

Public Safety expansion complete



Open for business. Public Safety Director Steve Mannell describes the features of the Municipal Center's new expansion at an Open House on November 4. The 18,000 square foot addition houses Cranberry Township's police department as well as its finance offices.

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Cranberrytoday

2005 WINTER EDITION

Collection Connection trucks hit the streets

It was a major adjustment, but when Cranberry's Collection Connection residential waste service finally began on November 1, forever changing the way trash is collected in the Township, it proved to be uneventful. At least for most people.



Using automated collection trucks, a greatly expanded list of recyclable items, and a separate yard waste collection from April through November, the program almost immediately gained a high level of acceptance from local residents. It also significantly increased the volume of material recycled by local households – items which are collected free of charge as long as they are properly contained in the blue-top recycling cart.

To make sure customers truly understood the guidelines for cart placement and for dealing with items outside of carts, Vogel Disposal, the Township's contractor, issued notices to households

wherever the driver identified a problem. Follow-up visits from Township staff frequently followed, also with a view to making sure the resident knew about the problem and how to fix it. But in almost every case, the waste was collected anyway.

Starting January 10, however, that grace period will end. Trash which does not follow the program guidelines will simply be left, uncollected, at the resident's home. Since November 1, a computer-based log of problems, notifications, phone contacts, cart changes, and service requests for each household has been developed to minimize false claims of missed pickups. That list will be used to help verify customer complaints and minimize potential abuses.

Among the most frequent problems cited by collectors:

- Carts too close together. They need to be placed at least two feet apart so that the mechanical arm can grab the right cart without knocking the others down.
- Carts facing the wrong way. The carts need to have their handles and wheels

facing away from the street so they empty properly when they are dumped.

- Carts too close to fixed objects. If a cart is placed too close to a mailbox, a tree, a basketball hoop, a wall or any other stationary item, it will interfere with the truck's mechanical arm.

- Carts overflowing. The cart lid must be able to close; otherwise the cart will spill its load before the truck can empty it into the hopper.

- Carts too far from the curb. The carts need to be within three feet of the curb, otherwise the arm may not be able to reach them.

- Loose garbage in carts. Garbage must be bagged before being placed in the gray-top cart. Recyclables and yard waste should not be bagged.

- Items outside of carts not tagged. All discards outside of carts – even recyclables – must carry the appropriate tags in order to be collected.

Questions can be directed to 724-COLLECT during normal business hours.

Christmas tree collection. Christmas trees placed at the curb will be collected from January 3 through January 14 on your normal collection day, free of charge. Cut the tree to six-foot length or shorter, 4-foot span or smaller. Remove tinsel and ornaments. After January 14, tree collection will require \$4 large item tags. Or, as an alternative, between January 17 and January 28, trees can be brought to a drop-off collection site at the Rt. 19 Community Park. No artificial trees please!

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Transit study recommendation: move ahead, but cautiously

A two-year public transit demonstration combining commuter service into Pittsburgh and local circulator service within southwestern Butler County, with the possibility of adding express service into the city of Butler, has been



proposed by a study group following a nine-month examination of transportation

needs in the Cranberry area.

"There is a strong unmet demand for both commuter and local circulator services in the Cranberry area," Baker Engineering study leader Bruce Ahern told the Township's Board of Supervisors at their November 23 meeting. "There is also a consensus that effective land use and growth management are needed."

The so-called "Cranberry Area Transit Study," conducted under contract by the Baker Engineering Corporation, included input from more than 700 individuals in the Cranberry-Mars-Harmony-Zelienople-Evans City area. A number of local employers, health care, and educational institutions also

participated. Their combined comments initially resulted in a long list of alternatives including some, like light rail, which were ultimately rejected as too costly.

At the same time, Ahern cautioned, there are some significant caveats along the route toward creating a new transit service. They include the lack of local entities which are eligible to receive federal transit grants designated for urban areas and Congressional gridlock on authorizing any kind of transportation funds, as well as Pennsylvania's own state funding crisis.

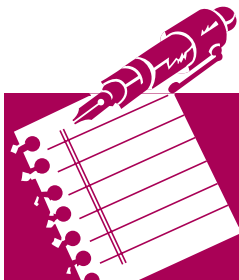
As a result, the study's proposal for a two-year demonstration, estimated at \$1.3 million a year, is limited to providing service through contracts with existing carriers, along existing right-of-way, and only after successfully negotiating at least 400 commuter parking spaces within existing lots. No capital expenses would be made for new facilities until the pilot program demonstrated that the demand was both genuine and sustained.

However, if that sort of support were to become clear after a two-year demonstration, the proposal contemplates capital improvements in the range of

\$20 million for buses, a transit center and a maintenance center, as well as for six passenger stations along its routes. Right now, the ratio of capital funding for transit projects is 80 percent federal, 17 percent state, and three percent local.

A \$2,000 allocation to help sponsor a second phase of the study, which was jointly led by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Butler County, the Butler Township City Joint Municipal Transit Agency, and Cranberry Township in partnership with the Port Authority of Allegheny County, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and the Federal Transit Administration, was approved by Cranberry's Board of Supervisors at its November 23 meeting.

No firm timeline has been established for a demonstration program to move forward. In fact, its ability to advance at all will require close cooperation among all the affected municipalities – a collaboration which has not yet occurred. But if it were to take place soon, and there were no major problems, service could begin as early as this September, Ahern said.



Briefly Noted

2004 property tax deadline has passed. What now?

The last day to pay 2004 property taxes was December 31. Beginning January 1, 2005, all 2004 property taxes will be turned over to the Butler County Tax Claim Bureau at 724-284-5326.

The Municipal Center office of tax collector P.J. Lynd will be open Mondays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Tuesdays through Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and on Fridays from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Appointments are available.

Deliver or mail tax payments to: P.J. Lynd, Tax Collector, 2525 Rochester Road, Suite 402, Cranberry Township, Pa. 16066. If you change your mortgage company or are no longer using an escrow account to pay your property taxes, please contact the tax collector's office. You can reach the office by e-mail at lyndpj@cranberrytownship.org or by phone at 724-776-1103, or by fax at 724-776-3011.

Chamber of Commerce to award scholarships to graduating seniors

The Cranberry Area Chamber of Commerce will award three \$1,000 Cranberry Area Chamber/Thorn Hill Educational Scholarships to area high school seniors. Applications and essay information will be available beginning on January 12 at Seneca Valley, Mars, and North Allegheny high schools, Cranberry Library, and at the Cranberry Area Chamber of Commerce office. The deadline for submitting applications is March 18. For more information, contact the Chamber office at 724-776-4949.

Volunteer fire company strives to retain and expand membership

At a time when communities and nonprofit organizations all over the country are experiencing falling levels of volunteerism, Cranberry Township's all-volunteer fire company has managed to maintain its strength. It hasn't been easy. According to Chris DeCree, President of the fire company, Pennsylvania saw a 66 percent loss in its volunteer fire force between 1975 and 2000, a decrease attributed to several factors.

"People just don't volunteer as much as they used to," DeCree explained. "They're busier, and often both parents work outside the home."

It's also more time-consuming.

"Twenty-five years ago they handed you a set of boots and a coat and said you were a firefighter. Now the requirements have become much more stringent and demanding," said Mark Nanna who, in addition to being the Township's full-time paid Fire Company Administrative Assistant, is also a 13-year veteran volunteer firefighter.

Growing professionalism

To become state certified as a firefighter, you first must complete 88 hours of essentials training, he explained. In addition, 32 hours of Hazardous Materials, First Aid, and CPR training must be completed each year. In 2004 alone, Township firefighters completed over 4,600 hours of training. Once trained, the average firefighter in Cranberry spends 250-300 hours a year serving the Township, participating in everything from search and rescue operations to educating students on fire safety and prevention.

According to Nanna, "the days of sitting around the fire station waiting for the alarm to sound are over. The volunteer is as much a career firefighter as a paid one." The only difference is that the volunteers also have full-time careers. "We have an airline pilot, a dentist, computer programmers, a bank vice president, and career law enforcement officers, among many others,"

he explained. The backgrounds of the firefighters reflect the demographics of Cranberry Township.

Township-Fire Company partnership

Determined to protect itself from the hemorrhage of volunteers that other communities were experiencing, Cranberry Township and the Fire Company reached an agreement in 1982 in which a fire tax, currently 2.5 mills, was added to real estate bills. Its proceeds enabled the Township to take over funding for the fire company, eliminating the need for it to raise money on its own, and allowing volunteers to devote their time to training and serving the community. In many other municipalities, volunteer firefighters are forced to spend a large part of their time on fund-raising drives to pay for trucks, protective gear, fire halls, and equipment. Too often, they end up spending more time putting on carnivals and mowing lawns than fighting fires. Many ultimately decide that the commitment is simply not worth it.

"Most of the fire stations in the state are losing their volunteers, while we are maintaining ours," DeCree noted. "Instead of fund-raising, our volunteers focus entirely on training and emergency response, and it has worked."

Steve Mannell, Cranberry's Director of Public Safety, emphasizes the Township's keen awareness of the volunteer firefighters' sacrifices. "The Township is always looking for ways to conserve their time," he said. "We value the time they put in for training, and feel it's important to provide them with first-class training and equipment." Accordingly, a committee was named at the end of 1997 to make recommendations about how the Township could better recruit and retain its volunteers.

The battle goes on

Their final report, dated September 1998, resulted in improved life insurance coverage for the volunteers and a stronger emphasis on training. The salaried



position of Administrative Assistant was also added to free volunteers from time-consuming paperwork. Recognizing the rigorous nature of their work, a Wellness program will be inaugurated this year to encourage firefighters to stay in shape and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Finally, the first steps toward building a new training facility, including a fire tower, were included in the 2005 budget. According to Mannell, this will make training easier by eliminating the need to travel back and forth to Butler as well as the related need to spend time transporting, setting up, and breaking down practice equipment.

"This kind of give-and-take between the Township and the Fire Company has created a supportive relationship," Mannell said. However, he is quick to point out that the battle to recruit and retain a volunteer fire department is an ongoing struggle. "We can't put up the 'Mission Accomplished' sign yet," he warns. Job transfers and economic instability have increased the level of transience in the Township, and there is a constant need for replenishing the well of volunteers.

To learn more about becoming a volunteer firefighter, contact the Fire Company at 724-776-1196.

Local officer issued repeated citations – for excellence

For a year, back in the early '90s, West Deer native Rhonda Rearick attended Clarion College to pursue her childhood dream of becoming an elementary school teacher. But other interests soon began to intervene, including her part-time work as an emergency medical technician, in which she collaborated closely with local police. Over time, the attraction of becoming a police officer herself, rather than a teacher, drew her into the police academy and eventually on to her current career with the Cranberry Township police department.

But, as it turned out, she never really left teaching that far behind. Since joining the Township's police force in 2001, Officer Rearick has had more involve-

ment with students in the Seneca Valley School system, where she administers and teaches the DARE anti-drug curriculum to 300-plus students at a time, than many full-time teachers have ever had.

Double DARE

In addition to being her ongoing daylight assignment, Rearick's anti-drug, anti-violence instruction has become something of a personal mission for the 33-year old officer, whose work often extends into evenings at home, where she reviews workbooks, essays, and other assignments submitted by her students. In September, the state recognized Rearick's outstanding commitment to her students by naming her Pennsylvania's 2004 Crime Prevention Officer of the Year.

The DARE program, a national curriculum directed toward ten and eleven-year olds, has evolved since it was founded in 1983, according to Rearick. That has even included the meaning of its name. "The new curriculum tells us that the name stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education, but it also stands for what is now a decision-making model: Define, Assess, Respond, and Evaluate," she said. "It's about how to make healthy decisions in everyday life. It may not be drug related or violent, but if it concerns something you know you shouldn't be doing, what do you do about it?"

In the case of drugs, the prevailing model of abuse used to be of a young

person on a ladder, moving step by step from comparatively harmless substances, like nicotine, on to increasingly dangerous drugs, and ultimately into addictive narcotics such as heroin. Today, that model no longer dominates drug education, according to Rearick. "A lot of times, someone is injured and on pain killers. When the doctor takes them off the drugs, they go onto something else. And what they go to is something illegal, or they buy prescription medicines from people on the street. They're addicted to that pain killer."

On speed

Rearick, who also works traffic patrols for the 25-member Township force, was recently accorded another honor. In response to a state police call on September 3, Rearick spotted a pickup truck driven by a murder suspect barreling west along the Turnpike at speeds approaching 100 miles per hour. Over her radio, she directed fellow officers David Tresky, Jeffrey Kobistek, and Duane Brucker to a spot where they could intercept the fugitive with tire-shredding 'stop sticks.' It worked, and after a dangerous 85-mile pursuit, state police were able to arrest the driver and his fellow passengers, all residents of Delaware, without injury.

For their vigilance and assistance in apprehending the suspect, Rearick and her fellow officers were honored by the Cranberry Township Board of Supervisors at its October 28 meeting.



Cop props. Officer Rhonda Rearick displays the mascots and materials used in her crime prevention classes at Seneca Valley schools.



Make a big splash. Early Bird WaterPark memberships purchased by January 31 will not only get you the best prices of the season, they'll also earn you two free guest passes. Membership prices during this discount period begin for as little as \$60. Stop by or call the Municipal Center Parks & Recreation Department service desk at 724-776-4806 x1129.

At nearly \$30 million, Township's 2005 budget holds the tax line

Cranberry Township's Board of Supervisors has approved a budget that projects income and expenses of nearly \$30 million for 2005. The new budget, adopted at the Board's



December 14 meeting, provides funds for several important initiatives, but retains the same tax rates on property, income, and business as in 2004. Fees for Township services will also remain unchanged except for

a \$2 increase per round in green fees at Cranberry Highlands Golf Course.

The budget, which includes 17 different funds financed by a mix of taxes and user fees, "is focused on maintaining and improving our community to assure that Cranberry continues to be the premier community in Pennsylvania," according to the Manager's Budget Message which accompanied the financial document.

The General Fund, which at \$11.7 million is the budget's largest, supports the Township's core public services including land use and building management, police service, park maintenance, recreational programming, administration,

community services, road maintenance, and debt service. The fund is financed by a combination of property taxes, earned income tax, and assorted fees for services.

That mix of income has shifted over time, however. It now relies less on real estate taxes and more on other forms of income than at any time in the past. "In 1993, for every dollar paid in local real estate taxes, the Township received 10.6 cents. In 2005, the Township will receive just 9.1 cents," the budget message noted.

When added together, the three separate Township funds related to water and sanitary sewer service actually exceed its General Fund as the largest item in Cranberry's 2005 budget. Those services, which were consolidated into the Township in 1999, are primarily funded by customers who now include approximately 90 percent of Cranberry's residents. Although the price for water purchased from the West View Water Authority has increased by 12 percent since that time and an annual state grant of more than \$500,000 for waste water treatment has now been eliminated, the budget does not anticipate a rate change during the new fiscal year.

Among the new initiatives which will be funded in the 2005 budget:

- An updated Comprehensive Plan for the Township. The last such plan was completed in 1995.
- Replacement of the Police Department's emergency radio system as part of an overall upgrade of the Butler County 911 system.
- Continued planning and engineering work to prepare for construction of Graham Park
- Continued replacement of mobile equipment including police cars and public works maintenance vehicles
- Several major transportation and inter-section improvements
- Preventive maintenance to Township buildings, streets, and water treatment facilities
- Rehabilitation of the sanitary sewer collection system

Other major funds in the budget include the Fire Protection and Fire Capital Improvement Funds, the Library Fund, the Solid Waste Fund, the Swimming Pool Fund, two Transportation Improvement Funds, and the Golf Course Fund.

Breaking news . . .

Keep up with fast-moving developments in Cranberry Township. Register for the Township's official e-mail notification service and you'll get up-to-the-minute information about emergencies, major local issues, and important public events. If you would like to receive these notices, which we will only send out when events warrant them, complete and mail the information form below to: Cranberry Township, 2525 Rochester Road, Suite 400, Cranberry Township, PA 16066, or go to our website at www.cranberrytownship.org and complete the form online.

Add me to your e-mail notification list:

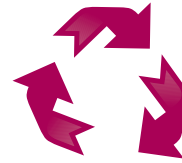
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crantech profile



Network Appliance is not a home appliance, but it's at home here

With a little help from a team of engineers based in Cranberry, the pace of science and commerce has been picking up lately, all over the world. Their secret: a unique approach to storing networked computer data – one that can grow to become as big and as fast as its users will ever need. Why?

For really, really, high performance computation tasks, ordinary computers just won't do. The speed of the computer's data processor sets a ceiling on the pace of its work. For critical applications such as oil exploration, aircraft design, and pharmaceutical screening, as well as for data-intensive research, that limitation would represent a major handicap. As a result, scientific computers neither look nor work like home PCs. But the speed with which they were able to retrieve essential data lagged behind their other components. Data storage had become the system's weakest link.

To a handful of Pittsburgh-area engineers, overcoming that weakness became a personal mission. The company they formed, Spinnaker Networks, had created a radical new approach to speeding up networked data storage, and they were determined to knock off their leading competitor, the much larger Network Appliance, Inc. based in Sunnyvale, California. Their plan: start with the high performance computer users and, in the fullness of time, enter the commercial enterprise market, where similar networks were expected to emerge someday.

But they underestimated the rapid pace of enterprise network growth – huge Internet and intranet-based corporate systems through which thousands of people transmit information all at once. Network Appliance, however, had seen it coming. NetApp also saw the potential of Spinnaker's innovative distributed file management approach and, in the words of former Spinnaker CEO Ron Bianchini, "they made us an offer we couldn't refuse." It was a buyout for \$300 million, just four years after the company was formed, and the transition of Spinnaker into NetApp's Scalable Systems business unit.

As a stand-alone startup, Spinnaker had distinctive space requirements. "We needed a manufacturing floor. We needed loading docks. And we found the perfect building in RIDC Park O'Hara," Bianchini said. "It worked out very well for us."

But that was before the acquisition and its transformation into a dedicated engineering site. "Once we were acquired, the manufacturing piece got pulled into Sunnyvale," he said. "So we needed office space and lab space, but we didn't need some of the other space we had. We have around 87 people today; including 72 engineers, so we're a very engineering-analytical company. When we started looking for buildings, we looked for more space for people and for space to build a lab to house the equipment we have. And we were very analytical about choosing the right space."



Down on the farm. Rack after rack of computer components hum away in the server farm of Network Appliance's lab at Cranberry Woods. The company, explains Vice President Ron Bianchini, produces equipment to greatly improve the performance of data networks.

One possibility was the Cranberry Woods building that housed Danelli Engineering. "We put the different building locations on maps and we calculated everyone's commute time down to the minute. Then we did an analysis and came up with two finalists, and we let the employees decide."

"Cranberry won hands down," he said. "It's a beautiful building. There are all these walking paths. And because of I-79 and the Turnpike, it's very convenient and easy to understand how to get there."

"Business is doing very well," Bianchini noted. "NetApp's plan is to actually double our headcount over the next two to three years. So we have options to take other floors in this building, and we always have the opportunity to grow in Cranberry Woods."

Although widely known for its retail businesses, Cranberry is also becoming an important high technology center. Each issue of Cranberry Today will feature the profile of a different local technology company and offer a glimpse into the Township's emerging knowledge-based economy.

Plowing ahead

They've been gearing up for months now. With plows attached, salt supplies recharged, anti-skid material restocked, and crews at the ready, Cranberry's Public Works Department is keeping a wary eye on approaching fronts, poised to move out at the drop of a snowflake. Despite the vagaries of winter weather, it is a familiar drill. Here's how it looked from inside the cab of one Township truck last winter:

For days, forecasters had been talking about the coming storm. With temperatures hovering near the freezing mark and high levels of moisture barreling in with a front from the southwest, it had the potential of becoming a major rain, snow, or ice storm – and possibly all of them combined. Nobody knew for sure, but from his command vehicle in the early evening of February 5, Township Public Works streets and properties manager Walt Beighey remained skeptical about all the speculation.

"No forecast over 24 hours old is really any good," he told a visitor. Too much can change. And no regional forecast can be detailed enough to determine which crews and equipment to dispatch to what parts of Cranberry Township to keep the roads passable through a winter storm. Even so, he keeps close track of his Internet sources: weather.com, and ThePittsburghChannel.com, as well as the Cranberry Highlands early warning system, originally designed to alert golfers to pending summer storms, but equally effective at spotting approaching winter weather.

At 6:40, by a warehouse in Thorn Hill Industrial Park, he links up with Township truck 602, a 25-year old Mack driven by Public Works associ-

ate Brian Miller. The truck – which has been Miller's primary work vehicle from the time he joined the department in 1997 – is among the Township's oldest, but with just 89,000 miles on its odometer, it is still in front line service. Together with 11 other heavy trucks and two plow-equipped pickups, Miller's Mack is part of Cranberry's snow emergency response fleet, working to keep the 101 miles of Township-owned roads clear throughout the winter season.

Miller's route – one of 12 that covers every inch of local road – takes him through quiet residential streets in the Township's southwestern quadrant. Residents are expecting him. Many wave from their homes, and Miller answers with a quick toot of his horn.

Ready to roll on short notice, 602 is outfitted for any contingency. An 11-foot plow remains attached from November through March. The truck's bed is already loaded with eight tons of rock salt and anti-skid material. And its 100-gallon tank of liquid magnesium chloride – used to improve ice penetration when temperatures fall below zero – remains on standby. But even at 30,000 pounds, the Mack is not



Preparing for the worst. Cranberry's Public Works Department keeps plows and salt spreaders attached to 14 trucks from November through March – just in case.

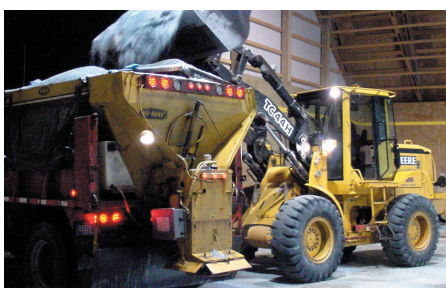
immune from the same handling issues that affect ordinary motorists. On this particular evening, the truck shutters to a stop as its brakes struggle for traction on the icy pavement.

From time to time, Miller reflected, homeowners become upset when their driveways are plowed in during road clearing. And some neighborhoods don't like the housekeeping problems created by antiskid material. But those responses are rare. For the most part, he said, people are pleased to see his truck approaching and understand the need to plow snow off of, and apply traction materials onto, their local roads.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation reminds homeowners that it is not only unsafe but illegal to shovel snow onto a state roadway. PennDOT recommends the following guidelines for driveway snow removal:

- *When clearing the end of the driveway, place snow to the right to prevent it from being plowed back into the driveway.*
- *Do not pile snow in areas that will block or obscure a driver's view of the roadway and oncoming vehicles.*
- *Keep children away from the roadways. Don't let them play on the snow piles near roadways.*
- *Be cautious when working near a roadway.*

For winter maintenance concerns on state roads, call 1-800 FIX ROAD.



Salt Storage Honors

This past September, Cranberry Township received an award for its winter materials storage. The Salt Institute selected Cranberry Township as one of only eight communities to be so recognized.

Two years earlier, the Township had replaced its small salt shed with a bigger one that strikes a careful balance between worker safety, environmental protection, cost savings, and operating efficiencies in maintaining Cranberry's 101 miles of municipal roadway.

Roadway Update: **Attention, congestion sufferers, relief is here.**

Freedom Road, Phase I completed

Clogged arteries bothering you? Not anymore. An initial round of improvements to the heavily-traveled east-west artery running through the heart of the Township has now concluded. Phase I of the Freedom Road project, which includes road widening, extra turning lanes, berm improvements, and traffic-responsive signals on both Rt. 19 and Freedom Road, is now a reality. Construction costs for the \$2 million project were shared by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and Cranberry Township.

Motorists heading west along Freedom Road from the intersection with Rt. 19, will now find an additional lane as far west as Executive Drive. Eastbound traffic also has another new lane along that same stretch of roadway, plus an added right turn lane on to Rt. 19 south. Further west on Freedom Road is a new second left turn lane for motorists who want to turn left on to Commonwealth Drive.

A new second left turn lane along Rt. 19 at its intersection with Freedom Road has helped alleviate a chronic headache for motorists heading north, particularly during peak traffic periods in the afternoon and early evening. In the past, on many evenings, motorists found it impossible to access the single left turn lane onto Freedom Road. Further north, motorists were presented with similar problems attempting to make left turns onto Unionville Road and to Rochester Road. With the new alignment, according to the Township's Engineering Director Mike Schneider, motorists can use both left turn lanes on Rt. 19 to access Freedom Road. By staying in the new right lane once they turn onto Freedom Road, they can easily turn right onto Executive Drive and head north toward Rochester Road.

All together now. . .

Motorists should note even more improvement in traffic flow over the next few months. Township engineers anticipate synchronizing traffic signals along Rt. 19 to improve movement from the Township's southern line north to Rowan Road. Traffic signal upgrades on Freedom Road include a traffic-responsive system connected to the one already in operation on Rt. 19 and Rt. 228. In addition, the Township has made an agreement with neighboring Marshall Township to allow their traffic signal on Rt. 19 at Bob Evans to become part of the overall system. This transportation management system, which is used in major cities like Los Angeles, is also appropriate for Cranberry, which sees 86,000 vehicles traveling the intersection per day, according to Schneider.

This past year, the Township conducted traffic flow studies to help determine the optimum timing of each of its 26 traffic signals at different times of day. That data is used to program the traffic signal timing, which will require state approval before it can be fully implemented. Over the coming months, Schneider foresees a smoother flow of vehicles on all three major roadways. For example, as a vehicle proceeds north through the green signal at Bob Evans and drives at the speed limit on Rt. 19, the vehicle will travel through several green signals until it hits a red light at Freedom Road. "You'll never be able to go straight through all of the intersections," he said, "but the traffic-responsive system will help to fix congestion."



Green light for Rochester and Powell Roads

A traffic signal at Rochester and Powell roads is now in full operation, following completion of the \$326,000 intersection improvement project. The costs were shared by the Township and the Church of Latter-Day Saints, which is building a new church at the intersection.

In addition to the traffic signal, improvements included two additional westbound lanes on Rochester, a left-turn only lane to southbound Powell Road as well as a right-turn lane; plus a right-turn lane from northbound Powell Road to eastbound Rochester Road.



Regency senior apartments now open, are quickly filled



The fortunate fifty. All 50 affordable one-bedroom units in Cranberry's new Rolling Road Regency senior apartments were leased from the moment the building was opened on December 10. A waiting list of more than 100 others is being kept on file.

Affordable housing in Cranberry may seem like an oxymoron – a contradiction in terms for the fast-growing, prosperous community Cranberry Township has become. But for 50 fortunate households with residents 55 and older, it has also become a reality.

In a December 10 ceremony attended by dignitaries throughout the region, the Rolling Road Regency apartments – an affordable senior living facility developed by the Housing Authority

of Butler County – was formally dedicated. Already, every one of its 50 one-room apartment units has been leased on a sliding rate scale with prices ranging from \$225 to \$425 a month – including utilities. A waiting list in excess of 100 more applicants remains on file.

Plans for the project, which began in 2000 with County housing executive Perry O'Malley and Cranberry Township officials, were given the green light for construction in April 2003. Its site – a six-acre plot owned by the Township and formerly used as a local playing field – was ideally suited to the project. But the stipulation of its original state deed required the land to be dedicated to public use in perpetuity; senior housing was not considered a qualified use.

Solving that dilemma turned out to be only one in a series of challenges which the \$5.3 million project faced on its way to completion. But one-by-one, in an extraordinary show of solidarity among public agencies, those issues were resolved. As Cranberry Supervisor and Board Chairman John Skorupan noted in his dedication remarks: "Finding a practical solution wasn't something we could do all by ourselves. It needed the cooperation of citizens and elected officials and agencies at every level of government. It was hard work. It required some very complex negotiating, some highly creative

financing, and a consistent vision of what it was we were trying to achieve." Eligibility to lease space in the Regency Apartments is determined, among other things, by income. Half of the units are reserved for individuals with annual incomes under \$19,300 or couples below \$22,050. The other half are for those with income ceilings of \$23,160 and \$26,460 respectively. "We're not talking about folks who have no assets or no income," O'Malley noted. "Suppose you sold your house and have \$100,000 in the bank; that's not a problem. We just count your interest on that asset as income. So at two percent interest, that would be \$2,000 annual income, plus your Social Security and pension. When you add it all up, it can't exceed those amounts."

The Regency complex, which includes both security, comfort, and accessibility features, is one of eight senior housing facilities operated by Butler County Housing Authority. But it is the only one in Cranberry Township, where the demand for housing is greatest. As a result, plans are already afoot for expansion. "We have the ability to add another 24 to 36 units over the top of the community room in the rear of the building," O'Malley pointed out. "We are also looking at two other property sites in Cranberry with developers right now because there is so much demand."



Making his list. Santa's Light Up Night visit to the Township's Municipal Center on November 19 gave hundreds of children an opportunity to share their Christmas wish lists.



Township wraps up bicentennial observance

People tend to think of Cranberry Township as a young, vibrant community. Of course, they're right. Except for one thing: it's actually 200 years old – even older than neighboring Sewickley, which is a mere 150.

Until this past year, most visitors, as well as many residents, might have



been excused for thinking it was the other way around. But now, after a year-long series of events and programs cre-

ated to raise local awareness about their community's history, an appreciation of Cranberry's long evolution from a Native American hunting site into a thriving 21st century community is beginning to emerge.

Why 2004? Four years after Butler County was formed in 1800, County officials determined that it would be easier to administer, and more responsive to its residents, if the County had smaller local units. That was when Cranberry Township was created out of what was then the southern part of Connoquenessing Township – one of Butler County's four original subdivisions. Fifty years later, the number of municipalities was increased once again, and the boundaries of the original Cranberry Township grew smaller. But apart from the tiny Borough of Seven Fields, which separated from Cranberry in the 1970s, the Township, within its current borders, has continued to anchor the southwestern corner of Butler County from the day it was created.

To help mark the anniversary, a Bicentennial Task Force was formed in the fall of 2003. Its charge: to plan events celebrating the Township's 200th birthday and coordinate the creation of materials to teach residents about their community's long history. The group's work continued throughout the year. Among its members: representatives of the Cranberry Township Historical

Society, the Cranberry Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Cranberry Township municipal government, as well as several local businesses and individuals.

Special events were held each month. They included a Founders Day pageant, an historic crafts village, and presentations by various local historians. Traditional events such as Community Day took on a bicentennial theme for the year. And a series of newly created materials was developed to continue building awareness of local history into the future. Among them: a new documentary video by Graham Digital Video; an updated edition of the Historical Society's 1989 book "Cranberry Township: a History of Our Community;" a personal memoir of the Township's development, "My Cranberry," by lifelong local historian Helen Dewald; a series of posters illustrating highlights of the Township's development; and a campaign to re-establish the Township's namesake – the wild cranberry – as an integral part of the local plant environment.

Cranberry plants, which flourished along Brush Creek during the Colonial Era, are actually an evergreen groundcover that bears flowers and fruit. They are still well suited to the soil and climate of Cranberry Township.

"It is a widely held misconception that cranberries must grow in bogs," Dick Cherry of the Historical Society explained. "Cranberries do well with the same sun, soil, and moisture conditions as azaleas or rhododendrons." Last fall, when third graders from nearby elementary schools visited the Sample One-Room Schoolhouse in front of the Municipal Center, they were each given a live cranberry plant. With luck, according to Cherry, if all the plants grow, there will be literally hundreds of cranberry plants blooming next spring.

Residents may order cranberry plants, and access many of the other Bicentennial materials, through links on the Township Website: www.cranberrytownship.org

Historical Society sponsoring lecture series

Take a walk through time. The 2005 Cranberry Historical Society series opening lecture will feature Eastern Woodlands Indians on Tuesday, January 11 at 7 p.m. Learn about the Natives who lived in the eastern United States, presented by native re-enactor Tom Vecchio, a.k.a., Welethetowaco (Pretty Ears), who will dress as a Delaware Indian and talk about the customs and lifestyles of the eastern Natives.

Subsequent events are scheduled for March 8, May 10, July 12, September 13, and November 8 and will feature lectures and demonstrations about George Washington, General Edward Braddock, the Depreciation Lands, and the Civil War. For more information, call 724-776-3234 or 724-538-4681.



Cranberry Cup begins its slow pitch for 2005 participants

Residents of Seven Fields North and the formidable Butler Barracks State Police softball team ultimately took home the trophies. But the fifth season of the Cranberry Cup tournament produced a whole community of winners. The popular slow-pitch softball competition, which involves neighborhood teams as well as teams of business and public agency players, saw its steep growth continue in 2004.

Altogether, 41 teams with a total of nearly 700 players took part in the two-day double-elimination event whose goals included raising money for the benefit of local families in need. During the games, approximately \$55,000 in combined player fees, concession stand commissions, and raffle income was generated.

And already, its founder, Cathy Cortazzo, is pitching for participation in the 2005 tournament, which will be played August 6 and 7. Selection of the annual competition's beneficiary begins in January. Nominations are solicited from school counselors, neighborhood representatives, and anyone else in a position to know of local families in need. By March, Ms. Cortazzo and board members of the newly incorporated Cranberry CUP organization, will make their selection.

In 2004, 15-year old Alex Poust of Greenfield Estates was named beneficiary of the Cranberry Cup's proceeds. Poust, who was battling brain cancer and whose father had died of a heart attack while jogging along Powell Road in 1999, was the youngest of three children. When organizers asked whom he would most like to meet, Poust, a big hockey fan, immediately told them: Mario Lemieux. The Penguins' star quickly responded by sending the boy souvenirs and later visiting him in Children's Hospital. Sadly, on December 3, Poust succumbed to his cancer.

"There are several aspects to the tournament," Cortazzo explained. "One of them is to raise money for somebody

from our community in need. Second is for the community to rally around that family or person just to give them uplift and encouragement." An outpouring of personal support for the Poust family became clear this summer, she pointed out.

"The other thing is just the community and the neighborhoods getting together to have fun and to get out for one week-end and be a kid again. It has actually prompted some other people to do fund-raising things," Cortazzo said. "There are people who aren't in the usual social crowd within their neighborhoods; they don't do the bunkos or the progressive dinner parties. But this tournament has gotten them out to get to know other people in their neighborhood."

In time, Ms. Cortazzo hopes to see other communities sponsor similar tournaments and to hold playoff games between them. For now, though, she and her fellow board officers, Pierre Khoury, Ernie Herrmann, Dawn Abbate, and Mark DeNapoli, are focused on selecting a beneficiary for the 2005 games and on securing legal status as a charitable, 501(c)3 organization. Questions and nominations may be directed to Cathy Cortazzo at 724-772-0058 or at softball@zoominternet.net.



Trophy time. The Butler Barracks of the State Police (below) won the Cranberry Cup in the tournament's 2004 Business/Instructional competition last August. Seven Fields North (above) won the neighborhood playoffs. Alex Poust, the 15-year old beneficiary of the fund-raising event, holds the trophies. Poust died on December 3 following a long battle with brain cancer.



TUE 1		THU 17	Nauticom Internet Class: the Basics, Council Chambers at 6 p.m.; free; register at www.nauticom.net or call 724-933-9800
WED 2	Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.	FRI 18	Lunch at the Library, “Flower Arranging,” bring your own lunch; drink provided; 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; call 724-776-9100 to pre-register
THU 3	Board of Supervisors Meeting, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.	SAT 19	
FRI 4		SUN 20	First Day of Spring
SAT 5		MON 21	Library Board Meeting, Library at 7:15 p.m.
SUN 6		TUE 22	
MON 7	Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Explore Power Library, 9:30-10 a.m. Library Book Discussion, Library at 7 p.m.	WED 23	
TUE 8	Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Explore Power Library, 9:30-10 a.m.	THU 24	
WED 9	Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Explore Power Library, 9:30-10 a.m. Planning Commission Meeting, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.	FRI 25	Good Friday Library closed Municipal Center closed
THU 10	Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Explore Power Library, 9:30-10 a.m.	SAT 26	
FRI 11	Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Explore Power Library, 9:30-10 a.m.	SUN 27	Easter Sunday Library closed
SAT 12		MON 28	
SUN 13		TUE 29	
MON 14	Zoning Hearing Board, Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m.	WED 30	
TUE 15		THU 31	Board of Supervisors Meeting, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.
WED 16			

BCCC negotiates niche at RLA



None of the 11 schools participating in the Cranberry Woods Regional Learning Alliance which opened its doors last August want their collaboration to deteriorate into a competition among member institutions. But identifying their unique and complementary strengths requires each of the schools to have a keen sense of their own capabilities, as well as the ability to negotiate provisions that make best use of them.

However, for Butler County Community College, there is an additional challenge: it is that since 1985, BCCC has had its own full-time Cranberry Center on Executive Drive as well as tenants including two of the

institutions – Geneva College and Robert Morris University – who are now partners in the Alliance. So how does BCCC fit into RLA?

For the time being, BCCC has no classes in the new 76,000 square foot, \$16 million structure built on land donated by Mine Safety Appliances

in Cranberry Woods. But, according to William O'Brien, BCCC's Vice President for Continuing Education and Off Campus Centers, there is a clear vision of how the College can best fit into the scheme of things at the new facility, and negotiations to implement that plan are well underway.

One of BCCC's greatest strengths has to do with its ability to provide core academic offerings at a fraction of what most other colleges have to charge. So, for example, classes in English or algebra or history which are required for degree programs in many schools, can be taught by BCCC staff, charging BCCC's low rate of \$80 per credit, and

then can be transferred toward degree requirements at other schools participating in the RLA partnership, saving the student thousands of dollars.

But O'Brien wants to stay away from duplicating the programs offered by other partners, or even at BCCC's other campuses. "It wouldn't be wise for us to have 11 business programs down there," he said. "That's why we're not going to the RLA and offering Associate Degrees – I do that down at the Cranberry Center. What we're trying to do is make it easier for returning adults to accomplish the degree they want to complete. So for example, if it's someone from Geneva College in a Human Resource management program, how can we make that easier for that student?"

"Right now we're doing the legwork of working with the other ten partners in trying to get something going for the fall of next year," O'Brien said. "We are really going to help students, and returning adult students in particular, save some money and save some time, because everything's right there; they're not running all over the place to get those courses. It's kind of a one-stop shop."

Plaques recognize contributions to Library annual fund drive



Two donor recognition plaques have been placed on either side of the entrance of the Cranberry Public Library. They recognize donors who contribute to the Library's annual fund-raising campaign. The Annual

Giving plaque recognizes all who contributed to the Library during the fiscal year. The Pillars of the Community plaque recognizes all who have donated

over the years at the \$1,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, and \$25,000 levels. The plaque is cumulative, so any donor who contributes a \$100 annually to the Library will be listed as a \$1,000 level donor in 10 years. The plaques were made possible through money donated from the Township, Butler County, and Cranberry Public Library board members. No operational money was used to buy them.

Canvas library book bags available

Canvas library book bags with a special secure inside pocket for library cards can be picked up at the Library for an \$8 donation. Tom Thumb Tote bags, perfect for young children, are available for a \$5 donation.

Decline in Reading

The report "Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America," released by the National Endowment for the Arts states that there is a sharp decline in reading of literature. To see the full report, go to www.arts.gov/pub/readingatrisk.pdf.

Computer Classes

For information and registration for winter/spring computer classes, call 724-776-9100, ext. 1147.

SAT	1	New Year's Day, Municipal Center closed	MON	17	Martin Luther King, Jr. Library Board, Library Meeting Room at 7 p.m.
SUN	2	Senior Moments, (anyone 50+), Learn location of items in the Library & how to use Public Access Catalog, 9:30-10 a.m.; call 724-776-9100 for information	TUE	18	3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 11 a.m.
MON	3	Board of Supervisors Organizational Meeting, Council Chambers at 7 p.m. Library Book Discussion, Library at 7 p.m.	WED	19	Library Book Discussion, at 10 a.m. Family Pajama Time, Library at 7 p.m.; no pre-registration required.
TUE	4	Senior Moments, (anyone 50+), Library at 9:30 a.m. 3-5 Year Old Storytime, 11 a.m.; pre-registration required; call the Library at 724-776-9100 for more information	THU	20	
WED	5	Senior Moments, (anyone 50+), Library at 9:30 a.m. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.	FRI	21	Lunch at the Library, "Backyard Birdfeeders," bring own bag lunch; drink provided, 11 a.m.-1 p.m; call 724-776-9100 to register.
THU	6	Senior Moments, (anyone 50+), Library at 9:30 a.m. 3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 1 p.m.; pre-registration required; call the Library at 724-776-9100 for more information	SAT	22	.
FRI	7	Senior Moments, (anyone 50+), Library at 9:30 a.m.	SUN	23	
SAT	8		MON	24	3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 11 a.m.
SUN	9		TUE	25	Library Program, Bellevue Pediatrics, "Kids with Asthma: Helping your child do well" at 7 p.m.; call Library to pre-register.
MON	10	Zoning Hearing Board, Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m.	WED	26	Family Pajama Time, Library at 7 p.m.; no pre-registration required
TUE	11	3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 11 a.m. Historical Society Lecture Series, Eastern Woodlands Indians at 7 p.m.	THU	27	3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 1 p.m. Board of Supervisors, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.
WED	12	Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Applications available; call 724-776-4949 for information Planning Commission, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.	FRI	28	Library Program, "Balancing Women's Hormones Naturally," by Dr. Ed Uhler at 7 p.m.
THU	13	Family Pajama Time, Library at 7 p.m.; no pre-registration required. 3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 1 p.m.	SAT	29	
FRI	14		SUN	30	
SAT	15		MON	31	Last day for Early Bird rates on WaterPark membership
SUN	16				

TUE 1	3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 11 a.m. Book Discussion, Library at 7 p.m.	THU 17	Nauticom Internet Class: Virus, Spyware, & Scams , Council Chambers at 6 p.m.; free; register at www.nauticom.net or call 724-933-9800
WED 2		FRI 18	Lunch at the Library, "Meet Abraham Lincoln," bring your own lunch; drink provided; 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; call 724-776-9100 to pre-register
THU 3	3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 1 p.m. Board of Supervisors, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.	SAT 19	
FRI 4		SUN 20	
SAT 5		MON 21	Presidents Day Library Closed
SUN 6	Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Learn about computer services at the Library, 9:30-10 a.m.	TUE 22	Library Board, Library Meeting Room at 7 p.m.
MON 7	Library Book Discussion, 7 p.m. Zoning Hearing Board, Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m.	WED 23	
TUE 8	Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Library, 9:30-10 a.m. 3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 11 a.m. Library Program, North Hills Youth Ministry, "Empowering Young Girls through Fairy Tales" at 7 p.m.	THU 24	Board of Supervisors Meeting, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.
WED 9	Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Library, 9:30-10 a.m. Planning Commission Meeting, Council Chambers at 7 p.m.	FRI 25	
THU 10	Family Pajama Time, Library at 7 p.m.; no pre-registration required. Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Library, 9:30-10 a.m.	SAT 26	
FRI 11	3-5 Year Old Storytime, Library at 1 p.m. Senior Moments (anyone 50+), Library, 9:30-10 a.m.	SUN 27	
SAT 12		MON 28	
SUN 13			
MON 14			
TUE 15			
WED 16	Library Book Discussion, at 10 a.m.		

AMERICA'S MOST INCREDIBLE NEWS SOURCE

THE WEEKLY TRASH

JANUARY 2005

Special Inside!

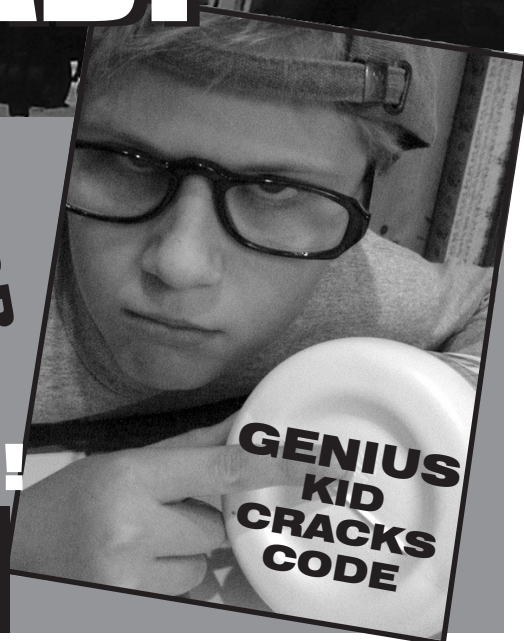


MUTANT ROBOTS MAKE GARBAGE GRAB!



The Report DEP
**DOESN'T
WANT YOU
TO SEE!**

HOLIDAY HORROR
CHILD'S
CHRISTMAS
TREE
SLASHED,
SMASHED,
CRUSHED!
NEWS



**REAL-LIFE CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP
EXCLUSIVE!**

MUTANT ROBOTS MAKE GARBAGE GRAB!

OH,
THE HUMANITY!

It was like a scene from a sci-fi horror movie. Steely robot arms, suddenly extending out from seemingly ordinary garbage trucks, have been spotted snatching up trash carts throughout the normally quiet western Pennsylvania community of Cranberry Township.

The monster robots, which were first reported to local authorities back in early November, show no sign of relenting in their appetite



Faye Wray in the original 1933 monster gorilla movie, have been observed picking up entire 96-gallon carts, chock full of waste, hoisting them high overhead, and dumping their contents into a hopper before returning them to the curb.

"I've never seen anything so

for household garbage, yard waste, and recyclables, according to eyewitnesses. The terrifying robot's clutch, which one resident compared to King Kong grasping

frightening in my life!" one elderly resident, who asked not to be identified, admitted. **"It just came out of nowhere and boom!** My garbage was gone!

"Whatever happened to all the little men in their bright orange suits?" she asked. "Did the robots trash them?"

Trucks outfitted with robotic arms have also been spotted in other areas of the country, including Fremont, California and Roswell, New Mexico. But at last report, no similar robots had been sited anywhere else in Pennsylvania. Local safety officials say they are unsure whether the monster robots have broken any laws.

The Report DEP Doesn't Want You to See!

In a shocking report to Congress, Pennsylvania's Secretary of Environmental Protection told federal lawmakers that neighboring states were dumping on Pennsylvania at alarming rates. In one year alone, out-of-state waste amounted to 42 percent of the all the trash disposed of in Pennsylvania, DEP chief David Hess told the secretive House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

That amount has continued to grow with imports jumping by double-digit percentages each year, he testified. "Out-of-state trash is one of the most pressing problems in Pennsylvania," he said, his voice trembling in anger. **"THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS!"**

Between 1994 and 1999

more than
34 million
tons of
garbage was
brought into

DEP Rats on
Neighbor
States!

A
**SHOCKING
REPORT**



ABC LADY PUTS
"I" BEFORE "E"
EXCEPT AFTER "C"

COMPULSIVE

ALPHABET LADY RECYCLES BILLS, BOOKS, BOTTLES, BEER CANS

Alice Betman, a compulsive 36-year old Cranberry Township resident, has always taken her recycling seriously – VERY seriously. But ever since the Township introduced its tremendously expanded list of items eligible for recycling, it has been a struggle for the fanatical Betman to organize her recyclables alphabetically.

"It used to be so easy," Betman confided to a reporter. "It was just bottles, cans, and plastics. That's it. But now I've got to line up all these other items. There's hardly anything left in my garbage. And I scarcely have time for work anymore!"

At the beginning, Betman admits, she found alphabetical disposal fairly easy: aerosol cans, aluminum foil, amber glass, and so on. But over time, it grew more difficult

for the emotionally disabled woman. By the time she got to the "Bs," with bleach bottles, beverage containers, brown glass, baby wipe boxes, and more, Betman felt the stress. And when she got to the "Cs" it became really hard for the neurotic Betman to concentrate on organizing her cardboard boxes, corrugated cartons, coupons, catalogues, and construction paper in neat soldier rows.

"Maybe I'll just have to give up and just stick it all in at once!" she said last week, with a sigh of resignation.

That solution remains a very real possibility. Since the Township does not require any form of recyclable separation in its Blue-top recycling carts, Betman may indeed end up simply mixing them all together. "It's a really scary thought," she said with a shudder.

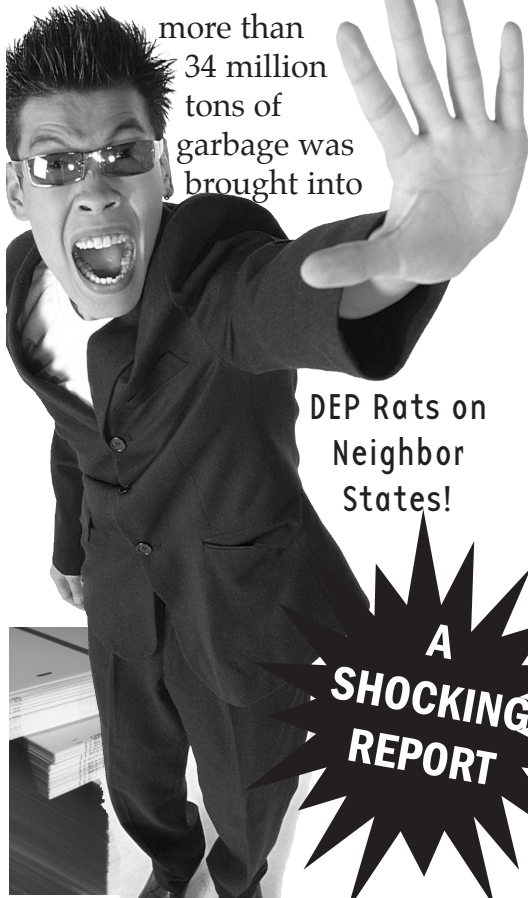
Pennsylvania's landfills from neighboring states.

"Pennsylvania is fast-approaching a waste disposal crisis," a spokesman for the state's waste haulers agreed. According to the Pennsylvania Waste Industries Association, the state has less than 6.3 years of available capacity in its municipal solid waste landfills, with less than two years of remaining capacity in the eastern half of the state.

Several years ago, Pennsylvania conducted

'Operation Clean Sweep,' an unprecedented eight-day effort to police each of the state's landfills and recycling centers.

"The results we found were frightening!" Hess testified under oath. "We inspected 3,768 trucks and found over 4,100 safety and environmental violations! State Police found 86 percent of the trucks they inspected had one or more safety violations and they took 849 trucks out of service. One driver showed up at 6:00 a.m. on a Monday morning, drunk!"



Fourteen-year old Jason Nichols of southwestern Pennsylvania isn't your typical MTV-addicted, Instant Messaging adolescent slacker. In fact, it's just the opposite. Young Jason, who lives with his parents and his spaniel Scruffy in a Cranberry Township bungalow, is actually an amateur cryptologist, or code-breaker.

As an eight-year old, Jason was able to single-handedly crack the genetic code of common housefly. When he was ten, he broke the secret cipher of the Navy's submarine fleet wide open. And at twelve, he was able to completely unravel the 128-bit encryption code used by the giant World Bank to safeguard international commerce. But it wasn't until this year that the local kid genius had his biggest breakthrough of all times: cracking the ultra-secret **Plastics Code**.

More than a year ago, Jason reported, he started noticing tiny marks on the bottoms of many plastic containers. Typically colorless and hidden from easy view, these marks appeared, to the prying eye of this curious youth, to have certain features in common. For example, they appeared to show small pyramids constructed of arrows. Hidden inside the pyramids were numbers. And tucked away at the base of the pyramids were letters.

After months of applying his amazing analytical skills, Jason eventually came up with a scheme that industry representatives now admit corresponds to the actual chemical composition of the plastic containers themselves. That code was later officially adopted by Cranberry Township as its guide to plastics recycling. And today, Township residents can recycle all

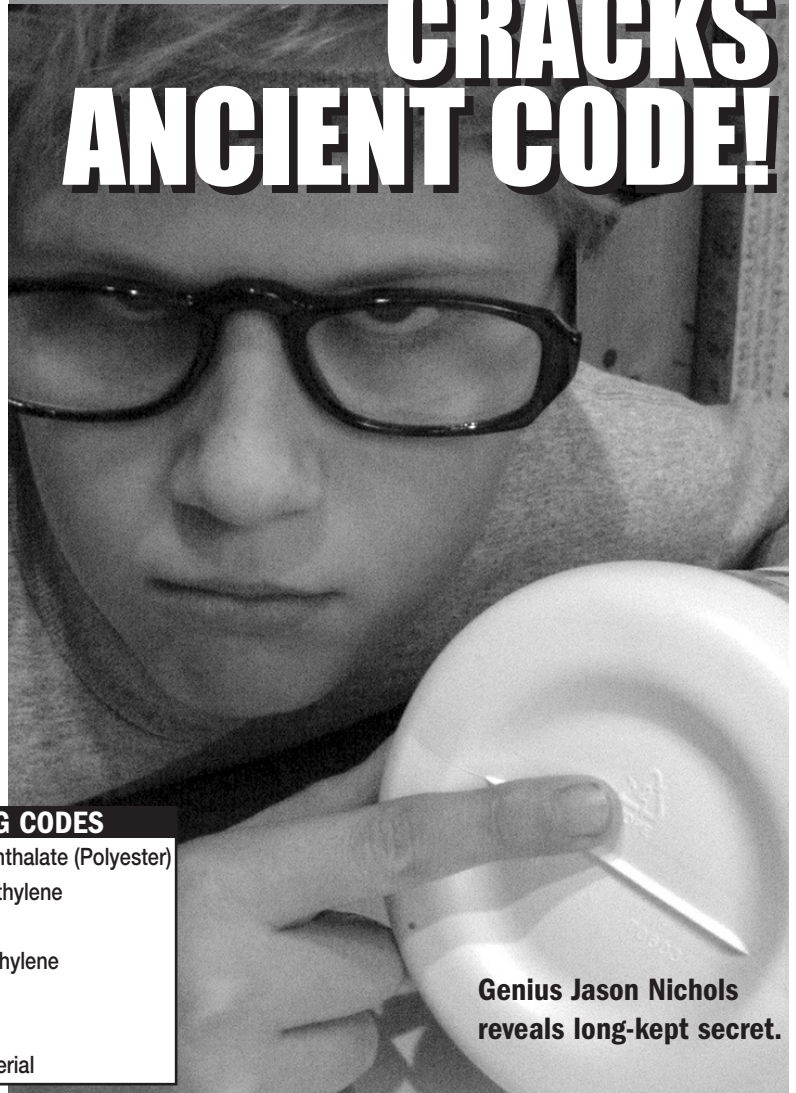
of them, except for #7, which remains a mystery.

**THANKS
JASON!**

PLASTIC RECYCLING CODES

1	PETE	Polyethylene Terephthalate (Polyester)
2	HDPE	High-Density Polyethylene
3	V	Polyvinyl Chloride
4	LDPE	Low-Density Polyethylene
5	PP	Polypropylene
6	PS	Polystyrene
7	OTHER	Mixed or other material

MIDDLE-SCHOOL KID GENIUS CRACKS ANCIENT CODE!



**Genius Jason Nichols
reveals long-kept secret.**

CHILD'S CHRISTMAS TREE SLASHED, SMASHED, CRUSHED!



It had been a wonderful Christmas for little Timothy Smith of suburban Cranberry Township. Santa had given him everything he asked for: his own cell phone, an air rifle, and a personalized copy of Grand Theft Auto II.

But the end of the holiday came as a terrible blow to the normally carefree eight-year old. Within hours of putting their family's Christmas tree out at the

curb, *Timmy was forced to behold a sight he will never forget.*

That was when the Township's trash collectors came by with their monster truck, grabbed his family's tree, hurled it into the back of the huge vehicle and, without looking back, hauled it off to a composting site to be shredded into pieces the size of toothpicks!

"I was so sad to see the tree go," the little boy sobbed. "It was a very special Christmas for me."

Curbside Christmas tree pickups are scheduled to take place throughout the Township during the weeks of January 3 and 10. Only natural trees are allowed.