

Cranberrytoday

WINTER 2016

2016 Budget: Big Projects, Tiny Tax Increase

There's a lot to like about Cranberry's 2016 budget, despite its totaling a record \$57.7 million. For one thing, it finances a number of high-value public improvements to Township roads, parks and infrastructure. And, except for a quarter mil real estate hike for fire operations costing the average homeowner \$6 a year, it includes no additional increases in taxes, user fees, or utility rates.

One major reason for the Township's decision to retain current rates,

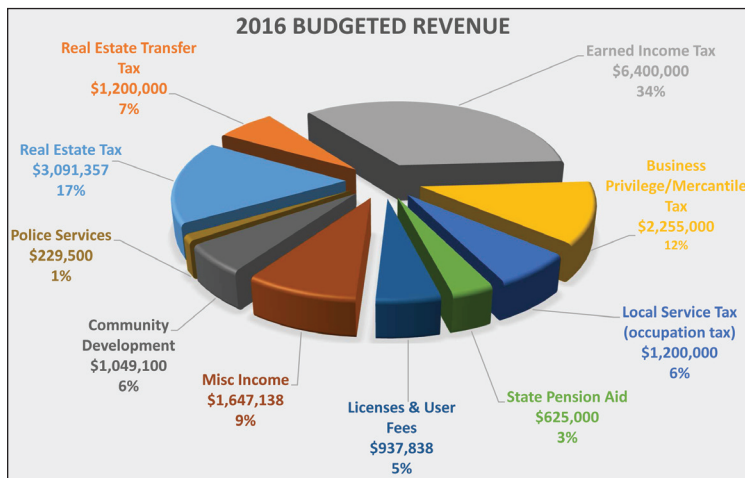
according to Finance Director Vanessa Gleason, was a consequence of the state law that went into full effect last year.

"Act 32, where everyone's earned income tax is now withheld and collected on a county-wide basis, has worked very well for Cranberry Township," Gleason reported. "Berkheimer is the collector for Butler County and that's working out nicely for us. But the key is that everyone's tax is being withheld – that's the crucial part of Act 32."

included in the budget, by far the largest involves work on upgrading the Township's wastewater treatment plant – a massive project which is expected to continue until 2019. Most of the money needed to rebuild the plant was raised last year through a bond issue financed by an increase in customer sewer rates. Additional funds, which are likely to be needed to complete the project, will not be required for several more years.

Other capital projects visualized by the 2016 budget include a much-improved intersection at the junction of Freedom Road, Valley Forge, and Parkwood. A new traffic roundabout at North Boundary and Marshall Roads will help manage traffic from a new nearby

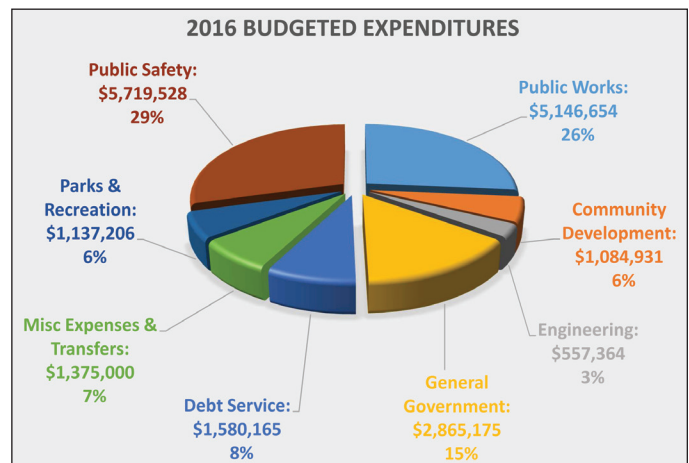
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In and out. About 90% of the revenue financing Cranberry's \$19.5 million 2016 General Fund budget comes from an assortment of local taxes. It pays for essentially all of the Township's core services. User fee-based services like sewer, water, and trash collection are budgeted separately.

Where the money goes

Of all the capital projects



A Publication of

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It's Not Enough Just To Pay Your Taxes. You Also Have To Report Paying Them.



If you work for a living, your employer is required to withhold your Cranberry Township and Seneca Valley School District earned income tax. Together, they total one percent of your income. Most employers comply, even if they're out of state, and your money is sent to Cranberry's appointed tax collector, Berkheimer Tax Administrator.

But there's one more step you still have to take: you need to file a tax return to confirm that the tax you paid matches up with the tax you owe – even if you owe nothing. It works just like your state and federal tax returns, only simpler. For most people, the return is just a single page. Although Berkheimer will mail you that form, it can also be completed online. And if you have a tax preparer or accountant do your taxes, they'll usually take care of it for you.

Where things start to get complicated is if you moved to Cranberry sometime last year. Then you only have to pay

those taxes for the part of the year you lived here. To help make that calculation easier, the return form includes a worksheet for part-year residents.

No income? No problem.

Only certain forms of income are subject to the local earned income tax including salaries, wages, commissions, bonuses, tips, stipends and fees, for example. Social security, unemployment compensation, pensions, death benefits, interest, dividends, capital gains, disability benefits and many other forms of income are exempt. The instructions that come with the return form provide more details.

Full-time homemakers, retirees, and students, as well as unemployed and disabled people who have no income, don't have to pay any tax, but they still have to file an annual return and check the form's appropriate box. Self-employed people have to file returns like everyone else, but instead of having their tax withheld, they need

to make estimated quarterly payments and then report them on the form.

If, for whatever reason, you fail to file a return by April 15, you may receive a notice of Failure to File. Those notices go out in August and, if the return remains unfiled, a follow-up will go out around the end of the year. A \$25 fee is added on to late return filings, regardless of how much or how little you owe.

Unlike federal and state income tax returns, no automatic filing extensions are available for local income tax

Even if your tax information is incomplete by April 15, send your return in anyway.

returns. So even if your tax information is incomplete by April 15, send your return in anyway and, if necessary, file an amended return later. ~

2016 Budget: Big Projects, Tiny Tax Increase

commercial development. A new eastbound lane will be added to Rt. 228 between Cranberry Woods Drive and Franklin Road. And Cranberry's 18-year old Waterpark will see a major upgrade completed in time for this summer's swim season.

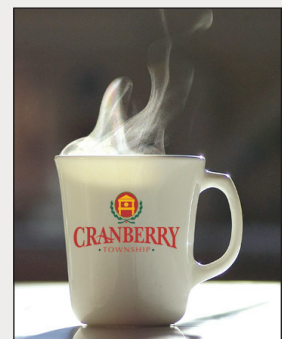
About \$19.5 million of Cranberry's 2016 budget, which comes from local taxes, is used to fund core operations including public safety, public works, administration, recreation, debt service and code enforcement. The remaining \$38.3 million is divided among a series

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of capital project funds, special revenue funds, and enterprise funds financed out of rentals, licenses, user fees, utility payments, state transfers, grants and development levies. ~

Coffee, Anyone?

Three informal Coffee and Conversation get-togethers with Township Manager Jerry Andree are coming up this winter. All three begin at 10:00 AM. The first one, on Wednesday, January 13, will take place at the Public Works building and focus on winter maintenance and traffic operations. The second, which will be held in the Library's Franklin Station meeting room on Tuesday, February 2, centers on the Township's recycling and environmental stewardship initiatives. The third, which will concentrate on program offerings by both the Library and Parks & Recreation, takes place Wednesday, March 23. All three events are free of charge and no reservations are required. However, for planning purposes, an RSVP to 734-776-4806 x1103 would be appreciated.





Cranberry's Social Contract And You

by **Bruce Hezlep, Supervisor, Cranberry Township**

To govern, or to be governed? That, with apologies to Hamlet, is the question. But

it's not a new question, and the answer carries real implications – even in Cranberry today.

In philosophy, the issue centers around a concept referred to as the Social Contract. It concerns the nature of political legitimacy and holds that the foundation of governance involves a consensual exchange: individuals surrendering the freedom to hurt one another and accepting the authority of the governing body in exchange for that government protecting their personal safety and advancing their collective interests. In other words, it's a quid-pro-quo between the individual and the governing entity. And most people consider it a fair exchange.

system of government as well. Keeping Cranberry's municipal government in step with what residents need is equally fundamental, and it requires constant effort.

How to govern

We use a number of tools to achieve that. One of them, of course, is the vote. Elected officials know they can easily become un-elected if voters don't like what they see – something which has played out at every level of U.S. government. Another is hearings, where anyone with an interest in a legislative topic under consideration is invited to voice their concerns and to testify publicly, on record, about the proposal's impact on their own lives. Less formal ways of communicating with elected officials – email, phone calls, face-to-face encounters, and so on – are also available.

But here in Cranberry, there's another method as well: it's to include interested residents in the governing process itself. Although our Board of Supervisors is Cranberry's most visible governing body, we don't operate alone. We have a number of independent boards, commissions, advisory panels and special-purpose groups that give us the benefit of their thinking. They include our Planning Advisory Commission, Zoning Hearing Board, Library Board and Building Codes Board of Appeals, as well as other standing committees.

There are bodies of volunteers who have organized into support groups such as Friends of the Library and the Special Needs Action Group. Right now, for example, we have two ad hoc councils at work – one crafting a long-range strategic plan for Cranberry's volunteer fire company, another for prioritizing its sidewalk and trail connections. And



Magna Carta. This 800-year old English document challenges the king's presumed divine right to rule in an effort to restore and protect individual liberties. It is regarded as the mother of all modern social contracts.

others are sure to be formed in the future.

What all of these bodies in Cranberry have in common is that they are comprised of ordinary citizens – private residents who recognize that their government, unlike a spectator sport, requires their direct participation. It doesn't just involve electing representatives to govern on their behalf, it also requires hands-on engagement by the governed themselves – by people who understand that self-government and the social contract are more than just philosophical abstractions.

I consider myself to be one of those ordinary citizens, albeit one who is now an elected official. But what I've found is that voluntary participation in governance – in my case, with Cranberry's Fire Company – became one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. It has been a source of tremendous personal satisfaction and of deeper connection to my neighbors than I had ever imagined.

New opportunities to participate in Cranberry's governance come up all the time. Just let me know and I'll be happy to help place you. ~

Government, unlike a spectator sport, requires direct participation.

However, as with any contract, there's always the risk of the agreement breaking down. And when that happens – for example, when the government goes off in directions which harm, or at least fail to support the interests of the governed – that consent can be withdrawn, undermining the legitimacy of the governing body.

There have been numerous examples of that in other parts of the world over the past few years. The uprisings referred to as the Arab Spring come immediately to mind. But the concept isn't limited to volatile areas of the globe; it applies, with a little tweaking, to our own

Bruce Hezlep can be reached at Bruce.Hezlep@cranberrytownship.org or at **Twitter: @brucehezlep**.

Long-Range Plan Reviewed, Revised Strategies Possible

A five-year review of Cranberry's ambitious 2009 comprehensive plan, now underway, may trigger some strategic adjustments.

The plan had envisioned a community of about 50,000 residents by 2030 – the date by which it anticipated that Cranberry would be fully developed. It included more than 250 strategies for local officials to use over the following 25 years. Its goals were to set the policies, priorities and action steps required to accommodate its visualized growth and realize its overriding objectives of sustainable prosperity, convenient connections, and a high quality of life.

However the population projection of 50,000 was more than just a wistful forecast; it was also a goal. That's because the plan's architecture was anchored in three essential factors: infrastructure, economy, and land use.

The plan's architecture was anchored in three essential factors: infrastructure, economy, and land use. All three had to work together.

All three had to work together. To create enough infrastructure to meet its growth needs, revenue would be required. However, to sustain that level

of revenue, the Township's zoning would have to accommodate significantly more than the 28,000 residents who lived in Cranberry at the time the plan was first adopted.

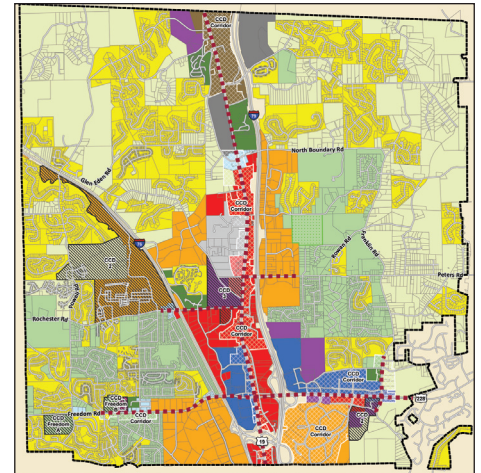
But it was a balancing act. A substantially larger population could strain Cranberry's municipal systems – water, sewer, traffic, parks, and so on – while too few would be unable to afford that level of infrastructure investment.

Zone defense

Yet of the plan's three essential foundations, only zoning fell under the Board's complete control. So, following the plan's adoption, Cranberry's zoning code was adjusted to allow a population density high enough to support the required infrastructure but low enough to avoid overcrowding.

One of those adjustments involved a revision of the Traditional Neighborhood Development zones, enacted five years earlier, which became re-born as Community Character Districts, or CCDs. They featured a mix of uses, townhomes, small lots, on-street parking and service alleys, among their other higher density, urban-style features.

Zoning, however, is not an exact science; hard-to-forecast market factors are the real engines that drive any growth scenario. So, as part of the plan's five-year review and update cycle, Cranberry's Planning & Development



In the zone. A five-year review of Cranberry's Comprehensive Plan, scheduled to be completed this month, will look at the Township's zoning ordinance to determine whether a re-examination of its provisions will be needed to meet the plan's long-range goals.

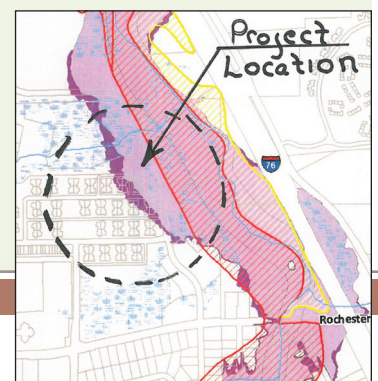
staff is now analyzing the Township's zoning code to determine whether the patterns of growth and development visualized in the 2009 plan are actually taking place. If not, revisions to the plan and the land use zoning strategies underpinning it may be recommended.

A final version of the updated plan will be presented to the Township's Board of Supervisors later this spring. Action on any recommendation concerning revisions to Cranberry's zoning ordinance would follow the Board's adoption of the updated plan. ~

Flooded With Appeals

A number of property owners in the Bellevue plan of homes near Graham Park were caught off guard by the draft map of flood plains issued by FEMA in 2013, updating one going back to 1982. It showed their homes lying within the boundaries of a 100-Year flood, meaning the homeowners would be required to carry costly flood insurance.

Problem is, the map was based on data collected before Bellevue was built. During its construction, lower-lying areas adjacent to the 1982 flood plain were actually filled in, raising the elevations where its homes are today – something that FEMA's map failed to capture. So, in collaboration with the Township, eight homeowners filed an appeal to have the map redrawn. Then in October, following months of federal agency review, FEMA sent the Township revised maps showing a new flood boundary that reflects the area's current topography. As a result, the homeowners may not be required to carry flood insurance. ~



Now You Can Get There From Here, Sort Of

In November, more than 100 residents turned out for a tour of recent sidewalk and trail construction in the Township. Popular interest in creating a coherent sidewalk network has been strong for years. But since most of Cranberry's sidewalks were built privately and in connection with individual property development projects, their growth has been piecemeal. That's resulted in an eclectic assortment of sidewalk stubs and missing segments, some of which could take decades to connect if left to private development.

So last year, the Township took it upon itself to chip away at the problem by completing three missing links. And this year, it will do even more. Requiring

sidewalks for new construction, creating hiking trails and filling gaps between existing segments has added more than 100 miles of new pedestrian walkway in Cranberry over the past 20 years.

Sidewalk infill projects completed in 2015 include one at the intersection of Commonwealth Drive and Pennwood Place in Thorn Hill Industrial Park and another linking Park Place to The Crossings. A one-third mile long trail project in Thorn Hill Industrial Park along Brush Creek created a link between an established sidewalk along Commonwealth Drive and a trail beginning at Cranberry's boundary with Marshall Township and leading through to Knob Hill Park. In addition, a



half-mile trail tying the sidewalk along Powell Road into Graham Park was also completed.

A short list of sidewalk infill projects for 2016 is being formulated by a volunteer advisory committee working with the Township's Planning and Development staff. That list is expected to be ready for consideration by Cranberry's Board of Supervisors this spring. ~

• *Sidewalks, hiking trails and filling gaps added more than 100 miles of new pedestrian walkway in Cranberry over the past 20 years.*

It's Your Sidewalk; It's Your Job To Take Care Of It

As Cranberry's network of sidewalks grows, the responsibilities of private

residents and businesses grow along with it. That's because removing snow and ice from sidewalks is the legal responsibility of the owner whose property touches that sidewalk, even if they didn't built it themselves.

Until 2012, the owner had 24 hours from the end of a snowstorm to

clear their sidewalk, but then the Board of Supervisors extended it to 48 hours. If you're away when the storm hits, try to make advance arrangements with a neighbor or hire someone to clear it for you.

Shovel snow to the building side of the walkway. Don't shovel or blow it onto the road; that's illegal and it creates a hazard for motorists. You are welcome to use salt or other anti-icing material in clearing the sidewalk, but it's not a requirement. And it's a great idea to clear snow from around your hydrant; you don't want firefighters to spend the first 10 minutes of an emergency call shoveling snow. ~



New Freedom from congestion

Turnpike Bridge Replacement Promises Relief

Some day – no one is sure exactly when – the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission expects to widen its 65-year old toll road through Cranberry by adding another travelling lane in each direction. Before that can take place however, both the Commission and its sister agency, PennDOT, need to prepare by extending the bridges spanning I-76 enough to accommodate an additional 60 feet of traveling lanes, shoulders and median once the Turnpike expansion is eventually built.

This past October, as part of that effort, a longer, wider replacement for the Thorn Hill Road bridge over the Turnpike was completed. Now the Freedom Road Bridge over the Turnpike – long a choke point for Cranberry's east-west traffic and one which the Township has been working to remedy since 2007 – is up for replacement. In early November, officials of both state agencies, along with their consulting engineers, gave Cranberry's Supervisors and residents a preliminary look at what to expect.

Accelerated construction

The \$8.5 million project visualizes having a new bridge in place by the end of September, 2018. Its construction will take place in a single season, beginning at the start of April, 2018. This year, before construction starts, PennDOT will negotiate rights of way through narrow strips of land with the owners of several properties adjacent to the work zone, which extends from Commonwealth Drive in the west to Executive Drive in the east. Next year, after contractors'

bids have been accepted, the affected utility lines will be relocated. Then, the following year, construction will begin. Work on the approach roads associated with the bridge, including the signalized intersections at both ends, is also included in the project's scope.

Traffic will continue to flow throughout the entire project. The current three-lane bridge will remain in service until the first part of the new span is completed. During the project's second phase, the old bridge will be demolished and traffic will shift onto the new bridge segment deck. Then, when the second phase is complete, the roadway will span six lanes – two thru lanes in each direction as well as two turning lanes. The finished bridge will also include eight-foot sidewalks on either side, separated from traffic lanes by cement barriers, although no foot traffic will be permitted while construction is underway.

Longer, wider, higher

In addition to being significantly longer and wider, the new bridge will also be higher, creating a 16-foot clearance for the Turnpike traffic beneath it; the current bridge clearance is 14 feet, 8 inches.

Once completed, the bridge will include dual left turn lanes for eastbound traffic along Freedom Road onto Executive Drive, although only one of those lanes



Now here's the plan... Officials from PennDOT, the Turnpike and the Township, along with their consulting engineers, held an open house in November to show off plans for the Freedom Road Bridge replacement, expected to be open for use by October, 2018.

will be available until Executive Drive itself is widened to receive the traffic. However, during the six months that the bridge is under construction, no left turns onto Executive Drive will be allowed. At the same time, however, McIntyre Road – now a one-way link carrying traffic from Robinhood Drive to Freedom Road on the other side of the bridge – will temporarily become bi-directional.

To achieve a complete bridge replacement in just six months while maintaining traffic along the vital Freedom Road corridor, PennDOT is requiring its contractors to fabricate major components of the project off-site and then truck them into position once they're largely complete. Pre-casting and pre-assembling bridge parts is a central element of the agency's Accelerated Bridge Construction initiative, one which is also being applied to other state roadway projects throughout the Commonwealth. ~

Construction will take place in a single season, beginning at the start of April, 2018. Traffic will continue to flow throughout the entire project.

Cranberry Road Tests, Expands New CMU App

There are several low-tech ways local governments use to keep track of their road conditions. One, of course, is visual inspection by municipal employees. Another is fielding complaints from local residents. Cranberry uses both.

There are also costlier high-tech methods that involve hiring vans outfitted with all sorts of sensors to prowl the streets and turn in reports. However, with 130 miles of local roads, each of these methods – even used in combination – can leave gaps in monitoring a streetscape that's constantly changing.

So when Public Works Director Jason Dailey read about a project being developed by Carnegie-Mellon's Traffic 21 personnel to quickly and inexpensively identify deficiencies in Pittsburgh streets, he was intrigued.

"Christoph Mertz, a scientist at the Robotics Institute, has developed an app that goes onto any Android digital camera," Dailey said. "It's a \$150-200, off-the-shelf camera that has sensors and GPS and all the other things digital camera have nowadays. So it works in a way that's very similar to a road evaluation van, except it uses a dashboard window camera.

"You hit the 'go' button on the camera and then just drive the roads. It saves the images onto a memory card. The

driver uploads it to an FTP site, the researchers at CMU pull it down and run it through a program. Then they send you back the results," he said. "We've already driven the entire Township."

New uses

But that was just the beginning as its applications began to cascade. "One of the interesting things that came out of our work with Purdue and Carnegie Mellon and Clemson universities, is that sometimes you end up finding other uses for the technology," Cranberry Streets Manager Bob Howland noted. In the past, they've included new applications for sewer projects, water projects, and coordinating temporary traffic signals.

"The spinoff we got from the road camera project involved street signs," Howland said. "One of the things we found was that the program on these cameras was able to identify colors and shapes. So Mertz was able to develop his app into something more robust and he was able to call out every stop sign the camera would see. Not only was he able to GPS locate it, but also to determine if it was hard to read the sign because of graffiti or fading. As a result, we were able find two signs you couldn't read."

But what about signs that are missing altogether? The app, which also has a

learning capability, may be useful there as well. "One aspect of the device that's under development is being able to see what isn't there any longer," Howland said. "For instance, if it saw a stop sign for three weeks and then the fourth week it recognized that there's not a stop sign there, it would be able to tell you that you're missing a stop sign. We could even pursue the possibility of working with our refuse collector or another service that has regular runs on our roads to get the camera out there every week."

It's becoming much more than just pavement management software. Once they start going down this path, there are endless possibilities including signs, guiderails and fire hydrants.

The applications don't end there, either. "It's becoming much more than just pavement management software," Dailey noted. "We'll be meeting with the research team to discuss looking at streets, signs, guiderails, fire hydrants, automating work orders – anything we can think of. Once they start going down this path of recognizing assets, there are endless possibilities.

"We're just a field test lab," he reflected. "Because of our relationship with CMU in other areas of our operations and the fact that we are interested and always available to look at innovative new technology, along with our ability to take advantage of those offerings, we try to be first in line with this type of thing. So we're a research partner. We share information, but there's no money involved. We don't buy any equipment; they provide everything, including the camera." ~



Here Comes ActiveNet For Active People

Anyone who has used Cranberry's online system to register for Parks & Recreation programs over the past 12 years knows it can be a bit cumbersome. Opening an account, finding programs, learning their details and then paying for them, can all cause headaches. Now, however, users can put the Tylenol away.

ActiveNet – a new and much friendlier internet-based registration package which includes an assortment of attractive, easy-to-use features – is now online and open for business. Owned by the same company as the now-retired older software, ActiveNet enables users to see much more when browsing their accounts – their history, what they've signed up for, their schedule, their payment status, and so on.

It allows automatic monthly payments, which are particularly handy for those registered in programs like preschool or aerobics that take place month after month. It offers more flexibility in how participants pay. In addition to taking payments on Visa and MasterCard accounts, it also accepts American Express and Discover Card – something the older system was unable to do. And it automatically recognizes different discount periods, as in the case of Waterpark memberships.

But wait! There's more!

People who live in Cranberry are generally eligible for discounts on their program fees. But until now, they've had to bring in printed documents, like utility bills, to prove that they actually lived in the Township.

No more. The new system includes a database of every address in Cranberry, running in the background, so it can automatically distinguish residents from non-residents and price their registrations accordingly.

There's also a built-in social media capability. A lot of people who sign up for Parks & Recreation programs look forward to sharing the experience with friends. Now, with just a click of the mouse, people signing up for classes can post it to their Facebook or Twitter accounts.

It's also mobile-friendly. It is as easy to read and navigate from a smartphone or tablet as it is from a desktop computer.

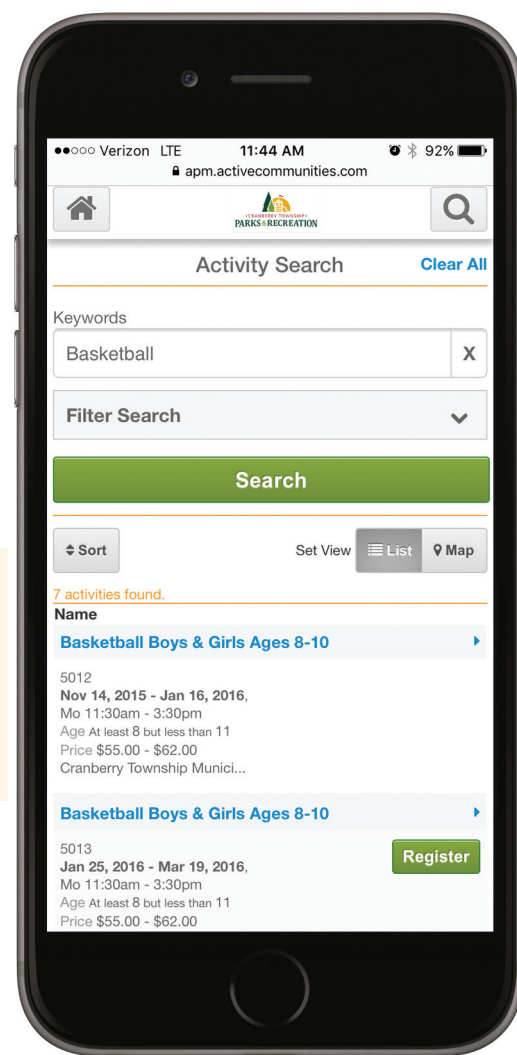
*Simple mistakes
which were easy to
make in the past are
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Goof proof

And it's been idiot-proofed. Simple mistakes which were easy to make in the past are no longer possible. So, for example, someone who inadvertently signed their child up for a summer camp meal plan couldn't complete that registration unless the child was also enrolled in Camp Cranberry itself. Same for swimming lessons; you can't sign up for Level 6 if you haven't already taken Levels 1 through 5. You can't sign up for a class that's been cancelled. And you can't enroll a five-year old for a course that's restricted to children 8 to 10 years of age.

But even with lots of online traffic and a better-looking, easier to use registration website, Cranberry's Parks & Recreation Department is not walking away from its more traditional methods of signing people up for program offerings.

"We still have traffic in the building and there are always people stopping in to inquire about things," P&R Department



Really smart. Cranberry's new ActiveNet program registration software is as easy to use on a smart phone as it is on a laptop or desktop computer.

Office Services Manager Pat Kovach explained. "They might not know what we offer, so we have brochures and fliers. With the preschool already being in the building, a lot of parents come here anyway, it's easy for them to stop in and sign up for something. It's convenient for them to come in and talk to a representative. So while we do have a lot of online customers, we have walk-ins, too.

"When programs are first offered, we do mostly online registration," she said. "But then, as the season goes on, it switches to on the phone and in person." ~

Township Seeking Resident Envoys To Acclimate New Arrivals

Cranberry's population is not only growing larger, it's getting more diverse. People from all over the world, with different backgrounds, languages, cultures and lifestyles, are slowly transforming Cranberry into a more cosmopolitan community than ever before. For long-time residents, that transformation has been a gradual one. But for new arrivals themselves, the adjustment can be abrupt and disorienting. So the Township's Cranberry Area Diversity Network is looking to ensure that its newcomers' first encounters here are positive experiences.

Their approach is predicated on the notion that the differences people bring with them can become shared community assets as long as they are recognized, respected and accommodated. And it is built around the idea that there are individuals as well as affinity groups in and around Cranberry which can help diverse newcomers connect more quickly with their neighbors, their kin, and their new hometown.

Pairing

Here's their plan: the Diversity Network is organizing a volunteer Envoy program

introduce the newcomer to resources in and around Cranberry which would be of particular value to people who share their background. In addition, Envoys help new arrivals to more quickly learn the ways that local institutions – utilities, schools, banks, healthcare agencies and so on – operate in Cranberry Township.

Longtime Cranberry residents Gary Winterhalter and Charles Hawkins

are coordinating the program for the Township in conjunction with its Parks & Recreation Department. "People who are from that particular background can understand the new arrival's problems or concerns or challenges," Hawkins explained. "Then they can guide them to areas which can help to overcome those new challenges."

While the Envoy program's primary focus is on identifying current residents who share the background of diverse newcomers, the key is finding people who truly understand that background – something that could come, for example, from living abroad and learning another culture through experience. Any residents with first-hand knowledge about the culture and needs of a distinctive segment of Cranberry's population who would like to help a recent arrival feel welcome in their new community, are invited to introduce themselves by email to: diversity@cranberrytownship.org.

On call

Initially, the Network will be developing a roster of local residents who have expressed an interest in being on call should their special expertise be needed. Once that list has been compiled, the next step will be to



identify new arrivals with diverse backgrounds and an interest in being paired with local residents who share their background. The amount of time an Envoy would spend with the newcomer they are paired with would vary according to the newcomer's need and the convenience of both parties.

At the same time, Winterhalter points out, the Envoy program is only one element of the Diversity Network's efforts. "We also invite anyone who would like to be a part of diversity in general here to become part of this, too," he said. "We'll be working on police-community relations at some point. We're having someone from the Butler Community Resource Center come in to talk to us. We've had a couple of volunteers who want to work with mental illness. The Regional Learning Alliance has put together a dinner for Slippery Rock and LaRoche to talk about involving the universities. So we're doing a lot of things. It's celebrating our diversity to help make people aware of what's going on in Cranberry."

For more details, prospective Envoys are invited to call program coordinator Gary Winterhalter at 412-519-7285, or Charles Hawkins at 724-968-8148. ~

A volunteer program to pair current residents with new arrivals with whom they share distinctive qualities or characteristic of a social minority.

to pair current residents with new arrivals – people with whom they share such distinctive qualities as nationality, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle, language, or anything else characteristic of a social minority. The resident Envoy helps

There Are Powerful New Reasons To Become A Waterpark Member

By the time May rolls around, a huge transformation will have taken place at Cranberry's Community Waterpark. A major rebuild of the facility, which has seen more than a million visitors since it opened in 1998, promise an even better experience for users starting Memorial Day weekend.

The changes began taking place shortly before Labor Day last year. Yet despite a compressed, weather-driven construction schedule, the footprint and features of the rebuilt pool have already visibly changed. So have others which aren't quite as noticeable.

Better water

Take, for example, filtration. "Until now, all the Waterpark features were on the same filtration system," Recreation Program Manager Dave Hutner explained. "We've added two more filtration systems – one dedicated to the spray pad, and one dedicated to zero depth entry pool – as well as the one already there, which is dedicated to the main body of the pool. By adding two more, we'll have better water quality for all three.

"But that's one of the things you can't see when you walk into the pool," Hutner said. "When you walk in you're going to see the splash bucket and the climbing wall. You're going to see that there's a separation between the baby pool and the main pool. You're going to see that the baby pool has doubled in size. You're going to see the umbrellas and the steps and the benches we

"What you're not going to see behind the scenes are the improvements to the infrastructure that create the great quality of water we have out there," he said. "All the filters and chemicals are in a building by the deep end of the pool. It will filter out impurities as small as one to three microns – smaller than a red blood cell. So as part of the project, we had to create a larger building."

Better access

In addition to adding a barrier separating the zero-depth entry baby pool from the Waterpark's main pool – a wall which, in the event of an accident, would isolate the bodies of water and eliminate the need to evacuate the entire pool as its water is being treated – the facility will become more accessible. "We're adding ramps to go down on either side," Hutner noted. "There's a center wall that separates the two ramps, and then there are steps at the end of each one. So we actually have two ADA compliant means of entry and egress from the pool."

Beyond that, all of the pool's interior surfaces have been refinished with a long-lasting cement coating, created specifically for pools and spas.

A few of the Waterpark's changes were actually completed a year ago. They included locker room improvements, new equipment in the concession area, and a more festive party room decorated by a class of Seneca Valley art students. Yet those upgrades pale in comparison to the magnitude of the current \$1.7 million renovation.

Even so, meeting an unforgiving deadline to reopen this spring remains a constant concern. "Getting the concrete in was huge," Hutner said. "If we hadn't got the concrete poured during a couple warm weather weeks in November, they couldn't have poured it until spring, and that would have been a disaster as far as making our deadline. But weather so far has been kind to us."

Better value

The fee for membership to Cranberry Waterpark remains unchanged from last year. "It's still the same price; you're just getting more fun with it," Hutner points out. Until March 31, when the second discount period lapses, the best values for season-long pool memberships will remain in effect. Prices vary with family size; check the Township's website for details. ~

A bigger splash. This aerial photo, taken in early November, shows some of the high-profile changes to Cranberry Waterpark. Among them: 1. a much larger zero-depth entry baby pool, 2. a barrier separating the baby pool from the main pool, and 3. a larger pump building housing two new filtration systems.

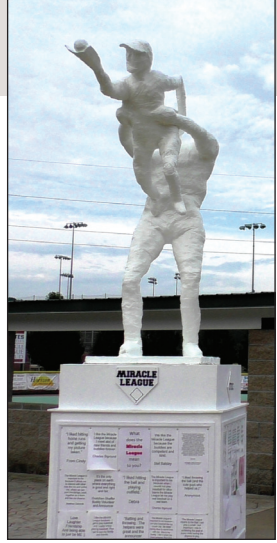


It's the most ambitious project the Waterpark has taken on since it was created.

have inside the baby area. It's the most ambitious project the Waterpark has taken on since it was created.

Miracle League Project Seeks Support

CTCC's partnership with the Miracle League to resurface the League's special purpose ballfield and construct an adjacent playground in Graham Park still needs help. To raise awareness of the \$650,000 project, a statue created for use in connection with fundraising by the Cranberry Artists Network depicting Miracle League's Buddy system, was moved to the high profile intersection of Routes 19 and 228, and the Sunrise Rotary Club has planned a 1970s-themed fundraising Monte Carlo Night for Saturday evening, February 20 at the Marriott. As of December 1, CTCC reported that another \$225,000 – approximately \$20 per Cranberry household – would be needed to complete the resurfacing work and build its companion "Out of the Park Playground." Project Co-Chairs Mike Sherry and Bruce Mazzoni extend their thanks to all who have contributed and ask those who have not to consider lending their support. If the project remains short of funds by the start of construction season, it will either be delayed or scaled back, Mazzoni said. Donations can be made via the CTCC website, www.CTCChest.org, or mailed in using a form on the flier available from the Municipal Center. ~



Get A Job

Cranberry is looking for a few hundred good men, women and teens to fill seasonal jobs this year. They include camp counselors, lifeguards, grounds maintenance workers, and clubhouse grill room attendants, along with many others. Season lengths vary anywhere from three to nine months, depending on the job. Pay rates begin at \$7.75 an hour and go as high as \$15.75, according to the nature of the assignment and the experience of the applicant. Many seasonal employees come back year after year, and their pay goes up with each returning season. Details about job openings as well as an online application form are available on the Township's website. Click the "Employment" link on the left side of the home page. Job openings are also announced on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. ~

It's Baaaack!

CranFest – the Township's second annual celebration of diversity and municipal services – has been set for Saturday, April 9 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM in the Municipal Center this year.

In addition to *Cranberry at Your Service*, a hands-on showcase of Cranberry Township's government activities and services, CranFest will host the 2016 *Folk 'n Food Festival* – an intercultural celebration of the community's diverse population presented by the Cranberry Area Diversity Network. Food will be available in booths staffed by local residents representing home countries from around the world. Entertainment, culture and history presentations will be offered by organizations representing many of those same nations as well as by organizations that work on behalf of other underserved local constituencies. Admission to CranFest is free. Foods may be purchased from the different nationality booths at prices set by each vendor. ~



STEM Project Honored

Trade magazine *Storm Water Solutions* recently profiled a joint Cranberry Township-Seneca Valley



STEM initiative as one of the industry's top ten projects this year. The project – an educational and awareness effort – grew out of an after-school program for middle school girls focused on introducing careers in science, technology, engineering and math. The magazine's award centered on the work of several dozen girls in Seneca Valley's STEM-FEMS Club who stenciled informational messages around catch basins in Graham Park earlier this year. The message texts, many of which were embellished with creative artwork, urge people to exercise care in the use of storm sewers. Project submissions for this year's competition came from Canada, Mexico and the United Kingdom, as well as the United States. ~

JAN

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

* Cranberry Customer Service 724-776-4806 # Cranberry Highlands 724-776-7372
 + Cranberry Library 724-776-9100 < Cranberry EMS 724-776-4480
 ^ Parks and Recreation 724-779-4FUN > ECS&R 1-866-815-0016

FRI 1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Township Offices and Library Closed Waste Collections delayed by one day		SAT 2	SUN 3	MON 4 Christmas Tree Collections, M-F ^ Park Shelter Reservations Open + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am Board of Supervisors Mtg Council Chambers, 6:30pm + First Editions Book Club Library, 7pm		TUES 5 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am + Tween Art Club Library, 4pm < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Cranberry Artists Network Open Studio Grange Hall, 6pm Planning Advisory Commission Council Chambers, 6pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		
WED 6 + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am		THURS 7 + Adult Discussion Group Library, 10am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Family Fun Night Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		FRI 8		SAT 9	SUN 10	MON 11 Christmas Tree Collections, M-F + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am + Teen Advisory Board Library, 4pm
TUES 12 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Tween Art Club Library, 4pm Planning Advisory Commission Council Chambers, 6pm + Frogwatch w/ Succop Conservancy Library, 6pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm				WED 13 + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am * Manager's Coffee Public Works & Traffic Center, 10am + Young at Heart Book Club Library, 7pm				
THURS 14 < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Homeschool Crafternoon Library, 1pm + Family Playtime Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		FRI 15		SAT 16	SUN 17	MON 18 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY No trash delay Library Closed Zoning Hearing Board Mtg (as needed) Council Chambers, 7:30pm		
TUES 19 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Tween Art Club Library, 4pm + Tween Lego Club Library, 4pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		WED 20 + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am + Books and Bagels Book Club Library, 10am		THURS 21 < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Budding Builders Library, 4pm + Tail Waggin' Tutors Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm				
FRI 22	SAT 23 Let's Dance, West Coast Swing Gym, 7pm	SUN 24	MON 25 + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am + Teen Advisory Board Library, 4pm Planning Advisory Commission Council Chambers, 6pm		TUES 26 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		WED 27 + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am	
THURS 28 + 4th Thursday Book Club Library, 10am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Board of Supervisors Mtg Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm			FRI 29	SAT 30	SUN 31	Cranberry Artist's Network Winter Art Show Municipal Center January 25 - March 3		

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FEB

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

* Cranberry Customer Service 724-776-4806 # Cranberry Highlands 724-776-7372
 + Cranberry Library 724-776-9100 < Cranberry EMS 724-776-4480
 ^ Parks and Recreation 724-779-4FUN > ECS&R 1-866-815-0016

Cranberry Artist's Network Winter Art Show Municipal Center through March 3		MON 1 + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am Planning Advisory Commission Council Chambers, 6pm + First Editions Book Club Library, 7pm	TUES 2 Groundhog Day Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am * Manager's Coffee, Recycling & More Franklin Station Rm, 10am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt.	+ Tween Art Club Library, 4pm Cranberry Artists Network Open Studio Grange Hall, 6pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm
WED 3 + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am + 1st-3rd Grade Book Club Library, 7pm	THURS 4 + Adult Discussion Group Library, 10am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Family Fun Night Library, 6:30pm Board of Supervisors Mtg Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	FRI 5 + Teen Movie Night Library, 7pm	SAT 6 + Princess Tea Party Library, 11am	SUN 7
MON 8 + Teen Advisory Board Library, 4pm	TUES 9 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	WED 10 Ash Wednesday + Young at Heart Book Club Library, 7pm + 1st-3rd Grade Book Club Library, 7pm	THURS 11 < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Homeschool Crafternoon Library, 1pm + Family Playtime Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	FRI 12 Lincoln's Birthday ^ Sweetheart Bingo Grange Hall, 1-2pm
SAT 13 Sheriff's Office Gun Licensing Council Chambers, 9am-2pm ^ Cupid's Special Needs Dance Municipal Ctr, 7-9pm	SUN 14 Valentine's Day	MON 15 PRESIDENT'S DAY No trash delay Early Learning Center Open House 10am-1pm & 5-7pm Zoning Hearing Board Mtg (as needed) Council Chambers, 7:30pm Library Closed	TUES 16 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Tween Lego Club Library, 4pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	
WED 17 + Books and Bagels Book Club Library, 10am + 1st-3rd Grade Book Club Library, 7pm	THURS 18 < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Budding Builders Library, 4pm + Tail Waggin' Tutors Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	FRI 19	SAT 20 < Learn CPR 8:30am Learn First Aid 12pm Register, EMS ^ Special Needs Winter Family Fun Day Municipal Ctr, Noon-1pm	
SUN 21	MON 22 + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am + Teen Advisory Board Library, 4pm	TUES 23 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	WED 24 + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am + 1st-3rd Grade Book Club Library, 7pm	
THURS 25 + 4th Thursday Book Club Library, 10am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Board of Supervisors Mtg Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	FRI 26	SAT 27 + Superheros Library, 11am Let's Dance, Hustle Gym, 7pm	SUN 28	MON 29 + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am + Maker Monday Library, 4pm Planning Advisory Commission Council Chambers, 6pm Waterpark Membership 2nd Discount Period Ends

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

* Cranberry Customer Service 724-776-4806 # Cranberry Highlands 724-776-7372
+ Cranberry Library 724-776-9100 < Cranberry EMS 724-776-4480
^ Parks and Recreation 724-779-4FUN > ECS&R 1-866-815-0016

TUES 1 Cranberry Artist's Network Winter Art Show Municipal Ctr Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt.		+ Tween Art Club Library, 4pm Cranberry Artists Network Open Studio Grange Hall, 6pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		WED 2 Cranberry Artist's Network Winter Art Show Municipal Ctr + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am Municipal Center 25th Anniversary Time Capsule Opening	
THURS 3 Cranberry Artist's Network Winter Art Show Municipal Ctr + Adult Discussion Group Library, 10am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Family Fun Night Library, 6:30pm Board of Supervisors Mtg Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		FRI 4	SAT 5	SUN 6	MON 7 + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am Planning Advisory Commission Council Chambers, 6pm + First Editions Book Club Library, 7pm
TUES 8 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		WED 9 + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am + Young at Heart Book Club Library, 7pm		THURS 10 < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Homeschool Crafternoon Library, 1pm + Family Playtime Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	
SUN 13 Daylight Savings Time Begins		MON 14 + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am + Teen Advisory Board Library, 4pm		TUES 15 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Tween Lego Club Library, 4pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	
WED 16 + 4th Thursday Book Club Library, 10am + Books and Bagels Book Club Library, 10am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am		FRI 11		SAT 12 + Author Expo Library, 11am Let's Dance, Cha Cha Gym, 7pm	
THURS 17 St. Patrick's Day < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. + Budding Builders Library, 4pm + Tail Waggin' Tutors Library, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		FRI 18	SAT 19	SUN 20 Spring Begins Palm Sunday ^ Hippity Hop Egg Hunt Parks & Recreation, 10:30am-Noon	
MON 21 + Infant Storytime Library, 10:30am + Maker Monday Library, 4pm Zoning Hearing Board Mtg (as needed) Council Chambers, 7:30pm		THURS 24 + 4th Thursday Book Club Library, 10am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		FRI 25 Good Friday Township Offices, Parks & Recreation and Library Closed	
TUES 22 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm		WED 23 Purim + ABC Storytime Library, 10am & 11am * Manager's Coffee, Library Programs & Parks Facilities Franklin Station Rm, 10am		SAT 26	
SUN 27 Easter Sunday Library Closed		MON 28 + Teen Advisory Board Library, 4pm Planning Advisory Commission Council Chambers, 6pm Yard Waste Collections Resume		TUES 29 Open Gym Pickleball 9-11am < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm	
WED 30		THURS 31 < EMS Child Car Seat Checks 10am-4:30pm by Appt. Board of Supervisors Mtg Council Chambers, 6:30pm Open Gym Basketball (18+) 8-10pm			

Time Capsule Opening To Mark Municipal Center's 25th Anniversary

Before the Municipal Center opened in 1991, community life in Cranberry had never focused around a physical core. Its earliest building, the former Sample Schoolhouse, was miniscule. Its next building, a 13,000 square foot structure at 2700 Rochester Road, was primarily an administrative office with a tiny 200 square foot library. That space soon became overcrowded. And by the late '80s, it was clear that something bigger would be needed. So the Board of Supervisors formed a citizens committee to study the matter and offer their recommendation.

The committee considered three main options: expanding the Township's then-current office; building something entirely new in Community Park; or buying a vacant industrial building at 2525 Rochester Road and adapting it. As part of their deliberations, the committee considered size, parking,

future needs and cost. In the end, their recommendation was to buy the long-vacant Perry Forge plant – a 64,000 square foot industrial structure built in 1963 – and create a community center inside, a site-specific focus for community events and activities.

Jerry Andree, who had interviewed for the post of Township Manager several months before the new Municipal Center's opening, was impressed. "As part of the interview process, the Board said 'come over here and see the building,'" he recalled. "And what impressed me was the vision they had to do it. It was a bold decision; the Supervisors really knew where they were going and what kind of community they wanted to be."

A building within a building

But buying the building and making the needed renovations would take money – about \$3.3 million – and there were other groups who had also expressed interest in purchasing

that building. It would take time to raise the cash, and there was concern that the building would be snapped up by another buyer. That's when the late Frank Hess – a retired steel executive living in Sherwood Oaks – stepped in to help. His handshake offer: until the Township could raise the needed funds, Hess would buy the property, hold it, and then resell it to the Township. It was an offer the Township couldn't refuse.

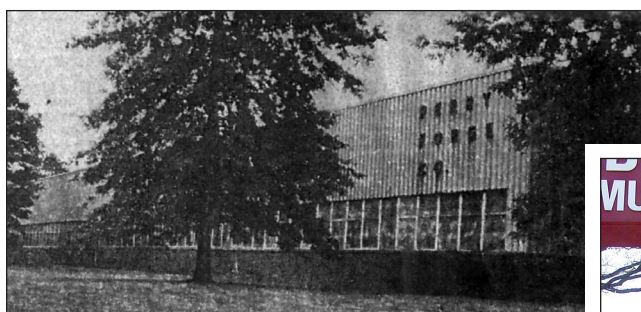
In March of 1989 architect Ralph Sterzinger, whose firm continues to provide design services for the Township, presented preliminary plans for the building's conversion into a community center. It included Township offices, the police department, offices for the former sewer and water authority, the library, and a recreation center. It also set aside space for several other government tenants and a multi-purpose gymnasium, although funding a gym's construction was still uncertain at the time.

Other features included skylights, open interior space, inside rooms with lower rooflines, a bandstand, and a canopied main front entrance. Beyond that, the building's 18-foot height allowed for adding a second floor, conceivably almost doubling its floor space.

A moment in time

Construction on the new community center got underway in 1990; by March of 1991, the building was open for business. To mark the occasion, a 25-year time capsule containing memorabilia of its day was assembled and sealed, along with instructions that it be opened on March 4, 2016. The capsule, which resides in a wooden cabinet in a corner of the library, will be opened as instructed, witnessed by invited guests who originally had a hand in the work leading up to Cranberry's Municipal Center. Its contents will then be displayed for the public.

Continued on page 17.



Municipal Center Upgrade Chronology

IMPROVEMENT.....	YEAR
Building purchased	1989
Renovated for Community Center.....	1990
Parking lot expansion and cell tower.....	1996
Parking lot islands and trees	1997
Sample School House relocated.....	1999
Administration area moved.....	2000
Senior/Teen Center created.....	2000
Skate Park behind building.....	2005
Children's Library expansion.....	2006
Police addition.....	2008
Finance department addition	2008
Parks & Recreation, Customer Service renovation	2012
Joint driveway with St. Ferdinand	2012
New common area carpet.....	2013
Customer Service area renovations	2014
Preschool and Library renovations	2014
Parks & Recreation renovations	2015



Forging ahead. Cranberry's Municipal Center is an adaptive reuse of the 1963 Perry Forge industrial building, shown in this 1988 Post-Gazette photo. In 1991 it reopened as Cranberry's community center. The building has seen numerous improvements since that time, as shown in the table.

Haine Middle School looks 'Beyond Our Walls'

By Dan Didesiderio, Principal, Haine Middle School



Education at Haine Middle School may include traditional subjects such as reading and math, but there is so much more happening with students and staff. The building theme for the 2015-2016 school year, "Beyond Our Walls," is the second part of a two-year initiative developed by the Olweus Bullying Prevention Committee and is fulfilled by the creativity and compassion of the 624 fifth and sixth grade students at Haine.

At the start of the school year, as Principal of Haine Middle School, I challenged students to represent themselves, their families, and their community as responsible and caring citizens. Students were encouraged to think about how they can give back to their community while raising awareness, funds, and care for those in need.

"It is really heartwarming to see students come forward with ideas of how to look Beyond Our Walls" said Assistant Principal Cassandra Doggrell. She referenced a variety of charitable activities students have engaged in last year and this year. In addition to events held at Haine Middle School for the Superhero Foundation, Cranberry Fire and EMS Services, and the Butler County Humane Society, students have engaged in classroom and small group initiatives to support organizations that they value.

While it may be hard to believe that middle school students could make such an impact on the community, time and time again they understand just what it takes to make it

happen. Technology gives students the opportunity to reach out and communicate their ideas and turn those ideas into meaningful philanthropic goals. Almost all of the fundraisers, food and toy drives, and events are student created, planned, and led. These types of activities serve not only to give back to the community, but to engage students in collaboration and goal setting.

Another initiative that is helping students to create and plan around their interests is a class called "Genius Hour." Genius Hour empowers students to engage in self-driven learning about a topic of their choice. While not all activities are about giving back to the community, many students have taken advantage of the time to create and implement learning paths that will result in a positive impact on the lives of others.

"We have students raising money for and designing wells in Haiti while their peers in the next room create an online funding campaign for St. Jude's Hospital," said School Counselor Jen Shipe. In addition, the teachers at Haine Middle School have engaged students in learning opportunities that incorporate core subjects with relevant and applicable skills to help promote their initiatives.

Haine Middle School continues to be one of the premier middle schools in the greater Pittsburgh area. In addition to the "Beyond Our Walls" theme, students are engaged in a variety of STEM, arts, athletic, and extra-curricular activities. With the support of a thriving community, the Haine PTO, and the wonderful families of HMS, students will continue to grow into innovative and productive global citizens.



ABOVE: HMS Food Drive. Sixth grade students at Haine Middle School collected and organized over 50 baskets of food items to provide for families in need over the Thanksgiving Holiday.

RIGHT: HMS Breast Cancer Collection. Haine Middle School Students organize and collect money for Breast Cancer Awareness. The entire project was student driven.



Cyber Harassment Morphs Into Cybercrime

Back in the day, harassing someone usually involved some sort of face-to-face confrontation. Under state law, it still does. However, in a world of instantaneous online and cellular communications, both the forms and opportunities for disparaging, annoying or threatening others, even from a distance, have grown exponentially. Now state law has begun catching up.

Prohibitions against cyber harassment – a term which covers all sorts of online pestering and bullying through the use of email, instant messages, chat rooms, blogs and social media – are now embedded in an amendment to the Pennsylvania Criminal Code. And local police, including Cranberry Township's police, are tasked with its enforcement – a sometimes difficult assignment because those doing the harassment usually remain anonymous while threatening others online.

Learning the code

Now, however, tracking tools are available, and some of the more complex jurisdictional issues associated with electronic communications have been addressed in the Code.

"For example, if you're getting harassed and you live in Cranberry, Cranberry can file charges, even if you were in Sewickley when you got it on a cell phone," Police Chief Kevin Meyer pointed out. "The proper venue is likely going to be where the victim resides.

So if someone would call 911, we'd do an investigation and determine who the perpetrator is. If it met the criteria, we'd file appropriate charges, take the evidence that was posted online, and have the victim testify."

Today, complaints about cyber harassment often involve children of school-age. In many communities, it has become something of an epidemic leading, in extreme instances, to criminal records and even suicides.

Pennsylvania's Code provides judges with the option of diverting juveniles charged with cyber harassment into counseling, training, or educational programs. However, there are also instances where committing a crime using a computer – which includes the use of cell phones for harassment – can result in an enhanced sentence.

Case in point

This past November, in Pennsylvania's Chester County, charges of cyber-bullying a 13-year old girl were heard against three boys ranging in age from 11 to 15. After the girl broke up with one of the defendants, he shared compromising images that he had pressured her to take of herself, quickly escalating into bullying and sexual harassment.

In announcing the charges, the County District Attorney said he hoped to offer parents and teens a public lesson about the outbreak of sexting and



Complaints about cyber harassment often involve children of school-age.

cyber harassment in schools. He reminded teens and parents that sharing sexual images of minors on phones and electronic devices, as happened in that case, is a serious crime, possibly leading to lifelong sexual offender status.

Even though it has become a huge issue in many schools, the problem is by no means limited to children. Recent scandals involving sexting and inappropriate uses of electronic communications have tarnished public officials as well. Not only that, the complex transmission and storage systems associated with electronic communications frequently mean that files sent through cyberspace are never completely eradicated. Recovered messages, even those thought to have been deleted, can have a ruinous impact on a person's life and career, even years later. ~

Time Capsule Opening *Continued from page 15*

In the years since its original opening, Cranberry's population has exploded and the building has been expanded, upgraded, and improved on multiple

occasions. Today, it includes about 50 percent more floor space than it did in 1991. But the growth pressure is relentless. So several years ago, the

Board commissioned a new review to determine whether it still made sense to remain in the building. When the numbers came back, the answer was a resounding 'yes'.

*It's best to stay here and build on what we have.
We'll be here for a long time.*

"It's best to stay here and build on what we have," Andree reflected. "We'll be here for a long time." ~

The Dark Vision Of Cranberry Township's Police

The vision of Cranberry's police department recently became sharper, thanks to the help of advanced technology and a gift from the Township's fire company.

Fifteen years ago, as Cranberry's senior police and fire officials remember well, a local man was arrested and taken to the Township police department's holding cell pending his arraignment. But a few hours later, he seemed to have disappeared, leaving only a hole in the ceiling where a drop panel had formerly been in place.

No one had seen him leaving the cell, and a check of the building's perimeter doors revealed no breeches. What it meant was that the man would likely be found somewhere in the crawl space above the Municipal Center, but no one was sure where. That's when the fire company was called.

Finding people in darkened places, whether they are victims of a disaster or fugitives from justice are valuable uses of the instruments.

One of the fire company's then-new tools was an MSA thermal imaging camera. Instead of displaying images illuminated by visible light, it showed images based on infrared radiation, distinguishing objects according to their heat.

"We brought in the camera, scanned the ceiling, and pretty soon we could see that he was right there, right above the ceiling. You could see him by his body heat," long-time firefighter



Mark Nanna recalled.

Night vision

Finding people in darkened places, whether they are victims of a disaster or fugitives from justice are still valuable uses of the instruments, which were originally designed to permit firefighters to see areas of heat through

smoke, darkness, and permeable barriers. In addition to seeing the heat signature of visually obscured victims, indoors or out, they allow firefighters to quickly find the seat of a structure fire, spot smoldering embers inside a wall, and detect overheated electrical wiring.

But they also have value in police work. "They're great for finding people in the woods or in a darkened building," Public Safety Director Jeff Schueler pointed out. "If you get to a crash scene soon enough, you can even use the thermal imaging camera to identify skid marks. A lot of times you can't see them, but there's still a heat transfer. If you get there quick enough, you'll see that from the friction." The same applies to recent footprints.

"It also could be used if you had somebody ejected from a crash and you couldn't find them. If you're searching the side of the road, it's going to pick up their body heat. Or if somebody's running and pitches a gun, the thermal imaging camera is going to pick up the heat difference between the ground and the evidence because steel cools differently than the ground does. It's



Now you see him. A thermal imaging camera was used by Massachusetts State Police to find the surviving Boston Marathon bomber in a Watertown boat.

sensitive enough that if I pointed it at a wall, I could see the studs inside. Even though the room may be at a certain temperature, the wood in the stud is different than the drywall. So you'd see lines where the studs are."

On sight

Ever since the fire company's first thermal imaging camera was acquired in 1998, Cranberry's police department has been able to go to a fire station, pluck one of the units from an engine, and use it as needed. But now, they have one of their own. Late last year, the Cranberry Township Volunteer Fire Company's Relief Association, which buys equipment used to protect its firefighters, purchased new cameras. In return, the company donated its still-working 2010 model camera to Cranberry's police department, where it will be available any time, 24/7.

But its police use will be restricted to areas of public access. The camera, which does not record the images it displays, won't be brought into private homes without either a search warrant or strong suspicion of criminal behavior. ~

Township Police Now Carry Anti-Overdose Meds

Cranberry's police have joined a growing number of other local police departments in an effort to combat a rising tide of opiate-related deaths in the Commonwealth.

The volume of drug overdoses in Cranberry has fluctuated over time, according to Township police, although it's held fairly steady for the past five or six years. However, neighboring Allegheny County experienced more than 300 fatal overdoses in 2013 alone, and there were another 171 in the five surrounding counties – more than the number of people who died in auto accidents.

Butler County was no exception. Particularly in the City of Butler and Butler Township, the overdose rate spiked last year, as it has in many other parts of Pennsylvania. One reason, according to Public Safety Director Jeff Schueler, is that the drugs themselves are changing.

"We're seeing higher grades of heroin," he explained. "That's why we're seeing

the overdoses. Some of it is cut with Fentanyl, a cancer pain killer, which is really dangerous."

In response, state legislators passed Act 139 in 2014, allowing first responders to administer the opiate antidote Naloxone, also known as Narcan, with immunity from criminal prosecution or civil liability. Then this past October, Pennsylvania Physician General Rachel Levine signed a statewide order making the medicine available to anyone without a prescription.

"We're going to partner with UPMC," Schueler said in November. "UPMC approached us through the ambulance service. They're going to provide the Narcan. We'll do some training with EMS, then every officer will know how to use it, and we'll have numerous kits available."

Of course, combating a problem that Pennsylvania's secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs has characterized as an epidemic involves much more than simply reversing an accidental



We're seeing higher grades of heroin. That's why we're seeing the overdoses.

overdose. But recovery from addiction is only possible if someone survives an overdose; that's what the Narcan is for.

However, drug deaths and damage to the addict's own health are only part of the state's drug problem. "Calls here related to heroin in one way or another happen daily," Cranberry Police Sgt. Chuck Mascellino pointed out. "Retail thefts – all of our crime – primarily comes back to heroin usage." ~



PD Has A Change Of Heart

Cranberry's police vehicles have just been outfitted with new automated external defibrillators, or AEDs, changing out the decade-

old units previously carried in its patrol cars. An AED is a portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias and treats them with electrical current. A jolt of electricity stops the arrhythmia, allowing the heart to reestablish a normal rhythm. Using simple voice and visual commands, AEDs are designed to be used by laypersons as well as EMS professionals. ~

Streets Paved With Platinum

Last year, for the ninth year in a row, Cranberry Township was named a recipient of the AAA East Central division's Platinum Award for traffic safety, the association's highest level of recognition. The award takes into account a variety of traffic safety programs beyond routine and targeted traffic patrols. They include a campaign directed against aggressive driving, a bicycle rodeo, child safety seat inspection, sobriety checkpoints, truck safety checks, seatbelt enforcement, driving instruction for teens and seniors, work zone safety, sidewalk extensions, roadway maintenance, traffic engineering, and Cranberry's fire police – a dedicated unit of the Volunteer Fire Company that protects firefighters and motorists as well as onlookers. The AAA award is intended to recognize their combined efforts. ~



Move Over! But Which Way?

For decades, Pennsylvania law has required motorists to slow down and move right when they see an emergency vehicle approaching, no matter which direction it's coming from. That's still the law, and it still makes sense, at least most of the time – but not always. Sometimes the law and common sense are in conflict.

Say, for example, you're on Rt. 19 at the Rt. 228 intersection, crawling along in a left turn lane. You hear a siren behind you. Pennsylvania State law says you need to pull over to the right. But you're three lanes away from the right side of the road. You don't want to get in the fire truck's way, but you don't want to break the law, either. What should you do?

Bill Ahlgren has a unique vantage point on the matter. As a private citizen, he is as likely as anyone else to find himself in traffic with an emergency vehicle approaching, lights and sirens blaring. As a volunteer firefighter, he is often called upon to drive the big engines responding to 9-1-1 calls – sometimes through heavy traffic. And as a Sergeant in Cranberry's Police Department, he is sworn to enforce the law. So we asked Sgt. Ahlgren what to do, particularly when observing the letter of state traffic code may not be the right response.

The worst thing is to do nothing. "Making a decision is better than making no decision."

Do something

"It's a very tough choice," Ahlgren acknowledged. But the worst thing is to do nothing. "Making a decision is better than making no decision," he said. "One of the problems is that when people see

emergency lights coming, they panic and jam on their brakes.

"I'm always leery about telling people to move left," he noted. "But in certain situations, that might be the appropriate course of action. However, if you're out in the middle of the road and you're the only vehicle there, you probably shouldn't be turning left or stopping in the middle of the road. That's why they always tell you to go right.

"You need to evaluate based on where you are

at the time an emergency vehicle is approaching. Ask yourself: what's the safest thing I can do at this moment for this incident?" If you're in traffic and everyone else in line is moving left, that's probably what you should be doing, too.

Stop

But clearing a path for the emergency vehicle is only part of the required response. "You've also got to stop your vehicle," Ahlgren emphasized. "Not jam on the brakes, but move to the right, come to a stop, wait until everything passes, and then move back into traffic. That's because you, as a driver, have no idea where my emergency vehicle is going. I could be making a left, I could be turning right." Not only that, in most emergencies an assortment of emergency vehicles will respond; don't assume it's all over once that squad car or fire truck has passed you; there may be more.

There's another possibility, too. It's that a police car may not be on its way to a 9-1-1 call after all; it may actually be trying to pull you over. "Whether you



Uh-oh. When an emergency vehicle approaches, slow down, go right, and stop – if you can.

think they're after you or not, you're still required to immediately pull over to the right and stop," he noted. "If those lights don't pass you and instead come up behind you, they're probably waiting for you."

But even if they're not for you, when someone else gets pulled over, you still have an duty under state law: you need to slow down and move a lane away from the emergency vehicle, which is typically stopped on the right hand shoulder. That requirement to move over one lane applies to all motorists regardless of the emergency they encounter, whether it's a traffic stop, a fire, an ambulance or even a tow truck removing a disabled vehicle. If their light is flashing, either move over or slow down as you pass.

Still, nothing takes the place of being attentive.

"You constantly have to evaluate live events because they're always changing," Ahlgren pointed out. "There's no script for an emergency run. Every situation is different; they're all unique." ~

Cranberry EMS Engineers A Safer Ambulance

Most people know the essential job of any ambulance: to quickly transport people who are sick or injured to a nearby hospital. In 2015, Cranberry EMS ran more than 3,800 such calls. Less well known, however, is that doing so is dangerous work; injuries among EMS professionals themselves are the highest of any industry in America.

A study by the National Center for Biotechnology Information found that the overall injury rate among full-time EMS workers was 34.6 out of 100 per year. In other words, more than one out of three get hurt on the job every year – substantially higher than any other type of public safety work, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics.

So, in developing new vehicle specifications to replace its retiring ambulance fleet, Cranberry Township's EMS decided to design one which would not only efficiently transport patients to hospital emergency rooms, it would also help assure the safety of onboard medical technicians while caring for those patients. The first of them arrived last month.

Built by Canadian manufacturer Demers on a high-profile Mercedes Sprinter chassis, the ambulance has all the handling and operational qualities that make sense for any work vehicle: a tight turning radius, great fuel economy, plenty of interior room, and a long useful

lifespan. But it also includes features which, in combination, make it among the safest ambulances anywhere.

It includes features which, in combination, make it among the safest ambulances anywhere.

Stay seated

For one thing, the medical technician – who can stand while working on the patient whenever the ambulance is parked – stays belted into a track-mounted pedestal chair once the ambulance is in motion. All onboard cabinets and controls are built to be comfortably reached and operated from that seated position. Corners of all interior parts are rounded and all of its materials are shatterproof, to minimize the technicians' potential for injury from inside surfaces. And more stretcher straps have been added to keep patients securely in place.

Motorists and passers-by will be alerted more quickly to the status of the new ambulance, painted bright yellow with added striping. "When we're responding, the lights in the back change from red, while we're in progress, to amber

when we're stopped," Cranberry EMS Executive Director Jeff Kelly pointed out.

"We've added intersection

lights in the front – a big cone of light protruding from the lower center of the vehicle, that washes the intersection with light. We have what's called a rumbler siren, a vibrating mechanism where people sitting at the intersection will feel it even before they hear it and recognize that the ambulance is approaching. There's also illumination from perimeter lighting underneath the ambulance to light the ground around it."

National envy

The Pennsylvania Turnpike is one of Cranberry EMS's clients. "We use the Turnpike as the point of reference because there really isn't anything else we can use to benchmark it against," Kelly said. "We are a Turnpike provider and there are only a certain number of them in the Commonwealth. So we could say that these ambulances are the safest in the Turnpike system."

Putting so many safety and performance features into a single vehicle was unfamiliar to most ambulance makers. "We shopped this through a couple different manufacturers," he said. "Nobody wanted to do what we wanted them to do with regard to all the changes – the seating, the lighting, the ergonomics, moving things around, packaging things a certain way.

"So now there's a lot of industry buzz from the folks we previously bought ambulances from. They want to see ours because now they're really interested," Kelly said. "And Demers, the manufacturer, has talked to us about wanting to take it around to conferences and shows. So it's on a national level. It's going to be their premier showcase to show off the design. And they're telling us they'd like to borrow it back a fair amount." ~

Built for safety. Every detail of Cranberry Township EMS new ambulance design is focused on improving the safety of medical technicians as well as their patients.





Firefighter Profile: Ein Deutscher Feuerwehrmann Besucht Cranberry Township

If you ask firefighter Fabian Kapp how Cranberry's fire company is different than his own community's fire company in Wilnsdorf, Germany, he will quickly tell you they're exactly the same, pointing out their very similar personal protective gear, their generous township financial support, their county-based dispatching service, their focus on auto wrecks, and their all-volunteer membership. But dig a little deeper, and real differences begin to surface.

Last summer Kapp, whose family owns a business building specialty steelmaking machines, was looking for ways to work in the U.S. for a year. The family's business partner, the much larger Danieli Company – an Italian corporation with an outpost in Cranberry Woods and a product line that includes a full spectrum of equipment for the steel industry – offered Kapp a year-long assignment. But, as a long-standing member of his hometown fire company in west central Germany, Kapp also wanted to learn about the firefighting aspects of America's community life during his year abroad.

However, according to the bylaws of Cranberry's fire company, the only way to observe its operations and learn how its members are trained is to actually become a member yourself. So in September, upon arriving in Cranberry, he applied for membership, and in October, following an accelerated vetting process led by Membership Committee Chair Elaine Cornell, Kapp was voted into membership.

Yet despite his more than 20 years of firefighting experience, there was a problem: the documents that accredit

a firefighter in Germany are not recognized in Pennsylvania. In fact, according to fire Chief Todd Rice, there are even other U.S. states that don't accept Pennsylvania's certifications.

The documents that accredit a firefighter in Germany are not recognized in Pennsylvania.

As a result, Kapp's service with the Cranberry fire company would have to focus on support roles. But that was actually fine with Kapp himself.

Service contrasts

Although his English is excellent, the cryptic radio dispatches from Butler 9-1-1 are still hard to follow. "My English language is not good enough to fully understand what is said during a real call, when they speak very fast, what they need, or what is going on," he explained. "Also, I do not know the equipment 100 percent. It's a security and safety issue when the firefighters cannot fully trust each other; that's why I said I will take a back seat for now, I'd like to learn a little bit more."

But the differences extend beyond language. In fact, the ecosystem of firefighting in smaller German communities – Wilnsdorf, with 22,000 residents, is actually a composite of eleven small villages – is quite different than in Western Pennsylvania. For example, as Kapp explains,



A year abroad. Volunteer firefighter Fabian Kapp from Wilnsdorf, Germany, here for a year on business, joined the Cranberry fire company in October to find out more about how his American counterparts train and fight fires.

each of Wilnsdorf's eleven villages has its own fire station and fire company members; their numbers vary from one location to the next. A member's 180 hours of required essential training is all community-based. And fire trucks there are only about one-third the size of their American counterparts; a Cranberry aerial truck simply couldn't navigate the German community's narrow village streets.

The fires themselves are different, too. The stone and masonry used in German home construction is much more fire resistant than the wood found in American housing. When a fire occurs in a German home, the damage is more likely to come from water used in fighting the fire than from the fire itself. So water there is used much more sparingly.

But perhaps the biggest difference is recruitment. In Wilnsdorf, firefighter preparation begins as a youth activity, starting at age 10. In addition to teaching kids about fire, it also involves play and camp outings through age 18, by which time

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Cranberry welcomes new Fire Company volunteers throughout the year. To learn more, call 724-776-1196.



What does it take to make a fire company great?

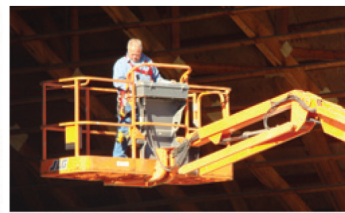


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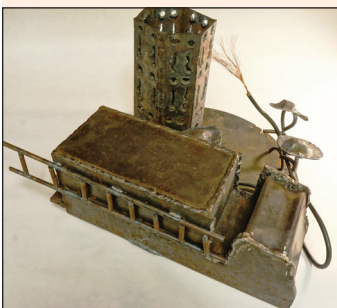
Ein Deutscher Feuerwehrmann Besucht Cranberry Township

Continued from page 22

the child becomes eligible for full fire company membership. In fact, according to Kapp, that is essentially the only way members come into the fire service there.

"I'm looking at this as a kind of foreign exchange program," Fire Company President Ed Hestin explained. "Fabian doesn't come to us as someone who would like to be a firefighter some day;

he already is a firefighter. He can share things with us, we can share things with him. So I talked to the Chief and said what have we got to lose here?" ~



Firemen Of Steel

A key part of CTCC's 2015 firefighter initiative was the endowment of scholarships for students at Butler County Community College who volunteered for their hometown fire companies while enrolled at BC3. Cole Campbell of Unionville, who is taking the college's welding certificate program, is among those scholars. The mixed-material project shown here, which demonstrates both his welding skill and his love of firefighting, was built as a classroom exercise in the program. Cole was one of five students who qualified for scholarships this past fall. Thanks to Cole for his artistry and service to the community! ~



724-776-4806

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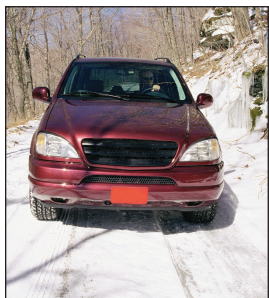
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This Isn't Florida

Township police are encouraging local residents to get smart about preventing avoidable injury in Cranberry's winter weather. Among their top tips: **Prepare your vehicle** with particular attention to systems which are prone to failure in cold weather: ignition, hoses and fan belts, battery, tires, and radiator fluids. **Avoid strain** while shoveling by observing the National Safety Council guidelines: take it slow, push snow when possible, but if you must lift it, use a small or partly filled shovel, lift with your legs rather than your back, and don't work to the point of exhaustion. If you think you have **frostbite**, **seek treatment immediately**. And **prevent carbon monoxide poisoning** by installing a working CO detector in your home. ~