

Cranberrytoday

FALL 2017

Fire Company Regroups, Seeks New Recruits

There's a serious problem with America's volunteer fire companies: they're disappearing. The number of fire companies, as well as the number of volunteer firefighters, have been in decline for most of the past decade. And during the past few years, that's been the case in Cranberry as well.

"There are huge demands on the personnel who belong to the fire company," CTVFC President Ed Hestin acknowledged. "It's getting harder and harder to recruit and retain people.

There are all sorts of reasons why – jobs, families, careers. People come and people go. But there are more leaving than coming in, so net-net, we're down in our total membership."

Starting last year, the Fire Company undertook a no-holds-barred planning exercise to formulate a strategy that would allow it to survive as a volunteer organization. Implementing the study's recommendations, including the creation of several new paid positions filled by experienced professionals who

would assume certain responsibilities that previously fell to volunteers, is now well underway. It is already reshaping the fire company and bringing it closer into the Township's daily operations.

The objective is to remain a volunteer organization versus a paid department.

"The objective is to put in place something that will enable us to remain a volunteer organization versus having to change into a paid department, which would obviously have a tremendous impact on the community from a tax perspective," Hestin said.

New personnel

One of the key recommended changes was for the Township to hire either a full-time fire chief or an executive director to oversee the fire company. **David Gallagher**, with a 30-year career in emergency medical service and lengthy tenure as chief of his hometown Stowe Township Fire Department, was brought on board at the beginning of 2017 with the newly minted title of Director, Fire and Emergency Services. In addition

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Emergency team. Cranberry's new approach to public safety more closely integrates its fire, EMS, EMA, and police with Township staff. Key members include, from left to right, Fire Risk Reduction Coordinator Jeff Gooch, Fire and Emergency Services Director David Gallagher, Fire Administrative Assistant Amy Behun, Fire Prevention Administrator/EMA Coordinator Mark Nanna, Cranberry EMS Executive Director Jeff Kelly, Police Sergeant/Volunteer firefighter Bill Ahlgren, and Fire Company President Ed Hestin.

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Professionalizing Local Emergency Services

By John Skorupan, Cranberry Township Supervisor

It's no secret that a number of communities throughout the country are experiencing tensions between police officers and the public they serve. A series of violent incidents, many of which have been captured on video and enthusiastically circulated through TV and social media, have enflamed these tensions to alarming proportions.

Of course, Cranberry shares the same planet with these other communities and their emergency services. But instead of angry criticism, I keep hearing from people who have wonderful things to say about our police, fire and emergency medical service. So it's worth taking a closer look at why Cranberry's first responders are getting heartfelt thanks from the people they serve, while their counterparts in so many other communities are not.

Now I recognize that every community is different in its makeup, size, culture and resources, so the character of their local emergency services will be a bit different, too.

The professionals

But for Cranberry, I think that the key to all the public support our emergency services receive can be summarized as



'professionalism.' And by that, I don't just mean that they're doing it for a living. In fact, in the case of our Fire Company, they aren't; they're doing it

• The key to all the public support our emergency services receive can be summarized as 'professionalism.'

as unpaid volunteers. So for us, the term means something different than it does for, say, a professional golfer or professional musician. Nor is it meant to be the opposite of 'amateur.'

To understand what professionalism really means, it helps to look at examples of emergency services that do not operate in a professional manner – a pattern which is all too common in much of the world, even including many of America's roughly 20,000 local police departments.

The unprofessionals

Let me offer some examples of an unprofessional emergency service. For instance:

- It would be one where both the tasks they're assigned and the employment of personnel to do them, are the results of patronage – extensions of the community's entrenched political, economic or social power system.
- It would be a group of first responders whose job training and education, instead of being ongoing, ended with graduation from the police academy, the fire school, or state EMS licensure.
- It would be a department where the agency's legitimacy and authority to operate derives solely from its centralized management instead

of being earned from the public it serves.

- It's one where any discretion by the individual officer, firefighter or EMT to innovate in solving problems and achieving better results is systematically denied.
- It's one where the relationship between responders and the public is remote and impersonal.
- It's one where law enforcement priorities don't mirror the concerns of local residents.
- It's one where insulation from the public rather than partnering and engaging with them is the rule.
- It's one where accountability is measured by procedures followed rather than by results achieved such as reducing crime, containing fires, or saving lives.

The turnaround

However, if you take any of these characteristics and turn them around, you start to see how distinctive Cranberry's emergency services really are – how differently they're operated and perceived. For Cranberry's first responders, learning is continuous, respect for residents is expected, innovation is welcomed, outreach is constant, and the priorities of each service are determined by the residents they serve.

Cranberry isn't your grandpa's hometown, nor are its public safety services those of years past. The professionalism of our men and women is a reflection of the community they serve and the major reason why, at a time of genuine tension between emergency workers and their communities elsewhere, Cranberry's first responders get the wholehearted support they now enjoy. ~

You can reach **John Skorupan** by email at john.skorupan@cranberrytownship.org



Understanding Grief and Loss

Dealing with the death of a family member, neighbor, co-worker or other close acquaintance is a challenge that everyone faces sooner or later. Precisely because the experience of loss is universal, those who are bereaved can

learn ways of coping and draw comfort from one another. Between 4:00 and 9:00 PM on Wednesday, October 4, the Cranberry Area Diversity Network will hold a free public session on Understanding Grief and Loss in the Cranberry Township Municipal Center. The six program speakers include professionals who will focus on different aspects of personal loss. Individual speakers will address questions from attendees and a panel discussion will follow. Resource tables from organizations providing various forms of support to grieving families will be available to meet with anyone interested and explain their services. Refreshments will be provided. Reservations are suggested at diversity@cranberrytownship.org. ~



Please Do Not Knock

Under a new Township ordinance, commercial sales representatives can be barred from soliciting at certain addresses if the homeowner makes that preference a matter of record. In July, Cranberry's Board of Supervisors approved a year-to-year Do Not Knock registry as an amendment to the Township's Code of Ordinances. It is the goal of the Township that the experience of door-to-door commercial sales in Township neighborhoods is a positive one for both licensees and residents. The Do Not Knock Registry is designed to support this goal. For those residents welcoming home sales visits, the revision also extends by one hour – from 8:00-9:00 PM – the times during which door-to-door commercial solicitation may be conducted and a license and identification badge issued by the Township police are required. Online registration to be placed on the Do Not Knock list is available to Township residents. Terms of the ordinance took effect October 1. ~



Work from home? Respond from home!



Most of Cranberry's volunteer firefighters have full-time jobs. They work downtown. They work on the road. They work in business parks all over the region. A few are retired. And some work from their homes.

Why is that important? It's because mobilizing people to respond to 9-1-1 calls in the middle of the day is difficult. So people who are available to respond during normal business hours are especially welcome as fire company volunteers. And the need goes beyond experienced firefighters; Cranberry's fire company requires people with all sorts of skills.

If your workplace is your home, stop by our Park Station and talk with one of us. Or go online at to see how you can leverage your home-based work life to the benefit of your community and achieve something of lasting value.



The Cranberry Township
Volunteer Fire Company





At Last, John Howley Is Following His Dream

As teenagers growing up in Michigan during the 1980s, John Howley and his brother would listen to the CB radio built into their father's car. Whenever they would hear from someone stuck in the snow or in need of assistance, they would respond, helping the caller out of trouble and getting them back on the road. It was an impulse that remained with John throughout his unrelated 35-year career in hotel management during which, if nobody else was on hand to respond, he would stop to help an accident victim.

But while hotel management has provided a comfortable living for Howley, his wife and their family of six children, it came about almost as an accident. "Law enforcement was always a dream of mine as a kid," he recalled recently. "When I graduated from high school, I initially went to a community college with the intent of going into law enforcement. But while I was in school, I got a job at a hotel. So I ended up switching to the hotel major. I've been in the hospitality business ever since. I'm currently Director of Finance for the Omni William Penn; my wife works at



the Marriott here in Cranberry, and my oldest son is Assistant General Manager at the Drury Plaza Hotel downtown."

On the move

As a boy, Howley had moved repeatedly with his parents, following his father's career as a Chrysler executive, including several years in Brazil, Mexico and Puerto Rico. Later, as a rising hotel executive, John and his wife moved to Florida, where he helped to open a new one. Then it was back to his wife's hometown in Massachusetts. Fifteen years ago, Howley and his family relocated to Cranberry from Greentree, where the couple had moved in 1994 to work for Interstate Hotels, a management company with 250 hotels of various chains in its portfolio.

In 2012, the Howley's fourth child Sean, then a sophomore in Seneca Valley, announced that he intended to go to VoTech for its emergency services program and that he planned to join Cranberry's fire company as a junior firefighter once he turned 16. Problem was, he didn't have a driver's license.

"Right after he joined I figured, well, if I'm going to be driving him back and forth, I might as well join myself," John recalled. "But if I'm not going to be a firefighter, maybe I'll direct traffic; I'll join the fire police."

Since that time, Sean has moved on to become a full-time firefighter in the Air Force, which deployed him to Southwest Asia this past August. But the family's youngest son Evan, who recently turned 14, has now signed on as a Junior Firefighter – a service opportunity limited to the 14 and 15-year old children of active Cranberry

Move over, please. Cranberry Fire Police officer John Howley's personal car is outfitted with a rooftop light bar, a window decal and a vanity license plate intended to let other motorists know why he's rushing to the scene of an incident.

Fire Company members – under the supervision of his father.

Learning the job

To become Fire Police officers, each volunteer has to complete a 16-hour course – a burden significantly less than the 188 hours of Essentials training required to become a Firefighter I.

"Most of the learning is on-the-job training," Howley explained. "In the class, we learn the basic laws for directing traffic. There's a huge manual – the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices – that sets out the requirements for altering the flow of traffic – where you have to place signage, the size of the signs, the color of the signs, the cones you use to channel traffic.

"If we had a recent incident, we'll do an after-action review during our Tuesday Fire Police training. We'll pull up Google Maps to display the intersection and we'll see where we were, where the different fire police were positioned, how we had traffic going, and whether we could have done something else to allow for smoother flow. If there's an

If there's an incident at 19 and 228, it takes at least six people to control traffic.

incident at 19 and 228, it takes at least six people to control traffic. There are currently about ten of us.

"As far as the fire police are concerned, for me it's just that passion I had as a kid where I wanted to do law enforcement," he reflected. "This is as close as I'm going to get." ~

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

Fire Company Regroups, Seeks New Recruits

Continued from front cover

to overseeing the fire company and Emergency Management Agency, his work involves serving as Township liaison to Cranberry's independent EMS.

Mark Nanna, a former fire chief and long-serving volunteer on the Fire Company's brigade, previously held the Township post of Fire Administrative Assistant. One of the first assignments in his new post as Fire Prevention Administrator/EMA Coordinator has been to check the status of the 800 buildings that carry Township-issued licenses for sprinklers, oven hoods, and automatic alarm systems. False alarms coming from malfunctioning systems are a chronic issue accounting for hundreds of calls a year. Reducing them, and the associated burden on volunteers, is essential to limiting volunteer burnout.

Taking Nanna's former job, which involves preparing incident reports, writing grant applications and paying bills, is firefighter **Amy Behun**. In addition to carrying out those duties – as well as responding to 9-1-1 calls as a volunteer – her job now includes new

member recruitment and retention. That has been her major focus since coming on board full-time in June. Although her recruitment strategy remains a work in progress, it includes a focus on retirees, fitness centers, and women, as well as members of various organizations.

Volunteer firefighter **Jeff Gooch** is an information technology whiz who served on the Township's IT staff for the past seven years. Before that, he dispatched medical helicopters and provided technical support to several different public safety agencies. His support for fire, police and EMS continued in Cranberry and this past summer evolved into the newly created job of Fire Risk Reduction Coordinator. The essence of his new position involves analyzing data to identify the greatest fire risks and then finding ways of using fire company and Township resources to reduce them.

Township resources

In addition to benefitting from the new staff positions, both the fire company and Cranberry EMS are looking for ways that other Township

assets, such as human resources, information technology, community development, communications and vehicle maintenance can partner with them to ease the burden on volunteers. Beyond that, the Fire Company expects to present Cranberry's Board of Supervisors with a proposal to build overnight accommodations for volunteers who would have scheduled nights on call – freeing other firefighters from having to turn out for every 9-1-1 overnight dispatch.

"I think it's an important step for the Township," Hestin observed. "Not only from the perspective of investing taxpayer funds, but also as a reflection of their trust and confidence that the fire company knows what it needs to serve the community. And now, introducing this full-time support mechanism through the Fire and Emergency Services Department allows things to happen when most of us are away at our day jobs. It's an opportunity we would be foolish not to take advantage of." ~



Fake Fire News

National Fire Safety Week, which is observed October 8-14, commemorates a huge conflagration in Chicago that started on

October 8, 1871. Soon after the fire was extinguished, Chicago Tribune reporter Michael Ahern wrote a story claiming that the fire had started when a cow that was being milked kicked over a lantern. The cow's owner was not named, but Catherine O'Leary, whose barn was near the center of the blaze, was blamed. In 1893, however, Ahern admitted he had made the story up. The Great Chicago Fire itself, however, was real, and so was the loss of more than 250 lives, as well as the destruction of 17,400 structures across more than 2,000 acres. Fire danger is still real today. Cranberry's Volunteer Fire Company strongly encourages residents to change the batteries in their smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms, check their home fire extinguishers, and to have their home heating system serviced before the cold weather months arrive. ~

Fire Company Award Levels Climb Up A Notch

Last year, the Cranberry Township Volunteer Fire Company was awarded third place in several statewide competitions for its fire safety education program: one from the Western Pennsylvania Firemen's Association, and another from the Firemen's Association of the State of Pennsylvania. This year, Cranberry's Fire Company won again, only this time receiving second place in both competitions. In addition to winning the esteem of their peers, both awards included monetary prizes. Congratulations to the CTVFC Fire Safety Education programs! ~



Rescue Practice On Cranberry's New Road To Nowhere

Soon after any serious crash, especially if it's on a busy roadway, the site is swarmed with first responders – firefighters, police, ambulance, tow truck operators and more – each arriving in their own specialized vehicles. Add to that the Fire Police – a special unit of the Township's volunteer fire company – who rush to the scene to direct, and sometimes reroute traffic, with a view to protecting the emergency workers as well as other motorists.

But where should those emergency vehicles park to be most useful and avoid interfering with one another? And how should oncoming traffic be controlled? It is a responsibility that typically falls to the Incident Commander – usually a senior firefighter who can draw from experience to direct the placement of emergency vehicles. But for newer first responders and those who initially arrive at the scene, it can be tremendously confusing, even though there is an 862-page Uniform Traffic Control manual available to offer detailed guidance.

Positioning

Not surprisingly, there are better ways and worse ways of positioning emergency vehicles and traffic control devices on busy roadways. However, except for occasional tabletop simulations using matchbox toys, figuring out exactly how and where to place things is a task that no one has had much opportunity to practice. Now, however, Cranberry's emergency services have created a better way.

The Township's Public Safety Training campus, tucked behind its Public Works building, includes a fire training tower, a classroom building, a rifle range and practice vehicle fire burn pads surrounded by broad swaths of asphalt pavement. Until this summer, that tarmac was unmarked. However, in mid-August, a contractor was brought

in to paint the pavement with traffic lanes, stop bars, center lines, yield markers, traffic circles and more to simulate several key Township roads and intersections.

- *It can be tremendously confusing, even though there is an 862-page manual available.*

Although financed by the Township and designed to mirror specific Cranberry roadways, the project was developed as part of the Township's participation in Pennsylvania's statewide Traffic Incident Management Group, or PennTIM. The regional division that includes the Township, along with other public and private agencies in the area that have a stake in handling traffic incidents, meets in Cranberry. Its members, as well as all three of Cranberry's own emergency services and its Public Works Department, are free to use the simulated roadways for their own training purposes.

TIM time

Sgt. William Ahlgren, who heads the Township police department's traffic division, took the lead in developing the roadway simulation. "It's all about protecting first responders and then getting quick and safe scene clearance," Ahlgren said. Earlier in the year, he had attended a national conference of

TIM leaders where he learned about a regional training center in Tennessee capable of simulating all sorts of roads and roadway conditions. The Pennsylvania delegation was impressed.

For Ahlgren, it triggered a moment of epiphany. "It dawned on me that we have a fantastic facility here right now," he recalled. "Could we potentially do some of those things by just adding paint markings? So we took some measurements and made some drawings and presented the idea to the fire company." They loved it, and so did Township Manager Jerry Andree. From there it went to Township GIS Administrator Doug Cloutier who created a draftsman-like version of the concept. Then, with the Township Board of Supervisors' blessing, a contractor was hired to paint the lines.

"I anticipate enhancing it even further as this grows," Ahlgren said. "We can use old street signs and maybe some other props. And we're looking into the possibility of getting a trailer full of traffic control devices to use both here and at crash scenes."

But the simulated road has already produced an unexpected benefit. The Township employees who report to the Public Works building – many of whom were accustomed to driving around the site casually – now slow down, stay in their designated lanes, and stop at the stop bars. "That was an unintended result," Ahlgren said, "but it is a fantastic result for us." ~



Simulated Road Conditions Heighten EMS Driver Awareness

Every day, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, at least one ambulance is involved in a reportable crash somewhere in the state. Most are relatively minor. But every accident requires its crew to stop and exchange information with other drivers and witnesses. Depending on the severity, it can sometimes require taking the ambulance out of service treating anyone injured. It also means losing the ability to provide whatever services it was dispatched for in the first place.

Drivers can practice running calls in a virtual city that includes a downtown, upscale communities, rundown neighborhoods, hills, straightaways, main streets, alleys and more.

It's not that ambulance operators are bad drivers; they aren't. But responding appropriately to unexpected conditions on an emergency call – whether they involve other vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, animals, slippery roads, unfamiliar locations or darkness – constantly tests the driver's skill, judgment and situational awareness. It's a condition aggravated by the adrenalin surge that comes with rushing to the aid of a sick or injured patient while driving a five- or six-ton vehicle with its lights strobing and sirens blaring.



EMS West is an agency tasked with overseeing Emergency Medical Service operations in a 16-county region that includes over 1,100 EMS vehicles. All of their operators face similar issues on the road. But providing ongoing training to drivers using an actual ambulance is costly and cumbersome. The agency recognized the issue and began formulating a plan to purchase a state-of-the-art driving simulator. In 2015, through a partnership with UPMC, the high-tech EMS Virtual Drive was delivered.

Virtual driving

This past August, the unit was stationed at Cranberry EMS and made available to EMTs and Paramedics from multiple agencies. The simulator is housed in a 35-foot trailer that includes two separate positions where drivers can practice running calls in a virtual city that includes a downtown, upscale communities, rundown neighborhoods, hills, straightaways, main streets, alleys and more. The driver, seated at a standard vehicle dashboard, is surrounded by three flat panel screens showing the view forward and to either side as well as in rear-view mirrors.

The sensation is a bit like an arcade game built around real-life scenarios and roadways. The visuals move, accompanied by engine rumble and road noise that envelop the trainee. Pedestrians, bicycles, buses, and cars pop up unexpectedly, ignoring the wailing siren, and recklessly cross in front of the ambulance. Rain, snow, fog

and darkness descend.

Although capable of simulating speeds as fast as 80 miles an

hour, an accident even at moderate speeds can shatter the cab's virtual windows and stop the session.

The unexpected

It's not that all of the situations it simulates are normal. "Something might only happen once in a 25-year career," according to Cranberry EMS Training Director Bill Hume. "For example, there are laws that tell you when there's an emergency vehicle approaching you should pull to the right and stop. But only about 30 percent of the drivers on the road actually do that. Or they'll stop in front of you. Some will go left. Others will try to outrun you. This simulator pushes you to predict the unpredictable.

"We could never, ever practice these things with an ambulance out on the streets," he said. "Simulators provide repetitions that help to normalize the process and make you more comfortable. But they also provide situations that I would much rather deal with in the simulator than driving down the road."

Although EMS Virtual Drive was created to benefit ambulance drivers, it can also help other emergency services navigate the roads. In less than a minute, its program can be switched to simulate a 40,000 pound fire engine whose angle of view and handling characteristics are significantly different than an ambulance's. As a result, Cranberry's firefighters are given an opportunity to enhance their own driving skills.

"UPMC and EMS West have created a valuable asset," Cranberry Fire Company Training Director Mike Hanks reflected. "It not only enhances the situational awareness of our first responders, but also the safety of the communities we serve." ~

Outta my way! As Cranberry EMS Training Director Bill Hume navigates his simulated ambulance through the streets of a virtual city with his lights and siren activated, a city bus nonchalantly crosses in front of him.

Township Police Face Extreme Challenge In Mississippi

At age 39, Cranberry Patrol Officer Robert Capezio has achieved a level of physical conditioning that others can only envy. A big man, standing 6-foot 7-inches and weighing in at 235 pounds, he presents a daunting model of strength and health. But his interest in maintaining personal fitness is not just cosmetic; it is something he fully understands can spell the difference between life and death.

Each year in the United States, more than 100 law enforcement personnel die in the line of duty from job-related illness and injuries. Another 800 are forced into early retirement for the same reasons. Nearly half of those officer deaths are the result of heart attacks while more than 30 percent of the disabling injuries result from strains to the back, torso and upper extremities, according to Professor David Bever of George Mason University.

It is serious enough that back in 1989, Dr. Bever organized the first LawFit Challenge – at the time, a training competition among police departments in Virginia – to test cardiorespiratory efficiency, muscular strength and stamina in the context of carrying out police work.

The gap

The significance of the gap between typical officer fitness and the physically demanding work of law enforcement has not been lost on Cranberry's police department. Last December, it implemented a voluntary program to encourage police fitness and wellness. Called Elite Police FIT, with 'FIT' standing for Fitness Incentive Training, the program invites officers, on their own time, to work out individually or in groups. Incentives offered include recognition and paid time off for those achieving age- and gender-specific goals. Officer Capezio and Chief Kevin Meyer, along with HR Director Neva

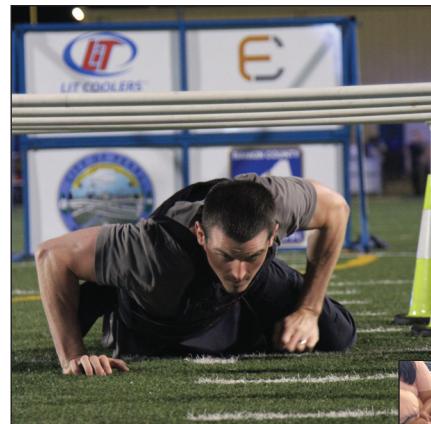
Stotler, were instrumental in getting the program off the ground.

That was also when they heard about the national LawFit Challenge, which for the past 16 years has been held in Pearl, Mississippi. Using their personal time and with financial backing from Performance Inspired, a Thorn Hill-based maker of sports nutrition products, Capezio, together with officers Mark Shields, Randy Bauer and Ed Horan, rose to the challenge.

The challenge

"It was our first time down there. We didn't know how the scoring worked

- *The trials are specific to police work,*
- *involving multiple obstacles encountered in chasing down, identifying, and handcuffing a suspect.*



Officer Randy Bauer, above, crawls through wicket obstacles.

Muscle sandwich. LawFit Challenge founder Professor David Bever of George Mason University is surrounded by Cranberry police officers Ed Horan, left, and Rob Capezio at this year's event in Pearl, Mississippi.

or how they did their exercises," Capezio reflected. "They do everything different there than we do. Everyone told us that our first year there would be a learning year, but I think we did well for a first-time participant. Randy Bauer actually tied for first place in the Sit-and-Reach exercise."

While much of the workout regimen in Cranberry's program involves generic strength, agility and endurance

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Township Police Face Extreme Challenge In Mississippi *Continued*

exercises, the LawFit Challenge trials are much more specific to police work, usually timed events involving multiple obstacles encountered in chasing down, identifying, and handcuffing a suspect – all while wearing a restrictive bulletproof vest.

The prep

Unlike Cranberry, most of the police departments participating in the Challenge don't have their own in-house fitness programs. "This is their Big

Thing," Capezio noted. "This is what they look forward to every year." But others, like the 1,500 member Mississippi State Police force, throw everything at it, assigning eight of its fittest officers to four months of nothing more than working out and training for the LawFit Challenge. "For them, taking eight people off the roads is nothing. If we took four people off the road here, it wouldn't work," he said.

Still, the experience was a valuable one. "It wasn't like we did it just to do

it," Capezio said. "I can bring stuff back here and say 'we can tweak our routines this way'. To be part of the competition, we have to change the way we look at exercising. We can bend what we do without changing our goals. It's all about the way we manage it.

"But it was fun. We learned a heck of a lot. We hope we can do this again and make it something we can work toward and train for and improve on every year."

~

Walking To School Is Cool

Until recently, walking to Rowan Elementary School from the nearby Fox Run plan of homes, involved either walking in mud, on busy Rowan Road, or through tall grass and shrubbery. It was a dirty, dangerous and generally unpopular way to make the quarter-mile trek. So instead of a five-minute walk, it became a 15-minute school bus trip or a ride from the child's parents. Now that's changed.

In a cooperative project between the Township and the Seneca Valley School District, a series of sidewalk gaps between the school and

the entrance to Fox Run were cleared, paved, and protected with a new four-way stop crossing signal complete with a pedestrian push button and countdown timer. The crossing also serves two daycare facilities in the immediate area – one in Rowan Tower and the Goddard School behind Rowan Elementary – as well as playgrounds and ballfields adjacent to the school. Dedication of the completed walkway took place August 25th. ~



SV School Board appoints Haine Elementary Principal to lead K-4 building

Kristen White joins the HES Team



Cranberry Township Residents,

It is with great pleasure that I reach out to you today as principal of Haine Elementary School.



To give you some background information about me, I received my undergraduate degree from

Slippery Rock University and my master's in Educational Leadership from Carlow College. I have had the privilege of teaching students from kindergarten to students who were 21 years of age, in both rural and urban schools. I most recently completed a two-year leadership program through the Principals' Leadership Academy of Western Pennsylvania. I am a believer in life-long learning and plan to obtain my doctorate.

I was fortunate to join the administrative team at Seneca Valley in March 2015. Prior to accepting the position of Assistant Principal at Haine Elementary, I was a Principal with the Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV for seven years. I was the recipient of the Tenth Annual Leadership Award given by the Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV Labor and Management group in February 2009. Additionally, I received the Junior Woman of the Year Award in 2014 from the Junior Women's Club of Butler. I believe these two awards demonstrate my commitment to being a strong leader both personally and professionally.

During my time at Haine Elementary, I have found the staff to be incredibly dedicated to the academic, as well as, the social/emotional well-being of each student. Children are encouraged to be "STARs" (Safe, Truthful, Always Kind and Responsible) in all environments. Our school-wide Behavior Support Plan establishes building-wide expectations. These expectations create an optimal learning environment for our students. As the principal, I am dedicated to continuing the student-centered approach that encourages our young learners to be creative, collaborative and innovative in an academic environment where success is defined for each individual child.

I have a strong belief in connecting with my community through the spirit of volunteerism. I have been an active member of the Butler County Drug and Alcohol Advisory Board and was the State Chairwoman to support young adults transitioning out of foster care.

I live in Butler with my husband and son - and I am SV proud!

Warmest Regards,

Kristen White

More about Haine Elementary School:

Haine Elementary School (HES) is a part of the Seneca Valley School District and is home to kindergarten through fourth grade students. One of four K-4 grade schools in the District, it serves approximately 800 students. The school building is shared with Haine Middle School, which houses fifth and sixth graders.

Each grade level is supported by an extraordinary staff that is caring and student-centered. School staff strives to provide hands-on learning activities and active student engagement in the classroom.

Preparing students for the 21st century and for a global economy is an important educational goal. As such, students are exposed to a rigorous technology curriculum as early as kindergarten. Compass Learning is a web-based program that our elementary students can use

district-wide to enhance their math and reading skills at an appropriate instructional level.

The teachers at Haine Elementary are also exploring new ways for students to bring their own technology into the classroom to participate in meaningful, structured educational activities.

At Haine Elementary, a strong working partnership with parents is also encouraged. Haine Elementary staff is looking forward to achieving their goals of providing students with many positive, enriching learning experiences that will foster intellectual, social and emotional growth.

You can learn more by visiting the school's building webpage @ www.svsd.net

¿Loco por el queso?

Have You Heard The One That Says Taco Bell Uses Meat?

Taco Bell is a magnet for urban myths. Some may not be suitable for a family publication. But that hasn't stopped curious Township residents from speculating wildly about why there isn't a Taco Bell restaurant in Cranberry.

- For example, there's the story that Cranberry has conspired to block Taco Bell to protect the public health. **False.**
- Another is that every item at Taco Bell is just a different combination of the same ingredients. **Maybe.**
- Or there's the one about other Tex-Mex restaurants in the area colluding to block the chain from opening a store here. **False.**

• And then there's the one that says Taco Bell doesn't want to follow Township land use codes. **True.**

The fact is that while the popular chain has been looking to locate in Cranberry for decades, the company's preference is to build drive-thru restaurants on stand-alone properties, like Burger King did before the Township's current regulations were enacted.

Problem is, fast food restaurants generate a lot of traffic and, unless they're embedded in a larger shopping center that's equipped with signalized access to local roads, they create traffic problems. Cranberry manages its traffic volume by making shopping center developers responsible for the traffic

impact of their tenants instead of allowing individual businesses to create new curb cuts for their traffic to enter directly onto Township streets.



So, if a Taco Bell franchisee were to someday find common ground with one of Cranberry's major shopping center owners, they would be welcome open their restaurant here – and that's the truth.

Adios, amigos. ~

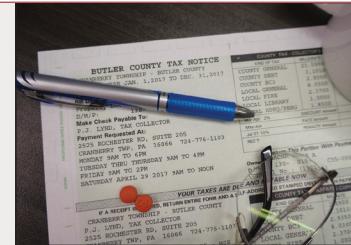


Property Tax Due? Just Say "Charge It!"

Want to pay your property tax at the last minute? Charge it. Want extra points, miles, rebates or other credit card incentives for paying your property tax? Charge it. At its June meeting, Cranberry's Board of Supervisors agreed that the Township's real estate tax collector could accept credit cards for payments. GovPayNet is a finance company that handles such transactions both online and by phone. There's a catch, however: the card holder needs to pay the 2.5% fee that the finance company's charges for the use of their card. So, for example, a tax bill of \$1,000 would entail a \$25 fee. Still, if a payment were to be made just as the period for payment at face value was about to end, paying the fee would cost less than the \$100 10% penalty which would otherwise apply. ~

Uh-Oh!

If you missed paying your Butler County/ Cranberry Township real estate tax by September 30, you are now in the penalty zone. But if you wait until after December 31, it will be even worse: you will need to deal with the County's famously unsmiling Tax Claim Bureau to resolve your tax issue. However, your Seneca Valley School District taxes are still payable at face value through until the end of November. But beyond the end of the year, you're in trouble. If there have been any changes in your mortgage company or you are no longer using an escrow account to pay your property taxes, contact tax collector P.J. Lynd at 724-776-1103 to make payment arrangements. ~



CMU Awards Township A Smart Mobility Grant

Alerting local motorists to problems on I-79 and the Turnpike that impact traffic on Township roads is the goal of a Smart Mobility grant from Carnegie-Mellon's Traffic 21 Institute. The \$400,000 award, which is being shared with seven other municipalities in Western Pennsylvania, will help Cranberry, in collaboration with CMU, to develop a system combining real-time data from traffic sensors with social media and traffic data from outside sources. It will provide travelers with a timely heads-up via message boards, smart phone apps, text messages and social media. Adjustments to the Township's own traffic signal system could also be made using that information. ~

Upcoming Events

OCTOBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

October 4

CADN- Spotlight on Mental Health: Understanding Grief & Loss, 4 PM - 8:45 PM, Municipal Ctr. CranberryTownship.org/CADN

October 7

ECS&R TV & Hazardous Waste Collection, 9 AM-1 PM, Public Works *By appointment; Fees apply* 866-815-0016

October 14

Sheriff's Office Gun Licensing, 9 AM-2 PM, Council Chambers

Howl-O-Ween Dog Parade, 11 AM, Rotary Dog Park Cranberry4FUN.com/Register

October 18

Manager's Coffee- Keeping Cranberry Safe, 7 PM, Public Safety Training Center by Public Works, CranberryTownship.org/CoffeeRSVP

October 20

Great Pumpkin Festival 6-8 PM, Municipal Ctr. Cranberry4FUN.com/Register

October 21

Cranberry EMS: CPR, 9 AM-12 PM, First Aid, 12-3 PM, Municipal Ctr. CTEMS51.org

October 28

CTVFC Ladies Auxiliary Spaghetti Dinner, 4-7 PM, Park Fire Station, Tickets at door.

November 1

Special Needs Expo; 3-9 PM, Municipal Ctr. CranberryTownship.org/CADN

November 13

Cranberry Early Learning Center Open House, 4-7 PM, Municipal Ctr. Cranberry4FUN.com/Preschool

November 17

Santa's First Stop, 6 PM, Municipal Ctr.

November 17 - December 31

Cranberry Tree Gallery and CAN Winter Art Show, Municipal Ctr.

November 18

Pet First Aid & CPR, 12:30-2:30 PM, Municipal Ctr.

November 23-24

Township Offices & Library closed. *(Trash & recycling collections delayed by one day on Thursday & Friday.)*

DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Import events to your calendar with iCalendar on our website!

NOVEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4			
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 3

Pet Photos with Santa, 2-5 PM, Municipal Ctr., Cranberry4FUN.com/Register

December 11-15

Final week of yard waste collection for 2017

December 25

Township Offices & Library closed. *(Trash & recycling collections delayed by one day this week.)*

Hanukkah Celebration at the Municipal Ctr.; Details coming soon!

More Info:

CranberryTownship.org/Calendar

HOLIDAY FUN!

Milk & Cookies with Santa

Saturday, December 2
11:30 AM, 12:45 PM & 2 PM
Sunday, December 3
11 AM & 12:15 PM
Municipal Center

Brunch with Santa

Saturday, December 9
10 AM & 12:30 PM
Cranberry Highlands

Holiday Cookie Exchange

Friday, December 15, 6 PM
Municipal Center

Cranberry4FUN.com/Register





The Iron Lady of Butler, Unbridled

as part of an effort to expand the range of art on view in Cranberry without cost to the Township. New pieces of sculpture will be installed as those on display are sold.

"Two weeks go by and they called on a Sunday, and I thought, well, they probably want me to pick the stuff up. And he says 'no, there's a couple here from Colorado who just bought everything you had and wanted to know what else you were doing.' My mouth hit the ground. I just couldn't believe it."

Steel fantasy

Secunda's sculptures are not only lifelike, they also project an aura of fantasy that animates the imagination. But even though he has worked as a full-time artist since the 1990s, Secunda never had any formal art education; both his artistic skills and his acumen as an art entrepreneur are self-taught.

"It started out as a hobby," he recalled recently. "I got my start at Pullman Standard; that's where I got my welding training. Then I had a fabrication job here in Cranberry where there wasn't a lot to do, and I don't like sitting around. So I started building little house flies out of ball bearings and welding rods. One thing led to another. I moved to Texas for ten years and when I came home, I met a guy who had an artist friend. He came out to the house one day and saw what I was making – big bugs, dragonflies and things. And he said 'you ought to try selling these. Go down to the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts and see if they'll show your work.' So I did.

"When I got there, they were like: 'well, they're a little expensive, but we'll put them on display and see what happens'," he recalled. "I had never even been in a gallery before.

The art biz

"So I had to figure out how to do art shows and how to show at a gallery. It

I had never even been in a gallery before, so I had to figure out how to do art shows.

took years to figure out. One of my first big shows was in Miami. Another artist came up to me and said: 'Your prices are too low. You're in Miami. If it doesn't cost a lot, it's not worth a lot.' His advice was: 'how much money do you have to have in your hand so you won't feel bad when that piece goes away?'

"When you build a piece of sculpture, there's more to it than the cost of material and the time it takes to make it. So his advice struck a chord. But for the rest of the show, people would buy pieces and wouldn't even ask what they cost. When I'd give them their receipt, they'd look at it like they were thinking: is that all?"

"So it's a long process to try to figure how to do this. But I met a lot of artists along the way who gave me good advice. I always try to pass that on anytime I'd meet someone new because it's hard to do." ~

Classic car auctions don't work the same as auto auctions here in Cranberry. They are where cars get bought and sold as works of art rather than for transportation. And they are bought by individuals rather than dealers. Selling prices vary, of course, but they are almost always in the tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars. And those who bid on them are people of considerable means.

That makes them ideal clients for sculptor Bill Secunda of Butler, who for the past 20 years has created outsized steel likenesses of bears, buffalo, moose, bugs and other animals which get snapped up by wealthy collectors from all over the country and as far away as Japan and the Bahrain. Some of his best customers frequent Florida's prestigious Mecum and Barrett-Jackson classic car auctions where Secunda is frequently registered as a vendor.

You may have seen his life-size sculpture of a lady riding a horse during Community Days. But in case you missed it, you will soon be able to find it on display in front of the municipal center. It's on exhibit thanks to an arrangement that Township Supervisor Bruce Mazzoni negotiated with Secunda

The Big Picture. *The Iron Lady's stay in Cranberry is among the more visible elements of a goal in the Township's comprehensive plan: to organize and integrate the arts into our community. Its emerging strategy involves providing support for art associations including the Butler Arts Council and the Cranberry Artists Network; offering opportunities for art education through the Township's Parks & Recreation programs; commissioning, acquiring and exhibiting art in public places; and in other ways working to create and advance the arts in Cranberry along with supporting a vibrant local art community.*

Flying Discs Coming To Cranberry

Cranberry Township GIS Administrator Doug Cloutier is a private and reserved individual, hesitant to engage in small talk and restrained in his communications with colleagues. But bring up the topic of disc golf, and there's no stopping him.

Cloutier, a lifetime member of the Pittsburgh Flying Disc Society and a former field official for competitive disc golf events, is an evangelist for the sport. Two years ago, together with fellow PFDS members, he brought his calling to Cranberry Township Community Chest, pleading on behalf of the sport for CTCC to take disc golf under its wing as the organization's next project of the year. They succeeded.

The sport is played like traditional golf except you're throwing a flying disc instead of hitting a ball.

"Doug's group is partnering with us," CTCC founder and Township Supervisor Bruce Mazzoni acknowledged. "They were the impetus that moved us forward. They were the ones that envisioned this type of championship course. They're the ones who did the research."

Ancient discs

"Believe it or not, disc golf was actually master planned into North Boundary Park a long time ago," Mazzoni said. "I don't know who put it there; it was before my time. But what really pushed it was when Doug's group came to us wanting to create one. You probably saw them at Community Days the last two years promoting the game. Now it's our next Project of The Year."

Expert instruction. Pittsburgh Flying Disc Society instructor Doug Cloutier, in yellow, offers guidance in the fundamentals of disc golf to visitors at the 2017 Community Days event.

That project, which will be built on 36 acres of a largely wooded hillside along the western edge of North Boundary Park, includes three key components. One is the championship disc golf course. With a playing area extending more than 10,700 feet through 18 holes, it is one of the world's longest and, with its fairways slicing through a canopy of trees, also one of the most challenging.

The second part is a separate 6-hole, ADA accessible Learn-to-Play course along with a nearby parking lot. PFDS members will provide instruction.

The third element is a two-mile nature trail which connects all 18 tees along the championship course while avoiding any encroachment on its fairways. All three components are open for public use, free of charge, anytime the parks are open.

"The sport is played like traditional golf except you're throwing a flying disc instead of hitting a ball," Cloutier explained. "Your arm is the club and the disc is the ball. You're trying to get the disc into a basket in the fewest number of shots. There are Par 3, Par 4, and Par 5 holes just like in ball golf. And there are different sets of tees for different skill levels.

"The same courtesy rules apply as in ball golf" he said. "You're quiet when other people are throwing, and the party farthest from the hole throws first. You have hundreds of discs to choose from. There are drivers, mid-range discs, and putters. When I play, I carry 20 discs. I have drivers that go different distances. They're made to cut in different

directions. Some are better for rolling along the ground, some are better for throwing forehand or backhand."

Different discs

Golf Discs generally weigh between 150 and 175 grams. The heavier discs are harder to throw, but can go farther. Ultimate Disc or Freestyle Disc – two separate but related games – use discs that tend to be bigger in diameter, but about the same weight; an Ultimate Disc, by regulation, is 175 grams, a Freestyle disc is about 160 grams. But none of those discs are the familiar Wham-o Frisbees found at backyard picnics, nor are their throwing techniques the same.

"In disc golf, the throwing motion is different than Frisbee," Cloutier explained. "It's less wrist and more arm motion."

This past August, CTCC allocated \$110,000 from its Community Day proceeds to jump start its \$300,000 disc golf Project of the Year. Other fundraising activities will take place throughout the year with a view to opening the course for play by next summer. An insert in this issue of CranberryToday includes instructions and incentives for donation. ~





Cranberry Highlands Golf Course is

The Perfect Place for a holiday party, lunch or business meeting!

**BOOK YOUR
HOLIDAY PARTY NOW!**

Contact our Event Coordinator

724-776-7372 x 1214 or

CranberryHighlands.com/EventPlanner

CranberryHighlands.com 724-776-7372
5601 Freshcorn Road Cranberry Township 16066 

Cranberry Highlands To Undergo Renovations

A series of renovation projects for Cranberry Highlands was proposed to Cranberry's Board of Supervisors this past August. The renovations – the first since the facility's 2001 opening – will take place over the coming months. The first element of the renovation – a greatly improved audio-visual system for the Clubhouse – was approved at the initial Board meeting. Further renovation funding requests involving the golf course entrance, parking lot, cart path, irrigation system, and Clubhouse will be presented at subsequent meetings. None of the improvements will affect play on the golf course. ~



A Birdie Told Me So

Cranberry Highlands Golf Course has once again been designated by Audubon International as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary.

It confirms that the golf course has maintained a high degree of environmental stewardship in a variety of areas including planning, wildlife and habitat management, education, reduced chemical use, and water quality management.

Cranberry Highlands was initially recognized as part of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary program in 2009. A letter accompanying the most recent certification cited a program started last year to create wildflower areas

that support pollinator insects – species which have been under stress in much of the country due to loss of habitat and other issues. Cranberry Highlands is one of 909 golf courses currently carrying the Cooperative Sanctuary designation.

Approximately 2,200 courses are enrolled in the program out of more than 34,000 golf courses operating worldwide. ~



**We
Pets!**

Sign up for our new programs for Pets!

HOWL-O-WEEN DOG PARADE

Saturday, October 14: 11 AM-12 PM
Rotary Dog Park, Community Park
\$10 Resident; \$15 Non-Resident

PET FIRST AID & CPR WORKSHOP

Saturday, November 18: 12:30-2:30 PM
Cranberry Municipal Center
\$29 Resident; \$34 Non-Resident
(Please leave pets at home
for this workshop.)

PET PHOTOS WITH SANTA

Sunday, December 3: 2-5 PM
Cranberry Municipal Center
\$10 Resident; \$15 Non-Resident
(Please bring your own camera
for photos with Santa Paws.)



Cranberry4FUN.com/Programs
724-779-4FUN (4386)



Santa's First Stop
SANTALAND
features
FREE ACTIVITIES and CRAFTS
FOR ALL AGES

Cranberry Municipal Center
 Friday, November 17 - 6:00pm

Each year, Santa makes his **VERY FIRST STOP** in Cranberry Township! Come help him light the Holiday Tree and enjoy festive crafts and yummy holiday treats!

CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION



Roadway Cleanup Program Marks 20 Years

A lot happened in 1997. But nothing could match the launch of Cranberry's Adopt-a-Roadway program, patterned after the state's Adopt-a-Highway program. Cranberry Township Volunteer Ambulance Corps – now Cranberry EMS – was the first participant. Since that time, 50 separate groups including businesses, families, clubs and associations have been responsible for clearing debris from approximately 30 miles of Cranberry's connector road network at least twice a year. It is a popular program with a list of eager volunteers waiting for assignments. Through the end of last year, more than 4,800 bags full of trash were collected from Township roadsides. Thanks to all the Adopt-a-Roadway program volunteers! ~



It's **Not** Graffiti

They can get pretty ugly, but the seemingly random patterns of bright colored lines spray-painted on local lawns, roads and driveways together with cryptic texts and tiny yard pennants are not the work of malicious vandals tagging the suburbs. They are the results of PA One Call, an organization that notifies

local utility companies with underground service lines in the area whenever someone calls 8-1-1 to let them know they're planning to dig. Notifying PA One Call in advance of any dig is required by state law. Within a day or two, each utility company will send someone to the site of the dig to mark their buried lines. Whoever is doing the excavation – whether it's a private homeowner, a contractor, or even another utility company – can then use the markings to avoid accidentally damaging those lines. Each type of utility uses its own color code including red for electric lines, orange for phone and communication lines, blue for water, green for sewer, and yellow for gas lines. ~

NEVER Refuse to Re-Use

Our Cardboard Compactor behind the Municipal Center is available for residential use and collects more than 200 tons per year!

However, we ask:

NO Styrofoam
NO Packing 'Peanuts'
NO Garbage



The area in the rear of the parking lot is under 24-hour video surveillance. We thank you in advance for NOT leaving trash outside of the bin.

Commercial Property Redevelopment Strategy Revised

The prevailing standard for commercial development in Cranberry during the 1950s, '60s and '70s could be summarized as: *Anything Goes*. There was plenty of open land, property was cheap, zoning rules were modest, traffic was light, and businesses were mostly owned and operated by local proprietors. Not surprisingly, the Township's early business development reflected the relaxed approach of its day – utility-type structures, curb cuts everywhere, no pedestrian accommodation, commercial sprawl, and strip shopping centers.

Fast-forward to now. Many of those first-generation businesses have become outdated, succeeded by newer types of development and more comprehensive zoning requirements. It is an evolutionary change – and one that's been accelerated by Cranberry's nonstop growth as an upscale community whose residents hold significantly higher expectations for their hometown's built environment.

Plan recommendations

Helping Cranberry transition into a new generation of commerce was identified by the Township's 2009 comprehensive plan as a key community goal. Here's how the plan put it: "Cranberry Township

We want to let older developments that don't meet our current needs become reinvented

will be a community that provides redevelopment programs and services that guide planned growth, facilitates the redevelopment of designated areas, and helps rebuild neighborhoods."

It recommended, among other things, crafting a coherent redevelopment strategy accompanied by policies – possibly including incentives

– to stimulate the redevelopment of older, vacant or blighted commercial properties. Formulating those recommendations, with help from Environmental Planning and Design Consultants, is currently underway with a final policy expected by year's end.

"As our undeveloped land dwindles, we're looking at parcels that would benefit from redevelopment," Cranberry's Director of Planning and Development Services, Ron Henshaw explained.

"We're making sure that our ordinances, and everything else we do, allows for redevelopment. We're talking about sites that were created years ago, and structures that were built on them using different standards, and making sure we allow for redevelopment in the future."

Ripe for redevelopment

"We've got parcels right in the heart of Cranberry that would benefit from good redevelopment strategies," he said.

"We're examining our ordinances to see how, or whether, they allow for their redevelopment. And we're adjusting our ordinances to meet the needs of the future. For example, we re-wrote our Planned Residential Development Ordinance and we're working on major revisions to our Commercial Sign and Shopping Center Ordinances. We want to be able to let older developments that don't meet our current needs or goals become reinvented into something more useful."

But there's a force more fundamental than building style that's transforming Cranberry's business environment: the impact of e-commerce. "We're



Cranberry commerce 1.0. Some of the Township's first-generation business are now ripe for redevelopment. A policy to enable that process is currently undergoing preparation.

keeping a watchful eye on the retail market," Henshaw said. "No doubt things are changing with e-commerce, but Cranberry's retail market is still very strong. We need to make sure that we continue to plan for the emerging needs of our community – whatever the future may hold. Our Board of Supervisors had the foresight, years ago, to make sure big box retail didn't spread to areas that couldn't sustain them. That was quite controversial at the time, but today, when you consider all the challenges facing retail, their wisdom is coming to fruition."

Although creating new ordinances and adjusting current ones to enable redevelopment will be part of the Township's new strategy, Henshaw does not rule out other approaches which could involve more comprehensive study and even a complete rewrite of current ordinances. "We have to make sure we're communicating with our residents and business community to accurately assess their needs," he said. "We continue to be in a highly desirable state of growth. We want to see how we can build on that to make our future even better." ~

The Real Dirt On Brush Creek

Throughout America's eastern seaboard, rainstorms are a normal part of the local weather pattern. But over time, as development has changed the contours of local land and paved areas have multiplied, handling water runoff from storms – both to avoid flooding and prevent the degradation of waterways – has become a costly issue for many municipalities, including Cranberry Township.

It's not so much that the Township's volume of rain has increased – although there are communities in other parts of the country where unusually heavy storms have led to serious flooding, extensive property damage, and even loss of life over the past few years. No one is exempt from the possibility of huge storms. But to date, Cranberry has been fortunate in dodging weather extremes. And, at least so far, its stormwater infrastructure has been able to handle the rain events which have occurred without major incident.

In Cranberry, the issue of greatest concern is silt – the accumulation of dirt from soil erosion washing into Brush Creek.

Even so, managing stormwater in Cranberry has become a difficult and expensive undertaking. And it's becoming even harder thanks to a growing volume of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection regulations. Today, in addition to building, maintaining and inspecting its network of municipal water-handling facilities including catch basins, conduits, culverts and detention ponds, the Township is also being tasked with safeguarding nearby streams from becoming polluted – and DEP takes a broad view of what constitutes pollution.

The source

Contamination in Pennsylvania's waterways can come from a variety of sources. The specifics depend on local land uses and the housekeeping practices of their residents and businesses. They frequently involve the sorts of toxic materials most people associate with pollution – things like automotive fluids, agricultural chemicals, hazardous household wastes and industrial discharges. But in Cranberry, it's different. Here, the issue of greatest concern is silt – the accumulation of dirt from soil erosion washing into Brush Creek.

It's not a minor issue. According to DEP calculations, the total volume of sediment going into local streams – especially Brush Creek – amounts to more than 4,000 tons a year. Some of it may be inevitable. But the agency is requiring Cranberry to submit a plan to reduce that volume by at least ten percent to qualify for its next five-year Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permit – the state license that allows Cranberry to authorize new land development. The Township's current permit expires in March.

The money

"It's another unfunded mandate," according to Township Waterworks Coordinator Tim Schutzman. "DEP walks you through your options and you try to find the most cost-effective ones for your situation. We've found that the biggest bang for our buck would come from stream bank stabilization. If you go into Graham Park, you can see how water is hitting the stream banks, eroding them, taking all that sediment



Up the creek. Exposed soil along the banks of Brush Creek contributes to the more than 4,000 tons a year of silt that accumulates in the stream. DEP has tasked Cranberry with reducing that volume of erosion.

into the water. DEP is telling us that their sampling shows we have a higher level of sediment than they allow."

Even though stream bank stabilization appears to be the most cost-effective approach to reducing sediment, it's still expensive, amounting to an estimated \$300,000 over the next five years. Together with several other pollution reduction steps including tree planting, filtering, vegetative channel clearing and street sweeping, the cost would easily exceed half a million dollars over the five-year permit period. When you add to that the cost of maintaining its established water-handling infrastructure, it comes to nearly a million dollars a year – about the same as Cranberry's fire company.

Of course, Cranberry isn't alone in falling under the DEP's mandate, and many of the state agency's demands actually stem from federal requirements. As a result, Virginia, Maryland and other eastern states are similarly affected. Some municipalities have enacted taxes to finance the work; some have established fees; and others, including Cranberry, have absorbed the cost in their general fund operations. But with steadily growing mandates and the reluctance of state and federal agencies to offer money to fund them, financing stormwater management is expected to remain a long-term challenge. ~

Cranberry Gets A Green Light On Traffic Signal Improvements

One of the most persistent concerns the Township hears from local residents goes something like this: "Why do I have to sit here and wait for the light to change when there's nobody coming?"

Particularly for motorists on side streets who have to wait a minute or longer to get a green light so they can cross or turn left, the irritation is understandable. But local officials have been listening, and when the results of a combined project of Cranberry Township's engineering and public works departments kick in over the next 12 months or so, driver impatience should become less acute. Here's why:

Cranberry's traffic signal cycles are largely pre-set. Their timing cycles – which are updated every two years – are based on peak traffic volumes, measured at different times of day and on different days of the week. On average, they work just fine. Problem is, not every day is an average day. There are weather issues. There are crashes on I-79 that cascade over onto local roads. There are heavily attended

• *It's been happening a little at a time, grant by grant, for much of the past decade.*

events like Community Days. And there's roadwork. So 'average' isn't always satisfactory.

What the Township has been quietly working on for the past five years has

been an advanced traffic signal control system along its key corridors to do two things: first, it would recognize departures from the preset traffic patterns and adjust signal timing at the affected intersection, and second, it would coordinate those timing changes with other traffic lights up and down the corridor. It's called an "adaptive" system, and it represents the most advanced form of signal management currently available.

Keep moving

The underlying challenge is how best to move the massive volume of traffic through Cranberry's major arteries, including 124,000 vehicles a day through the 19/228 intersection, without the need to add new roads or traffic lanes – a huge expense that eats up scarce real estate and usually results in even more traffic.

"We're out of space," Marty McKinney, Manager of Traffic Operations observed. "What we're trying to do is implement technology that uses the time allotted at each signal as well as possible." Building an adaptive network is expensive, requiring centralized software, individual signal control adapters, and cameras or radar detectors to track vehicles at 25 critical intersections. As a result, it's been happening a little at a time, grant by grant, for much of the past decade. But now the end is in sight.

"Each one of these grants has allowed us to purchase more of the pieces until

we get the puzzle put together," McKinney said, pointing to

a map showing the quiltwork of corridor segments for which adaptive grants have been received since 2013. "It's time to turn more and more of this on."

On the cusp

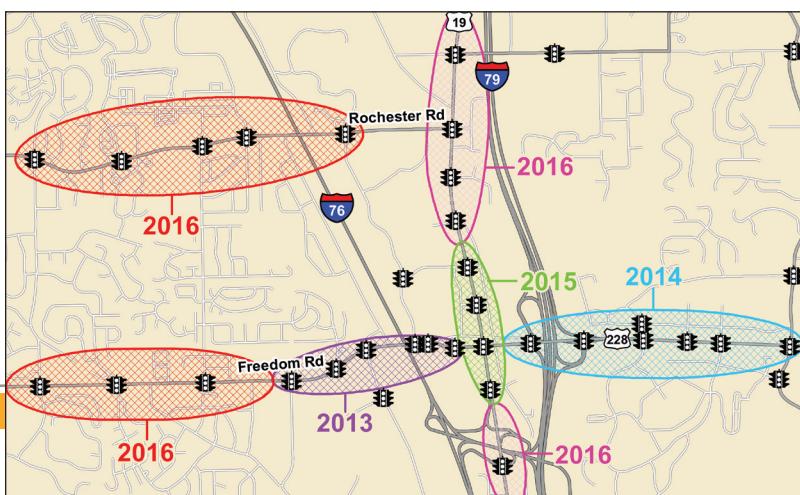
"We're now at the point where we're going to implement it," Cranberry Engineer and Project Manager Kelly Maurer added. "Rochester Road has been undergoing an adaptive test for the past six months. That test is now complete. We didn't change the signal timings – just how they operate in real time. It's taking the timing plans we already have and using technology to make them as efficient as possible. It's making our existing system better."

Take Graham Park, for example. "We did an engineering analysis around Memorial Day when we had SoccerFest in Graham Park, which is about the busiest day there is," she said. "When everybody left, it gave them more green time rather than letting cars stack up. But then when the traffic leveled off, they got less time. So it adapts to real traffic."

One huge advantage Cranberry brings to the adaptive project is the in-house know-how to install it once the parts have been acquired. Those parts will cost Cranberry \$500,000 – \$300,000 of which is grant money – or about \$20,000 an intersection. By contrast, PennDOT recently announced that it would help Pittsburgh install adaptive at 125 intersections in the city, averaging \$240,000 apiece.

"I never dreamed we would get all this done," McKinney recently reflected. "We had a vision that we would like to get it done someday, but I wouldn't have believed we'd be there by now." ~

Coming together. Seven separate matching grants, each affecting a different segment of roadway, have enabled Cranberry to finance a comprehensive adaptive signal corridor management system which will be phased in over the next twelve months.



On The Road, Surface Appearances Can Be Deceptive



It was early August when Cranberry Public Works Streets Manager Bob Howland received a call from an unhappy resident. "You guys just paved this road and it still rides badly," the man complained.

Actually, the caller was partly right. Although the road looked great, its surface irregularities had not been improved; they were just the same as before. The caller's confusion stemmed from the fact that, despite its appearances, the road hadn't actually been repaved. What he had seen was a blacktop pavement sealing product that the Township has been experimenting with. The goal is to see if it can become part of Cranberry's asphalt pavement preservation program. Preserving pavement extends a road's life, holds maintenance costs down, and keep drivers relatively happy.

The process, called Micro-Surfacing, uses a mixture of finely crushed stone, polymer emulsion, water and additives to cover an asphalt surface. A wide ribbon of black material gets squeegeed onto the pavement from a specialized truck. Tests in other communities have shown that the resulting seal significantly extends the life of a road's surface. Initially applied to low-volume roads, the product's success has encouraged its use on higher-volume roads as well. It is relatively inexpensive and, used in combination with crack

sealing, it can extend the interval between costly repavings for at least several years – a real benefit for a community like Cranberry with more than 110 miles of road to maintain.

The problem

There's just one problem: the stuff doesn't dry right

away. Unlike asphalt, which can be driven on almost immediately after being rolled out, Micro-surfacing, depending on the weather, can take anywhere from 15 minutes to several

- *If you drive on it before*
- *it's cured, it loses*
- *effectiveness as a*
- *pavement sealer and*
- *splatters material onto*
- *your car.*

hours to cure. If you drive on it before it's cured, it loses effectiveness as a pavement sealer and splatters material onto your car. As a result, the places it can be used are somewhat limited.

So, at least for the time being, it's being used on Township-owned parking areas and on certain collector roads. But its use in residential plans is still being evaluated.

Whether Micro-surfacing becomes a regular part of Cranberry's maintenance arsenal remains to be seen. But the Township's interest in it reflects a broader shift in strategy that's been underway for several years. "We're no longer looking at roads and saying that we're going to repave them every 12 or 15 years," Public Works Director Jason Dailey explained. "Since asphalt

has become so expensive, we're now looking at other techniques, like Micro-Surfacing, that can be part of our strategy to stretch those dollars."

The price

Each roadway maintenance strategy falls somewhere into a cost hierarchy.

The most comprehensive approach – total reconstruction – is far and away the most expensive. It's the step you want to postpone for as long as possible. You accomplish that by using more modest measures in timely ways to protect and extend the life of the pavement already in place. Rehabilitating a roadway, which removes and replaces elements of a failed road, is the second most expensive. Milling and filling – stripping away the asphalt and laying down a new surface – comes after that. Micro-surfacing or some other thin overlay is next. Applying a tar and chip overlayer is the cheapest. What it means is that if the right application is put down at the right time, it can be effective in extending the life of a pavement surface and in pushing back the timeline for more costly maintenance strategies. Micro-Sealing may be among those steps.

"Micro-Sealing products are similar to driveway sealants," Daily said. "They won't fix a rut or deep crack and they won't change the structure of your driveway. But they'll extend its life by preventing water from getting in and doing further damage. It's the same with Micro-sealing; it extends the life of a road, but doesn't add any structure to it. When we go out to repair a road that has a drainage problem with soft spots on the pavement, this product will make a uniform seal and look great, but it's not a leveler. It just keeps out water and makes the pavement usable for a longer period of time." ~

The Needle Is Moving On Cranberry's Water Meter Exchange

By mid-August, 46 percent of Cranberry's households were having their water consumption read and reported back wirelessly to the Township's accounting office using new digital meters recently installed in their homes. For commercial and institutional customers, the corresponding figure was 76 percent. By next spring, all of Cranberry's 10,000 water customers are expected to be on the new electronic metering system, according to Public Works Director Jason Dailey. And by the beginning of next year, every customer with a new digital unit will have access to their water use data online.

This is going to be a game-changer for both water utility management and customers.

"This is going to be a game-changer for water utility management and for customers to get a handle on their water spend," Dailey said. "Right now, a person is only billed in thousands of gallons. But with the new meters, we're going to be reading in the tens of gallons – not for billing purposes just yet, but for analyzing purposes. And our Finance department can now identify leak problems right from the office with customer use data instead of waiting months for the resident to notice."

The Pittsburgh horror show

At the same time, however, municipal water and sewer customers throughout the region have been hearing nonstop

horror stories about all sorts of problems involving the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority including outrageous bills that some customers received after having their meters changed. Cranberry is acutely aware of those customer concerns.

"We have people looking at our bills before they go out," Dailey explained. "Our Finance Department not only has auto-alerts set up, they're also physically examining bills that go out. If there's a bill over so many hundreds of dollars, it's going to prompt them to look into what's going on with that bill."

"Maybe somebody filled their pool. Maybe they just got a new irrigation system. So they're looking, they're investigating, they're calling customers to say: hey, what's going on with this? They're alerting our staff that this is an unusually high usage; can somebody go out and take a look? Maybe there's a leak. Maybe they have running toilets they hadn't known about. And now, because of our highly sensitive meters, we're picking up things like that."

But why would Pittsburgh have such massive problems while Cranberry's program has been essentially problem-free? "Whenever anybody brings up the City of Pittsburgh, I always flinch a little," Dailey admits. "Our setup is nowhere near as fragmented as theirs. They were dealing with seven different meter manufacturers. They were dealing with multiple installing companies. They didn't have uniform billing. Their people weren't looking at the same

information. And they didn't have a good inventory of meters to begin with. Cranberry is a relatively new community, so we don't have all the abnormal plumbing setups that older communities have to deal with."



Tracking meters

"We have a well-organized, concentrated system in place," he said. "We've been changing out meters all along. We know where every single one is located. We have a solid finger on the pulse of our metering and billing systems. Whenever you talk about the City of Pittsburgh and Cranberry, you're comparing apples to oranges."

"When a meter gets installed, our finance people know within 24 hours that the meter has come online and whether it's communicating properly and sending in the right data," Dailey noted. "The biggest challenge we've had is that the meter comes pre-programmed from the manufacturer. Our contractor, Newman Plumbing, and our own employees know if it's not reading correctly at the time of installation. We can see whether there's an issue that needs to be corrected. If there is, we usually make that correction the same week the meter was installed. We can do that from outside the home, so the homeowner doesn't even need to get involved in correcting anything with their meter." ~

New EPA Rule Has Teeth.

Dental amalgam is a metal alloy mixture that many dentists use in treating cavities with "silver fillings." About half of it is liquid mercury, which can be toxic to adults if ingested in high levels, and it's dangerous to unborn babies in any amount. During dental procedures using amalgam, when a patient's mouth is being rinsed out, some of the material can go down the drain, where it gets eaten by small fish, ultimately working its way up the food chain. This past summer, a new federal rule went into effect that requires dental offices to use separators that capture amalgam before it reaches the wastewater treatment plant and enters into the food stream. To make sure the regulation is being observed, Cranberry is issuing yearly permits to any dental office that either places or removes amalgam fillings. Pretreatment Coordinator Mason Miller will be contacting each of the Township's 37 dental offices to clarify the law's requirements. ~



Okay, So It's Not Chanel No. 5

Eliminating fragrances that flow from commercial and industrial operations is rarely a priority for company managers; productivity, safety and cost are typically far more important. But sewage treatment is an exception.

With residential neighborhoods on either side, odor management at Cranberry's Brush Creek wastewater treatment plant is a constant concern. And with major changes underway in its treatment process, the task of keeping unpleasant odors to a minimum is expected to face new challenges. So the Township's Public Works department is working on a revised odor management strategy.

Odor is not something that's once-and-done, it's something that constantly needs to be managed.

Right now, the plant has four scrubbers that clean odors from air forced through them. Each scrubber treats the air from a separate part of the plant. And periodically, each of them need to be serviced. "Treating odors from the plant is very corrosive on scrubber parts," Public Works Director Jason Dailey explained. "The plant environment is rough; the stuff they're cleaning is rough."

Dirty work

"It's not just taking the air and running it through; sometimes the air has to get heated to dry out before getting into the scrubber. That drying process involves an in-line heater. When a heater goes down, it essentially takes the whole scrubber off line. Those heaters are \$40,000 to \$60,000 apiece. We have them on a constant replacement schedule so we can periodically take them off line to make sure they're rebuilt to function optimally."

"It's like changing the air filter in your car; it's your car's first line of defense. These things are very similar; they have a very important function as part of our operation; we take that very seriously. We have to make sure they're running optimally because, just like with that auto filter, if you don't change it, you're going to start experiencing unpleasant things with your car."

"It's the same way in taking these scrubbers off line. When we do, we try to take them off one at a time so that when they're back on line, they will run at their highest efficiency. As part of our odor strategy, that's Number One, but it's already part of our normal operations; it's not necessarily part of our plant expansion."

"It's just a bigger deal now because we'll need to revisit our strategy once the plant is on line with all the new processes. We'll have the new membranes on line; the ATAD system is going to have a different role; and we'll be generating more sludge as a result of the new plant processes."

The never-ending challenge

"Odor is not something that's once-and-done," Dailey pointed out. "It's something that constantly needs to be managed and that's going to be part of

our process. For example, we have a misting system in place at our open-air primary stage treatment area now.

Those are fine sprays that attack odor in a different way than scrubbers do. Those are being revisited and we're looking into a new system.

"And we're evaluating the possible need for another scrubber at a different part of the processes than we have now because we're changing a lot of things. We're adding a lot of tankage. We're going to be creating more sludge and we will be monitoring how that affects our odor plan and how we can improve it. There's a lot that's changing and it's going to impact operations. So we'll have to fine tune after everything's online and running."

"One of the most important keys to odor management is communicating with our neighbors whenever things are offline or whenever we're changing the processes. When something is offline, our neighbors usually know it pretty quickly. We try to put out regular communications to the homeowners' associations and try to keep them informed about what's happening

whenever odor is going to be impacted. We really want to be a good neighbor. Having everybody know what our process is and how it affects them is a good thing." ~

A breath of fresh air. The sole function of this scrubber – one of four at the Brush Creek wastewater treatment plant – is to remove odors from the sewage treatment process. The Township's strategy for managing odors is being revisited in light of the plant's updated process technology.



Township Keeps Baseball Lips From Puckering

Some baseball fields, like some baseball fans, get sassy, giving unwelcome lip to players, coaches and umpires. They not only disrupt infield play, they can also cause injury. A lip, in baseball, is the uneven surface where the skinned infield meets the grass. It can cause ground balls to abruptly jump up, hitting players in the face and causing errors. And it's one of the main reasons that fields need to be renovated from time to time. Take the case of Graham Park's Pony League Field J.

With normal baseball field maintenance, grooming and raking, lips build up. Dips and lifts develop along the line separating the skinned parts from the grassy parts of the baseball diamond. And they become more pronounced over time. That means Cranberry Township, with 12 baseball fields of different sizes, needs a lot of lip service.

A level playing field

"At places like PNC Park or at high-end NCAA fields, they have dedicated staff who go in and clean the clay and infield material out of the grass edges to re-level the field after every game, every practice, every tournament," Cranberry Grounds Maintenance Manager Rebecca Auchter explained.

"In a municipal setting, that degree of maintenance isn't really possible. Instead, the daily maintenance and grooming on these ballfields falls

to CTA, our all-volunteer partner association," she said. "But they don't necessarily have the time or expertise to maintain a field like a full-time, professional, dedicated grounds staff would. So the fields get turned over to weekend warrior parents and coaches who have the best intentions, but maybe not the expertise.

- *We value volunteers*
- *getting out there and*
- *helping because we*
- *couldn't do it without*
- *them.*

"Of course, we value volunteers getting out there and helping because we couldn't do it without them. At the same time, though, they're not a professional grounds staff. That's why we do a 4- to 5-year renovation with our full-time staff." This year, Field J is getting the treatment.

"We own a laser grader," Auchter pointed out. "We got it in the fall of 2015 through a cooperative purchase with Franklin Park and Marshall. We now have the ability to do laser leveling in-house. Virtually everybody else has to contract that out."

"Our first full-scale project with the laser grader was Veterans Field at North Boundary Park, which was a

great success," she said. "We did a fully skinned infield and used our new equipment to make some elevation changes and laser-level the infield. Then last year we did a major renovation on softball Field H which included a very large irrigation component.

Pony up

"Field J is our big project this year. You'll see a big difference when we're done. There will be no lips on the field. It'll be perfectly laser-leveled, so there won't be any puddles. It'll be put back to exact regulation, which is how it was originally built, but through routine maintenance over the years, it kind of lost its form."

"The field will be back in use this season; we expect to turn it back over to the Association. It was in play all spring and all the way up through Cranberry CUP. Then we took it out of play and expect to have it back in use by the end of September" she said.

"We'll use anywhere from 25 to 50 tons of new infield mix and CTA will pay for that," she noted. "All the equipment, the labor, the sod and any irrigation parts will come through the Grounds Division's operating budget. So both of us bear a financial cost for it. But we're doing this for probably 20 to 30 percent of what it would cost to contract it out. We're basically doing it for the cost of materials; everything else is in-house."

"Our intention is to get all 12 of our ballfields onto roughly a five-year rotation; we want to fully laser-level each field every five years." ~



Ground out. Members of Cranberry's Public Works grounds crew spent part of the summer renovating Graham Park Baseball Field J – a regulation size Pony League field – to level out its playing surface. A 4- to 5-year rotation of renovations is planned for the Township's 12 baseball fields.



CRANBERRY

TOWNSHIP

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FINAL WEEK OF 2017 YARD WASTE COLLECTION: DECEMBER 11 - 15



Place items curbside in
GREEN TOP CART
or **BIODEGRADABLE**
YARD WASTE BAG

Bags available for sale in
Customer Service - 5 for \$2
or home improvement/hardware stores.



ACCEPTED:

- Leaves
- Grass clippings
- Branches and tree limbs under 4" diameter
- Brush up to 4 ft. in length
- Plants, flowers, and roots
- Shrubbery and prunings

NOT ACCEPTED:

- Loose soil or sod
- Kitchen food waste
- Garden or orchard food waste
- Excrement, pet droppings, or kitty litter
- Plastics or synthetics
- Tree stumps or limbs over 4" thick
- Non-compostable bags or boxes
- Lumber or construction material



More waste collection info:
CranberryTownship.org/Collection



Move over, Bryn Mawr. Cranberry Township joined a handful of elite Philadelphia suburbs with its mid-August designation by Moody's Investor Service as one of the seven most creditworthy municipalities in Pennsylvania. The new Aaa rating was assigned by Moody's in association with the Township's offer of \$10 million in bonds to fund its wastewater treatment plant upgrade and several smaller projects. Aaa is Moody's highest credit designation. The Township's previous rating, a very high Aa1, had been assigned two years earlier. The new rating, which is also retroactive to previous Township debt, means that the interest Cranberry pays on those bonds will be the market's lowest. ~