



O-Town News - February 15, 2021

It's February! This seems worth mentioning as it means we are heading out of winter – even though we have a cold blast and more snow to get through before “normal” winter weather returns next week. ***Please be very be careful walking outside.***

Good News! Oxford Community Foundation approved funding to support printing and postage for O-Town News through June of 2021. This means our paper readers, as well as our digital readers, will continue receiving local news and announcements monthly. Thank you Oxford Community Foundation (and donors!) for the many ways you make the Oxford area a better place to live.

More Good News - Oxford Seniors, Inc., 922 Tollgate, reopens Monday, March 1!

The long awaited re-opening of Oxford Seniors is almost here. For everyone's continued health and safety, things will operate a little differently (for now) from what we were accustomed to prior to the pandemic. The staff is working on a schedule for:

- Weekly exercise, art, billiards and game times
- Congregate lunches five days a week
- In person tax preparation and benefits counseling

All members and visitors coming to the Center will be asked to register in advance for a time slot for their desired activity. This is necessary to make sure there are not too many people in the center at one time for safe, social distancing. Oxford Seniors is looking forward to seeing you soon and thanks you in advance for your patience and understanding of the changes required for the time being.

The Adult Day Service is also reopening on March 1 at Faith Lutheran Church, South Campus Ave. under the leadership of its new Director, Lisa Davidson. We are most fortunate to have this service in our community. Oxford Seniors also welcomes new Business Manager, Jackie Uhler. Welcome Lisa and Jackie!

A huge, heartfelt thank you goes to the staff of Oxford Seniors, Inc. for their tireless efforts this past year, and ongoing now, to continue serving the Oxford area during these challenging times.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH UPDATE - Briefs

(from Gov. DeWine's press conference at 2:00 p.m. on 2/11/2021)

- Cases of COVID in Ohio Nursing homes are down 77%.
- National Guard is partnering with Ohio Department of Aging to advance vaccination delivery to Ohioans ages 65+ in rural areas and affordable senior housing neighborhoods in dense urban areas.
- Due to Ohio having less than 2,700 new cases per day for seven days running the Ohio curfew has been lifted as of Noon on 2/11/2021, for the time being.
- New vaccinations sites:
 - Rite Aid pharmacies will begin distributing vaccination from the Federal vaccine supply source.
 - As of this week, ALL Kroger stores in Ohio are vaccination sites.

CITY OF OXFORD ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the February 1st edition of the City of Oxford's Electronic Newsletter, the **following information was provided:**

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

Our local Kroger store and McCullough-Hyde Memorial Hospital have been designated as local vaccine providers. Please be aware that these vaccines are in limited supply, and will follow the rollout schedule of the Ohio Department of Health.

Kroger 1-866-211-5320

McCullough-Hyde/Tri Health 513-862-6843

Another option is to sign up for the vaccine online (if able) through the Butler County General Health District. By signing up using the BCGHD Vaccination Registration Form, you will receive an automated call and/or email when there is a vaccine appointment available at their facility. You will then need to follow up with their instructions to get your vaccine.

Winter Weather Information

Throughout the winter months, all residents are encouraged to follow local weather reports as any significant snowfall could result in the need to clear snow routes and/or the declaration of a snow emergency. The city will make every attempt to inform residents about changing conditions via the local media and its website.

When the snow melts, it is the owner's and/or operator's responsibility to ensure that their vehicle is parked within twelve inches of the curb. Vehicles parked more than 12" from the curb will be cited.

Do not call Police Headquarters for weather or road reports during inclement weather. For road reports, use the OHGO app for iPhone and Android or call the Butler County Emergency Information Hotline at (513) 785-5800.

Transportation for Seniors and Disabled Individuals

Oxford Seniors offers transportation for those age 60 years and older as well as disabled individuals of any age. A donation is suggested for each way. Call 513-523-1717 to schedule or for more information.

Oxford Police Survey (from City of Oxford website on 2/5/21)

The City is currently conducting a survey (provided by an external independent research firm) about the services provided by the Oxford Police Division. Residents have been randomly selected by their mailing addresses. If your household received a yellow postcard signed by the City Manager, you have been selected to participate in the survey. The adult 18 years or older in your household who most recently had a birthday should complete the survey online. If unable to complete the survey online, you may call the City at (513) 524-5200 and ask for a paper copy to be mailed to you. Your responses are completely anonymous and will be reported in group form only. Your input will be invaluable in assessing the current services provided by the Police Division and providing input for ways to improve this service. The survey does not take much time to complete and will make a big difference!

Oxford Climate Action Steering Committee

The City of Oxford's Climate Action Steering Committee (CASC) will meet quarterly during 2021. In the coming year, CASC will offer recommendations for the revision of the City's multi-year comprehensive plan; review existing sustainability plans from other communities to help develop goals to help reduce the carbon imprint of our own community; and work with Miami University Presidents Climate Leadership Commitments to coordinate climate action efforts of both entities.

On February 3, Miami University Professional Service Project students reported their with the Local Government's Greenhouse Gas Inventories to the City. This was a comparison of Oxford's Calendar Year 2018 greenhouse gases to Calendar Year 2019. A final report will be shared in April, 2021.

The City is hiring a part-time Climate Sustainability Coordinator. The coordinator will work with teams of community volunteers through civic Boards and Commissions to create and implement a Climate Action Plan for the City of Oxford and to communicate the plan goals to the public.

UPDATES and GREETINGS FROM . . .

Oxford Farmers' Market

Did you know the Oxford Farmer's Market is open year-round? The Winter Market is held every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. until Noon in the parking lot just north of Memorial Park in the center of Uptown Oxford. Offerings from local vendors may include peppers, sweet potatoes, squash, lettuce and other greens, herbs, leeks and radishes, chicken, pork, grass-fed beef, eggs, and bakery items. Also available are handmade gifts such as candles, jewelry, and knitted items. Face masks and hand sanitizers are also for sale. If you have questions, contact Larry Slocum at **513-505-5238**.

Oxford Parks and Recreation

Wine & Design - This adult program art class offers different projects every other month! Instructors will walk you through the project while enjoying wine and the peaceful serenity of Hanover Winery! Our next program is April 8th from 6pm-8pm @ Hanover Winery where we will paint wooden bird houses! Fee: \$20R / \$22NR. **Fitness Classes** (in gymnasium at Oxford Parks and Rec. building)

*Fitness/Strength – Wednesdays – 9 am-10 am

*YOGA (Gentle - slow and calming) – Thursdays 9:30 am-10:30am

*YOGA (Gentle Vinyasa – a little faster with more breathing techniques) Saturdays, 9am -10am.

All classes are held in the gymnasium at the Oxford Parks and Recreation building. For more information about all activities, classes, fees and passes call Oxford Parks and Recreation (513) 523-6314 or visit our www.oprd.recdesk.com or visit us in person at 6025 Fairfield Road, Oxford.

The Knolls of Oxford

It seems there is a light at the end of the tunnel. As of February 15, 98% of the residents at the The Knolls of Oxford will be vaccinated against COVID-19! Not only does this make TKO a safety-focused community, the overwhelming participation in vaccination will allow for a cautious re-opening of dining, classes, and activities for residents beginning March 1st. Events will still be limited by number of participants and will require masks and social distancing as long as county virus numbers remain high. The Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing wings will also open up for restricted, in-person visitation on March 1 – the first time in almost a year! A huge “Thank You” to all community members who sent cards, delivered goodies, and remembered our residents during this time. For information about Knolls activities and access please call Cheryl Hampton, Marketing Manager, The Knolls of Oxford, (513) 524-7791; champton@mkcommunities.org.

AGE-FRIENDLY OXFORD (AFO) ACTION TEAM UPDATES

Age-Friendly Oxford's Leadership Group and its four Action Teams met in early February to set priorities for 2021. AFO's initiative is to improve quality of life for older adults in the Oxford area. The four AFO Action Teams are Communication and Information, Community and Health Services, Housing, and Transportation. The teams' reports are briefly summarized here.

AFO Communication and Information Team Report

O-Town News Survey Report

In October of 2020, Age-Friendly Oxford (AFO) was awarded a CARES Act grant from the City of Oxford to produce and mail O-Town News. O-Town News was designed to help communicate important information about the City of Oxford and the COVID-19 public health emergency, especially to seniors who may not have access to the internet or prefer to get information in printed form. The CARES Act funding was exhausted at the end of 2020. A brief survey included in the December 28th newsletter helped determine if AFO should seek funding to continue O-Town News in 2021. Following is a summary of the survey results:

*The O-Town News mailing list contains 355 household addresses. The paper survey was sent to all. A total of 163 completed paper surveys were returned by mail, representing a 46% response rate.

* 92% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that O-Town News did a good job of communicating important information.

* 86% either agreed or strongly agreed that O-Town News helped them feel connected to their community. * *

71% agreed or strongly agreed it helped them feel less isolated.

* 54% percent reported they use email daily.

* 30% of respondents reported using email infrequently or not at all.

* Respondents indicated that Oxford Community Calendar and Event News, COVID - 19 Information and City of Oxford News and Services were the three most useful features of O-Town News.

* 90% said they would like to see O-Town News continue in 2021.

Thank you to all who completed the O-Town News survey.

Oxford VillAGE Listserv

This free email tool currently has 248 Oxford area subscribers and is another way AFO (and other organizations) can get information out to community members. We know

that Oxford has approximately 1,500 households with at least one household member over the age of 55. This means there are about 1,200 more friends and neighbors who might want to receive O-Town News and OxVillage e-mail updates. The AFO Communication Team will continue trying to “capture” (in the age-friendliest of ways) as many local readers as possible on one list so all community members can be better informed.

Can we double our OxVillage email listserv membership? Triple it? Let’s try! Find a friend or two and have them email agwhelpton@gmail.com; info@age-friendlyoxford.org or call 513-520-7742 to be added to this information source.

Closing the Digital Divide The current challenge to sign up for the COVID-19 vaccine is a sad example of how those without digital devices, digital usage skills, time or ability (e.g. vision impaired) do not have access to a critical health care resources right now, in the middle of a pandemic. There are three ways to help bridge the digital divide:

- 1) increase access to electronic devices
- 2) increase skills for using digital information, the internet and devices; and
- 3) continue to provide paper, telephone, poster and in-person ways of sharing information.

Are you interested in this issue and/or do you have ideas to share? Please call Jessie at (513) 504-3002.

AFO Community and Health Services Team Report

The primary goals of the AFO Community and Health Services Team are to inventory providers of health and community services to the Oxford area; conduct an informal assessment of the strengths and weakness of each, and make that information available to the community. In 2020, the team contacted over 100 formal home health care services. The work was very labor intensive, and the status of providers’ services and availability changed more rapidly than the team could track. The team decided to pause the formal services data base until after the pandemic when service providers for in-home care are more stable.

For 2021, the team will be gathering information on informal contacts and service providers for the Oxford area (those who work independently to provide companion care, home maintenance, or home-making kinds services) to help residents remain independent in their homes.

If you are such a service provider, or know of individuals who are, please contact Oxford Senior, Inc., to register. (513)-523-8100.

AFO Housing Team Report

2020 Oxford Housing Needs Analysis

The City has recently released a 2020 Oxford Housing Needs Analysis, conducted by Bowen National Research. The analysis confirms that additional housing in several categories (affordable housing, housing for seniors to age-in-place, and both medium range and upscale housing) need to be increased to retain current residents, attract new residents and employees to the area, and to allow Oxford to grow in a planned and smart manner. This study will help guide planners and developers.

Are you interested in learning more about the analysis of Oxford's Housing Needs? If you have virtual access please attend the Oxford City Council and Oxford Housing Commission joint work session on Tuesday, February 16, at 6: 30 p.m. on ZOOM or Facebook. We plan to write a summary of this housing needs analysis in our next newsletter.

Oxford Non-Student Housing Boom?

After decades of very little non-student new housing coming to Oxford, several single-family, non-student housing developments are either underway or in early planning stages, including some designed for older adults and aging in place. The name, location and stage of planning or development are listed here to the best of our understanding at this time.

Heritage Vineyard Subdivision – off Contreras and Olde Farm Road. Lots available for single family homes - construction stage.

Heron Pond – on Kehr Rd. in front of Cobblestone Church and the pond. 15 single family residential condominiums - Planning Commission stage.

Lake Forest Edge – on Lake Forest Dr. South of Oxford off of Rt. 27. 21 lots for single family residences - preliminary planning prior to Planning Commission.

Owl's Landing- Brookville Road just before park entrance. Four 4-Plex condominiums and 60 detached single family residential condominiums - early concept and planning stage.

Western Knolls Village - Rt. 732 South –proposed independent senior living – one ad two bedroom cottages with garages - land purchase negotiation stage.

South Farm – 20 single family homes – groundbreaking stage.

South Forest Drive - Rt. 27 South - adjacent to Lake Forest Edge. 36 detached single family condominiums – through planning to Council for approval.

Volunteer Needed – Is there anyone out there who likes to listen to Planning Commission meetings who would be willing to follow these developments and help keep the AFO Housing team updated? If so, please call Ann at 513-520-7742.

Universal Design and Visitability in Housing Design and Home Modifications

These two areas of home design and function are topics which AFO hopes to help others learn about in 2021. Features of Universal Design and Visitability allow people's living space to be adaptable to changing needs for safety, independence and function. Some examples of U.D. are: *have at least one zero step entrance in your home or apartment; *use flooring materials rated high for non-slip even when wet; *install at least one walk-in shower; * have at least one bathroom with a 50+ inch turning radius; * have kitchen appliances such as the dishwasher raised to chest/waist level and have a kitchen prep area at a seated level; * use attractive towel bars and fixtures designed and installed to be grab bars. These features enhance safety for people of all ages and are reported in national data to be a plus for home value and resale.

AFO's Transportation Team Report
(will be covered in the March O-Town News)

Thank you for reading!

