



**Executive Director
Andrew J. Devany**

CONNECTIONS

Quarterly Newsletter

September 2022

From the Desk of Our Executive Director



www.ohcac.org

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After almost two- and one-half years our country, our communities and our Agency are still showing our patience, creativity and determination in dealing with the effects of the Corona virus. But, though it has been a long and exhausting struggle, situations have improved. Deaths, hospitalizations and quarantines have all significantly declined. People are traveling, medications seem to be working and the new normal, though not normal, is doable. At OHCAC, staff have learned how to roll with the punches and what was once unknown and unpredictable has become ok. We do what we have to do to make this work.

Thank you for that.

As we look forward to the Autumn season we are seeing improvements to our facilities throughout the OHCAC service area. A long-awaited (at least 18 months) Early Head Start playground is finally going up in Richland County. Our grand opening for the newly acquired Jan Hulse Head Start Center in Marion County will be held on October 13 in conjunction with our October Board meeting. We have been working for the past few months making necessary changes for Early Head Start classrooms, painting, working on signage and improving the lighting for both classrooms and hallways. Many of our Head Start administrative staff have relocated to the “Jan Center” and are now in ground level, handicapped accessible offices with windows and everything. We are very grateful for this opportunity, which was brought about by our Board of Directors and many community partners who realized what a wonderful community facility this building has been and will continue to be.

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OHCAC Services Offered

Ann and Jaime
Administration - Receptionists
740-387-1039 x-1100

- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
- AEP Neighbor to Neighbor Program
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)
- Food Pantry (Galion)
- Personal Needs Pantries (Marion, Morrow)
- Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP)
- WARM CHOICE Program
- Electric Partnership Program (EPP)
- Community Connections Program
- Emergency Food and Shelter Program (ESFP)
- Community Service Block Grant (CSBG)
- Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention (Marion and Crawford)
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Clothing Outlet in Crawford County (also available to Marion and Morrow County residents)
- Prescription Assistance Program
- Senior Commodity Boxes (Galion)
- Payee Program (Marion)
- LIHWAP Water Assistance
- Emergency Senior Funding Grant (Marion)
- Work boots (Crawford)
- Early Head Start and Head Start in Marion, Morrow, Crawford and Richland Counties
- Columbia Gas Fuel Funds
- First Energy Fuel Funds
- Resource and Referral
- Medication Lock Boxes (Morrow)
- Summer Reading Program (Marion)
- School Supplies (Crawford)
- Backpack Program (Crawford)
- Social Security Navigators
- Emergency Senior Funding (Marion)

Agency Directors

Joe Devany
Executive Director
740-387-1039 Ext. 1118

Joseph Main
Deputy Director /
Energy Coordinator
740-387-1039 Ext. 1121

Jim Lavelle
Chief Fiscal Officer
740-387-1039 Ext. 1117

David Wirick
IT Manager
740-387-1039 Ext. 1108

Debbie Schuster
Head Start Director
740-387-1039 Ext. 1109

Robert Foreman
HEAP/LIHWAP Director
Energy Programs
740-387-9703 Ext. 1111

Tracey Rector
Marion Co. Director
740-383-2154 Ext. 1313

Lisa Meddles
Morrow Co. Director
419-946-2009 Ext. 1905

Tammy Crabtree
Crawford Co. Director
419-468-5121 Ext. 1619



Head Start
Debbie Schuster, Director
740-387-1039 x-1109

BOARD MEMBERS

EHS & HS	FUNDED OPEN	PLACED	ATTENDED / ENROLLED
Morrow	36	36	37
Crawford	36	36	36
Crawford County – Bucyrus 1 HS is scheduled to open on 9/26/22 with 20 children.			
Marion	136	136	135
Richland	129	129	131
TOTAL	337	337	339

Marion County

Kerr Murray
Staci Thomas
Danica Dodson
Sherry Russell
Stephanie Shaffer
Robert Concepcion
Laura Detweiler

Crawford County

Richard Genzman,
Board President
Larry Schmidt
Thomas O’Leary
Joe Stafford
Tina Bloomfield
Douglas Court
Darrin Harvey

Morrow County

Kelli Cooperider
Tracy Blackburn
Vacant
Darci Hendrickson

Richland County

Theresa Alt
Tamea Jobe
Fred Boll

Children enrolled on 8/24/22 = 339. Total Funded Enrollment = 587. We are 57.7% Enrolled.

Our Head Start classes began on August 15, 2022 in all four counties. We are in need of 1 additional HS Lead Teacher in Bucyrus, 1 HS Lead Teacher in Galion, 4 HS Lead Teachers in Marion, 1 HS Lead Teacher in Mt. Gilead and 2 HS Lead Teachers in Mansfield. We are also in need of an Education Supervising Manger for Crawford and Morrow Counties, an Education Mentor/Coach Manager for all four Counties and an Intervention Manger. All of the postings are on our website at www.ohcac.org and we also have the positions posted on Indeed. We need Full-Time Associate Teachers in all four counties.

Our USDA site review was on August 24, 2022 at the Marian Clark Center and they observed the commercial kitchen at that site as well as the Early Head Start classrooms. We have not had an observation recently due to COVID-19. We appreciate that they are able to restart their visits.

All Lead Teachers, Family Advocates, Data Systems Processors and Managers attended a Bridges Out of Poverty training at Ohio State in Marion during August.

On August 15, 2022 the former Marie English Early Childhood Center opened as the Jan Hulse Head Start Early Childhood Center. We have relocated many Head Start offices to this building. The building offers space for OHCAC staff training, Head Start Policy Council, and OHCAC Board meetings. We are anticipating an October Open House.

We are very grateful to the OHCAC Governing Board for the approval to purchase this property.

Debbie Schuster, OHCAC Head Start Director

Home Energy Assistance Program

Robert Foreman, Director
740-387-1039 x 1201

Happy Fall from the Home Energy Assistance Program department!

The 2022 HEAP Summer Crisis Program (2022SCP) is finishing up. The program runs from July 1 through September 30. We have until October 15 to finish any pending/incomplete applications that were started during the 2022SCP season. No new applications can be started after September 30. If a client still needs to finish their pending/incomplete application, please call your local county CAC office.

At the time of this printing the 2022SCP has assisted 510 **households** with utility assistance and referrals, 669 PIPP Plus applications, and 796 applications for State HEAP. There have been 168 fans and 174 air conditioners given out as additional benefits...a final total will be given after October 15.

In addition to the 2022SCP, staff are also busy with the AEP Neighbor to Neighbor fuel funds. These fuel funds started July 1 and are available through August 31.

The 2022-2023 Winter Crisis Program (2023WCP) is fast approaching. It will begin on November 1, 2022 conclude on March 31, 2023.

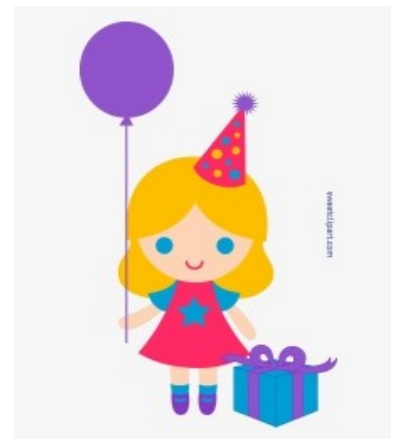
Our in-house training for staff to finalize all necessary 2022-2023 Winter Crisis Program guidelines will be October 26, 2022.

Please continue to utilize our website... www.ohcac.org. The HEAP department has a drop-down menu that has all the most updated information we have to date. Watch the website for more information about the opening of the automated appointment hotline to schedule appointment for the 2022-2023 HEAP Winter Crisis Program.



October Birthdays

Erma Dible	3
Lauren Fraysier	3
Karen Marshall	7
Amy Daly	9
Jason Lilly	11
Richard Murphy	12
Sharonda Wilson	13
Brinnley Belcher	14
Wendy Bennett	27
Anita Major	27
Rockie Jones Bigham	28
Jennifer Phelps	31



**Low-Income Household Water Assistance
Program (LIHWAP)**

**Robert Foreman, Director
740-387-1039 x 1201**

The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is a federally-funded program designed to help income-eligible families with their water and wastewater bills. The program runs from December 2022 through September 30, 2022. However, the grant has been extended and the new grant year will run from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023.

Eligible families are those who are at or below 175% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) and who have been disconnected (or have a disconnection notice), need to establish new service, or need to pay to transfer service.

Since the beginning of the grant, OHCAC has assisted over 500 plus families with the LIHWAP grant.

If you are in need or know someone who is needing water assistance, please contact one of OHCAC's local Community Action Center's or 740-387-1039 and ask for the water assistance program.



Morrow Neighborhood Center

419-946-2009 x-1900

We are excited to get into the fall season. Until then, the Summer Crisis program is keeping us busy with more clients for the program than in the last couple of years, although we are not giving out as many air conditioners or fans this year. Clients are receiving assistance with their water bills using the LIHWAP program. While preparing to roll into the Winter Crisis Program, we are finishing up the CAA program, which ends next month. The OHFA program is still in full effect, which allows us to assist home owners with utilities, taxes, and home owner fees. The personal needs pantry is open and serves area residents with toiletries and household items. Individuals can call the Morrow Center on Wednesdays to request assistance. We recently extended the Wednesday hours to include 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. as well as 1 – 3 p.m. Medication lockboxes are also available. We welcome Angela Neely from the Crawford County office - she is the new Receptionist in Morrow County.

Crawford "Egner" Center
Tammy Crabtree, Center Director
419-468-5121 x-1619

Our School Supply Program was a definite success this year. Thank you Walmart for working with us again this year. Also, thank you to Fireland Federal Credit Union for the generous donation of \$500.00 toward our School Supply Program.

We are gearing up to start our Back Pack Program for the 2022/23 school year for the Galion City School children. The students can apply at school, or parents can call 419-468-5121 ext. 1619.

Cold weather is just around the corner. If you have new or gently used winter coats, hats, gloves, and/or scarves, please bring them in. We especially need children's coats.



Bits from Benefits
Bev Kuenzli, Benefits/Assist. Office Manager
740-387-1039 x-1104

Thank you all for tuning into the Annual Orientation/In Service Day on Zoom. If plans would have worked out we would have met in person, but COVID reared its ugly head and, once again, we had to Zoom It!

We learned a lot about our Policies and Procedures from Trent Grooms, some of the ins and outs of our Retirement Plan from One America representatives Colleen Baltis and Doug Thorp, really good tips for using the Anthem Insurances from Jennifer White and Stephanie Petty, and the different plans Allstate has to offer from Toni Stevens.

We were able to introduce an updated Drug Free Work Place program with Regina Bond.

Looking ahead, we'll be sending info by email in September for Formfire and getting ready for Open Enrollment by November for the coming year, 2023.

Did you know?

Labor Day **pays tribute to the contributions and achievements of the American worker** and is traditionally observed on the first Monday in September. It was created by the labor movement in the late 19th century and became a federal holiday in 1894.

November

Birthdays

Amy Huckaba	4
Shayla Walters	5
Kylie Brown	5
Amanda Siwek	9
Sarah Danals	10
Reina Riegle	14
Sherita Catchings	16
John King	17
Rose Brough	18
Laura Wixtead	25
Brenda Ramey	26
Sara Nemeth	29



Home Weatherization Assistance Program

Joseph Main
Deputy Director/Energy Coordinator
740-387-1039 x-1121

With most of our programs starting a new grant year, we are in full swing at the Energy Office. EPP and Community Connections have started strong this grant year. HWAP has been off to a strong start as well, given we have completed 1/3rd of our inspections for the year. Our sub-contractors have been doing excellent work for the EPP program. We look forward to keeping the momentum rolling through the fall!

9 Ways to prepare your home for fall:

1. Clean, or possibly replace, your gutters.

If they're clogged, you can end up with a flooded interior and damaged exterior. Clean them, and if necessary, replace them.

2. Check for drafts.

Heat loss through windows is responsible for 25-30 percent of heating energy use, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Weather-stripping is a simple cost-effective way to keep heating costs down.

3. Drain your outdoor faucets.

Drain and disconnect all garden hoses from outside spigots to prevent any water from freezing. Not doing this can result to pipes bursting.

4. Bring your outdoor furniture in.

If you don't have anywhere to store the items, you should cover them with a waterproof furniture cover.

5. Fix any cracks in your driveway.

Enough small cracks can turn into big cracks, and eventually the concrete can crumble.

6. Change your filters.

FYI: Disposable filters can be vacuumed one time before you replace it, and foam filters can just be vacuumed and not replaced.

7. Fertilize your lawn.

Applying fertilizer will prevent winter damage. Doing this will also help your lawn turn green faster in the spring.

8. Test winter equipment.

Check it all now and make your life easier later.

9. Change your batteries.

Once per year you should be checking to make sure all smoke detectors and carbon monoxide devices are working.



Safety Committee Members

740-387-1039

Bev Kuenzli	Ext. 1104
Bob Foreman	Ext. 1201
Debbie Shuster	Ext. 1109
Paula Langenderfer	Ext. 1130
Tammy Crabtree	Ext. 1619
Tracey Rector	Ext. 1313
Joseph Main	Ext. 1121

December Birthdays

Chris Jones	1
Marilyn Brumenschenkel	2
Michael White	2
Melissa Conley	5
Lisa Zahn	13
Mindy Sinclair	16
Lori McCune	18
Nedra Ernest	21
Camille Arndt	24
Jodi Lucas	24
Megan Church	27
Jammie Roberts	27
Diane Howard	30
Eric Withrow	31



Marian Clark Center
Tracey Rector, Center Director
740-383-2154 ext. 1313

As my favorite time of year approaches, we continue to serve the community with unmet needs that they may be experiencing. Currently it is cooling needs: Fans, window A/C units, central air repair and electric bill payments. Soon we will switch gears to heating needs: Furnace repair, bulk fuel, firewood, natural gas and electric payments. Where has the year gone?

We have been working with the Marion Area Chamber of Commerce to make a Resource Guide for Marion County. We try to keep it as up to date as possible. The information is given to us and we make changes, but if you have a printed version you are out of luck. We have placed a QR Code and a link, www.ohcac.org/resource-guides, on the front cover so that anyone may get to the most updated version that is located on our website: ohcac.org.



We have welcomed a new staff member — Tammy Blair has joined us to assist with client needs. Tammy is a wonderful addition to our office and will primarily be doing crisis programs, PIPP and HEAP applications.

The running joke in our office is when someone calls in and wants to talk to their case worker. “Do you know which lady you talked to? There are 10 of us.” “No, she was tall with glasses.” We are all tall with glasses!



OHCAC Mission Statement

The Ohio Heartland Community Action Commission (OHCAC) will foster and promote planning services and developmental efforts for the mobilization and utilization of resources, public and private, for coordinated attack upon conditions of poverty affecting the inhabitants of the area.

OHCAC will continuously support economic self-sufficiency. It will encourage the provisions of services, and other activities toward developing employment and economic opportunities, improving human performance, individual and group motivation, productivity, housing and bettering conditions under which people live, learn, and work.

OHCAC will solicit, contract for, receive, administer, and disburse any funds, grants, bequests, devises, and other resources for the execution and implementation of specific or general programs in carrying out its purposes.

2022 OACAA Annual Service Awards



10-Year Award (2012)
Steven Phil Adams
Joyce Branam
Richard Murphy



15-Year Award (2007)
Angela Paul
Brenda Ramey



20-Year Award (2002)
Rachel Skaggs
Stacie Stout
James Thurston



25-Year Award (1997)
Debbie Schuster



30-Year Award (1992)
Paula Langenderfer



40-Year Award (1982)
Andrew "Joe" Devany