

Cranberry **TODAY**

SPRING 2019

SWITCHING SIGNALS
TOWNSHIP TACKLES TRAFFIC

**+ COMMUNITY
UPDATES**

STRIVING TO MANAGE GROWTH
CRANFEST RETURNS
RECYCLING REVISITED



CRANBERRY
• TOWNSHIP •

2019 CTCC Project of the Year

CRANBERRY LIBRARY MAKERSPACE



DONATE TODAY!

CranberryLibrary.org/Donate



724-776-7372

GOLF LESSONS & clinics

Available for all skill levels!

- Group Lessons
- Private Lessons
- Adult & Junior Clinics
- Men's & Ladies' Clinics
- Lesson Packages



Visit CranberryHighlands.com to learn more.





5



14

What's
INSIDE

22



7



18



26



CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Dick Hadley
Bruce Hezlep
Mike Manipole
Bruce Mazzoni
John Skorupan

TOWNSHIP MANAGER
Jerry Andree

CranberryTODAY is published quarterly by the
Cranberry Township Communications Team
on behalf of the Board of Supervisors and
the Township Manager.

We welcome your feedback!
CommunicationsTeam@cranberrytownship.org

Cover Photo: Traffic light maintenance on Rochester Road.

CranberryTODAY

- 4 Cranberry Briefs
- 5 Adaptive Traffic Signals
- 6 Supervisor's Commentary
- 7 Road Reconstruction Challenge
- 8 Robots Roam Residential Roads
- 9 How Cranberry Manages Growth
- 10 Impaired Driving, Part II
- 11 Firefighter Profile
- 12 Ambulance Service Redirected
- 18 CranFest Returns April 6
- 19 Resident Profile
- 20 Makerspace/ Township Survey
- 21 Soccer Field Lights/ Dog Park
- 22 Cranberry Highlands' Long Game
- 23 Birds and Bees Fly Home
- 24 Sensory Garden/ HHW Collection
- 25 Seneca Valley
- 26 Recycling Revisited/ All of Us Program
- 27 Events

BusinessTODAY

- 13 Fresenius Kabi
- 14 Fresh Thyme Opens in Cranberry
- 15 Bits of Business/ Now Open
- 16 Johnson Controls
- 17 Cranberry's Market Analysis



He's in the garden, but he's not pushing up daisies

Lorin Meeder, Cranberry's longest-serving employee, marked 45 years with the Township in November, a milestone which was duly celebrated by his fellow staff members in January. But on April 8, he will receive a different honor – this time from the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania: a recognition of his work with the Southern Butler County Garden Club's community garden project in Graham Park. In nominating him for the statewide organization's Silver Seal Award, club president Rosemary Romboski noted the many contributions Lorin has made in his capacity as Cranberry's Environmental Project Coordinator, including to his steadfast support of the garden project. "He coordinated the installation of planting beds, ordered soil and compost when we needed it, and made sure a water line was installed before the garden was planted," she wrote. "Lorin has a wonderful spirit and strives each day to make a difference in the community. He is kind hearted and wonderful to work with." Congratulations to Lorin Meeder!



Now you can drop into Cranberry Township's Play Center

For nearly 18 years, the Play Center in Cranberry Township's Municipal Center served as a convenience to the women enrolled in an aerobics program just down the hall. Their children, ranging from 12 weeks to 6 years of age, were supervised by a trio of experienced Parks & Recreation staff members in a secure room filled with toys, screens and colorful learning materials while their moms exercised. Now, however, the Township's Parks & Recreation Department has opened the Play Center as a drop-in childcare center to anyone needing capable child supervision for children up to six years of age between 8:30 and 11:30 AM, Monday through Friday, for just \$5 an hour. After initial check-in and providing their contact information to one of the supervisors on duty, there is no need for the parent to remain in the building. No advance registration is currently required, and no day-to-day or week-to-week commitment is expected. The Play Center's ceiling of 15 children at a time remains in place.



Help yourself to a tax break this month

Not only did your Butler County/Cranberry Township real estate tax bill remain unchanged from last year, if you act soon, it will even be eligible for a discount. Between now and April 30, you can take two percent off your tax bill, which is otherwise due at face value between May 1 and June 30. On the other hand, if your 2018 real estate taxes weren't paid by the end of last year, their collection has been turned over to the Butler County Tax Claim Bureau, and you'll have to contact them at 724-284-5326. In the meantime, if you changed your mortgage company or no longer using an escrow account to pay your property taxes, you are invited to contact tax collector P.J. Lynd's office to arrange for timely payment. You can reach his office by email at pj.lynd@cranberrytownship.org, by phone at 724-776-1103, or in person at his Municipal Center office.



Cranberry and Marshall are best friends again

It took a while to get there, but a series of disagreements concerning how costs are assigned in Marshall Township's sewer rate calculations have now been resolved. Cranberry provides wastewater treatment for a portion of Marshall Township as well as a small area of New Sewickley. In January, Cranberry's Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to the Intermunicipal Sewage Service Agreement between the two communities that clarifies how costs are assigned in calculating the Marshall rate.

Follow Us!



ADAPTIVE SIGNALS ARE READY TO ROLL

This is the year. Finally, after exhaustive counts, multiple grants, extensive field tests, and more than half a million dollars of investment, Cranberry's new adaptive traffic signal system is ready for prime time. And it promises to move traffic more quickly, using the road surfaces already in place.

Here's how it works: Pole-mounted video cameras are constantly trained on specific traffic lanes approaching intersections along the Township's arterial roads. Signal timings have been predetermined, based on measured traffic volumes. But the difference is that they're not fixed times, as they were in the past. Instead, they're entered into the traffic control system as a range of times. So, for example, a green light could range anywhere from 10 to 40 seconds in length, usually in five second increments.

The specific duration of that green signal would be determined by the stack of traffic that the camera detects is lined up at the intersection, including its left turn, right turn, and thru lanes. Light traffic would get a short green time. Heavy traffic would get more time to clear the intersection. And those times would reset with each cycle. So changes in traffic volume – often unpredictable and changing from day to day – would be reflected in each phase of the traffic light, in real time. As a result, the traffic flow between intersections connected to the system also become adjusted in real time. Hence the name: 'adaptive.'

Data from the system, which is centrally monitored by Cranberry's Traffic Operations Center inside the Township's Public Works Operations Center, is forwarded to researchers at Purdue University and to CMU's Traffic 21 Center – both of



which are studying ways of optimizing traffic – as well as to Econolite, the system's vendor. Over time, and based on that data, the software that controls the system is refined, and new releases of the software are issued as needed.

Companion refinements to the system are also taking place. For example, with the advent of autonomous vehicles, communication is being enabled between those vehicles and the traffic signals. Early alerts to highway incidents outside the Township that could have an impact on local roadways have been automated to trigger contingency plans and reset signals accordingly. And signal performance analytics are centrally displayed, allowing professionals to optimize traffic flow even more.

Last year, the new adaptive system went live for the first time on Rochester Road. Then earlier this year, the segment of Freedom Road from Commonwealth Drive to Rt. 19 was added, along with Rt. 228 from its intersection with Rt. 19 to Cranberry Woods. Over the course of 2019, other signals and roadway segments will be added. Every traffic light along Route 19 from Rowan Road south to the Turnpike will be added in the coming months. So will the Freedom Road/Route 228 corridor from Powell Road east to Franklin Road. Extensions of both arteries have also been proposed.

What makes the new system particularly timely are three major road projects in the Township which are expected to have a major impact on local traffic during the next two years: the Freedom Road Turnpike Bridge replacement, the MSA Thruway beneath Rt. 228, and the replacement of the twin I-79 bridges crossing North Boundary Road. The adaptive system is designed to quickly accommodate the changing traffic patterns caused by the projects. 🚗



The Cranberry Township Traffic Operations Center is located in the Public Works Maintenance Facility.

Building the Future, ONE PIECE AT A TIME

By Richard Hadley, Chairman, Cranberry Township Board of Supervisors



Back in the early '80s, when building new Interstate highway-type roads was still politically and economically viable, PennDOT floated an idea: it was to build an east-west highway that would carry traffic from the Ohio River in Beaver County through to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and I-79, going either near or through

Cranberry Township. The working title for the project was Crows Run, which took its name from a stream that flows along the western end of the proposed corridor.

The thought behind the Crows Run project was that there were already a number of heavy trucks and passenger cars making the trek from Conway to Cranberry along narrow, hilly, and sometimes dangerous roads – including Freedom Road. A modern, limited-access highway, the state reasoned, would improve safety, expedite the flow of traffic, and promote economic development.

But property owners and municipalities along the route weren't happy about it. Angry protests took place. Meetings devolved into shouting matches. Lawsuits were filed. Alternatives were demanded. And progress on the project slowed until the money earmarked for it ultimately got reassigned, with Crows Run destined to remain a paper highway.

Cranberry was among the communities objecting to PennDOT's proposal which envisioned Freedom Road being replaced by a limited access divided highway, cutting off its intersecting streets as well as any business or homeowner driveways along its route. Instead, Cranberry's vision had Freedom Road becoming a tree-lined boulevard with signalized intersections, turning lanes and planting islands, together with a mix of residential and light commercial establishments along its route.

We've never given up on that idea, but major projects on state roads almost always involve multiple agencies – PennDOT, DEP, SPC, DCED and others, each of which has its own history, its own resources and its own mission – sometimes including agendas that conflict with one another. Aligning them with Cranberry's vision, as well as with each other, is like assembling an overly complicated puzzle, and it's frequently a struggle. As a result, we typically form a series of interim partnerships to put the pieces together – block by block, intersection by intersection, grant by grant – just as we have with other transportation projects in the Township. And eventually, we get where we need to be.

Although their details differ, similar stories apply to pretty much every major infrastructure project in Cranberry. Take, for example, Route 228, which continues to undergo a series of upgrades and improvements. Or consider our program to create a network of improved parallel roads, providing residents with alternatives to Routes 19 and 228. Our park system, which continues to see incremental improvements in its attractions has a similar story. And so do our waterworks, which recently included a major upgrade to our wastewater treatment plant.

The common thread among all these projects is that they require extensive collaboration as well as significant time to get from Point A to Point B. That's especially evident when it involves units of government where each step – formulating plans, hearing objections, generating consensus, and developing the resources to achieve them – involves significant effort.

A number of years ago, I was travelling in Europe and saw a cathedral which, according to the guide, took 600 years to build. That's an amazingly long time, and I don't expect fulfilling Cranberry's comprehensive plan to take anywhere near that long. But in both instances, it started with a vision. Having the patience to sustain that vision, the diplomacy to engage others in the process, and the technical skill to implement it piece by piece, are an important part of what defines Cranberry Township. 🏠

You can reach Dick Hadley at
Dick.Hadley@cranberrytownship.org.



Cranberry's Rapid Road RECONSTRUCTION CHALLENGE

An initial segment of Freedom Road may, at last, be about to expand to five lanes from the Turnpike bridge to Haine School Road. It's all a matter of orchestrating the sometimes conflicting timelines that various agencies require for funding road projects. And getting it done will require a major work of administrative choreography. Here's what happened:

Butler County's Commissioners applied for and received a multi-million-dollar federal construction grant to make the Freedom Road improvements – part of an ambitious vision for an improved corridor running from the Beaver County line all the way to Rt. 8. Other money was committed by the County itself, by PennDOT, by SPC and by Cranberry Township. The details of their partnership are still in flux. Problem is, the federal money came with a stipulation: it needs to be spent starting next year. But construction can't begin unless the project is considered "bid ready" by September 2020.

At the same time, PennDOT doesn't have access to the federal money until a comprehensive agreement between the parties is in place, something which can't happen until a series of milestones have been reached, which is unlikely to happen until late this year. And then there's the need to collect public input.

"Without an agreement in place for the next six months, PennDOT can't start spending money on the design of

the project," Township Engineering Director Jason Kratsas explained. "To keep the project going, the Board of Supervisors agreed that the Township should partner with Butler County and start designing this project full speed ahead, using the local funds that were already committed to the project, until the grant money becomes available for PennDOT to take over the construction.

"When the grant application was made, the schedule was to have the design ready to go in 2021," he said. "That would give us four years to build the project. But the requirements from the FHWA say that in order to be eligible for this money, you're going to have to be ready by September of 2020 – a year sooner than anybody anticipated. Which means a highly aggressive schedule will be required."

"We've got a heavy task ahead, trying to make sure we're hitting all these required deadlines so we can get that money encumbered," he said. "The overall project cost will be around \$10 million including design, construction and other project costs.

"While this is certainly a huge task, and one we've never seen before, Cranberry is excited to work with Butler County, PennDOT and SPC to get it done." 🏠

Visit our website for more information at www.CranberryTownship.org/PennDOT.

ROBOTS ROAM RESIDENTIAL ROADS



Bob Howland, Manager,
Streets & Properties

Every spring Bob Howland, Cranberry's Streets Manager, invests an exorbitant amount of time evaluating the Township's 137-mile roadway system, updating its ratings using the industry standard Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating method. It is a system that relies on visual inspection to assign ratings from 1 (awful) to 10 (excellent) for each segment of road.

Those ratings are used to determine which roads get included in that year's resurfacing program. Then, drawing on his years of industry experience and familiarity with current inspection rating processes, Bob assigns his Public Works crew to take care of any roadway deficiencies he found before the paving contractor arrives each spring. That was then.

Now, a CMU startup called RoadBotics is automating the process. Using artificial intelligence, RoadBotics is perfecting a software package that takes data from cameras mounted on its patrol vehicle, processes it, rates each 10-foot section of roadway, and provides Public Works with the high-resolution photos and precise GIS locations of all those segments.

Their program – the outgrowth of an earlier technology that focused on traffic signs, for which Cranberry served as a beta test site – is not quite ready for prime time. But it's getting there quickly.

"We wanted to see how good it was compared to what Bob was doing," Cranberry Public Works Director Jason Dailey

recalled. "So we sent it out and had it look at the exact same roads that Bob looked at, and it came up with a 2-3% difference from what Bob had found. It was very close. We didn't think it was going to be as good as it was.

"It takes Bob 3 or 4 weeks to do this because it's very involved, very labor-intensive. And it takes time for us put the numbers into a piece of software that helps us manage our paving program. The RoadBotics system does in days what it takes Bob three and four weeks to do. It's very intuitive and it's very quick."

To Dailey, the fact that most of the ratings assigned by RoadBotics matched those given by Howland has been gratifying. "The results were so close that it certainly has increased our confidence in not only how we were doing it before, but also in the fact that technology can be used to do the same type of thing that Bob was doing," he said.

At the same time, however, a few kinks remain with the RoadBotics system. For example, it can identify pavement cracks, but has trouble ascertaining whether those cracks have already been sealed.

"We recognize there are still some limitations," Dailey admits. "But we're optimistic that they will be addressed in the foreseeable future and that the system will become more useful, allowing Bob to do things other than driving all the roads for evaluation." 🏠

WE'RE HITTING THE ROAD AGAIN

Here are the streets that are in this year's resurfacing plan.

COLLECTOR ROADS

Burke Rd	Franklin Rd - Serendipity Ln
Short St	Rt 19 - Dutilh Rd
Connector St	Old Freedom Rd - Freedom Rd

RESIDENTIAL ROADS

FOX RUN

Deerfield Dr	Meadow Dr - Partridge Dr
Meadow Dr	Old Farm Rd - Cul-de-sac
Old Farm Rd	Rowan Rd - Deerfield Dr
Cedar Circle	Deerfield Dr - Cul-de-sac

WOODBINE

Woodbine Dr	Powell Rd - Cul-de-sac
Columbine Ct	Woodbine Dr - Cul-de-sac
Trillium Dr	Woodbine Dr - Klein Rd
Trillium Ct	Trillium Dr - Cul-de-sac

WOODLANDS

Parkwood Dr	Freedom Rd - Carriage Dr
Kira Circle	Parkwood Dr - Cul-de-sac

EHRMAN FARMS

Gate Dancer Dr	Ehrman Rd - Steeplechase Dr
Middleground Pl	Ehrman Rd - Ehrman Rd
Celtic Ash Ct	Ehrman Rd - Cul-de-sac
Day Star Ct	Steeplechase Dr - Cul-de-sac
Gallant Fox Ln	Steeplechase Dr - Cul-de-sac

OLD TOWNE

Lexington Dr	Rowan Rd - Cul-de-sac
Field Gate Dr	Rowan Rd - Lexington Dr

THE CROSSINGS

Nottingham Ct	Crossing Ridge Trl - Cul-de-sac
Winchester Ct	Crossing Ridge Trl - Cul-de-sac

TIMBERVIEW

Oakridge Trail	Twp Line - Cul-de-sac
----------------	-----------------------

GROWING PAINS:

How Cranberry strives to manage growth

At least in principle, growth is a good thing for a community. It means more jobs. It means a wider choice of housing types. It lifts property values. It means a stronger economy with a broader selection of shops, restaurants and services. And it generates more public revenue. But growth also comes with its challenges.

For example, growth often means more traffic. It means fewer open spaces. It means less privacy. It can mean more pollution. It can lead to stormwater issues. And it can end up making starter homes less affordable.

All of those outcomes – both the good and the not-so-good – are characteristic of any growing community, and they have typified Cranberry Township's growth as well.

However, what local governments can do about those issues is often constrained by state law. For example, municipalities in Pennsylvania can't exclude legal businesses; they need to provide zoning and reasonable conditions for everyone, no matter what people might think about them.

Over the years, Cranberry has developed an arsenal of strategies to address its own residents' concerns – and most of them have worked, although not always to everyone's satisfaction. The hardest part has always been finding a balance between the rights of property owners and the interests of affected neighbors.

Here are some of Cranberry's major growth issues and the Township's strategy for addressing them:

Open Space. For more than a decade, Cranberry has encouraged developers to

organize their projects around its Planned Residential Development ordinance – which typically requires 25 to 30 percent of open space in addition to private yards – instead of its Subdivision ordinance, which doesn't require any open space. Since 2000, Cranberry has protected more than 2,100 acres of residential open space using that method.

Transportation. Ever since Pennsylvania allowed it 30 years ago, Cranberry has collected transportation impact fees with each new development in the Township. Those funds are used to finance road improvements that offset the project's effect on traffic. Every category of road carries certain standards; new and rebuilt roads must satisfy them to receive Board approval. Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations have also become Township priorities.

Recreation. Every residential developer in Cranberry is required to pay a Recreational Impact Fee; the amount varies with the number of homes included in their plan. Those fees help to finance Township parks.

Stormwater. Federal NPDES standards require developers to plan for and build adequate stormwater drainage. Those standards, along with state DEP requirements, have been administered by Cranberry for decades. Methods of satisfying those requirements can include detention ponds, surface grading, storm sewers, headwalls, culverts, swales, basins, underground tanks, wetland creation and other methods determined by the specific needs of the land involved.

Privacy. If a homeowner's scenic easements include property belonging to someone else, resolving it is typically a matter between the two property owners. However, if a home is built using the Planned Residential Development system, unlike in a subdivision, it automatically includes a buffer of at least 50 feet separating the homeowner's property line from neighboring parcels. 🏡



WHEN IT COMES TO DRUGS, THE EYES HAVE IT

Statistically, driving under the influence of alcohol has been in decline for the past 40 years. But driving under the influence of other intoxicants, including many OTC, prescription medications and recreational drugs, is growing. So too, at least for police, is the complexity of establishing their presence in the driver's body and any effects on the driver's motoring skills resulting from those drugs. It is an issue that is expected to grow even more complicated as medical and – if some legislators have their way – recreational marijuana both become legalized, as they already are in many states.

Detecting intoxicants tends to be somewhat nuanced. But for many police officers, it's not. Cranberry Police Corporal Bill Och, who has undergone specialized training and is certified as a drug detection expert, explains it this way: "What happens is that officers arrest so many people who are at the highest level of intoxication that they think every DUI is supposed to look that way – someone who's falling down, staggering, on the roadside throwing up.

"That's a lot different than an officer performing a set of field sobriety tests. Each test generates recordable clues. We observe them, document them, and then, based on field studies and lab experiments, if someone has X number of clues on these standard tests, that would be the deciding factor in issuing a citation."

At the same time, however, specific drug concentration levels cannot be reliably equated with specific degrees of driver impairment. There are no court-tested metrics to tell whether the metabolites and active drugs in a person's system are affecting their driving. That's different than in the case of alcohol. Most states, including Pennsylvania, have "per se" violations where a defined level of alcohol in the bloodstream is automatically interpreted to mean the driver is impaired, no matter how drunk or sober their behavior.

"When you get a drug screen back and it gives you levels of the active ingredients in cocaine or any of the narcotic-opiate type drugs, that number doesn't automatically say you're guilty of being a DUI driver," Och explained. "It still has to do with the street officer having face-to-face contact with the driver, having them perform standard field sobriety tests, and then using a drug recognition expert to do a medical screening involving blood pressure, pulse rate, and pupil size, along with standard field sobriety tests, to determine if they're impaired or not. So it's really about the evaluation.

"Certain types of drugs cause horizontal gaze nystagmus – the involuntary jerking of the eye when it moves side to side," Och continued. "Not all drugs cause it, but central nervous system depressants, inhalants, and associative anesthetics like PCP are the three drug categories that would cause someone's eyes to perform a certain way that a trained officer would be able to detect."

However, even common over-the-counter medications can impact driving. Decongestants, for example, can cause drowsiness and agitation. So can cough medicines. Other OTC and prescription drugs come with their own side effects, sometimes including confusion and blurred vision, and their effects can be amplified by interactions with one another. But their warning labels are frequently ignored.

In the meantime, what about marijuana? "Fingers crossed, we're going to host some training to get all our officers through what's called a 'medicinal marijuana workshop,' he said. "We'll open it up to other agencies in the county to get a jump on things before it's a problem. We're scrambling to figure it out so that, hopefully, we'll get some good information from those workshops and have a plan of attack ready to go when it hits." 🏠

Next issue: Distracted Driving Hazards

FIND THE FIGHTER IN YOU!

Volunteer with the Cranberry Township Fire Company

FIREFIGHTERS NEEDED - ALL TRAINING PROVIDED



STATE-OF-THE-ART STATION RENOVATIONS INCLUDE:

- BUNK-IN QUARTERS
- WORK STATIONS WITH WI-FI CONNECTION
- WORKOUT ROOM WITH NEW EQUIPMENT

CTVFC21.org • Contact@CTVFC21.org





IN PUBLIC SAFETY BILL AHLGREN IS A TRIPLE-THREAT

There aren't many people who want their portrait taken in the studio of Cyril Wecht, the celebrated former coroner of Allegheny County. But for three years back in the '90s, it was Cranberry Township police Sergeant and volunteer firefighter Bill Ahlgren who, early in his career, ran Dr. Wecht's photo lab, as well as the County's crime lab photography unit, in his capacity as chief forensic photographer.

"We photographed all the autopsies, all the evidence, and went out to all the crime scenes," he recently reflected. "Homicides, suicides, and other deaths have to be documented. So, any time the homicide or general investigations units went out, whether it was for arson or anything else, we went out and photographed those scenes."

Ahlgren's work doing photo documentation for local law enforcement agencies was a natural outgrowth of the training and experience he had acquired earlier, during the course of his first career as a medical photographer. A graduate of Rochester Institute of Technology, where he majored in biomedical photographic communications, Ahlgren worked for UPMC, taking pictures of surgeries in progress as well specialized work in ophthalmic photography and shooting photos through a microscope.

But during that time, he had also been a volunteer firefighter, first for Perrysville Volunteer Fire Company, then later with the Valencia Fire Company, where he held the rank of captain for most of his tenure. He also became an emergency medical technician, running with the QRS service out of Valencia with a basic life support crew. At the same time, he put himself through the IUP police academy in the belief that his work as a medical photographer, just as with other hospital support services, would always be in jeopardy from budget tightening.

"I made the ultimate choice to leave that profession and pursue something else," he said. "I'd already been a fireman and worked as an EMT in public safety. That got me looking into arson investigation using my photography for investigations, and at one point I considered doing that for the state police." However, the list of candidates seeking jobs as state troopers is very long, so when the call came in from Dr. Wecht's office, he was eager to accept. But the idea of becoming a police officer never went away. And in 1999, with an opening in the Cranberry police department, it finally became a reality.



Today, as a triple-threat first responder, Ahlgren brings a unique perspective to emergency scenes. "I already knew many of the firefighters," he said. "So I've been able to leverage the skills I learned being an EMT and a volunteer fireman to enhance my abilities as a police officer. And my training as a forensic photographer with the homicide unit got me into being a crash reconstructionist here in the police department.

"We've been able to foster a great relationship between the police department and the fire service," he noted. "Before, they didn't like the police getting on scene and cancelling them. But my background bridged that gap and helped unify the organizations. I interact with both emergency medical and fire service people. Knowing my background, they trust me in providing information or assisting them. And we now have a culture where we work very well together."

Yet even after all these years, Ahlgren's interest in photography remains strong, although considerably less morbid or technical in nature. "I still do a little on the side," he pointed out. "Senior portraits, family portraits – things like that. At home I take a lot of pictures. I don't have a studio, but I can set up anywhere. I've got lighting, cameras, lenses – all that. I'm a Nikon fan." 🏠

Ambulance service REDIRECTED

For years, the laws governing the nation's financially precarious ambulance services have needed acute care. This past February, however, CMS, the national Centers for Medicare Services, announced what promises to be at least a partial cure for sick ambulance regulations, starting next year.

Right now, for an ambulance service to be paid by Medicare or private insurers – the major sources of EMS revenue – they have to deliver the patient to a hospital emergency room. In a lot of cases, that makes sense. But what if the patient doesn't need the costly service that a hospital's ER provides? What if it's a minor complaint like the flu or a toothache or a stubbed toe – something that the patient's doctor could treat in their own office or that a freestanding urgent care clinic could handle just as well? Too bad. The ambulance service has to deliver them to the hospital anyway.

However, according to Cranberry EMS Acting Director Ted Fessides, ambulance operators will soon have better options.

"Currently, we can only bill if we transport you to a hospital," Fessides explained. "We can't take you to a doctor's office. I can't take you to an urgent care. Even though you may not need to go to a hospital and one of those places are better suited, under the current law we're not allowed to take you there."

But starting in 2020, the Centers for Medicare Services has approved two new options. One is Treat/No Transport. If the EMT or Paramedic who arrives in the ambulance is able to provide appropriate care on the scene and no transport to a hospital or other facility is needed, the service will be able to recoup its costs. Right now, it can't bill the patient's insurance carrier for on-site treatment.

The other major development involves Alternate Destinations. "That's going to be a huge game changer," Fessides said. "We already know that 70 percent of the patients we see don't need to be seen in an ER. They can go



to an urgent care clinic or doctor's office. This change opens up that possibility. And usually whatever Medicare or Medicaid does, the commercial insurers will follow. So it's a big win for EMS.

"Treatment in an ER is vastly more expensive than if I take you to your doctor's office or one of the urgent care centers," he continued. "So that will be a huge savings, and we can actually get people to the right place." For local EMS subscribers, any charges not reimbursed by insurance would be covered by their subscription.

Some details remain to be worked out, however. CMS has not yet released guidelines defining who makes the call concerning the ambulance's destination or what criteria should be used in making that judgment. Presumably the paramedic or EMT in charge would either make the determination or ask the patient if it's okay to go somewhere other than an ER – especially for minor complaints. However, that hasn't been finalized. But the reduced cost of care, getting service from the appropriate care provider, and receiving fair compensation for the EMS work, are all much-needed developments.

"It's a good win for everybody," Fessides said. 🏠

Ambulance crew posted to Haine School station

For years, Cranberry's public safety services had talked about opening a satellite EMS operation at the Haine School Fire Station. Doing so, the argument goes, would help to trim about a minute from the response times in answering 911 calls from locations west of the PA Turnpike. But until the recent remodeling of the Haine School fire station, that wasn't practical. Now, however, a recently completed station

remodeling has created room for a two-person EMS crew and ambulance to be on call from there between 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM daily. The relocation will take place over a 90-day trial period this spring to confirm whether EMS response times have actually been reduced. If the record shows that they are, in fact, consistently shorter than for ambulances dispatched from the Rt. 19 EMS base station, the Haine School EMS substation will become permanent.



Garret Viglione, head of manufacturing operations for Fresenius Kabi in Thorn Hill Industrial Park, explains the operation of the plasma collection units made there.

HEALTHCARE IS IN ITS BLOOD

Fresenius Kabi, a company with part of its U.S. manufacturing operations in Thorn Hill Industrial Park, may actually be the biggest company you never heard of. And it's just one division of an even larger parent company you may not have heard of either: Fresenius SE – a global healthcare corporation based in Bad Homburg, Germany with more than 277,000 employees and sales of more than \$40 billion last year.

For most Americans, if the Fresenius name rings a bell, it is due to the dialysis centers, including one on the campus of UPMC Passavant Cranberry, which are operated by Fresenius Medical Care, also a part of Fresenius SE. However, Fresenius Kabi is a different organization, with a different focus within healthcare. With its U.S. headquarters near Chicago, Fresenius Kabi's primary activities in Cranberry involve building sophisticated machines used

in transfusion medicine – primarily the collection, separation, and storage of blood products for infusion into patients who need acute or chronic care. Those devices are shipped to hospitals and clinics worldwide, frequently including special features designed to satisfy regulatory differences between customer countries.

Until the beginning of 2015, the Commonwealth Drive building that Fresenius Kabi now occupies was home to Fresenius Medical Care. Even earlier, the building, owned by Gigliotti, Sirea and Associates, had housed USA Today and a 7-Up warehouse.

But Fresenius Kabi, with 65 employees now at its Cranberry site, is growing. Last year the company secured a permit to expand its 25,000 square-foot facility by another 12,000 square feet, and recently, it applied for more space to house its growing

volume of manufacturing, storage and administrative support activities. By the end of this year, Manufacturing Operations Senior Manager Garret Viglione anticipates that the plant will employ 100.

One of the reasons for the plant's expansion is to extend its use of shop-floor automation. For example, the new addition will be outfitted with racks 50 feet high holding materials and component parts used in production. Ten or more automated lift modules, with just a few keystrokes, will sort, shelve, fetch and deliver the parts as needed to the appropriate operator as the devices under construction move slowly along tracks from one assembly station to the next.

Still, for a company of its size, the firm's low public profile is somewhat surprising. "Because we're not consumer-facing, it's hard to say how many people know who we are or what we do here," Viglione reflected. "The only question we received from the Township when we did our building application was: how do you pronounce your name? My email address is the longest one I've ever had. "But we are expanding and we definitely want to be a key contributor to the community. We want to get the word out that we're here, we're growing, and we're looking to hire." 🏠



FRESH THYME Brings Customer Service Back to the Grocery Business

For a grocery chain that was essentially unknown here when it entered the Pittsburgh market last summer, Fresh Thyme Farmers Market has done an amazing job of introducing itself to area residents. The February 5 soft opening of its Cranberry Commons store – the company's third in Western Pennsylvania and 76th nationally – was mobbed.

"We set a company record for sales those three hours," Store Director Floyd Prescott recalled. The next day, when the store officially opened for business, it was even busier, with customers lining up from its front door all the way past Lowe's. "It was wall to wall. You couldn't get in. You couldn't get a shopping cart. You couldn't get a parking place. But the line stayed long pretty much the whole time."

Even so, helping people learn what the store is and what it is not remains a challenge as the Illinois-based chain gets larger and moves into new markets. "Some people had actually heard of us," Prescott acknowledged. "People who lived in the Midwest and had been to Sprouts, which is a very similar concept, had a pretty good idea of what we were talking about. But most people had never

heard of Fresh Thyme."

So, what exactly is it? "Produce is our moniker; that's what we are. We are literally a produce store that surrounds itself with all these other great departments," Prescott explained, pointing out the store's deli, its bakery, its meat department and extensive collection of health foods and supplements.

At the same time, though, while the store carries a number of exotic and unfamiliar products, some of the products and brands that shoppers are familiar with from stores like Giant Eagle, Walmart, Target and Shop 'n Save aren't carried by Fresh Thyme. Need a light bulb? Go to Walmart. Need a screwdriver? Go to ACE Hardware. And if you need paper goods or cleaning supplies, prepare to see environmentally-friendly but unfamiliar brands as well as products with the company's own private labels on its shelves.

"We could carry those type products," he said. "But our focus is more on natural foods, healthy products, certified organics. That's really who we are."

However to Prescott, perhaps the most important point of differentiation has to do with its

personnel. Recruiting the store's current staff of 110 required more than 1,000 interviews and took longer than expected, resulting in its opening date getting pushed back a month. But Prescott and his key managers were picky – looking for a special combination of qualities in the people they hired.

"I can train you to do any job in the store," he claimed. "Give me two weeks and I'll make you an expert. What I'm looking for are people who can bring a personality, the ability to engage people, to be helpful, to go above and beyond. Because in my opinion – and I've been in the grocery business a long time – nobody does it anymore. There's no service in this business."

"People will come here the first time because it's new," he noted. "Whether they come back is going to depend on what we do or don't do. We're going to offer them a clean, safe store to shop in. Our people create a real positive, high-energy atmosphere. When customers ask for something, we don't just point; we take them to it. You don't see that anywhere, but we do it here. Our people have been doing a great job; I'm very proud of them. I love the team I have." 🏠

BITS OF BUSINESS

Cape Cod style condo community approved

A planned residential development by Weaver Master Builders on a 15-acre parcel at the corner of Franklin and North Boundary Roads has been given tentative approval by Cranberry's Board of Supervisors. Houses in the plan, which include 27 mostly single-story patio-style homes along a new street accessed from North Boundary Road, would be owned by the incoming residents. But yards, gardens and other property surrounding those homes, in addition to common areas of the plan, would be retained and maintained by a homeowners association. Other features of the plan include streetlights, sidewalks on both sides of the street, and a garden in the teardrop loop at the end of the cul-de-sac. Construction is expected to take place this year.



Bank of America to replace gas station

Bank of America, the nation's second largest financial institution with assets of \$2.3 trillion, began moving its retail operations into the Pittsburgh region last year. Cranberry's Board of Supervisors approved the bank's application to build a 3,970 square foot branch on the site of what was, until recently, a Marathon gas station at the busy corner of Freedom Road and Route 19.

Hotel plans have changed

When the proposal to build a Cracker Barrel Old Country Store on the site of the long-closed Echo restaurant at the end of Longtree Way was presented to Cranberry's Board of Supervisors three years ago, it was part of a package which included a 103-room Element by Marriott hotel behind the restaurant, both of which would be owned by JBCD Developers of Tampa, Florida. But the project has changed hands and changed plans. Now owned by Khushi Development – which also owns the Candlewood and other properties in Cranberry – the plan calls for a smaller 84-room Holiday Inn Express hotel, with fewer amenities.

Board gives blessing to church addition

Grace Community Church on Marshall Road, built in 2012 to accommodate a rapidly growing congregation, is about to grow again. Cranberry's Board of Supervisors approved an application by the church to build a two-story 51,910 square foot addition onto the structure already in place. The addition, which includes only minor modifications to the structure's initially planned footprint, already has the required improvements associated with the project, including parking and stormwater management, in place.



Forest Edge expansion approved

Cranberry's Board of Supervisors has given tentative approval the expansion of the Forest Edge Planned Residential Development from 64 to 101 custom homes. The expansion was made possible by the Singer Development company's 2018 acquisition of a 36-acre parcel of woodlands adjacent to its project from the Russian Orthodox Church, which maintains a retreat on nearby Peters Road.

IPEG/Conair

200 W. Kensington Drive,
Suite 100

MT Nails & Spa

20455 Route 19

Flame BBQ

1343 Freedom Road

CX-Energy Real Estate Broker

81 Dutilh Road

Morascyzk & Polochak, Attorneys at Law

81 Dutilh Road

Cabinet World & Bath Fitter

20430 Route 19

Velez Dermatology

144 Emeryville Drive

Penstan Supply

15 Leonberg Road

Sleep Number

2080 Mackenzie Way, Suite 500

Patterson Dental

100 E. Kensington Drive, Suite 300

Starbucks

1713 Route 228

Barber & Hoffman

1659 Route 228,
Suite 200

GSA Census Office

260 Executive Drive,
Suite 100

Kentucky Fried Chicken

20245 Route 19
(inside Walmart)

**WE ARE
OPEN!**



Johnson Controls Area General Manager Mark Altman with a schematic showing how the company's equipment fits into a newly renovated floor of Pittsburgh's Gulf Building.

JOHNSON CONTROLS CAN MAKE YOU SMARTER

Lots of private homes today are outfitted with all sorts of internet-enabled gadgets including doorbells, locks, thermostats, surveillance cameras, and robotic appliances, as well as smart speakers – and that's not even counting the remotely-read utility meters which are rapidly replacing old electromechanical ones.

In most homes, however, those devices operate independently of one another. But what if they were connected in meaningful ways? What could be learned about improving household management?

According to Mark Altman, who heads Johnson Controls' 300-person office in Cranberry Business Park, it is an important question for his company – a global giant whose business is focused on designing, building, installing and servicing the systems used to manage and protect commercial buildings. That's because the answers will help inform the company's own long-range strategy of

creating truly smart buildings and, by extension, smarter cities.

In the meantime, the company is working to fully integrate the fire protection and security businesses it acquired from Tyco International in 2016. It is a formidable task. Unlike consumer products, which are sold directly to end users in stores or online, the products and services offered by Johnson Controls are sold in specialized ways to different buyers including architects, general contractors, electrical engineers, and building owners. The result is a multi-layered matrix, organized by products, functions, territories and customer types – a complex model that works a bit differently in each of its many regional offices.

About half of its worldwide revenues – which totaled a whopping \$31.4 billion last year – come from newly constructed buildings – ones where the company's comfort and safety systems are built into a structure right from

the start. The other half comes from its service division, which maintains and upgrades legacy systems already in place.

Last year, as part of the company's consolidation, Altman closed Johnson Controls' Robinson Township office, as well as the former Tyco properties SimplexGrinnell and Tyco Integrated Security, to bring them under the same roof as Johnson Controls in Cranberry.

"Because we moved three individual cultures into one office, we're spending a lot of time defining exactly what our culture is," Altman said. "There were a lot of similarities, but they were each different. Now that we all sit in one office, we spend a lot of time building culture, having team events, making sure each of us understands what the other does." It is a project that will likely take another year or two. But the long-range goal remains the same.

"We want to connect all these technologies," he said, nodding toward a chart of the company's offerings. "We want to provide analytical data from the systems in our buildings to give clients a smart platform to manage from."

"We're doing a lot of work for Chicago right now to create a smart city. They want to understand the way traffic flows, how much water is consumed, how much power is used, where can they save energy. The reason we got pulled in is because our equipment is already in 60-70% of the buildings in downtown Chicago."

"So how do we help create smart cities and buildings? Right now, we're watching and learning from these smart homes with Alexa and all the other smart products going into them." 🏠

MARKET ANALYSIS: CRANBERRY'S FUTURE LOOKS

In one of the most memorable scenes from director Mike Nichols' classic movie "The Graduate," Benjamin Braddock – Dustin Hoffman's youthful character – is taken aside at a Los Angeles cocktail party by an affluent gentleman who offers the young man a single word of career advice. "Plastics," he said, to the bewildered Braddock. "There's a great future in plastics."



A 2018 update to an economic analysis of Cranberry initially prepared in 2007 by Delta Development Group for the Township's 25-year comprehensive plan, sees it the same way. The assets Cranberry brings to the region's economic marketplace, including excellent highway access, an educated workforce, affordable office space, and an assortment of plastics-related companies already in place, as well as its proximity to Marcellus Shale gas production and the Shell ethane cracker plant under construction in neighboring Beaver County, all point to a future which will likely be affected by the region's plastics business.

"Cranberry Township's proximity to the feedstock, consumer markets, and access to major transportation corridors provides an excellent marketing opportunity for business recruitment," the report says. To support its assessment, which focuses on attracting additional petrochemical companies and expanding Cranberry's current plastics manufacturing sector, it cites a separate report by Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development. That DCED report recommended accelerating pad-ready development, supporting natural gas pipeline infrastructure, and advocating for storage capacity to maximize the potential economic development

benefits of natural gas and related investments.

In addition to marketing Cranberry's current key assets, the report's recommendations include working with manufacturers who are looking for sites with access to the ethane cracker plant, developing an inventory of available industrial sites, improving critical infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer, and working with Butler County Community College to prepare the area's workforce for the new industry's labor needs.

The business sectors which would most directly benefit from that sort of development include plastic, resin and adhesive manufacturing, plastic pipe and parts, laminated plastic, plastics wholesaling, and logistics, according to the Delta report.

However, any decisions to implement the report's recommendations and accommodate those types of development would hinge on the vision as well as the actions of Township officials, community leaders, and local residents, in addition to business stakeholders in and around Cranberry. To date, no such policy decisions have been made.

At the same time, though, plastics aren't the only focus of Delta's Market Analysis. Other findings confirm the steady expansion of Cranberry's retail, office, hospitality and business service sectors, as well as its growing diversity of housing. Year-to-year comparisons of the workforce were a bit more difficult to determine due to a reclassification of jobs involving business management and finance.

But comparisons of the study's northerly "Cranberry Corridor" to Pittsburgh's east, west and southern corridors reflect a continuation of Cranberry's sustained pattern of population and economic growth. 🏠

RESINOUS



CRANFEST

4.6.2019

11:00AM - 3:00PM



*Musical Performances
Authentic Food
Dancing*

CRANBERRY MUNICIPAL CENTER



CranFest Returns April 6 with Food, Fun and Fantastic Acts!

Recent arrivals to America's shores, together with long-time residents of the region, will convene for the fifth consecutive year on Saturday, April 6 in the Cranberry Township Municipal Center to celebrate their national heritage and showcase Western Pennsylvania's growing mix of nationalities and backgrounds.

Between 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM, CranFest – the annual celebration of cultural diversity organized by the Cranberry Area Diversity Network – will present a program featuring music, dance, food and information booths representing the cultures of nations from all over the world. A companion exhibit of the Township's own municipal government, called Cranberry At Your Service, will be held at the same time in Council Chambers.

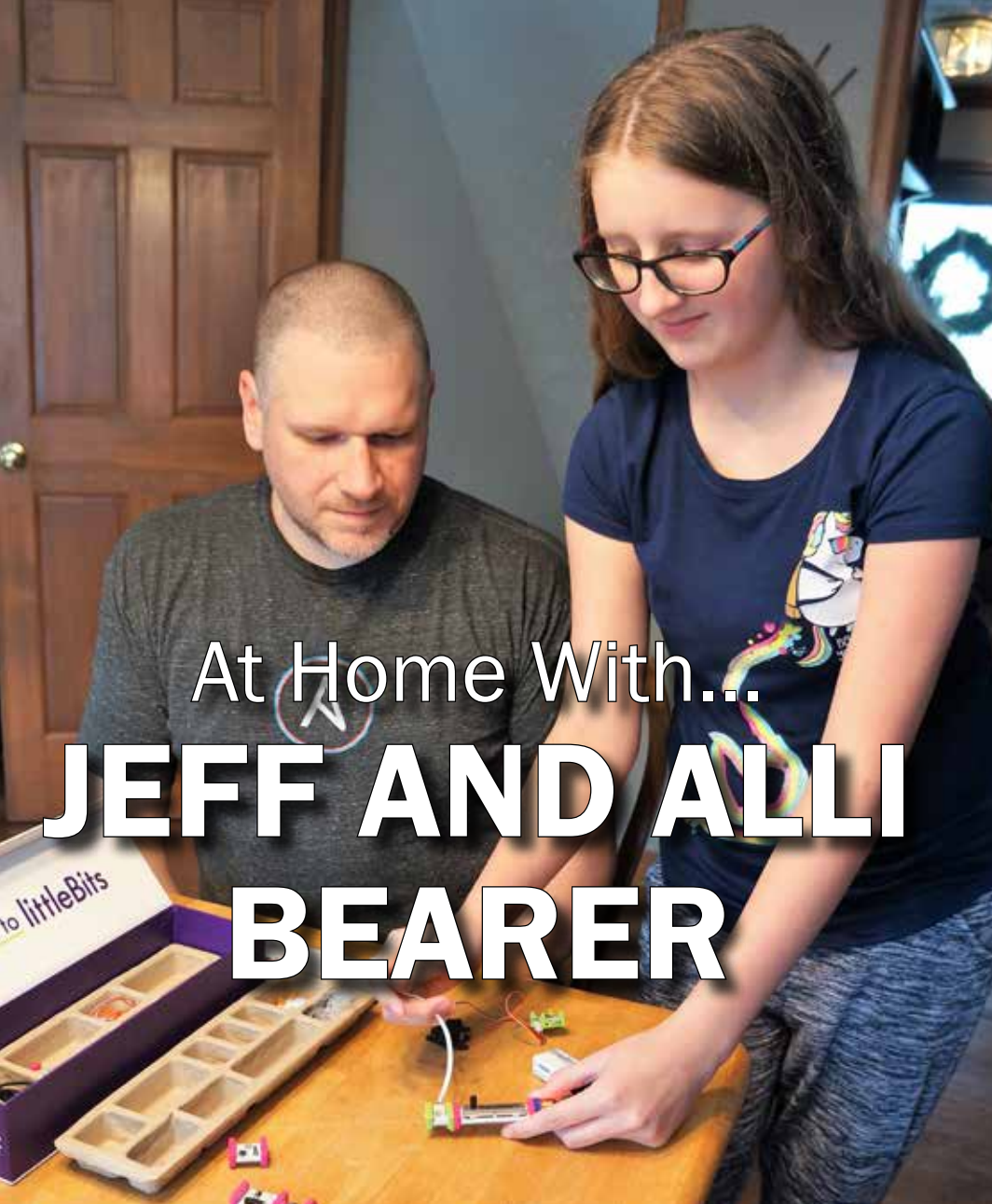
Stage presentations will run simultaneously at two venues in the Municipal Center: one in the gymnasium, another in the building's Town Square. Some performers will be returning from previous CranFest celebrations including dancers from the Philippines, Ireland, Bulgaria, China and India. Several new acts this year will include an exhibit of Kendo, a traditional Japanese martial art using bamboo swords, and Taiko, a powerful Japanese drum ensemble.

Authentic nationality foods will be available for sale from vendors stationed throughout the gym. This year's menu will include specialties from Hungary, India, Italy, Korea, Thailand, Pakistan, Columbia and the Philippines.

Cultural booths offering information and keepsakes will set up shop in the building's corridors. Among them: henna tattoos from India, representatives of the special needs and mental health coalition, North Hills Genealogists, and several school and nationality-centered tables including Japan, Venezuela, and representatives of the Hispanic, Francophone and Arabic cultures, as well as clergy from five major religious faiths.

There is no charge to attend the event, and free parking is available behind the building. 🏠





At Home With... **JEFF AND ALLI BEARER**

When a computer at home goes haywire, most people simply throw up their hands and call a help desk in some far-off part of the world. But when a computer in Jeff Bearer's Cranberry household goes AWOL, he sees it as a puzzle – a challenge for him to figure out, to fix and improve. For Jeff, truly understanding what makes things tick, buzz, ring or roar has been a lifelong preoccupation.

That penchant helps to explain why he's comfortable in his day job, working as a software developer for Microsoft, where he engineers robust data storage devices for high intensity commercial users. However, solving difficult problems in a hands-on fashion had been part of Jeff's mindset well before his Microsoft career connection ever came about. It's a practice for which he credits his father, a heavy equipment and backyard mechanic, and it's a habit of mind he has passed along to his own daughter Alli, a 5th grader in the Seneca Valley system.

A selection of Alli's electronic creations, including battling robots, an electronic flute, a flower petal piano and a sonic

levitation machine, are showcased in a home basement shadowbox, right across from her dad's recording studio where, for the past 14 years, he and a partner have originated a series of podcasts directed to craft beer brewers and beer enthusiasts.

Jeff's lifelong enthusiasm for hands-on work eventually led him to become familiar with makerspace projects elsewhere in the region. So when CTCC announced its makerspace project in Cranberry library, Jeff was immediately drawn to it.

As part of the library's Makerspace Planning and Organizing Committee, he and his fellow members have been tasked with figuring out some important details about how the Cranberry Makerspace will operate. For example, what tools should it stock? What material should it provide? Who will give the essential safety instruction concerning its high-temperature electronic devices? And what about teaching and supervising early stage makerspace patrons who are working on their own projects? Will oversight come from staff, from volunteers, or a combination of the two?

The tools in Cranberry will probably not include most traditional artifacts of industry – no welding or wood shop tools or anvils for metalworking are contemplated. But it will likely include a laser cutter, a 3-D printer, soldering equipment and assorted electronic devices.

"There's also going to be some classroom instruction," Jeff pointed out. "I felt that we needed to go back to foundation principles by getting people to put code onto a piece of hardware and have it do something. So I'm working on an Introduction to Microcontrollers class. It's going to be a two-hour class, but it will include four easy projects that people will be able to do.

"We're going to use Micro Bits – pieces of hardware with reduced sets of instructions embedded into them that were originally designed for computer education in the UK," he said. "They're great for teaching kids how to program. And there's no reason adults can't use them as well if they're just getting into it." 🏠

*Cranberry residents, do you have an interesting story to tell?
Contact us: CommunicationsTeam@cranberrytownship.org.*

FORGE AHEAD: 2019 PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Signature feature:
THE MAKERSPACE
featuring 3-D printers,
a laser cutter, sewing
machines, computers,
loom and decorative
materials for
embroidery, painting and
embellishing projects.

New entryway to
easily accommodate
those pushing a
stroller, guiding
children or
needing assistance.

Improved lighting,
carpet and paint.



MAKERSPACE

Cranberry
Public Library

Key details of CTCC's 2019 Project of the Year were unveiled at Cranberry's Board of Supervisors meeting

The \$1.2 million project, which is being funded by a Keystone Fund Grant of \$476,000, leveraged with CTCC and Township funding of \$724,000, will include a relocated circulation desk and a new ADA-accessible front entry system, as well as new carpeting and lighting. But its most important renovation will be the addition of a makerspace – essentially a series of workstations outfitted with tools and materials for a variety of hands-on collaborative projects. The Board also approved a proposal by Cannon Design to develop detailed designs for the project.

Township to Survey Neighborhood Needs

A pilot survey to identify the improvements that long-time Township residents want and need is now underway in Cranberry's Fernway plan of homes. The survey is the first step in an ambitious, communitywide neighborhood reinvestment project. It begins with the Township's Department of Planning and Development Services ascertaining what, if anything, residents of the Township's longest-established neighborhoods need in order to thrive. And Fernway – Cranberry's first major housing plan – is also the first development to be included in the project.

"We're looking closely into our neighborhoods, especially the older ones, to learn what's really happening there," Department Director Ron Henshaw explained. "This is not a case of Township planners making plans for residents from a distance; it's getting out and learning what's really going on at street level. Are there things we should be doing? Things that they should be doing? Things we should be working on together?"

"Neighborhoods should have a say in their future," he continued, "and we'd like to help them get there. So it's important for us to engage, listen and learn."

In the case of Fernway, however, several extenuating circumstances pushed it to the top of The Reinvestment Plan's list. One is the Freedom Road Turnpike bridge widening project, which is taking place at Fernway's front door. This year, utility lines in the bridge area will be relocated. Next year the bridge itself will be replaced. Concerns about cut-through traffic – already an issue in Fernway – could temporarily become worse.



So finding ways of managing and calming traffic need to be addressed this year.

The other development involves several buildings which formerly housed Sweet Licks and Paint Monkey – both of which were acquired by PennDOT for the bridge's right of way and both of which were recently torn down. But their demolition is also an opportunity to create a distinctive public amenity on the site. Whatever that amenity turns out to be is going to have an impact on the neighborhood, but exactly what it will be has yet to be defined.

The interior of Fernway might also present opportunities to do some pilot projects – low-cost tests of ideas having to do with things like calming traffic that people want to see, and then making sure they work before spending money on permanent fixes.

Of course other potential improvements – possibly including things the Township never imagined – could become candidates as well. While the plan's recommendations need to be fiscally responsible, some capital investment by the Township would likely become involved.

However, the study's main goal is engaging the people who live in those neighborhoods to identify needs and figure what improvements are important to strengthen their neighborhood. "It's a way for us to get input and opinion from the people whose lives would be most directly affected by any projects," he said. "It's securing residents' engagement so we can learn what their needs are and plan for the future." 🏠

Soccer Fields

SEE THE LIGHT

A major upgrade to North Boundary Park's three soccer fields is now in place. The project, which involved the installation of pole-mounted sports field lighting, is the product of an agreement between Cranberry and the Seneca Valley Soccer Association which was finalized last fall.

A second potential upgrade – the installation of artificial turf on those same fields – is currently on hold as a result of the projected \$4 million cost. However, alternatives are being considered. In each case, with growing demand for field time, the projects are designed to extend the use of the fields into the evenings, as well as to minimize delays from inclement weather. Last year, for example, neither baseball nor soccer were able to complete their seasons due to poor weather conditions.

But while decent field conditions are key to successful play, so is adequate lighting. Soccer's spring season begins before evening light is available, and its summer season concludes after evening light has gone away.

Under terms of a partnership agreement between the Township and the Soccer Association, Cranberry will



advance the cost of the lighting project and the Association will reimburse the Township according to an agreed upon schedule. A similar approach is under discussion for turf replacement, although the outcome is uncertain. Maintenance of the fields would be a cooperative venture.

No additional parking is included in the project. The only structural modification will be the addition of a small storage cabinet to a current restroom building. ADA-accessible paths will be created to and around the fields with space for spectator seating in case the Association decides at some future point to add bleachers. 🏠

RUN WITH THE DOGS



Local dog owners will soon have the opportunity to exercise outdoors with their pet, where both become more fit, as well as better companions, along the way.

Cranberry Parks & Recreation Director Pete Geis explained how the idea came about. "We're constantly listening to people, seeing what they need," he said.

"In our group fitness program, we kept hearing people say: 'I don't have time for exercise right after work; I've got to go home and take care of the dog.' And most people, once they get home, aren't coming back out to the gym.

"So this summer, we're starting a program with one of our fitness instructors where people can run home, get their dog and then go to a dog-friendly, $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile trail off of Commonwealth Drive," Geis explained. "You get your fitness in as you walk your dog. It's sort of like a parcourse fit trail; you do some sort of exercise, then go to the next stop, do some other sort of other exercise, and part of that exercise is training your dog to sit when he needs to and to overcome distractions from other dogs there. So it's dog training, it's fitness for you, and it's fitness for you dog."

For those seeking more passive way to accompany their pet, Community Park's Rotary Dog Park is undergoing some enhancements. "We finished a lot of work last fall – new fencing, a shelter, a paved area in the large dog park," Geis said. "We've put play amenities on one side of the dog park and this spring, that same amenity will also be installed in the other side of the large dog park."

Even more developments are pending. One would be from a grant being sought through Butler County to pave the entrance of the small dog park, a grant which Geis is optimistic about receiving. The other involves the possibility of making the new disc golf course nature trail into a leash-friendly walking area. Whatever the outcome of those discussions, the Puppy Plunge will continue and once again conclude the Waterpark season after Labor Day. 🏠



The **LONG GAME** of **CRANBERRY** **HIGHLANDS**

**What good is a golf course
if you don't play golf?**

**In the case of
Cranberry Highlands, plenty.**

Twenty years ago, Township officials had a choice; the 336-acre farm owned by the former Sewer & Water Authority that now includes Cranberry Highlands, was no longer suitable as a site for sludge disposal, and its viability for agriculture was marginal. So the Township faced two alternatives: sell it to a developer who could use it to build yet another housing plan, or see if someone could turn it into a golf course. But when efforts to attract a private golf investor failed, the Township decided to take the project on itself.

Board Chairman Dick Hadley remembers it this way: "At the beginning we looked at it saying it's either a golf course or 300 homes. If it's a golf course, we're going to create green open space, which made sense. But how do we do it? We didn't want to burden the taxpayer. Instead, we'd pay for bonds through revenue generated by the golf course itself"

Renowned golf course architect Bill Love was retained to design the course in 2000, and sixteen years later, he returned to Cranberry as the U.S. Open was being held in Oakmont. "He and I went around all 18 holes in a cart," Hadley recalled. "I was there when he designed it, and I walked the course with him. I remember our philosophical discussions about playing different holes and things like that. And he says: 'Well, you know I am the architect. I do this for a living. I know what I want.' And I said, 'Yes, but you know, I am the customer and I sign your checks.' After that we got along just fine."

Since that time, Cranberry Highlands has continued to enjoy success, even at a time when other golf courses in the region have been forced to scale back or close. It is an outcome he attributes to the exceptional level of maintenance led by course superintendent Dave Barber and the outstanding golf instruction provided by PGA Pros Jody Barrett and Shawn McCall to both kids and adults. But its success has involved more than great golf. Cranberry Highlands has been the site of outings and fund raisers for all sorts of worthy organizations. In addition to generating millions for charitable causes, it has become the wedding venue of choice for a couples throughout the area as well as a meeting site for all kinds of private and business events.

"One of the things that encourages me when I walk through the golf course parking lot is how often I see Penguins players there following their practice sessions and how many of our guest's cars come from out-of-state," Hadley said. "It's all about having a good time, and I think Cranberry Highlands succeeds because we understand that. We get it. And we encourage people to go out there and have a good time."

"We knew we had an amenity that would add to the value of the community – property values and more – and it certainly has," he reflected. "This is exactly what we were trying to do then. We've maintained the integrity of the course, we've accomplished the vision that we had and we're going to continue to keep this course on the up cycle and make it something that people are proud to play." 🏡

BIRDS AND BEES

Fly Home to Cranberry Highlands



It's been a labor of love. About ten years ago, Cranberry Highlands built a series of homes for its resident birds. Those birdhouses continue to be well-used. Next it was bat boxes, and then butterfly houses. Now they're doing the same thing for bees.

A community apiary, being built as a collaborative project of Cranberry Highlands, Cranberry Township, and the independent advocacy organization Burgh Bees, will be going up in a wooded area near the golf course's hole 12 pond this spring. It will be at least 150 feet from any golf play area and buffered from the course by shrubbery. The beekeeping project is being led by Mason Miller of the Township's Public Works department, himself a beekeeper whose own father and grandfather also maintain hives in the state's rural northwest.

A securely fenced-in area to protect against predators will initially house two hives owned by Cranberry and managed by Township staff under Miller's supervision. Honey from those hives will be harvested late in the season and sold through the Cranberry Highlands pro shop with proceeds going toward ongoing maintenance of the beekeeping project.

By the apiary's second season, other beekeepers in and around Cranberry will be invited to install their own hives in the enclosure while observing a series of guidelines created to assure the apiary's safe and healthy operation. Beekeepers whose hives are deemed unkempt or whose bees have become abnormally aggressive, will be required

to fix those issues or be told to buzz off.

Although golden honey is a sweet byproduct of beekeeping, Cranberry's apiary serves other, even more important roles. Bees are essential to the region's ecosystem and food supply through their work as plant pollinators. As a result, cultivating pollinator species has become an element of Cranberry Highlands' certification as an Audubon International Sanctuary – a coveted credential that recognizes golf courses whose environmental stewardship has been exceptional.

Honey bee colonies have been struggling in recent years due to a variety of stresses which include habitat disruption, genetically engineered foods, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and invasive pathogens. However, a promising new treatment developed in Washington state to combat a mite species suspected of killing bee colonies will be tested in the Township's apiary to help strengthen the bees' immune systems and lengthen their lives.

At the same time, Burgh Bees will offer instructional programs designed to teach beginning beekeepers how to responsibly maintain their own hives and apiaries. Their members include experienced beekeepers from all over Southwestern Pennsylvania. Classes will be open to all and offered throughout the insects' active season. Beekeeping tools and personal protective gear will also be provided.

For more details, visit CranberryTownship.org/Bees. 🏠



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

A Garden FOR ALL THE SENSES

Friends consoling their stressed-out companions will sometimes advise them to stop and smell the roses. It's a pleasant allegory for taking time out of a busy schedule to enjoy the beauty around you. And it's good advice. But just outside the Regional Learning Alliance building in Cranberry Woods where HeartPrints preschool is housed, that same metaphor is being taken quite literally.

A "sensory garden" populated with a variety of plants and flowers, along with chimes and other objects chosen to stimulate each of the five human senses, is about to be installed on a stretch of woods and wetlands between RLA and neighboring MSA Safety, just inside the Butler County line. Initial groundbreaking for the project took place in January. The garden site, which includes a meandering stream, will have multiple sensory stations, an outdoor classroom for children, and a paved, ADA-accessible walkway connecting the garden's novel features.

An extension of HeartPrint's already-certified Monarch Butterfly Natural Habitat and Waystation which features milkweed – a favorite of monarchs – will also be incorporated into the plan to continue attracting the colorful pollinating insects. The milkweed capitalizes on Cranberry's good fortune of being a preferred stop along the butterflies' annual migration route to and from Central America.



Although sensory gardens and structured outdoor learning programs are relatively new in the United States, they are well established in England and Europe,

where they are often associated with programs for children



experiencing various cognitive, physical or developmental issues. Sensory stimulation from the garden can help children with disabilities to integrate new information, gain social skills and learn to manage stress.

HeartPrints, together with Julia Konitzky, the mother of two children with disabilities who have attended the school, are leading the effort to establish the sensory garden. Other organizations, including the RLA, Treesdale Landscape Company, FedEx, MSA, Moe's Southwest Grill, the Pittsburgh Foundation, and the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust have also expressed support for the project, although funding for the \$50,000 project is not yet complete.

Once funds have been secured and construction completed this summer, the sensory garden will be open year-round and available to everyone, regardless of age – able-bodied and disabled alike. The school hopes to have the garden certified as a Nature Explore classroom, which would be the first in Butler County to be officially endorsed by the nonprofit Dimensions Educational Research Foundation.

Anyone interested in helping to advance the project is invited to contact HeartPrints Executive Director Grace Byrnes at 724-741-1008 or visit heartprintsed.org. 🏠

MAKE BAD STUFF GO AWAY



Hazardous household wastes and unwanted electronic products are hard to get rid of legally. State law keeps them from being left at the curb for pickup. Pouring them down the drain or into catch basins is prohibited. And most stores won't take them back. But ECS&R, an Evans City company that specializes in recycling difficult waste products, will be accepting household chemicals, consumer electronics, and small appliances with freon by appointment on four different Saturdays this spring: April 27, May 4, 11 & 18, and June 15. Fees, which vary by weight according to the type of item being discarded, will apply. For details, directions, and arranging drop-offs, call 1-866-815-0016 or go online to www.ecsr.net.



— SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT PRESENTS —

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Thursday, May 2:

**A screening of the Screenagers Movie:
*Growing up in the Digital Age***

This evening presentation is FREE and open to parents and the general public. It is not recommended for children; however, childcare for SV residents will be provided at no cost. To reserve childcare, please contact Julie Moore at (724) 452-6040, ext. 0 or via email at moorej@svsd.net.

ALL PROGRAMS WILL BE
HELD IN THE SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
FROM 6:30 - 8 P.M.

www.svsd.net



The theory of household recycling is alluring: it visualizes just about everything that people use eventually turning into feedstock for something new, including products made from paper, plastic, glass, aluminum, steel, and cardboard.

In practice, however, it works a little differently. Act 101, the state law which governs household recycling in Pennsylvania, assumes that money generated by haulers selling the recycled materials will finance most of the curbside pickup program's cost. But sometimes the markets for those materials become glutted, leading to wild price swings. Sometimes the buyer's specifications change. In a few cases, those markets simply go away. All of it affects the program's economics.

Beyond that, the mix of items people recycle changes too; consider the shift away from glass bottles or the decline of printed newspapers. And with many consumer products, the item's form – such as a plastic wading pool, a plastic hose, a steel clothes hanger, or an aluminum baking pan – is incompatible with the recycling plant's machinery and sometimes even dangerous, although the material itself may be essentially okay. Construction debris, medical waste, auto parts, paints, chemicals, electronics, motor oil, gardening products and environmentally hazardous materials are never allowed.

Even so, as a result of Act 101, recycling is now common throughout the Commonwealth as it is in many other states. But the details of how it works differ from one community to another. So when people move to Cranberry from just about anywhere else, what they've learned about curbside recycling may need to be revised. Here in Cranberry, those details are spelled out in a contact with the hauler, currently Vogel Disposal. Here are its essential requirements for residential customers:

- Bag your garbage and put it into the gray-top cart. Place all recyclables loose into your blue-top cart; they will be mechanically separated at the plant.
- Items accepted for recycling include paper, cardboard, clean metal cans, food and beverage containers made of #1 or #2 plastic.
- Clear and colored glass containers are also accepted, but the recycling market for them has largely disappeared.
- Never put recyclables into plastic bags and don't put plastic bags into your recycling bin. They jam the plant's machinery. Take them back to the supermarket for recycling.
- Never put propane cylinders into the recycling cart; they cause fires and explosions at the plant. Treat them as trash.
- Treat shredded paper as garbage; it creates a housekeeping nuisance at the plant and it doesn't get recycled.
- Never recycle garden hoses, plastic tubing or strings of Christmas lights; they jam the plant's machinery. Trash them.
- Don't recycle food or garden waste. Compost it or bag it and put it into your gray-top cart.

For details, visit: CranberryTownship.org/Recycling. 🏠



HELP BUILD A NATIONAL HEALTH DATABASE!

**All of Us
Pennsylvania**

**Pop-up enrollment center is
coming to Cranberry
April 12 and 13**

**Call to schedule (412) 383-2737
www.Joinallofuspa.org**

What's HAPPENING

As Needed:

ZONING HEARING BOARD

Council Chambers, 7:30 PM
Third Monday

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Council Chambers, 6:30 PM

April 4

April 25, May 2

May 30, June 6

June 27, July 2

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION

Council Chambers, 6:00 PM

April 1

April 29, May 6

May 27, June 3

June 24, July 1

2019

More events & details: CranberryTownship.org/Calendar

APRIL

- 1 - Yard Waste collections resume
- 6 - CranFest, Muni Ctr, 11AM-3PM
- 6 - E-Waste Collection, Public Wks, 9AM-1PM (Fees apply)
- 11-14 - Library Spring Book Sale
- 19 - Municipal Ctr closed
- 20 - CPR & First Aid Training- EMS
- 24 - May 9 - SVSD Art Show
- 30 - Last Day to pay County/Twp Property Tax (at discount)

April 13 & June 1: Butler Co. Sheriff Gun Licensing, 9AM - 2PM, Muni Ctr

MAY

- 11 - Mini-Maker Faire, Library
- 21 - Primary Election Day
- 25 - Waterpark Opening Day
- 27 - Memorial Day (Municipal Center & Library closed & trash collections delayed by 1 day all week)

JUNE

- 13 - "The Project Band", 7PM, Community Park
- 15 - CPR & First Aid Training, EMS
- 20 - "The Rick Purcell Band", 7PM, Community Park
- 21 - "The Win/Win Duo", 12 PM, Municipal Center Gazebo
- 30 - Last Day to pay County/Twp Property Taxes

ADVENTURE AWAITS...

• CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP •
CAMP CRANBERRY
A Parks & Recreation Program

Cranberry4FUN.com/CampCranberry
Ages 3-15

Youth
Pee Wee
Mini Movers
Counselor In Training





CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP
2525 ROCHESTER ROAD, SUITE 400
CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP, PA 16066-6499
724-776-4806

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID

PERMIT #25
CRANBERRY TWP, PA

POSTAL PATRON
CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP, PA 16066



Drop-In Child Care at the PLAY CENTER

"The ladies who run it are awesome! Both of my kids have spent time there & loved it."
- Jennifer E.

"They are amazing! I've been using them for the last five and a half years!"
- Amanda W.

For details: 724-776-4806 x17714

Cranberry4FUN.com/PlayCenter

