

LOCAL

News Briefs: book bench installed at main library, new adult law enforcement training being offered at PRCTC

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A new bench resembling a book was installed at the Chillicothe & Ross Main Public Library on Friday.

The book's title reads, "Main Library Bus Stop." The pages of the book provide information about the City of Chillicothe's experience in the Bloomberg-Harvard Innovation Track, a nine-month project that used community surveys and engagement to find ways to improve public transit within the city.

As a result, streamlined fixed routes, a city-wide on-demand service and a trackless trolley.

"The Main Library allowed Transit to utilize a section of their parking area to facilitate passenger pick-up and drop-off, and place infrastructure such as the swing, shelter and this book bench!" the bench reads. "The City of Chillicothe and Chillicothe Transit System are grateful for the opportunities to partner with such amazing organizations, and to be able to provide services to the residents and visitors of this great community."

New adult law enforcement training being offered at PRCTC

Law enforcement leaders in Pickaway and Ross counties are looking forward to the opportunities that Pickaway-Ross Adult Education's Basic Peace Officer Academy will provide for their departments and communities.

The Basic Peace Officer Academy, in partnership with Ohio University Chillicothe, which will begin March 6, will be a much-needed training avenue for people interested in becoming law enforcement officers.

"As a graduate of the Southern Ohio Police Training Institute at Ohio University Chillicothe in 1996, I am excited to see a local academy back in Ross County," said Ronald Meyers, Chillicothe's chief of police.

Ross County Sheriff George W. Lavender Jr. said the academy will also save southern Ohio departments the costs associated with traveling to an out-of-town facility for training.

Cadets must meet all requirements set forth by Pickaway-Ross and the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) to enroll, graduate, qualify for the state certification exam and, ultimately, become certified as a peace officer in Ohio.

Terri Mikesh, Law Enforcement programming coordinator and OPOTC school commander, said the academy will provide cadets with the fundamentals necessary for seeking certification and employment as a peace officer in Ohio. The academy is conducted in strict compliance to all rules and regulations prescribed by the OPOTC and is accredited by the Council on Occupational Education.

"Our goal for cadets is to provide the best foundation training we can for aspiring peace officers to become certified, enter the workforce, and safely protect and serve citizens of our communities with our area law enforcement agencies," Mikesh said.

Pickaway County Sheriff Matthew Hafey said certified trained officers are in demand.

"We are unable to hire anyone for a road position who does not possess a peace officer certificate from OPOTC," he said.

"We can hire them to the jail as a corrections officer, but that limits their ability to further develop in their career."

The Basic Peace Officer Academy will begin March 6, with a mandatory orientation session from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. March 2 at 1410 Industrial Drive, Chillicothe.

“It will be a huge benefit for local people who want to attend (a) police academy,” Hafey said.

Another goal Mikesh has is for the program to be designated an Ohio Attorney General’s Office STAR Academy. This designation can be applied for after the academy’s first year and is awarded to academies that exceed the required OPOTC curriculum (740 hours) to produce graduates who are better prepared to enter the workforce.

“With the support of our instructors — a diverse group representing law enforcement agencies throughout our region — and the OUC partnership, I’m confident the academy will be a success,” said Carrie Fife, Adult Education director