



O-Town News - April 12, 2021

Greetings! Here we are in the full bloom of spring. With outdoor activities ramping up, vaccines rolling out and friends and families seeing more of each other, our community is bustling. City departments, Council and community members are preparing to update the City's 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The beautiful agricultural lands surrounding town are being prepared for spring planting. Miami University students have spring fever and the university will celebrate the semester's end with an in-person commencement ceremony on May 15th.

Meanwhile, public health and health care officials report rising numbers of positive COVID-19 cases and urge continued social distancing, small group gatherings and vigilant face mask use. Local mental health care providers report increases in anxiety and depression related to isolation and losses associated with COVID-19 disruptions. This issue of O-Town includes a focus on local mental health care resources. Can we celebrate and enjoy spring, nature and one another while continuing to take care of ourselves and practice public health safeguards? YES.WE.CAN.

OHIO COVID-19 – BRIEF UPDATES

- Ohio vaccine eligibility now includes all Ohioans ages 16+ regardless of underlying health conditions.
- Butler County Health Advisory Status:
Level #3 RED - Public Emergency - Very high exposure and spread.
- The City of Oxford is only scheduling COVID-19 vaccines for people who need a ride from the TRI Community Center in Oxford to the Butler County Fairgrounds or for people who do not have access to the internet. If you meet this criteria call 513-524-5200 to be connected with someone who can schedule you. If you have transportation and computer access to the internet visit vaccine.CityofOxford.org to schedule an appointment.
- If you have questions regarding Coronavirus/COVID-19 please call Ohio Department of Health 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634)

FEATURE ARTICLE:

Mental Health Resources and Oxford Area Mental Health Town Hall

Oxford area residents and representatives of local organizations gathered on March 30th for a virtual Mental Health Town Hall. The event was co-hosted by Amy Macechko, Project Manager of the Coalition for Healthy Community and Fran Jackson, President of the Oxford Unit of the NAACP. Town Hall moderators were Dr. Kip Alishio, Licensed Psychologist and former Director of Miami University Student Counseling Center and Reverend Vanessa Cummins, Pastoral Counselor, Pastor of Christ Our Redeemer AME Church in Dayton and Vice President of Oxford NAACP. Six panelists spoke about different types, sources and locations of mental health care services in the Oxford area.

The Town Hall theme was equitable access to mental health services for all members of the community. Goals for the Town Hall were adopted from the Mental Health Group of the Coalition for A Healthy Community, Oxford Area:

1. Help residents advocate for their own mental and emotional health care needs and be able to access them when needed.
2. Help reduce stigmas associated with mental and emotional health needs and with using mental health services or treatment.
3. Promote availability/access to existing mental health resources in the area.

Butler Behavioral Health Clinics (BBH) was represented by its President and CEO, Randy Allman. BBH has provided mental health care in Butler County and three other counties since 1948! BBH has 140 employees serving a four county area and serves 8,000 outpatient clients; 2,000 crisis service clients, and 3,000 in its Hamilton, Oxford and Middletown offices. BBH clinics provide outpatient and acute services, community based counseling, and crisis and psychiatry services at all offices. BBH specialty programs include:

* Crisis Service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

* Mobile Response and Stabilization Service - where they can meet a client in distress where ever they are having a crisis, be it at home, at school, or at work (within 30-60 minutes).

* WINGS - a long-term intensive family counseling program to help keep families together and functioning, children in school, and to resolve conflict.

* UPLIFT - for seniors ages 60+ either in a community setting or at the individual's home to address anxiety, depression, isolation and grief. *

Coordination of services for clients who need medical care, hospitalization, or follow-up care and transitional support after hospitalization.

Cincinnati Association of Black Psychologists (CABP) is led by Dr. Ritch Hall, President, who also works as a licensed clinical Psychologist at the Miami University Student Counseling Center. CABP serves the Cincinnati area and beyond and is part of a national association of psychologists working to close the mental health gap for African Americans. CABP provides training, outreach, mentorship and career information to professionals and clients regarding social and emotional needs

affecting African Americans. CABP was founded in recognition that people of color have stress related and mental health issues that may need healing approaches unique to their needs. For more information contact Dr. Ritch Hall at 513-529-4630.

Miami University Psychology Clinic is open to students and residents of all ages in the Miami University and Oxford community. The clinic offers mental health assessments, educational testing and individual, group and family counseling services at their center on Miami University's campus. Dr. Lauren Evans-Toben, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist is Director of the clinic. The Miami University Psychology Clinic is a training center for doctoral students and all clinicians are supervised by licensed Psychologists. The clinic sees clients for mental health needs including emotion regulation, distress tolerance, parenting skills, relationships with parents, racial, ethnic, and nation of origin, sexual preference and gender identity. Minimal fees range from \$10.00 for an intake session to \$25.00 per counseling session. A sliding fee scale can be arranged for those with need. Contact the Clinic's program manger, Jeanne, at 513-529-2423 to be put in touch with a clinician.

Miami University Student Counseling Center is directed by Dr. John Ward, Licensed Clinical Psychologist who has been with this Center for 19 years. M.U. Student Counseling Center has a team of 25 clinicians and offers short-term individual counseling for 4-8 sessions and long-term counseling for students without access to other mental health care services. Issues treated include anxiety, depression, eating disorders, substance abuse, harm prevention and relationship challenges. The Center also provides wrap-around service for students in crisis, group counseling, and outreach programming with the Oxford community, parents, faculty and staff to support and guide students. The Miami University Student Counseling Center runs a 24 hours a day seven days a week HOPE line for direct access to a mental health clinician at all times and will help student find services for when they are not in Oxford attending school. For more information call 513-529-4630.

Talawanda School District Social Workers are often a first line of support for individuals and families with school-age children in the Talawanda School District. Kelly Franks, MSW, LISW represented the Talawanda School District which has a social worker in each of its three elementary buildings. The School District's social workers work with students, families, teachers and school counselors to help locate appropriate mental health care for students , do in-school mental health check-ins, conduct support groups, and help students develop emotional and social coping skills for school success. For more information contact the Talawanda School Board Office at 513-273-3100 or any individual school building in the District.

Private Practice Counselors and Therapists provide individual and group services to individuals, couples, and families for a wide variety of mental health concerns. Dr. Susan Callan, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, one of over 20 professionals

working in private practice in the Oxford area, spoke on behalf of the area's mental health private practitioners. Practitioners Dr. Andrew Garrison, Ann Wengle and Marilyn Elzey also attended the event. These private practitioners provide services to help treat mood disorders, depression, anxiety, trauma-related conditions, childhood abuse, relationship issues, and anger, behavioral issues.

A complete listing of ALL mental health care providers can be found in the 7-page Mental Health Resource Guide created by the Coalition For a Healthy Community at <https://healthyoxfordarea.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Spring-2020-Mental-Health-Providers-Telehealth-Availability.pdf>. Paper copies are available for pick up at Oxford Seniors, 922 Tollgate Drive, Oxford, or can be mailed to you by calling 513-523-8100.

All clinicians and practitioners emphasized the importance of seeking help if you or someone you love are struggling with their emotions, relationships and behaviors, before the need becomes a crisis. Having a primary care provider who knows you and your mental health needs is very important and should often be a first point of contact for help.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

First Red Door Community Concert to be held on April 16 at Noon

Looking for something new to celebrate spring? Learn about the Red Door Community Concerts, offered at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. This series includes three noontime concerts of varied secular music, at no cost to attendees. During the pandemic, concerts will be provided virtually on YouTube. When safe for live performance, they will be open to the public at Holy Trinity, the church with the red doors at 25 East Walnut Street, Oxford. Concerts will still also be offered virtually for those unable to attend in person.

During 2021, concerts are scheduled for April 16, September 17 and November 5. In April, the church organist, Phillip Roberts, will accompany Holy Trinity Choral Scholars Lauren Maynus, Eric Riedel, Nathaniel Wilkens and Choir Director, Rex Man, as they perform selections from their individual repertoires. In September, nationally known musicologist Tammy Kernodle and her trio will deliver a jazz performance with commentary. In November, Juilliard-trained musicians, Thomas Garcia (guitar) and Andrea Ridilla (oboe) will perform a selection of Latin American Music.

The concerts will reveal a rich diversity of both music and performers. College students, Talawanda students, seniors and members of the greater Oxford community will experience music as a way to connect, learn, and expand horizons,

regardless of their differences. Grant monies, organizational and individual sponsors are making the concerts possible. The concerts are available on YouTube through a link on Holy Trinity's website www.holytrinityoxford.org. For more information,

please contact Sarah Michael at sk65michael@gmail.com

Thread Up Oxford Event – Saturday April 17

Thread Up Oxford is a new action group in the Oxford area working to help the community rethink their use of textiles and to keep textile waste out of landfills. Our first major initiative is a textile recycling drive that will culminate in a final drive-thru collection in the Oxford Lane Library parking lot on Saturday, April 17th, from 1:30-5:00 p.m.

There are also 3 donation barrels around town where textile recycling can be dropped off: the City Municipal Building at 115 S. College in their foyer entrance by the parking lot, The Family Resource Center at 5445 College Corner Pike inside their office, and Oxford Seniors at 922 Tollgate Drive.

Thread Up Oxford is working on setting up programs about textile arts and crafts, mending clothes, and others that will promote the recycling and upcycling of textiles. We are also planning a clothing swap for the community for later in the year. For more information about Thread Up Oxford and how you can donate or volunteer, email ThreadUpOxford@gmail.com or visit our Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/threadupoxford> or call 513-520-7742.

Medication Disposal & Take Back Events April 22 and April 24

Twice a year the Coalition for Healthy Community Oxford Area hosts a medication take back day for the entire community. This is done in partnership with McCullough-Hyde Memorial Hospital| TriHealth, Miami University Police Department, Oxford Police Department and Oxford Township Police. Residents can drop off non-liquid medications with no questions asked. The medications are disposed of in an environmentally friendly way by law enforcement officials.

This month, Oxford Township Police will host the drug take back event on Thursday, April 22 at Grace Point Church, 3727 Oxford Millville Road, (on Rt. 27 South of Oxford) from 2pm-4 pm, and at First Christian Church, 5877 Todd Rd. (west of Oxford) from 11am-1pm and from 5pm-7pm. On Saturday, April 24, the City of Oxford Police will host the Drug Take Back event from 10am-2pm at the TRI Community Center parking lot at 6025 Fairfield Road, Oxford.

Medications can also always be dropped off at either Oxford Police Department in the permanent disposal drop box provided there (101 E. High St.) or at Miami University Police Department 4945 Oxford Trenton Road. No questions asked!

Oxford Community Arts Center Virtual Gala Saturday, April 24 “Art and Nature – Together Again”

The Oxford Community Arts Center (OCAC) adds vibrancy to our community, sparks creativity and innovation, and brings joy to lift us beyond everyday experiences - and it's time for the annual OCAC Gala. The gala is a FUNdraising event that provides nearly a quarter of OCAC's annual operating budget. This year, OCAC will offer its Annual Gala as an online event. *

There are two ways to participate:

- 1) Silent Auction - Anyone can register online to view and bid on a vast array of items in the Silent Auction. Bidding for the auction begins April 17 at 6:00 p.m. and concludes April 24 at 10:00 p.m. Auction items will be on display in the OCAC Ballroom from April 14-24. Please stop in to see the items in person and visit the Gala art exhibit currently on display.
- 2) Event ticket - In addition to participating in the auction, you can purchase an event ticket to view the evening's 2 hour program on April 24. The online program will introduce you to OCAC's new Executive Director Heidi Schiller and provide interviews with local artists about their Gala exhibits. It will also offer musical performances by guitar and oboe duo Thomas Garcia and Andrea Ridilla, pianist Bruce Murray, and a virtual wine tasting with Jack Keegan and Bob Toerner from Ohio Valley Wine. All event details and bidding information can be found online at www.oxarts.org or call the OCAC at 513-524-8506. To register, purchase tickets and view the auction visit www.artandnature.givesmart.com.

**If you know someone who does not have on-line access, consider inviting them to view this OCAC Annual Gala experience with you!*

League of Women Voters, Oxford to host Community, Food, and Sustainability Speakers - April 28

The League of Women Voters of Oxford is hosting a virtual event at 7:00 p.m., April 28 on Community, Food and Sustainability in Oxford. Ross Olson, LWV Oxford Natural Resources Portfolio Director, and Ann Fuehrer, Talawanda Oxford Pantry & Social Services (TOPSS) Executive Director, will discuss the relationship between food insecurity, community gardens, and homelessness. Olson will provide information on a pilot project to create a pollinator and food production garden and food forestry plot near Merry Day Mobile Home Community and TOPSS on US 27 N. Fuehrer will discuss how TOPSS, providing food to area residents since 2007, is implementing innovative solutions in the face of increased demand and challenges over the last year. Use this link to participate in the webinar: <https://tinyurl.com/lwvoxford0428>. A write-up of the talks will follow (call 520-7742).

Greetings from Oxford's Climate Action Steering Committee!

(March 31 2021 Update)

The Oxford Climate Action Steering Committee and staff devoted its March meeting to the critical challenge of setting greenhouse gas reduction goals and timeline. Having ambitious yet realistic targets is essential to guide future progress. Scientific consensus tells us society must be carbon neutral no later than 2050 to avoid catastrophic climate change. The Committee discussed interim reduction targets and a long-term neutrality goal it will recommend to City Council. Minutes of the CASC meetings are available through the [City Website](#). The CASC will continue working to coordinate Oxford's commitment to the GCoM and support [City Council's 2021 new priorities](#) concentrating on housing, economic development, and climate sustainability. Achieving these bold goals requires careful collaboration between the City, Miami University, and all our local neighbors and partners.

So, remind your colleagues, friends, family, associates, members to sign up for [City Climate Updates](#). The City's website also includes a page designated to its [Climate Action Efforts](#). Another website that lists community-sponsored Climate Action events is [Enjoy Oxford](#). If you would like a CASC member to speak to your organization, send your request to JGreene@cityofoxford.org. Questions, comments, or concerns from your group can also be channeled to CASC through this email.

What are things you can do to reduce your environmental footprint?

***Use the City of Oxford's Compost/ [Food Scrap Recycling Program](#).**

Methane from landfills is an important contributor to climate change, but 1/3 of what's landfilled is potentially compostable. Oxford provides compost bins available to all Oxford residents at a drop-off location at the southern end of Main Street (925 S. Main St.). Currently, the bins accept fruits, vegetable scraps (remove stickers, ties, and wrappers), meat, fish, and bones, bread, oils and fats, dairy products, and BPI Compostable Materials. ***Benefit from the City of Oxford's Electric Aggregation Program.** The City's electric aggregation program provides City of Oxford residents and small businesses in Oxford an opportunity to purchase renewable energy credits at a competitive price. Small customers are automatically enrolled unless they opt out. Contact 513-524-5200 for more information.

Ride the Bus! Its Free! The Butler County Regional Transit Agency (**BCRTA**) provides bus service for Miami University students and Oxford residents. Fixed-route buses are now free to ride for all residents. Oxford is bike friendly and walkable. Read more on the City of Oxford's website under Parking and Transportation Commission or contact BCRTA for routes and rates. 513-785-5237. <https://www.butlercountyrta.com/>

AARP Awards a Technical Assistance Grant for Universal Design Consultation in Housing to Age-Friendly Oxford

The Age-Friendly Oxford (AFO) Housing Team is excited to share that AFO was granted technical assistance from AARP National for educational events to learn about Universal Design and its impact on healthy aging in our own homes. Features of Universal Design also make our home more “visitable” for friends and are beneficial for families with young children and those with disabilities. Building in features in new construction can help avoid costly remodels later if or when a household member’s needs change.

AFO will be working with the RL MACE Institute of Universal Design and consultant Richard Duncan to bring forums and other learning opportunity to new home buyers who are working with home designers and marketers. AFO is in the process of planning these upcoming events. *Watch for more information on this topic in the coming weeks and months.*

If you, your business, club, church or organization have information to share with the community, please contact Age-Friendly Oxford at 513-520-7742 or info@agefriendly.org.

