

The Due Diligence

The Coshocton County Auditor's Newsletter
Sandra Corder, County Auditor



Inside This Issue:

From the Auditor's Desk.....1
 County Payroll News.....2
 Dates & Deadlines, Farewell
 To Sandy Corder.....3
 Video-Cam, Coshocton Census
 Tipton Baby.....4
 Chris Sycks Interim Auditor,
 Clerk of Courts Online, Auds
 & Ends.....5
 Don't Double-Tax the Tax-
 payers, Spotlight on Soil &
 Water Conservation.....6
 County Audit, NTAS
 Changes.....7
 Tax Levy Changes, ODNR Mine
 Information, Attention Animal
 Lovers.....8

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www.coshoctoncounty.net/agency/auditor

REAL ESTATE SEARCH WEBSITE:

www.coshcoauditor.org

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From the Desk of... Sandra Corder, Coshocton County Auditor

Final Farewell

Retiring, no, don't think so; "I'm much too young," I say inside my head, but the year on the calendar tells the truth. Have you looked at the synonyms for retiring? Let's see, there's depart, escape, retreat, resign, quit, rest; none of these are on **my** Bucket List. As Chris phrased it "she's moving onto another chapter in her life." I am blessed with three hard-working, loving sons, two beautiful daughters-in-law, two awesome grandchildren, and a husband who besides having a great sense of humor, finds life is an adventure for us to sample and believe me we do!

My father always reminded us to "leave it better then you found it." In life this has been my mantra, and it always makes a difference. My mother's guidance was by example; you help those you encounter and God will help you; this too will always make a difference.

In a conversation with my staff recently we were debating why certain rules and regulations are put in place and then continue to change making it difficult and complicated for the public (who I might add pay taxes that sustains our offices) to be assisted. Too often we pass the buck and you hear, that's not my job, or we don't take care of that in this office. I encourage them to not send the public on "wild goose chases". We've all experienced those and they waste a great deal of our time and effort and frankly drive me insane. I asked the staff to do a little research and then call ahead, don't send them on their way with your best guess. While we are discussing this topic, **right now** think about how often you have thought or even said out loud: that's not my responsibility. For the new year let's make a resolution and keep it. **As government employees**, who are only here because the general public pays taxes and we provide the services for which they pay, let's make a promise to improve that service. Let's review our office policies and instead of making the public jump through hoops we've made complicated, remove some of these obstacles by streamlining and simplifying. So what if providing that extra service takes more of our time? If it improves government operations and the way government employees are perceived and people feel we have truly assisted them, **then we all win.**

In 2012 let's practice **PONO**. It is one of my family's favorite words; Hawaiian for correct, honorable, or good, basically it means to "**do the right thing.**" So 2012 our plan is to leave it better then we found it and to help those we encounter each and every day. **PONO.**

It has been an honor and a blessing serving as your Coshocton County Auditor and County Recorder. Respectfully, *Sandra Corder*

Oct - Dec County Anniversaries
Over 20 consecutive years

David Selders	30 years
Don Stroup	28 years
Barb Babcock	24 years
James Priest	21 years
Timothy Greer	21 years
Tamra Cheney	20 years
Rebecca Beiter	20 years

Payroll Pointers by Christi Selders

2011 Year End Figures

Total Gross Payroll	\$14,420,435.10
Total General Fund Payroll	\$ 4,304,516.01
Total Number of Employees Paid	606
Total Employees' Share of Retirement	
	\$ 1,353,222.95
Total Medicare Paid (Both Employee and Employer)	
	\$ 380,483.70

Correction

Jana Dotson reached 21 years with DJFS on September 24th. Please accept our apologies for overlooking your anniversary in the last newsletter.

Changes for Law Enforcement Officials in 2012...

The following changes will take place in 2012:

- Retirement contributions for employees will increase from 11.60% to 12.10% with the matching remaining the same at 18.10%.
- Union Dues will increase by \$.06 per pay.

COUNTY PAYROLL STATISTICS
December 2011

Number of Employees	451
Average Payroll	\$541,943.36
Largest Department -	Coshocton Co. Board of DD

Congratulations and Best Wishes to Sandra Corder who is retiring on December 30th after serving Coshocton County for 6 years as Coshocton County Auditor, for 12 as County Recorder, and as a public employee for nearly a decade prior to that.

Famous Quote

"Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right."

-Oprah Winfrey (1954-), Author and Television Personality



Please welcome Coshocton County's new hires

- Hannah Worthington hired 10/12/11 at District Health*
- Matthew Green hired 10/17/11 at Hopewell*
- Robert Casey hired 10/19/11 at Hopewell*
- Shayla Rafn hired 10/27/11 at EMS*
- Carole Smith hired 11/1/11 at Hopewell*
- Wendy Asire hired 11/21/11 at Hopewell*
- Van Blanchard hired 12/12/11 at Probate Juvenile*

Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

- Jan 1 – (on or about) Townships and Municipalities submit “Certificate of the Total Amount from All Sources Available for Expenditures and Balances” to County Auditor
- Statutory tax lien date
- Jan 2 – NEW YEAR’S DAY (observed) – Offices closed
- Jan 3 – Avoid Then & Now Certificates by opening purchase orders for all routine expenses and blanket purchase orders for all necessary expense accounts
- C.A.U.V. application period begins
 - Homestead application period begins for those turning 65 in 2012
- Jan 6 – County pay date (timesheets due 12/30)
- Jan 11 – County bill run (vouchers due 1/3)
- Jan 16 – MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY – Offices closed
- Jan 20 – County pay date (due 1/13)
- Jan 25 – County bill run (due 1/17)
- Jan 31 – Last day to purchase Dog or Kennel tags without penalty
- Feb 3 – County pay date (due 1/30)
- Feb 15 – County bill run (due 2/7)
- Feb 18 – Projected 1st ½ Real Estate Tax due date
- Feb 20 – PRESIDENT’S DAY – Offices closed
- Mar 2 – County pay date (due 2/27)
- Mar 6 – Primary Election-GO VOTE!
- Mar 7 – Last day to file new or renewed C.A.U.V. applications
- Mar 14 – County bill run (due 2/6)
- Mar 16 – County pay date (due 3/12)
- Mar 28 – County bill run (due 3/20)
- Mar 30 – County pay date (due 3/26)
- Mar 31 – Last day to file Board of Revision

Coshocton County Bids Farewell to Sandra Corder

After serving as an elected official for more than 18 years and more than a decade of service prior to that, Sandy Corder is retiring. She was hired by County Auditor M.H. ‘Spike’ Kanuckle in the late 1970s. She served at the counter with Chris Sycks under the supervision of Chief Deputy Betty Leech doing deed transfers and bookkeeping back before the accounting was computerized. In 1993, she was elected as the Coshocton County Recorder and served the public in that office until 2006. At the retirement of County Auditor Richard Tompkins, Sandy was appointed to fulfill his unexpired term and later that year defeated a Republican opponent. With the changes coming to OPERS, she decided it was a good time to move on to another chapter in her life. Sandy plans on traveling with her husband Ross, spend more time with their grandchildren, and possibly get involved in a new family business.

The staff in her office hosted both a private dinner for her, her family and her office staff one evening as well as an open house on December 30, her last day. Below are some photos from these events. Farewell, Sandy, and God Bless You on this new journey!



**Congratulations, Sandy,
and all the best in the
years to come!!**



Coshocton County Treasurer Janette Donaker and the Coshocton Board of County Commissioners have installed several cameras in and around the Courthouse Annex. They video 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in various offices, entranceways and parking spaces both inside and outside the building.

The digital video is streamed live to a monitor in the Treasurer's Office as well as copied and stored in the County Server for later retrieval and viewing.

In light of the series of recent incidences against downtown businesses, it is hoped that this will both deter and identify any offender.

So, whether you are parking near the Annex or taking care of some county business inside, remember to look your best and SMILE!!



NEW TIPTON BABY!

Did you miss seeing Jarrod at his desk in December? It was because he was home for a couple weeks with his growing family. His wife, Erin, gave birth to their son, Easton Kyle Tipton, on December 10th. Easton has an older sister, Everly. Jarrod returns to work on January 3rd to continue his appraisal and weights & measures duties.



2010 COSHOCTON COUNTY CENSUS FACTS

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/39/39031.html>

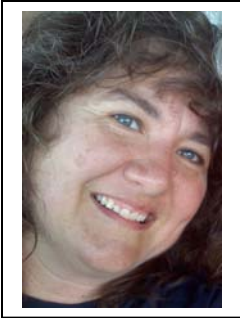
QuickFacts	Coshocton County	Ohio
Population, 2010	36,901	11,536,504
Population, percent change, 2000 to 2010	0.7%	1.6%
Population, 2000	36,655	11,353,140
Persons under 5 years, percent, 2010	6.2%	6.2%
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010	24.1%	23.7%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2010	16.2%	14.1%
Female persons, percent, 2010	50.6%	51.2%
White persons, percent, 2010 (a)	97.0%	82.7%
Black persons, percent, 2010 (a)	1.1%	12.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2010 (a)	0.2%	0.2%
Asian persons, percent, 2010 (a)	0.3%	1.7%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2010	1.2%	2.1%
White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2010	96.6%	81.1%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2010 (b)	0.8%	3.1%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2005-2009	0.3%	3.6%
Living in same house 1 year & over, 2005-2009	86.8%	84.7%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2005-2009	5.2%	6.1%
Veterans, 2005-2009	3,466	951,024
High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2005-2009	83.9%	86.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2005-2009	11.4%	23.6%
Housing units, 2010	16,545	5,127,508
Homeownership rate, 2005-2009	74.2%	69.5%
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2005-2009	10.3%	23.0%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2005-2009	\$96,000	\$134,500
Households, 2005-2009	14,157	4,526,164
Persons per household, 2005-2009	2.54	2.47
Per capita money income in past 12 months (2009 dollars) 2005-2009	\$19,620	\$24,830
Median household income, 2009	\$38,887	\$45,467
Persons below poverty level, percent, 2009	14.6%	15.1%
Private nonfarm establishments, 2009	652	256,551 ¹
Private nonfarm employment, 2009	9,433	4,460,553 ¹
Private nonfarm employment, percent change 2000-2009	-30.8%	-10.8% ¹
Nonemployer establishments, 2009	2,083	697,000
Total number of firms, 2007	2,709	897,939
Women-owned firms, percent, 2007	26.9%	27.7%
Manufacturers shipments, 2007 (\$1000)	1,222,877	295,890,890
Retail sales, 2007 (\$1000)	259,193	138,816,008
Retail sales per capita, 2007	\$7,151	\$12,049
Accommodation and food services sales, 2007 (\$1000)	22,685	17,779,905
Land area in square miles, 2010	563.91	40,860.69
Persons per square mile, 2010	65.4	282.3

1: Includes data not distributed by county.

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race.

(b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories.

Chris Sycks to Serve as Interim Auditor



The Coshocton Board of County Commissioners has appointed Christine Sycks as Interim County Auditor. The December 31st retirement of Sandra Corder left a vacancy in the office. Ohio Revised Code requires the Commissioners to appoint an interim until the Democrat Central Committee meets and decides upon their appointee. Chris has submitted her résumé for their consideration.

Sandy's term expires in March of 2015. Chris will hold the appointed position until the county auditor is elected during the November 2012 general election to fill the remainder of the unexpired term.

Clerk of Courts Announces Online Service

Submitted by Janet Mosier

Coshocton County Clerk of Courts Janet Mosier has announced that the Common Pleas Court Docket and Index are now available to the public online. The website is :

<http://www.coshoctoncounty.net/agency/coc/>

Click on Online Search of Common Pleas Court Case Docket & Indices in the red section on the left hand side of the page. There are many ways to search for case information on this site. You can search by name, case number, case type or attorney. Case information from 1999 through present will be available on the site. The information is accessible as soon as it is entered into the system by the deputy clerks.

The cost of this project was \$23,773.00. This amount included an upgrade to the current computer system, eAccess licenses, and the first year maintenance. The money for this project came from the Clerk's Computer Fund and the Court Special Projects Fund wherein monies for these funds are collected when a case is filed in Common Pleas Court. Mosier states that no General Fund monies were used for this project. She said this project is a goal she has had since she took office, and it would not have been possible at this time had it not been for the willingness of Judge Robert J. Batchelor to use money from the Court Special Projects Fund.

Janet feels that access to public records is an essential part of our system of government. She and her deputy clerks hope that the citizens will find the site easy to use. If you have any problems or questions, contact the Clerk of Courts' Office at 740-622-1456.

AUDS & ENDS

- Coshocton County was named in 1810. The word Coshocton was derived from a Native American word meaning "Black Bear Town".
- Prior to its organization in 1810, Coshocton County was administered by Muskingum County. Any records pre-dating this year would be found in Muskingum County.
- Coshocton County is the 67th largest in population out of 88 counties according to the 2010 census. In 1940, Coshocton was the 47th

**Buy Your Dog Tag BEFORE
January 31st, to Avoid a Ticket!**



**TAG IT or
TICKET
IT'S THE LAW**

Don't Double-Tax the Taxpayers!

There are some things for which public funds should never be used. Using taxpayer's dollars to pay certain taxes is one. Government entities are legally exempt from some taxes, so paying them is an unnecessary use of local government dollars.

Avoiding these taxes can pose a problem when county employees are being reimbursed for certain items. However, with a little planning ahead this can be prevented. As we head into a new year with all its opportunities and plans, here are some tips for better public fund stewardship.

One of the biggest areas we see public funds used for unnecessary taxes is lodging. Offices could plan out their staff's overnight stays far enough ahead that the purchase order and voucher can be processed in time for the trip. This way the employee can present the exemption forms (available in the Auditor's Office) along with the check. This assures that the sales tax and some city's lodging taxes can be avoided. Just presenting the exemption forms with the employee's own credit card sometimes does not work because the hotel will not accept the form unless the bill is being paid with a county credit card or a county-issued check.

Another problem exists when county employees are reimbursed for items. Since they are paying for it on their own, there is no way for them to claim the exemption. Technically, none of the taxes should be reimbursed. Call the business and ask if they would accept an exemption form from an employee at the time of purchase and therefore not charge the tax. Planning ahead could also be done so that a county check can be issued to present along with the exemption form. Some on-line businesses do not charge tax.

The auditor's staff will be happy to help you acquire the necessary forms and plan so that the taxpayers are not paying taxes with their tax dollars.

Spotlight on. . .

COSHOCTON COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Submitted by Deb Bigelow



Coshocton SWCD Board of Supervisors, l. to r: Garry Derr, Greg Waters, David Lapp, Knox Porteus, and Adrian Garber

The Coshocton Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) was formed by landowners in 1942 to address local soil and water resource concerns. The SWCD is a legally organized subdivision of State Government, assigned under law the task of protecting and improving our soil and water resources. The foundation of our program is the local leadership of our SWCD Board of Supervisors. These five members are elected to 3 year terms and volunteer their time and talents to establish work priorities to be accomplished in conservation education and technical assistance on our land. Supervisors hire capable district employees and manage all funds and facilities belonging to the district. Current board members include Greg Waters from Lafayette Township, Knox Porteus-Tuscarawas Township, Adrian Garber-Crawford Township, David Lapp-Bethlehem Township, and Garry Derr-Linton Township.

Local appropriations are the starting point for Coshocton SWCD's programs. Generous support from the Coshocton County Commissioners and the City of Coshocton is "matched" with funds provided through the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission by the Ohio General Assembly. This funding allows the SWCD to hire staff that provides educational and technical assistance to Coshocton County landowners.

The SWCD works with local, state, and federal monies to implement conservation programs. Whether it is working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to construct a spring development for federal cost share or working with a landowner to solve a drainage issue, the SWCD is the "boots on the ground". Working one-on-one with landowners to solve resource concerns is a very important part of the SWCD program. District staff also provides outreach conservation education to school and civic groups, develop GIS layers for county mapping, and assist customers that walk into the office for a soils map or plat book. We are the local connection for natural resource information.

The SWCD also works closely with other government agencies and community groups to promote conservation. For example, the District GIS position is housed at the County Annex building and is responsible for developing layers for our county mapping which is used by all county agencies and available on the County website for public use. The Rain Garden installed at the Park Hotel lot in cooperation with *(continued, page 7)*

COUNTY AUDIT UNDERWAY

The Auditor of State's team assigned to Coshocton County has had their pre-audit meeting and has already started gathering information. Audit team members include Joey Jones, Assistant Chief Auditor, Shane Statler, Senior Audit Manager, Heather Neiger, Audit Manager, Jim Fairbanks, IT Audit Manager, and Staff Auditors Jonathan Barnett, Sheryl Hardesty, and Doug Allen. Several of these auditors are Coshocton County residents. Many of the county offices have already been contacted for certain information in preparation for the audit and Jim has already met with Michael Lavigne and Don Andrews several times for IT information. The auditors expect to arrive in mid-January and to be done by June. They will be based in the "Red Room" of the Courthouse.

This is the first time since the 1990s that Coshocton County has had an audit performed by the State Auditor's staff instead of an Independent Public Accountant (IPA) firm. County officials and employees can expect the auditors to look at different aspects and government records and possibly in more detail than in the past years with the IPAs.

County officials should also expect more cost for this audit and should budget accordingly. Historically, state audits can be double the cost or more of an IPA audit. Last year our total audit bill from Balestra, Harr, and Scherer was \$52,900. It is recommended that each office review what their portion was last year and budget for at least twice that much when the commissioners request the 2012 budget figures.

The audit is a necessary and important part of assuring the taxpayers that their tax dollars are being put to proper use without any fraud or abuse. As always, please promptly and politely respond to all of the audit team's requests as they go through the audit. Remember – the quicker they receive the records, the quicker they can complete their task!

Soil & Water Conservation (continued)

with the Pomerene Center for the Arts is another example. This garden takes the runoff from the roof top of the adjoining building and allows it to slowly absorb into the ground instead of entering the storm drain.



Coshocton SWCD Staff: Mary Thomas, Barb Mainwaring, Deb Bigelow, and Ryan Medley.

Whether it is assisting a landowner with a spring development, talking to a group of elementary students, or planning a Fall Foliage Tour; these are all ways the SWCD reaches out to people of Coshocton County to improve our community's natural resources. Promoting conservation is simply acquainting people with ideas and methods to use their soil and water resources wisely. Soil and water conservation is essential for future generations to enjoy the quality of life that we envision for them.

NATIONAL TERRORISM ADVISORY SYSTEM (NTAS) CHANGES

The new NTAS replaces the color-coded Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS). This system will more effectively communicate information about terrorist threats by providing timely, detailed information to the public, government agencies, first responders, airports and other transportation hubs, and the private sector.

It recognizes that Americans all share responsibility for the nation's security, and should always be aware of the heightened risk of terrorist attack in the United States and what they should do.

When there is credible information about a threat, an NTAS Alert will be shared with the American public. It may include specific information, if available, about the nature of the threat, including the geographic region, mode of transportation, or critical infrastructure potentially affected by the threat as well as steps that individuals and communities can take to protect themselves and help prevent, mitigate or respond to the threat. More information can be found at:

<http://www.dhs.gov/files/publications/ntas-questions-answers.shtm>

First Half Taxbills Will Be Affected By Levy Changes

The first half taxbills will be sent out before long for both real estate and manufactured home taxes. Anyone owning and occupying their home should be receiving the 2 ½ % reduction and anyone owning, occupying and 65 years or older (or totally and permanently disabled) should be receiving the Homestead Reduction. This latter reduction averages annual savings of \$300.

Properties with new construction or removal of buildings by January 1, 2011 (for real estate) that were reported to the auditor’s office will reflect on this tax bill. Also, the following changes to tax levies will affect the taxes in certain districts:

- **East Knox and Ridgewood School Districts** – slight increase due to bond levy adjustments
- **Garaway, Newcomerstown, Tri-Valley, and West Holmes School Districts** – slight decrease for bond and emergency levy adjustments
- **Crawford Township** – increase due to two replacement levies: Road and Fire
- **Lafayette Township** – slight increase due to additional .10 mill inside levy: Cemetery
- **Pike Township** – increase due to additional 1.75 mill Fire Levy
- **Nellie Village** – increase due to additional 6.83 mill Garbage Collection and Disposal Levy

Projected due date is Friday, February 17, 2012. Please remember to check your taxbill for accuracy and qualified reductions. Call the Auditor’s Office with questions or concerns

ODNR OFFERS ABANDONED MINE RESOURCES

In an effort to help landowners and developers avoid the costly problems associated with developing abandoned mined land, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Mineral Resources Management, in collaboration with the Ohio Mine Subsidence Insurance Underwriting Association, has created an abandoned mine land development guide, *Ask Before You Build*, and companion educational DVD. The free guide and DVD are available to individuals, developers and agencies to help evaluate and strategically plan for potential problems associated with abandoned mine areas **before construction begins**. *If the landowner fails to address abandoned mine land problems prior to development, subsequent remediation projects are not eligible for AML program funding.* A free interactive **web-based underground mine locator** is available online.

To order guides, flyers, brochures:

Abandoned Mine Locator:

<http://www.ohiodnr.com/mineral/locators/tabid/10358/Default.aspx>

ATTENTION ANIMAL LOVERS!

Are you or anyone you know in the market for a new pet? Pictured are just a few of the animals currently at the Coshocton County Animal Shelter who need a loving home. You can adopt a dog for \$50 or cat for \$30 and bring home a furry friend. This cost includes dog tags, all necessary shots for the animal, and \$10 off spay or neuter.

The shelter is located at 21755 Township Road 164. Shelter hours are Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Animals are available for immediate adoption.



IF YOU'D LIKE THIS NEWSLETTER DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY, SIMPLY SEND YOUR REQUEST TO CHRIS AT

chrissycks@coshoctoncounty.net

MAIN STREET DISPLAY WINDOW

Please call Danna or Christi at 740-622-1243 to see what's available & to reserve your spot! If solid display boards are used, please limit height to three feet. (Sorry, no businesses or for-profit organizations)