

Cranberrytoday

WINTER 2012



Soaring Road Maintenance Costs Drive 2012 Budget Property Tax Increase

Cranberry Township's property taxes will be going up in 2012, the first such increase since 2004. The average increase for a home worth \$200,000 will be about \$64 a year. You can blame the rising cost of roadwork for most of it.

Between 1997 and 2005, the cost of periodically repaving Cranberry roads remained fairly constant – between \$50,000 and \$60,000 a mile. During that time, revenue from the Township's share of state gasoline tax nearly covered it. But in 2006, paving costs began a steep climb, reaching more than \$102,000 a mile by 2011, while income from the state's liquid fuels tax to pay for it remained flat.

Over the past five years, the gap between the cost of repaving and the gas tax revenues to cover those

costs, has been made up by dipping into the Township's General Fund and its rainy day reserve fund. But by last year, it became clear that siphoning cash from those sources was not a sustainable solution and that the state wasn't likely to step in and close that gap anytime soon.

Then, late last year, the state Transportation Advisory Committee issued its final report on the financial needs of local governments for roads and bridges, confirming a pattern which, by then, had already become clear. What it said, in effect, was that if the Township were to continue its strategy of high-level road maintenance, it would have to find ways of paying for that maintenance itself. The disparity between the need and the available funds was simply too great, the report continued, and while the state should consider providing a bit more help, it was up to local officials to find the resources for most of it.

So starting this year, the Township changed the structure of its budget. Funds for road equipment and maintenance will now be segregated

from other expenses and financed by a dedicated 0.85 mil tax on real estate. A companion change, which removes expenses dedicated to financing Township buildings from the General Fund and provides them instead with their own 1.0 mil property tax, would free additional funds for use in maintaining Cranberry's transportation system.

Two other components of property tax will also see modest increases. The Cranberry Public Library, which has seen its state funds decline

If the Township is to continue its strategy of high-level road maintenance, it has to find ways of paying for that maintenance itself.

50 percent since 2007, will have a 0.25 mil tax increase to help make up the shortfall, and the Cranberry Township Volunteer Fire Company will also have an additional 0.25 mil increase. Taxes to finance Cranberry's

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Cranberry's Chinese Sister City Welcomes A Township Envoy

Late last summer, after two years of planning, working and waiting, Cranberry Township met its Chinese sister – face-to-face.

The meeting, between Cranberry resident Kim Perez and the Mayor of Cranberry's Sister City – Haiyang, in Shandong Province, China – took place September 19 in the Chinese coastal resort city. It was also attended by various Westinghouse executives, including Kim Perez's husband Ric, as well as by Haiyang Deputy Mayor Li Yuanhui. Ms. Perez chairs the Cranberry Sister Cities Association's Haiyang Focus Committee and represented the association at their meeting.

Haiyang – a city of 690,000 on the Yellow Sea – is where two nuclear power plants designed by Westinghouse are now being built and where Westinghouse maintains a field office overseeing plant construction. It is also the site of the 2012 Asian Beach Games – a near-Olympic scale international competition – and preparations for its various athletic venues are well underway.

Ms. Perez interpreted their 4 hour meeting, luncheon and tour as a gracious show of hospitality by

Haiyang's leaders. It was the culmination of an effort, begun several years earlier, with a letter sent to Cranberry officials by Haiyang Mayor Jiang Shili in 2009 proposing the formation of a Sister City relationship. At the time, however, there was no organization in Cranberry positioned to accept the invitation, and forming a Cranberry Township Sister Cities Association took a while to get off the ground.

Finally in 2010, with its own Association now in place, Cranberry reciprocated to the Mayor's invitation with a gift – a beveled glass plaque with logos of the two communities and inscriptions in both English and Chinese. The gift packet also included descriptive information about the Township. But it mysteriously disappeared before ever reaching its intended recipient; as a result, no one heard back from the Mayor.

Then early last year, Lee Fang, a Westinghouse Human Resources professional and native of Taiwan who specializes in welcoming guest engineers from China to Cranberry, met a visiting engineer from Haiyang. He, in turn, was able to establish direct communication with the Mayor's office. Then last summer, at a regular

meeting of the Cranberry organization, Kim Perez mentioned that she and her husband were planning a trip to



“China is slow to warm to strangers, but this meeting is really a great start.”

Shanghai and Beijing, and that they would be available to make a side trip to Haiyang. Then things began falling into place.

Ms. Fang was able to contact the Mayor's office directly. Details of a meeting were worked out. A replica of the original glass plaque was purchased. A leather-bound binder of photos and news releases about the Cranberry Sister Cities Association was compiled. Talking points were developed. Schedules were adjusted to accommodate the visit. And on September 13, the meeting took place.

“China is slow to warm to strangers, so this is only the beginning,” Ms. Fang cautioned. “As far as what can develop down the road, it's all up to the two cities. But this meeting is really a great start.” ~

Sisterhood. Cranberry Sister Cities Association member Kim Perez greets Mayor Jiang Shili of Haiyang, China, Cranberry's counterpart city. Ms. Perez's husband, Ric Perez, is a Westinghouse executive involved in overseeing the company's construction of power plants there. Her September visit was the first face-to-face meeting of the two sister cities.



Is Cranberry Leading The Nation Out Of Recession?

It's no secret that job growth has been anemic across most of the nation over the past few years, and Pennsylvania is no exception. However, according to a recent federal report, the Pittsburgh area, with a 7.0 percent unemployment rate, has fared better than most. In fact, it was responsible for adding 14 percent – one out of every seven – of the jobs gained in the entire country.

Within the metro Pittsburgh area, Butler County, which enjoyed a robust increase in employment, was identified as the nation's sixth fastest job growth market. And in Cranberry Township, where almost all of that growth took place, new employment has been huge, resulting in a local unemployment rate of just 5.3 percent.

Those results have helped to uplift the entire Southwestern Pennsylvania economy and, by extension, helped to notch a noticeable recent decline in joblessness nationwide.

Eight years ago, employment in the Township totaled 10,500. In 2011 it hit 18,500 – a remarkably high level for a community of just 28,000. And projections are for it to reach 32,000 by 2030. The findings confirm information reported earlier by several subscription data sources that Cranberry uses to track its economic indicators.

Those sources revealed a stunning 92 percent increase in job growth in Cranberry since 2002. Among the leading job sectors: professional, scientific and technical services; retail trade; manufacturing; healthcare, and wholesale trade. Cranberry's weekday population now exceeds its nighttime residential population by a large margin.

That employment growth has been accompanied by a bonanza in

commercial development, with new offices, hotels, and retail stores – many constructed in the past year alone.

Between 2000 and 2011, new commercial construction permits in the Township authorized almost four million square feet of office, retail, hotel, industrial and restaurant space. And from 2001 to 2010, the value of residential construction in Cranberry exceeded \$414 million.

In addition to conventional subdivisions, Township building records for that period include permits for apartments, traditional neighborhood developments, townhomes and retirement communities.

Despite its rapid development, however, approximately 4,000 acres of Cranberry's 14,800 acre area is still considered developable land. So there remains considerable room for growth and for continuing to develop in a sustainable manner.

All three of those key economic indicators – jobs, commercial construction, and new housing – are closely related: new employment drives the need for new work space, and new employees require new homes.

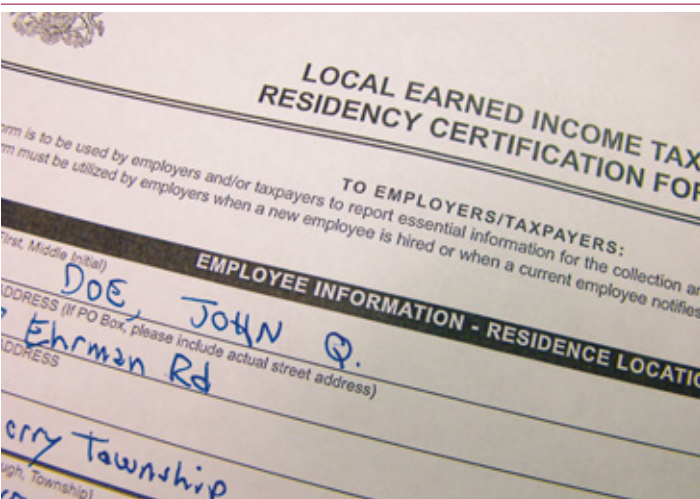
Why all the growth? Each of the Township's major employers – Westinghouse Electric, Mine Safety Appliances, Alcoa, Verizon, UPMC, and the Manheim Pittsburgh Auto Auction



“In Cranberry, practically everything we do is the result of creative public-private partnerships. And the numbers confirm that it's working.”

– cite their own reasons for locating or expanding in Cranberry. But one of the Township's longest-serving Supervisors has a theory.

“Local economic health is heavily influenced by local laws, local taxes, local policies, and local investment,” according to Township Supervisor Dick Hadley, who has worked closely with municipal government associations for more than a decade. “Every locality is different. But in Cranberry, practically everything we do is the result of creative public-private partnerships. It's a novel approach to local governance, at least for this part of the country. And the numbers confirm that it's working.” ~



File your form. Local income tax collection has changed throughout Pennsylvania, although it will be less disruptive here than in many other Commonwealth communities. A state law which took effect January 1 requires employees to file a form with their employer showing where they live. That information will be used to determine how the 1 percent earned income tax that's withheld from their paychecks will be distributed. Employers will need to collect that data from their employees, but in Cranberry, they'll continue working with Berkheimer Tax Administrator – the same organization which has collected income tax from Cranberry employees for years. Most other communities will have new tax collectors. More information is available on the Township website.

Township Business Services Consolidated Into Cranberry Business Hub

Until lately, if you were the owner or manager of a business which aspired to set up shop in Cranberry, working with the Township government was a multi-step affair. On the one hand, you would meet with staff members from the various planning-related services Cranberry offered – services designed to promote economic development, help employees commute, connect business service providers, and aid companies in marketing themselves successfully in the Cranberry area.

“The Business Hub is to be the central point of contact for businesses. That’s how we organize all our information and requests.”

Then, on the other side, there were the Township land development specialists who would work with a company’s architects, builders and developers to interpret Cranberry’s zoning ordinances, its signage ordinance, its building requirements, its traffic circulation needs, and their associated fee schedules. And, at least in the eyes of some business

proprietors, the two sets of services seemed to operate without reference to one another.

That’s about to change. The Cranberry Business Hub, a re-organization of the way the Township delivers services to its business community, is on the brink of being rolled out – both as a new approach to working with business clients and as a specialized presence on the Internet.

“The Business Hub is to be the central point of contact for businesses,” according to Cranberry’s Chief Strategic Planning Officer, John Trant, Jr. “That’s how we organize all our information and requests from businesses – anything from sign ordinance requests, to new land development requests, to expansion requests.

“It’s a centralized system for having a single point of contact for business clients. No matter who on staff has that initial contact, we all communicate in a way to shepherd that business through the process of expansion, or relocation, or a sign ordinance issue,” Trant explained. “The applicant doesn’t get handed off to other



CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP
business hub

people. It’s about being business-friendly and providing a single point of contact that can help to streamline any Township process.”

A special-purpose business website, linked to the Township’s primary site, will include information reflecting all aspects of economic development, business location, business growth, and expansion. The online Business Hub will include the Business List – a searchable, map-able online database of all 800-plus businesses in Cranberry.

“The Business Hub brings all of Cranberry’s economic development and land development under one roof,” he said. “This will be a marketing function in terms of economic development, business attraction and retention. But it will also include services related to getting a sign permit and the nuts and bolts of building out a tenant space.” ~

In Cranberry Business Park, There's No End To The Speculation

Some commercial buildings – supermarkets, big box stores and hotels, as well as a few major corporate buildings like the Westinghouse Cranberry Woods headquarters – are built to order. Others are built on speculation – in the hope that prospects will find the space to their liking and decide to move in.

Cranberry Business Park, a 180-acre office complex serving nearly 3,000 employees in the geographic heart of Cranberry, is among the latter. None of the seven buildings put up by Chaska Property Advisers, the Park's development arm, had tenants before they were begun. So its design is deliberately flexible – allowing tenants to carve out just the right amount of space for their own immediate needs.

The park is built on land defined as SP-1 – Special Growth zoning – Cranberry's designation for land that permits certain types of business uses, like office space, while barring others, such as food processing or manufacturing. But it's a bit off the beaten path, along Unionville Road, and it can't be seen from any of the Township's major thoroughfares.

Traco, whose original family owners assembled most of the land decades ago, is a neighbor on the Park's southernmost end. Its eastern boundary lies immediately behind the screen of woods that includes Community Park Nature Trail. And its list of tenants contains an impressive roster of technology, equipment, software, pharmacy, engineering, energy, financial and logistics companies, including some which are the American outposts of larger overseas parent corporations.

It also has a distinctly low-rise suburban character. Point Breeze resident Richard Donley is a leading partner in the Business Park and, for the past ten years or so, has

developed it around a clearly-defined vision of what companies want in the 21st century. He approaches that task with a remarkably high level of confidence, using his own money along with his partners' funds to finance buildings entirely on speculation that his vision is correct. "I don't want to build multi-story offices," he asserts.

"We're not a bunch of tall buildings; that's why people leave the city."

"We're not a bunch of tall buildings; that's why people leave the city. And besides, I don't like them, they're harder to manage, and they don't promote the campus-type environment we've tried to create here," he said.

"The flex space in this park is over 80 percent office; only 20 percent is for storage or R&D. We're different than other business parks. If you look at what most people call 'flex space,' it's the opposite: they're 80 percent storage and 20 percent office. Here, every tenant has their own entrance. They control their own security. The utilities are individually metered. They control their own restrooms.

"We built a much more expensive shell than our competitors for flex space. It's brick and glass and we built lots of parking – five spots per thousand square feet instead of three, like most flex buildings do. That parking ratio has allowed the Park to attract companies like Sage Software, Fidelity Information Services,

Coventry Health Care, Tollgrade, Pittsburgh Logistics, and Fidelity Information Services – companies which are 100 percent office – into Cranberry Township and the Park."

That arrangement also gives Donley the ability to relocate growing companies within the Business Park, and to do so with minimal disruption. "Real estate should be the least important part of any tenant's day," he reflected. "The tenant shouldn't have to worry about changing light bulbs or mowing the grass or anything else. The tenant should focus on their business. The important thing is to make sure they're comfortable, that the environment's right for them, and that they know that if their business grows, somebody's here who can take care of them. That's why, so far, we've never lost a tenant."

In the end, though, what makes any business park succeed has less to do with its architecture than its location, and Cranberry has been a great location, according to Donley. "The infrastructure and the community life Cranberry has to offer is really a great package," he reflected. "Good, solid planning, forward thinking, traffic management; Cranberry Township

really stands out. We don't always agree on everything, but they've done a great job in managing this growth. It's been incredible."



Overview. Richard Donley, along with several co-investors, built Cranberry Business Park and contemplates adding two more flex-space buildings on its remaining undeveloped sites.



Reflecting On Taxes

by Dave Root, Supervisor, Cranberry Township

When you have to pay for things out of pocket, it forces you to think about your priorities. The

same is true for governments.

Whenever I hear the word “taxes,” I can’t help but think of the Ray Stevens song “If Ten Percent is Good Enough for Jesus (It Ought to be Good Enough for Uncle Sam).” But, most of us pay far more than that with federal, state, county and school district taxes. On top of this, we pay fees for services such as water, sewage and trash.

The general concept of taxation is for government to provide services for the “common good.” The rub of this is what is the “common good?” Government is a net consumer. It doesn’t create wealth like a business, but uses taxes, and fees, to pay for what your elected leaders set as priorities. Rarely does government shrink or reduce taxes. The 1936 Johnstown flood tax is still on liquor sales.

There will never be enough money to do all the things everyone would like to do in our community.

Frankly, there will never be enough money to do all the things everyone would like to do in our community.

Cranberry’s three main sources of tax revenue are transfers from other government sources, (federal, state

and county), Act 511 taxes, and property taxes.

Besides money for specific projects in the form of grants, such as the recent Freedom Road upgrade, the most notable transfer of money to Cranberry is from the state liquid fuels tax. The gas tax is a “use tax” in that only people who use gas pay it.

Currently the state collects about 31 cents per gallon of gas purchased in Pennsylvania (note that government entities are exempt from it). Then it doles this out to communities based on the length of local roads and the population. Even though our community has grown, the amount we get has been decreasing. There is just less gas tax revenue to share.

However, the cost for road repairs has gone up due to material and having to pay higher labor under the prevailing wage law. Cranberry is about \$400,000 short annually from what we

need, and must use money from our General Fund for the difference.

Act 511 taxes include Earned Income

Tax, real estate Transfer tax, business tax, and the \$52 per person service tax. This brings in 66 percent of our total revenue. EIT is considered a

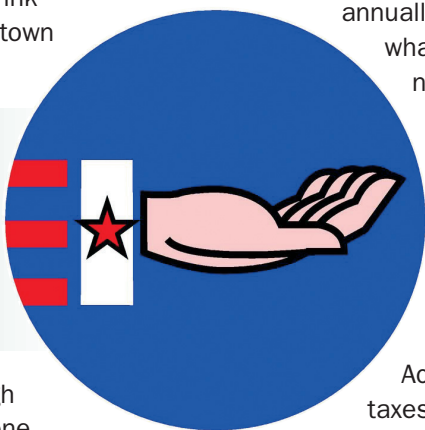
“progressive” tax in that those with more income pay more. Cranberry is lucky in that being a young and growing community most residents work and pay EIT. Older communities with more retirees rely more on other taxes.

Last is property taxes. These bring in about 21 percent of our revenue. They are considered regressive in that those who are least able, pay a higher percentage of their income for these. Please realize that majority of these taxes go to the school district. Some say that property taxes really mean that you never own your house but that you get to rent it from government.

So, what to do about a budget shortfall? We can either raise taxes or find places to cut government. Most, I believe, consider fire, police and road maintenance essential services and won’t want those cut (although some slight saving may be found here too). These take up about 60 percent of our township expenses. Another 10 percent goes to bond payments for infrastructure upgrades, parks and such.

This leaves about 30 percent of our expenses to play with, which includes things such as our library, recreation programs, park maintenance, and future planning initiatives. We also have planned capital projects such as expanding the teen/senior center. Not all will agree on what is a priority, and hence the problem.

We can’t do everything and would love to hear from you on what you think is important for our Township. ~



You can reach **Dave Root** by email at dave.root@cranberrytownship.org

Decisions, Decisions...

SV's new transportation director finds poetry in weather



By Jim Pearson, Director of Transportation, Seneca Valley School District

The winter season is upon us. When the snow begins to fall, I am often reminded of the poem by Robert Frost, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." To me, the poem reminds me to take time and enjoy the beauty of nature in our otherwise hectic lives. It would be nice to be able to stop, "To watch his woods fill up with snow." But as the new transportation director for the Seneca Valley School District, my job is to make sure the snow, ice, and wind do not cause hazardous conditions impeding the progress of our school buses to deliver students to our schools.

My name is Jim Pearson and this will be my first year driving the roads at 4:00 AM in the Seneca Valley School District. As I drive, I will be in contact with the roadmasters in each of the townships that make up the 100 square miles of the Seneca Valley School District. I will talk to the bus garage managers, who are also driving the roads, and transportation directors in districts that border Seneca Valley. The decision is not an easy one to make, each of us realize our decision will affect the lives of all the families we serve. A two-hour delay needs to be decided by 5:45 AM and a cancellation needs to be decided by 7:00 AM. Early dismissals will be decided by 11:00 AM. I strongly urge parents and guardians to make contingency plans regarding child care alternatives now. Please make sure you are signed up to receive the AlertNow parent notification system. Also, make sure all your emergency phone information is updated with the district.

It takes the cooperation of many people to keep the district running smoothly. This cooperation includes the need for people to understand that if roads are clear in Cranberry Township, they could be treacherous in Lancaster or Forward Townships. I urge people to travel the rural roads in the Seneca Valley School District for two reasons. One, is to appreciate the beauty of our district. Two, is to understand how wide of an area our district covers.

I am enjoying my transition into the position of transportation director. Prior to joining the Seneca Valley family, I was an assistant principal in the Deer Lakes School District and Hampton Township School District. Although some of my previous experience overlaps into my new position, I am extremely grateful to my predecessor, Kevin Prady, for being a true mentor by sharing his knowledge of 23 years serving the Seneca Valley School District. I am also thankful to Jim Mings and Pete Giglione who were my teachers during my training to receive my commercial driver's license. The knowledge and experience I received during the CDL training has help me understand the professional expectations of our school bus drivers. I am also grateful to have a professional secretary, Christine Thayer-Miller, who has been a long-

time resident of the Seneca Valley School District. Suffice to say, I have been blessed to work with so many nice, helpful, and professional people on a daily basis in the Seneca Valley School District.

So when the snow does start to fall and temperatures drop, please keep this thought in mind. There are many qualified people collaborating throughout the district to make the right decision in the best interests for the children. I do wish a safe and healthy winter season to all the families we serve in the Seneca Valley School District. If you have time, read the poem by Robert Frost the next time the woods fill up with snow. Slow down and drive safe because we all have promises to keep. And I have miles to go before I sleep and miles to go before I sleep.



...and miles to go
before I sleep...

Bait And Switch

Displaced fish taken in by Cranberry



For several years, visitors to Graham Park watched as a graceful pond began taking shape near the parking area of its baseball campus. Back in October, the pond's rim was lined with stone, an aerator was installed to circulate its water, and ambitious plans were set in motion for a series of additional enhancements, including a stone plaza and marker celebrating the centennial of Scouting in America. But what most people are looking forward to is its eventual use as a fishing hole.

At about that same time, Hereford Manor Lakes – two man-made bodies of water near the Zelienople Airport – were experiencing a problem. The earthen dams holding back the lakes, which had been built as part of a strip mining operation there decades ago, were starting to weaken. If either one were to fail, water surging from the 45-acre lakes would wreak havoc on homes, businesses, and farms downstream. And, of course, its recreational use as a fishing attraction would come to an abrupt end.

Local residents and fishing enthusiasts all around the region rallied to

the lakes' defense. A "Save Hereford Manor" campaign was started. Funds were raised. Elected officials were lobbied. And eventually, the State Fish & Boat Commission, which owns the lake and is responsible for its safety, was persuaded to repair the dams.

But what about the fish who had made the Lakes their home for all these years? That question was very much on the mind of the Commission, and it came just at the point when construction of Cranberry's new fishing pond was essentially complete. As a result, transferring a portion of the Hereford Manor Lakes fish population to Cranberry seemed like a good deal for everyone concerned.

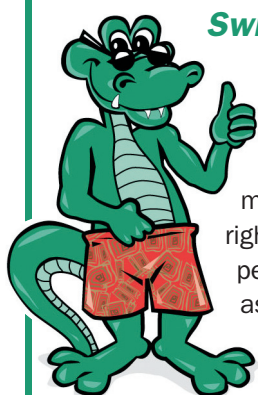
So, late one fall night, a special tank truck carrying 450 bluegill and 30 largemouth bass backed up to the Cranberry pond and released its newly netted catch from Hereford Manor Lakes. Once in the water, they were joined by thousands of minnows which had been purchased as feed for the larger fish until the pond's ecosystem stabilized.

But like any new arrivals to Cranberry, the fish need some private time to



The fish need some private time to make themselves at home before their public debut. So the Township imposed a fishing moratorium until this fall.

make themselves at home before their public debut. So the Township imposed a fishing moratorium until this fall to enable its new aquatic residents to acclimate, nest, and breed in the pond. By then, depending on how fundraising goes, it may be just in time for the opening of Scout Centennial Plaza. ~



Swim cheap(er)

Cranberry's Community Waterpark doesn't open until May 26, but season-long discounts on membership are available right now. The discount period, with prices as much as 30 percent below the full in-season membership rates, is open until the end of January. For the

full schedule of rates, an explanation of member benefits, and to register online, go to www.cranberrytownship.org/waterpark.

Welcome the dragon. The Chinese New Year is the longest and most important celebration in the Chinese lunar calendar. This year, for the first time, Cranberry's Sister Cities Association will be marking the arrival of the year 4710 – the year of the dragon – at a family-friendly gathering in the Regional Learning

Alliance building in Cranberry Woods on Saturday, January 21, from 1:00 until 3:00 PM. The celebration will include Chinese story time, a traditional Chinese dance performance, Chinese arts and crafts, a lesson in Chinese language, giveaways and samples of Chinese cuisine. Register online by January 7 to participate in the celebration through the Township's Parks & Recreation program for just \$15 per family.



It's Not Easy Being Green

Last summer was rough on local golfers – especially when they'd get to the putting greens. A combination of bacteria and root rot, prompted by heavy spring rains and reinforced by hot summer nights, had weakened the bent grass used in planting the heavily manicured greens, leaving a bumpy surface which deflected balls in unexpected directions as they rolled from putter to pin.

The problem affected golfers throughout the area, including those playing the region's most prestigious links. While their maintenance crews struggled to fight back, most ended up losing entire greens, often for weeks at a time, sometimes improvising with temporary putting greens.

Cranberry Highlands didn't escape the blight either. Holes 4, 12, 13 and 15 were noticeably rough, although all 18 holes in the course remained open throughout the season. And by late summer, each of the greens had completely recovered. Their recovery,

however, required some major intervention.

In essence, that effort involved keeping the greens dry enough to force their grass roots down 6 or 8 inches, instead of letting them spread out near the surface where moisture had accumulated. As a course designed and built with USGA sand-based drainage greens right from the get-go, Cranberry Highlands already had the advantage of faster-draining greens than those in many older courses. As a result, they were better able to take the punishment of daily use. But sand drainage alone wasn't enough; without sunny, dry weather, the greens would continue staying moist. Their roots would remain shallow and susceptible to damage and disease.

"To help dry them out, we went in and vented the greens," Cranberry Highlands Golf Course Superintendent Dave Barber explained. "We went out multiple times and vented them with 5mm holes, which are about the size of a pencil. The holes go four inches deep. They don't disrupt elite play, but they allow the greens to dry out a lot faster.

Syringing treatments – light injections of water administered with pinpoint precision – as well as the careful application



A combination of bacteria and root rot had weakened the bent grass. Their recovery required some major intervention.

of fungicide, calcium, and potassium nitrate – also played important roles.

"Then we raised the mowing height a little – by about five one thousandths of an inch – so that we weren't putting the grass under as much stress. And we did some rolling to compensate for raising the higher mowing level – which came to about an eighth of an inch altogether. But you can still get speed out of the greens at that height," he said.

"The important thing to understand is that we're always shooting for premium conditions on the golf course, and we were able to manage the water." ~



CRANBERRY HIGHLANDS golf course

Why not meet here?

- Picturesque view of the golf course
- Food and beverage packages
- Accommodates 20-150 guests
- AV capabilities
- Free Wi-Fi access
- Flexible seating




Contact us about your next **BUSINESS MEETING** or any special event!

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Cranberry Twp. PA
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cranberryhighlands.com

Be there or be square. A public meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, January 24, in Council Chambers, to introduce Cranberry's Recreation and Open Space Plan project and obtain residents' input. Your help is needed. Attend and help shape the future of Cranberry's recreation facilities and open spaces.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

JAN

Registration may be required for some programs. For more information, call:

* Cranberry Library 724-776-9100

* Cranberry Highlands 724-776-7372

* Cranberry Customer Service 724-776-4806

* Seniors for Safe Driving 1-800-559-4880

† Parks and Recreation 724-776-4806 ext. 1129

SUN 1NEW YEAR'S DAY		MON 2Municipal Ctr and Library Closed		TUES 34 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Board of Supervisors Organizational Mtg Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		WED 4Family Pajama Time Library, 6:30pm Chapter Book Club Grades 1–3, Library, 7:30pm			
THURS 54 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Discussion Group Library, 10am Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm		FRI 6		SAT 7Elks Hoop Shoot Gym, 1–4pm		SUN 8		MON 9First Editions Book Group What the Dog Saw by Gladwell, Library, 7pm Planning Advisory Commission Regular Mtg Municipal Ctr, 7pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm	
TUES 104 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Teen Book Club Library, 4pm Friends Mtg Library, 7pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		WED 11AGH Sportszone Speaker Series: ACL Injury Prevention, Darren Frank, MD, Municipal Ctr, 7–8:30pm Family Pajama Time Library, 7pm Chapter Book Club Grades 1–3, Library, 7:30pm		THURS 124 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Senior Center Birthday Party Municipal Ctr, Senior/Teen Ctr, 9:30am Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm					
FRI 13		SAT 14		SUN 15Art Reception Allegheny Highlands Botanical Art Society, Library, 1pm		MON 16MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY Connection Collection – tree pick up through 1/20 on regular collection days Zoning Hearing Board Mtg (If needed) Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 7:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		TUES 174 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8-10pm	
WED 18Books & Bagels Discussion Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand, Library, 10am UPMC Wellness Series: Municipal Ctr, Sr/Teen Ctr, 12:30pm Stephanie Plum Party Trivia contests/snacks, Library, 7pm Family Pajama Time Library, 7pm Chapter Book Club Grades 1–3, Library, 7:30pm		THURS 194 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8-10pm		FRI 20Locked in Library Teen Movies 7-11:30pm		SAT 21Chinese New Year Celebration Regional Learning Alliance 1-3pm		SUN 22	
MON 23Kickoff Winter Reading Program Between the Covers, Library, 7pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		TUES 244 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Grocerygame.com Library, 7pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8-10pm Recreation & Open Space Public Mtg Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 7-8:30pm		WED 25Family Pajama Time Library, 7pm Chapter Book Club Grades 1–3, Library, 7:30pm		THURS 264 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Board of Supervisors Mtg Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8-10pm			
FRI 27Not Just Ballroom Dance – Viennese Waltz, Gymnasium, 7–11pm		SAT 28Cookbook Club Library, 12–2pm		SUN 29		MON 3020 & 30 Somethings Book Club Sarah’s Key by Tatiana deRosnay, Library, 7pm Planning Advisory Commission Work Session Municipal Ctr, 5:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		TUES 31Last Day for Early Bird II Waterpark membership discount 4th Qtr Earned Income Tax filing 4 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♫ Library, 11am or 1pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8-10pm	

FEB

Registration may be required for some programs. For more information, call:

☎ Cranberry Library 724-776-9100

☎ Cranberry Highlands 724-776-7372

* Cranberry Customer Service 724-776-4806

☎ Seniors for Safe Driving 1-800-559-4880

† Parks and Recreation 724-776-4806 ext. 1129

WED 1 2012 Parks Shelter Reservations Begin Star Wars LEGO Program ♣ Library, 4pm Family Pajama Time Library, 7pm		THURS 2 Ground Hog Day Discussion Group Library, 10am 4 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm Board of Supervisors Mtg Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm		FRI 3		SAT 4	
SUN 5		MON 6 AARP Tax Preparations Library, 10am–2pm Planning Advisory Commission Regular Mtg Municipal Ctr, 7pm First Editions Book Discussion Clara and Mr Tiffany by Susan Vreeland, Library, 7pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		TUES 7 Valentine Booksale Library thru 2/14 4 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		WED 8 Valentine Booksale Library thru 2/14 Family Pajama Time Library, 7pm	
THURS 9 Valentine Booksale Library thru 2/14 Senior Center Birthday Party Municipal Ctr, Senior/Teen Ctr, 9:30am 4 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm		FRI 10 Valentine Booksale Library thru 2/14		SAT 11 Valentine Booksale Library thru 2/14		SUN 12 Lincoln’s Birthday Valentine Booksale Library thru 2/14	
MON 13 Valentine Booksale Library thru 2/14 AARP Tax Preparations Library, 10am–2pm Teen Valentine’s Day Program: Love is In the Air ♣ Library, 4–5:30pm Zoning Hearing Board Mtg (if needed) Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 7:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		TUES 14 Valentine’s Day Valentine Booksale Library Infant Family Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm Teen Book Club Library, 4pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		WED 15 Books & Bagels Discussion Those Who Save Us by Jenna Blum, Library, 10am UPMC Wellness Series Senior/Teen Ctr, 12:30pm 2 & 3 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 7pm			
THURS 16 2 & 3 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm		FRI 17		SAT 18		SUN 19	
MON 20 PRESIDENT’S DAY Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		TUES 21 Infant Family Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm					
WED 22 ASH WEDNESDAY WASHINGTON’S BIRTHDAY 2 & 3 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 7pm		THURS 23 2 & 3 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am Board of Supervisors Mtg Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 6:30pm Oscar Party Library, 7pm Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm		FRI 24 Not Just Ballroom Dance – Tango, Gymnasium, 7–11pm		SAT 25 Cookbook Club Library, 12–2pm	
SUN 26		MON 27 AARP Tax Preparations Library, 10am–2pm 20 & 30 Somethings Book Club Room by Emma Donoghue, Library, 7pm Planning Advisory Commission Work Session Municipal Ctr, 5:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		TUES 28 Infant Family Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		WED 29 2 & 3 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 7pm	

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MAR

Registration may be required for some programs. For more information, call:

* Cranberry Library 724-776-9100

* Cranberry Customer Service 724-776-4806

† Parks and Recreation 724-776-4806 ext. 1129

* Cranberry Highlands 724-776-7372

↔ Seniors for Safe Driving 1-800-559-4880

THURS 1 Photography Display – Mary Beth Aiello Library thru 3/31 Discussion Group Library, 10am 2 & 3 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am Board of Supervisors Mtg Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm		FRI 2		SAT 3		SUN 4		MON 5 Planning Advisory Commission Regular Mtg Municipal Ctr, 7pm First Editions Book Discussion Heretics Daughter by Kathleen Kent, Library, 7pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm	
TUES 6 Infant Family Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm			WED 7 2 & 3 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 7pm			THURS 8 Senior Center Birthday Party Municipal Ctr, Senior/Teen Ctr, 9:30am 2 & 3 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm			
FRI 9	SAT 10	SUN 11 Daylight Savings Time Begins	MON 12 AARP Tax Preparations Library, 10am–2pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm			TUES 13 Teen Book Club Library, 4pm Staying Sharp – Alzheimer Prevention St. John’s Rosecrest, Library, 7pm AGH Sportszone Speaker Series: Asthma, David Skoner, MD, Municipal Ctr, 7–8:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm			
WED 14	THURS 15 Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm	FRI 16	SAT 17 St. Patrick’s Day	SUN 18		MON 19 Teen Program: Hunger Games @ Cranberry Public Library ♣ Library, 4:30–6pm Zoning Hearing Board Mtg (if needed) Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 7:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm			
TUES 20 First Day of Spring Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		WED 21 Books & Bagels Discussion The Bookseller of Kabul by Asne Seierstad, Library, 10am UPMC Wellness Series Senior/Teen Ctr, 12:30pm		THURS 22 Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm		FRI 23 Not Just Ballroom Dance – Bolero, Gymnasium, 7–11pm		SAT 24	
SUN 25 Morning with Mr. Bunny † Municipal Ctr, Senior/Teen Ctr, 10am–12pm		MON 26 20 & 30 Somethings Book Club Bringing Down the House by Bob Mezrich, Library, 7pm Planning Advisory Commission Work Session Municipal Ctr, 5:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm			TUES 27 4 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm River Cruising Tracy Gyr, Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+), 8–10pm		WED 28 Family Pajama Time Library, 7pm		
THURS 29 4 & 5 Year Old Storytime ♣ Library, 11am or 1pm Board of Supervisors Mtg Municipal Ctr, Council Chambers, 6:30pm Excursions & Destinations Tracy Gyr, Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (30+), 8–10pm				FRI 30		SAT 31 Summer Park & Recreation Program Registration Begins † Furry Friend Easter Egg Hunt † Dog Park, 10am–12pm			



Firefighter Profile: Gaining Altitude: Sean Hayden's High-Flying Career Is Taking Off

Firefighter Sean Hayden is out of town a lot. On a typical weekday, he's likely to be in Cleveland, St. Louis, Nashville, Houston and Jacksonville – all on the same day. That makes it hard for him to respond to fire calls from Butler 911. But as a pilot for Express Jet – a regional carrier that contracts with Continental and United Airlines to provide service on its 50-passenger Embraer-145 jet liners – moving around quickly is simply part of the job.

On the other hand, there are also times off – anywhere from 12 to 19 days each month – which allow Hayden to be available during daylight hours, when mobilizing volunteer fire crews is typically hardest. In fact, showing up when he's needed has always been a priority for Hayden, a lifelong Cranberry resident and holder of the Eagle Scout badge – the highest rank available in scouting. Even when he was a student at Kent State University, where he majored in flight technology, Hayden made it a priority to drive the 90 miles each way for weekly meetings with his hometown Fire Company.

But what may be most remarkable is that he had achieved all of this – his commercial pilot licensure, his academic credentials, his flight ratings, his scouting accomplishments, multiple firefighting certifications, and nine

years with the Fire Company – by the tender age of just 23.

"I joined the fire company when I was 14 years old," he explained. "That was in January, 2003. At the time, you could join the Fire Company's Junior Firefighter program at 14. So I spent four years as a Junior Firefighter, training. When I was 16, I started going on calls.

"I had done all of the Essentials classroom work, as well as the 24-hour Hazardous Materials course, while I was still in high school," he pointed out. "Then when I turned 18, I just had to take a weekend-long structure burn class, where you go inside a burning building for the first time. Once I did that, I completed my Essentials course and became fully certified as an interior firefighter."

Hayden's interest in aviation has been a lifelong pursuit, inspired by his dad, who is also a commercial pilot. "I actually got my private pilot's license while I was in high school here," he said. "I took lessons out at the Butler County airport. So I went to college already having my private pilot's license in hand. Then as part of my college classes, I got my instrument rating, my commercial pilot's license, multi-engine rating, and then became a flight instructor for single-engine, multi-engine, and instrument flying.

"There are many similarities between the fire service and flying, such as working as a team member, leadership, and resource management," he reflected. "Although the act of putting out a fire and flying an airplane are very different, you need the same



skills to complete the tasks, so there's a lot of carryover between the two.

"But in the fire service, no two calls are the same. There's always something different, something unknown about every call you go on, every situation you find. And it's enjoyable to try and work out a solution to mitigate the problem."

That problem-solving experience also heightens your awareness of the world around you. "One of the biggest eye-openers for me has been how crazy people are as drivers," Hayden observed. "One of the scariest things is responding to calls on I-79 or the Turnpike. People are driving so fast and not looking where they're going, and you're there, trying to work on a car or whatever, and you have people flying past you at 60 or 70 miles an hour, just a couple feet away."

Up in the sky, though, where speeds of 600 miles an hour are routine, Hayden sees a more confident future. "I'd like to end up at one of the major airlines out there that's actually doing the flying as opposed to being contracted to fly," he mused. "That would be my ultimate career goal." ~

*"I joined the fire company
when I was 14 years old,
When I was 16, I started
going on calls."*

company volunt

EMS Raised From The Dead

Over the years, all public services have gone through changes. That's only natural. But ambulance services here have made one of the stranger transformations.

"EMS grew out of the funeral home industry," Cranberry EMS Executive Director Jeff Kelly acknowledged. "A lot of the big hitters, back in the '70s and early '80s were actually the larger funeral homes."

Part of it was practical: at the time, hearses were just about the only vehicles capable of transporting someone lying down. And many of the early ambulances were essentially funeral hearses, retrofitted with sirens and lights, along with a handful of medically useful items.

The other part was more practical, at least from the funeral director's stand-

Vertically integrating ambulance transportation with undertaking made sense but, by the mid-1980s, most communities had separated the two.



Afterlife. The Cranberry Volunteer Ambulance Corps' first ambulance was the 1963 Cadillac Miller-Meteor, a dual-purpose vehicle built to transport both the living and the dead. The 2011 version is dedicated to the living.

point. It was that in case a patient were to succumb to their injuries prior to or during transport, the funeral home would have a new customer.

But while vertically integrating ambulance transportation with undertaking made sense, at least in a somewhat ghoulish way, most communities, by the mid-1980s, had separated the two, even though funeral homes continue to play an important, though significantly smaller, role. Yet the forms of the successor organizations who provide Emergency Medical and ambulance service today vary widely from place to place.

Many major cities, including Pittsburgh, provide EMS as a taxpayer-financed public service. In some places, hospitals provide ambulance service as an adjunct to their patient care. Many communities are served by commercial ambulance companies, and others by nonprofit ones.

More than 40 years ago, in 1969, Cranberry's Volunteer Fire Company created a sister organization, the Cranberry Township Volunteer Ambulance Corps. That organization continues, although it separated from the Fire Company decades ago, formed its own board of directors, established its own financial life, and is no longer mainly staffed by volunteers. Two years ago, it changed its name to reflect that transition; it is now the

Cranberry Township Emergency Medical Service, and it is the Township's official responder for emergency calls placed by the Butler County 911 dispatch center.

However, unlike Cranberry's salaried

police officers, its 32 full- and part-time employees are not paid by the Township. And unlike the Cranberry's Fire Company, whose stations and trucks are taxpayer-financed, Cranberry EMS staff, equipment and facilities are self-funded and its roster includes only a handful of volunteers.

By law, the EMS may not turn down any 911 calls in its service area due to the patient's ability to pay. But it is required to charge the patient's insurance company in cases where ambulance coverage is available, and it bills those patients directly for any unpaid balance. But it also sells subscriptions, essentially a specialized form of insurance, and its 2012 subscription drive is now underway.

The drive serves two important goals. One is that subscribers are able to use the service throughout the year without any out-of-pocket payments. The other is that, at a time of declining insurance reimbursements, it helps keep the independent ambulance service on a more stable financial footing.

The full cost of a scheduled patient transfer by ambulance averages \$450. Responding to 911 emergency calls averages \$750, although it can easily go higher, depending on the procedures performed and medications administered. Even those individuals who do have insurance are required to make co-payments, the amount of which varies from one policy to another. As a result, patients with insurance plans that require large co-payments or high annual deductibles, can end up paying most of the cost of ambulance service out of pocket. That's where subscriptions, which range from \$40 to \$60 a year, can come in handy. Details are on the EMS website, www.cranberrytownshipems.org. ~



No Emoticons, Please ☹

You already knew it was a bad idea – sending and reading text messages or email while you were driving. Now it's an even worse idea: you can get fined for it. Starting in January, a new state law went into effect that raises texting behind the wheel to the level of a primary offense – one where you can be stopped if you are observed to be texting – rather than as a secondary offense, where you could only be cited if you were found texting while pulled over for a different violation. It is already a summary offense in most states, and studies have shown that texting while driving is even more dangerous than drinking and driving. If you really, really have to use your phone's text features, pull over, stop, and then do your messaging.



Learn CPR

Cranberry Township EMS will be offering four classes in life-saving Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation this year. Each three-hour class will be held on a Saturday: January 14, April 21, July 14 and October 13, from 9:00 to noon. The course fee

is just \$20 per person. Call 724-776-4480 for registration details.

The Sheriff's Back In Town



Last year, Butler County Sheriff Mike Slupe made several visits to the Township's police station to renew and accept new applications for the five-year licenses required to carry concealed firearms. It was a huge success. So this year, he plans even more visits, on alternate months – April, June, August and October throughout 2012. Renewals will be issued on site, provided the applicant passes the Pennsylvania Instant Check System. Applicants must be residents of Butler County, at least 21 years of age, with either a driver's license or some other approved photo identification. An application form must be completed and a processing fee of \$20 will be collected by cash or check. Completed applications from first-time applicants will be brought back to the Sheriff's office in Butler for required background checks. His next visit will be on Saturday, February 18, from 9:00 until 2:00. Application forms are available online at: www.co.butler.pa.us/sheriff.

More Platinum For Cranberry

The American Automobile Association's East-Central chapter announced its 2011 traffic safety awards in late November, and once again, Cranberry Township received the coveted Platinum Award. The program recognizes communities for their efforts in educating residents about traffic safety and for the breadth of their traffic safety initiatives.

In Cranberry, these initiatives include aggressive driving enforcement, buckle-up, bicycle safety, commercial vehicle safety, child passenger safety, traffic signal and road engineering, among others. The only category in which Cranberry scored zero was for railroad crossing safety, primarily because it has no railroad tracks.



When worse comes to worst Practicing For Disaster

Battling structure fires and the chaos that follows serious auto wrecks is hard enough for first responders. But battling against other public safety agencies which have also sent crews to the scene of an incident is even worse. Yet it happens all the time, in community after community, where neighboring emergency services fail to coordinate their responses and end up wasting precious time and resources in an effort to establish who's in charge.

Avoiding that sort of senseless conflict is a key goal for Cranberry's police, fire and EMS services. But achieving it requires practice. So on two weekend days this past fall, disaster drills were held in Cranberry to accomplish two major objectives: one was to practice effective rescue and fire suppression techniques, the other was to coordinate the responses of multiple-agencies using a unified command structure. Their dramatizations were unnervingly realistic.

In one, according to the police scenario, a badly damaged school bus, which had been rammed from behind by an out-of-control van in Cranberry Business Park, rolled over on its side, trapping 15 middle-school students and one adult inside.

All three passengers in the runaway van – including an infant – had died on impact, according to the police account. The risk of a fuel-driven fire igniting and incinerating the trapped students was tangible. Hysterical parents ran screaming to the crash site, frantically searching for loved ones among the carnage. The school district's new superintendent was rushed in, deeply concerned for the lives and safety of her pupils.

Four separate EMS companies in and around Cranberry responded with full

ambulance crews. Township police did their best to safeguard the scene – protecting the Fire Company's delicate rescue operations while preserving important



forensic evidence. And Stat-Medevac dispatched an airlift helicopter to transport the most critically injured patients, all of whom were rushed to UPMC Passavant Cranberry hospital's emergency room for treatment.

In the other drill, a century-old farm house along Glen Eden Road which had been slated for demolition, became the site of a multi-agency practice burn. Firefighters from Cranberry, Zelienople, Marshall and Adams, under the direction of state fire instructors from Washington County, were organized into teams. They took turns attacking pre-set interior fires with high pressure hoses, and practicing their backup, safety tracking and recovery procedures. In the end, though, the house was lost in flames. An EMS ambulance crew and representatives of the Cranberry Police Department were also on hand to witness the blaze.

The challenge in both instances is this: as a typical emergency unfolds, control of the site, and of the first responders' actions on that site, shifts from one service to another. It is often complicated by issues



*The risk of a fuel-driven fire
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Hysterical parents ran
screaming to the crash site.*

involving incompatible radio frequencies. Each responding company has its own officers. And the service ranks denoting the hierarchy of individuals from different agencies are not always well aligned. So there's plenty of room for confusion and conflict – usually at the expense of the people most in need of help.

Avoiding that sort of skirmish takes more than simple courtesy and goodwill. It requires policies, procedures and practice to test potential points of conflict and build a level of mutual confidence that transcends jurisdictional and service lines.

Cranberry's disaster drills enacted situations designed to bring out the strengths and weaknesses of each service – particularly including their ability to work effectively with one another. And in both practice drills, it appeared to work remarkably well. As a result, whenever a real disaster strikes in Cranberry, first responders, school transportation officials, and hospital emergency workers will be focused more on helping those in trouble than on creating trouble for one another. ~



Welcome To Cranberry's Traffic Lab, And Be Sure To Stop At The Red Lights

CMU and private tech developer put Township traffic under the microscope

Since it opened a little more than a year ago, Cranberry's Traffic Operations Center has become the region's showcase for state-of-the-art traffic control technologies. Walking past its wall of high-definition screens showing real-time traffic and its clusters of computer monitors displaying signal control system data, is like strolling the bridge on a spacecraft.

It's not just an illusion. The visible instrumentation, along with the unseen software that drives it, represent the most advanced technology of their kind, helping Cranberry manage a growing volume of traffic on essentially fixed ribbons of pavement.

So it comes as no surprise that two professors from Carnegie-Mellon University's multi-disciplinary Traffic 21 research unit would take an interest in the data that system generates. Nor, for the same reasons, does it seem strange that TrafficVision, a division of the South Carolina firm Omnibond Systems and developer of traffic monitoring technology, would also want to do so. So, starting this year and with several new agreements in place, both organizations are about to tap into the rich trove of Cranberry traffic data.

"The two CMU professors were interested because we not only have

video, we also have all the traffic counts, which is unique in this area," according to Cranberry Assistant Manager Duane McKee. "One professor is primarily working on incident detection with the use of cameras. Our agreement allows him to view our cameras, feed it into his programming software, and use it to try to detect incidents, whether it's a broken down vehicle, a car on the side of the road, an accident, or any other type of anomaly he can detect through video.

"The second professor is working on a predictive form of adaptive software where he would take our traffic counts – everything that our timers and traffic signals provide to the Traffic Operations Center – and pull that information into his software, in real time, to further develop that technology.

"As far as TrafficVision is concerned, they work primarily in Intelligent Traffic System technologies," McKee noted. "They want to use us as a beta site and install one of their servers that performs incident management through these cameras. Also, they want to use the time they have with us over the next 18 months to further develop technologies for counting turn movements, which is something we don't do very well right now."

Although CMU and TrafficVision have

different technical goals in mind, they're both driven by a common truth: that safely moving more and more traffic through the same area of roadway is getting harder all the time. Jams, accidents and breakdowns grow increasingly likely as the volume of vehicles grows.

If traffic were constant throughout the day, clock-driven synchronized signals like those in Oakland and Manhattan

Safely moving more and more traffic through the same area of roadway is getting harder all the time. The key to maintaining the safe flow of traffic is information.

would be perfectly adequate. But traffic is dynamic. There are rush hours and off-peak hours. There are daylight patterns and night-time patterns. At any given time, traffic may be heavier in one direction than another. Sometimes emergency vehicles override normal signal patterns. Pedestrians crossing can disrupt signal timing. And then there are special events, incidents, and weather conditions which throw a wrench into established traffic patterns.

The key to maintaining the safe flow of traffic is information – both historical information to establish predictable patterns, and real-time information to address unforeseen situations as they arise. Both research projects are efforts to capture that information and apply it in assisting the movement of traffic in Cranberry and beyond. ~



The 23.3 Percent Solution

Solving the dark mystery of black road ice

Rock salt is fairly expensive, about \$65 a ton. That adds up, especially if you use it in large amounts. Last winter, for example, Cranberry Public Works road crews used 6,166 tons of salt to keep more than 120 lane miles of Township roadways passable – and that’s not even counting the additional volume put down by PennDOT on state roads which pass through Cranberry.

For Bob Howland, Cranberry’s Public Works Streets and Properties Manager, winter maintenance presents conflicting challenges. On the one hand, doing whatever it takes to keep local roads open and safe remains a top priority. On the other, so does holding down the cost of doing it. With roughly \$400,000 in salt cost alone last year, and prices steadily rising, how do you reconcile those goals?

As recently as eight years ago, Cranberry instructed its crews, and calibrated the salt spreaders on its trucks, to use 500 pounds of rock salt per lane mile. Many communities still use that as their standard. But technology has advanced a lot since that time. Electronic controls now regulate the flow of salt according to the speed of the truck; when the truck speeds up, so does the spreader. When the truck stops, so does the flow of salt. But every storm is different, and so is the response by road crews.

“Improved technology over the last 8 or 10 years has brought that 500 pounds per lane mile down to 250,” Howland explained. “But I’d really like to take it down to 225 this year – a 10 percent decrease – and work my way down to 30 percent less by next year.”

How does he plan to achieve that? By using brine – water which contains a

certain amount of salt dissolved in it – to pre-wet the rock salt just as it leaves the truck’s spinner, in order to reduce salt scatter, accelerate its melting action, and lower the temperature at which it can remain effective on the road.

With just the right application, salt wetted with

It has to be very precise – a 23.3 percent saline solution. If it’s just a few percentage points off, it can be worthless – even dangerous.

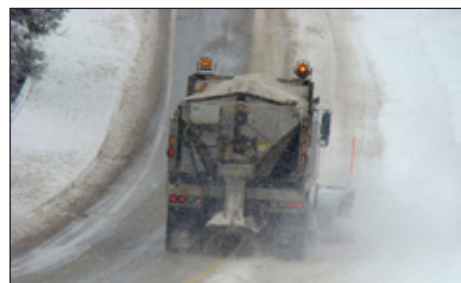
brine can keep road ice from forming down to temperatures as low as six below zero. But there’s a catch: not just any salt water will do. It has to be very precise – a 23.3 percent saline solution. If it’s just a few percentage points off, it can be worthless – even dangerous. So precision equipment is required. And now Cranberry has it.

Following November’s purchase approval by Cranberry’s Board of Supervisors, the installation of a new brine-making and storage system is now underway at the Public Works Operations Center. Its use will be phased in across the Township’s fleet of 14 trucks over the next two years. Savings are expected to begin immediately and then accelerate. That’s because the program is expected to grow as several other uses for brine are phased in.

“Once we get all the trucks outfitted with the equipment needed for the pre-wet system, I’d like to start exploring applying the salt brine



Secret brew. This computer-controlled mixing vat is capable of producing up to 3,000 gallons an hour of precisely calibrated brine for application by Township salt trucks.



directly to the road before the storm even rolls in,” Howland noted. “If you can get out a couple days ahead of the storm, pretreat the roads with brine, and let it dry, once the snow starts to come down, it’ll activate the salt and keep it from causing ice. That gives you time to get your operators out there and scrape it down to black asphalt.”

That’s not all. “Most communities out there don’t have the ability to buy their own brine making equipment,” he pointed out. “We’re already in discussions with our neighbors in surrounding communities to sell them brine solution and the different blends of material we’ll be able to make.

“I’m not looking forward to winter getting here, but I’m looking forward to getting the new equipment, getting it up and running, doing our best to be good stewards with the taxpayer’s money, and saving every dime we can.” ~

Soaring road maintenance costs drive 2012 budget property tax increase *Continued from front cover*

General Fund budget – the largest of the Township's funds and the one which includes such core services as police, parks, and code administration – remains unchanged at 8.03 mils.

The total 136.25 mils in property tax paid by local residents in 2011 included 105.6 mils in school taxes, 20.0 mils in county taxes, and

10.65 mils in Township taxes for a combined total of \$4,360 for a home with a current market value of \$200,000. Cranberry Township's share of that averaged \$678.

Cranberry's credit rating, which Moody's Investor Service last year raised to Aa2 – the highest level available for a community of its

size – was strongly influenced by the Township's ability both to pay its current expenses and maintain an adequate reserve fund balance. That rating also helped the Township to save \$3.4 million in upfront debt service costs and to secure financing for several new projects at record low interest rates when it went into the bond market this past summer. ~

Potential Polluters Surveyed For Wastewater Pre-Treatment

The operators of Cranberry's Brush Creek wastewater treatment plant are awfully picky about what they can and cannot accept. As the caretakers for millions of hungry, but fragile bacteria at the heart of the plant's biological treatment process, they are watchful about how much and which types of food the bacteria get fed.

So, for example, the plant is great at cleaning up human waste, household dirt, pulverized table scraps, and a handful of other organic materials – at least in reasonable amounts – before it releases the treated water back into the environment. That's what it was designed to do, and it does it very well.

But there's a lot of industrial stuff it can't treat at all. Fracking water used in gas drilling, for example, requires an entirely different treatment process, so the plant can't accept it. And there are plenty of other items – typically from commercial

customers – which can pose equally difficult problems if they enter the waste stream.

There are plenty of items from commercial customers which can pose difficult problems if they enter the waste stream.

So starting this year, Township Pretreatment Administrator Rhonda Zellhart will be surveying Cranberry's business customers and working with them to identify any material in their wastewater that the Brush Creek plant can't effectively treat. It's both a fact-finding and an informational mission. And while it will touch bases with the obvious candidates for wastewater pollution – high-volume restaurants and manufacturing plants, for example – it also includes some types of business most people don't associate with posing a problem.

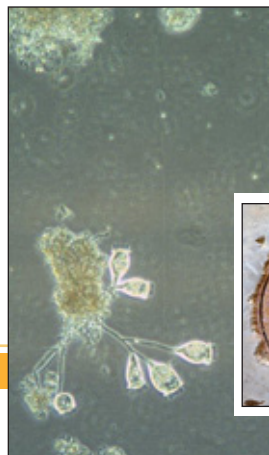
kitchens. All of them, along with a number of others, use chemicals capable of wiping out an entire generation of bacteria at the plant.

Armed with detailed survey information about the material each business uses, Zellhart's plan is to follow up with them individually, to provide packets of industry-specific best practices which minimize the environmental impact of their business operations, especially from the use of prohibited chemicals.

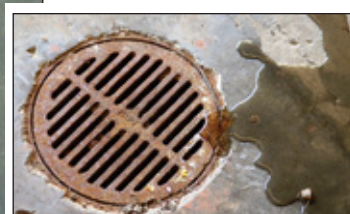
"We're here to be a resource, not just a regulator," she explained. "For example, some of the smaller facilities in Cranberry don't have a spill prevention plan in place. If they don't, I'll have a template they can use in developing one for their site. The surveys will not only ask basic questions about what the customer produces and uses, it will also pose what-if questions, like what would you do if a major spill were to happen at your facility?"

"So we're looking to partner with our business community – to make it as easy as possible for companies to operate in ways that are friendly to our plant and its bacteria colony. That's part of the information we're putting out to people. And we'll make that information available on our website as well." ~

Yummy! These stalked ciliates are among the delicate bacteria who feast on the Brush Creek plant's normal diet of organic wastes. But if they're fed the wrong kind of material – solvents, salts, metals, and pesticides, for example – it can wipe them out. Pretreating wastewater is the key.



Take beauty shops, dentists, pet groomers, funeral homes, auto repair shops, or churches with commercial-type





A Silver Lining. Okay, it's not actually silver, but the plastic lining that's being slipped into more than 3,800 feet of pipe beneath Fox Run has a definite silvery appearance, at least when it's exposed to sunlight, which is admittedly rare inside the Township's sanitary sewer lines. The project, which began in mid-December and will run through the rest of January, continues Cranberry's multi-year effort to clean, repair, and extend the life of the Township's 160-mile underground pipeline network. But the project will involve no new excavation – all of the lining material will be inserted through manholes already in place along Township rights of way – nor will it cause any service disruptions for residents. Cost of the repair: \$177,000.

Four Sewer And Water Technicians Awarded DEP Certification

If you're in the drinking water or wastewater treatment business, you can operate one of two ways. You can either hire people who are licensed by Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection to run the facility, or you can bring in non-credentialed people who are required to meticulously follow detailed Standard Operating Procedures, S.O.P.s, for every single thing they do. So, if you're in a water-related business, it's a huge advantage to have certified employees.

Cranberry Township is in both sides of the water businesses, so having a certified staff is critical to its operation. But you can't just apply for a license on the basis of good character; you actually have to know something, pass tests on it, and accumulate a significant amount of hands-on experience actually doing it.

You can't just apply for a license on the basis of good character; you actually have to know something, and accumulate a significant amount of hands-on experience.

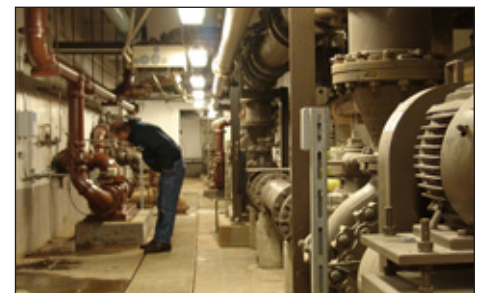
Mike Sedon, the manager of Cranberry's Brush Creek wastewater treatment plant, is not only

personally certified, he's also been an instructor for DEP, for CCAC, and for a private group of trainers who provide license-related instruction to treatment plant clients on request. Here's how he sees it:

"The way the regulations are written is that you must have a certified operator to make a process control decision – any decision that's going to change the quantity of the water," Sedon explained. "So if you turn a pump speed up or down, you change the quality or quantity of the water. If a guy turns a valve in the distribution system, he's changed the quantity of that water by rerouting it. So the person turning the wrench either needs to have an S.O.P. telling him how to turn that valve, or needs to be a certified operator.

"Right now, the majority of treatment plant operators have licenses, so they didn't need an S.O.P. to tell them how to do that. But if you don't have a license, you have to run off S.O.P.s. With the amount of equipment we have at the treatment plant – I would need an S.O.P. for everything under the sun. So the way you get around S.O.P.s is by having everybody certified."

Until recently, however, three of Brush Creek's employees and one water distribution employee were not



Your license, please. Without an official certificate issued by the state Department of Environmental Protection, no one can even turn a knob at a Pennsylvania wastewater treatment plant without following lengthy Standard Operating Practices, to the letter. As of November, all of Cranberry's Brush Creek plant personnel became officially certified.

eligible for certification because they hadn't yet achieved the required amount of hands-on time. But now that's changed. After as much as five years of practical, on-the-job experience followed by two months of daily coaching, mentoring and instruction during lunch breaks from plant manager Sedon, system technicians Frank Houser, Mike Ervin, Brett Lester and Brian Belsterling have now completed their certification requirements.

"I gave them homework, math questions, and assignments like that," Sedon recalled. "Now that they're certified, it gives us a lot more operational flexibility in staffing," he noted with relief. ~

Shocking New Video Wins Grand Prize For Cranberry Wastewater Plant

You'll have to excuse them, but Cranberry's Brush Creek wastewater treatment plant employees are still flushed with success.

In November, Hach Company, a Colorado-based manufacturer of analytic instruments and reagents used in wastewater treatment plants worldwide, announced the winners of its second annual 'See the BIG Picture' contest. Cranberry Township's Brush Creek wastewater treatment plant, was named one of two Grand Prize winners and awarded company equipment valued at \$50,000, based on its submission to the company's contest.

The Brush Creek plant, which serves portions of Marshall and New Sewickley townships as well as Cranberry, will receive a variety of Hach equipment for lab verification, portable spot checking, and real-time online instrumentation. According to plant operators, the package will be ideal for "monitoring ammonia and phosphorus levels throughout the treatment process...allowing for better process control decisions and to generate data that would be useful in designing for the next plant expansion, which is expected to include a total nitrogen limit."

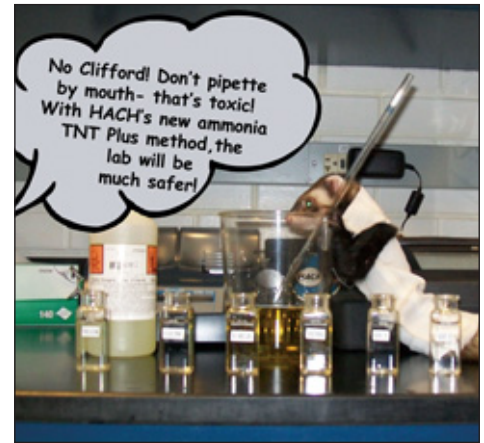
Translation: it will help keep the plant running smoothly.

The company's contest, which began last April, offered one municipal and one industrial wastewater treatment plant the chance to receive \$50,000

"Hach to the Future," used a movie-themed story line in which Brush Creek professionals frantically struggled to deal with dark forces.

in Hach equipment by creating a video or PowerPoint presentation explaining how new equipment could improve their treatment process. Entries were judged on creativity, expected results from the products requested, expected impact of the award, and the extent of need.

Cranberry's video submission, "Hach to the Future," used a movie-themed story line in which the Brush Creek plant was projected forward and back in time as its staff professionals – playing themselves in the highly-charged drama – frantically struggled to deal with dark forces that menaced its operation. In addition to astonishing



High drama. Weasels in lab coats play a powerful supporting role in the Cranberry Township Sewer and Water Division's dramatic video production "HACH to the Future." The video won the plant \$50,000 in laboratory supplies and equipment.

special effects, several live ferrets were also featured in the production, although their roles were somewhat ambiguous, and they were not assigned speaking parts. The final production can be seen at www.cranberrytownship.org/plant.

The contest, according to the Hach Company, is designed to help municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants understand the benefits of increasing nutrient monitoring to optimize their nitrogen and phosphorus removal.

No animals were harmed in the filming of this production. ~

What's your sign?

It's the perfect gift for anyone named Ellen, Cameron, Stacy, Phillip, Rose, Peter, Jane, Joan, Joyce, or Whitney, as well as dozens of others who are among the personal names, and scores of family names, that match Cranberry street name signs which are being retired and sold by the Township. For just \$25, a retired Cranberry Township street sign can decorate your den, dorm, or bedroom – and it's all perfectly legal. A list of signs is posted on the Township Website. Go to the Township's Customer Service desk



during regular business hours with the names of the signs you want to buy. All signs, regardless of condition, are priced at \$25 each plus state sales tax. Cash, checks, Visa and MasterCard will all be accepted.



Ashes to ashes. Half of the nearly 150 ash trees along Freshcorn Road between Glen Eden and Cranberry Heights

have been taken down by Township crews. Their removal is the result of damage from an infestation of Emerald Ash Borers – an invasive species of Asian beetle which singles out Genus Fraxinus for spawning – killing the trees in the process. The ash trees have been replaced by sunset maples – a robust tree, native to this region, whose summertime mantle of green leaves turns red in Autumn. The remaining 75 ash trees will be removed and replaced in the spring.



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www.cranberrytownship.org

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Now about your taxes... Sorry to be the bearer of bad tidings. But if your 2011 Butler County/Cranberry Township and Seneca Valley School District real estate taxes weren't paid in full by December 31, your account's been turned over to the Butler County Tax Claim Bureau. You can reach them at 724-284-5326. However, you may be able to save money next time around. The County has mailed homestead exemption application forms to anyone who has not already signed up. If your home is also your primary residence, fill out the form and send it back; it will save you money on your school property taxes for 2012/2013. If you've changed your mortgage company in the past year and are no longer using an escrow account to pay your property taxes, contact the tax collector's Municipal Center office at 724-776-1103 to make an appointment.