



MIDDLE SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWS WINTER 2019

*A view of the Delaware Water Gap by James Kaval, Pocono Photo Club.
See more Pocono Photo Club artwork at the opening reception on 3/31/2019
at the Whispering Pines Banquet Hall.*

james kaval

RESTAURANT WEEK KICK OFF

**and Pocono Photo Club
Opening Reception Art Exhibit**

Sunday 3/31/2019 at 6:30pm at the
Whispering Pines Restaurant Week
Kick Off and Pocono Photo Club
Opening Reception Art Exhibit,
Sunday 3/31/2019 at 6:30pm at the
Whispering Pines

(see page 5)



2018
CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR 2018
PERSON OF THE YEAR!:
DAVID PASKIET

(see page 14)

ITS TAX TIME!

**Get FREE Help
From Area Agencies**

(see page 26)

WHAT’S GOIN’ ON

- March:** *Women’s History Month*
3/16 “Cool Crop Planting” Gardening Class
3/31 Restaurant Week Kick Off Event
(Restaurant Week runs 3/31 to 4/6)
3/31 Pocono Photo Club Art Exhibit
- April:** 4/13 12th Annual Eggstravaganza, 12pm
4/13 “Planting Spring Flowers” Gardening Class
4/19 Good Friday / Passover Begins
4/22 Spring Leaf Collection Begins
4/27 1000 Feet of Street Spring Litter Pickup
- May:** *5/2 2nd Quarter Sewer Payments Due*
5/3 & 5/4 Cleanup & Freecycle AKA “Dumpster Day”
(Drop Off Only 7am-4pm)
5/9, 5/10, 5/11 Freecycle (Pickup Only 7am-2pm)
5/17 Spring Leaf Collection Ends
5/18 “Planting Potatoes” Gardening Class
5/21 Election Day
5/27 Memorial Day
- June:** 6/8 Free Dog Training at W. Leroy Lewis Dog Park, 11am
6/15 “Designing your Raised Bed” Gardening Class
6/26 Anniversary of Marshalls Creek Explosion
- July:** 7/4 Independence Day
7/20 “Harvesting Garlic” Gardening Class, followed by
“All About Bees” Beekeeping Class
7/25 Supervisors Meeting 7pm Presentation:
Midyear Report to the Public
- August:** *8/2: 3rd Quarter Sewer Payments Due*
Master Gardener in Residence at the Community Gardens
Park every Saturday, 10am -12n
8/10 Free Dog Training at W. Leroy Lewis Dog Park, 11am
8/17 Flood of 1955 Anniversary
8/17 15th Annual Memory Makers at the Whispering Pines
- September:** 9/2 Labor Day
9/21 “Drying your Herbs and Flowers for Arrangements”
Gardening Class
9/28 1000 Feet of Street Fall Litter Pickup

Note: All Gardening Classes are taught by Penn State Master Gardeners, and all Beekeeping Classes are taught by Monroe County Beekeepers Association, and held at the township’s Community Gardens Park from 11am-12n unless otherwise indicated. Classes are tentative and subject to change due to weather, call to confirm.

- October:** 10/4 & 10/5 Cleanup & Freecycle AKA “Dumpster Day”
(Drop Off Only 7am-4pm)
10/5 Free Dog Training at W. Leroy Lewis Dog Park, 11am
10/10, 10/11, 10/12 Freecycle (Pickup Only 7am-2pm)
10/14: Columbus Day
10/16 National Fossil Day™ & Marshalls Creek Mastodon
10/19 “Planting Garlic” class in Bushkill Outreach Raised Beds
10/21 Fall Leaf Collection Begins
10/26 6th Annual Trunk or Treat, 12pm
- November:** *11/2: 4th Quarter Sewer Payments Due*
11/5 Election Day
11/10 MST Veteran’s Luncheon at Whispering Pines
11/11 Veteran’s Day
11/15 Fall Leaf Pickup Ends
11/23 Shop Local Now thru 1/2/19
11/28 Thanksgiving
11/30 7th Annual Tree Lighting, 6pm
- December:** 12/5 Supervisors Meeting 7pm Presentation of the
Budget to the Public & Year End Review
12/25 Christmas Day
12/31 New Year’s Eve
*1/24/2020: 2019 Person of the Year and
Volunteer Appreciation Banquet*

COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

- Parks & Recreation Board**
6:30pm | 1st Monday of Every Month
- Golf Course Committee**
8:30am | 2nd Monday of Every Month
- Economic Development Committee**
6:00pm | 2nd Monday of Every Month
- Oak Grove Multi-Municipal Composting Board**
Call for Schedule
- Regional Parks at Smithfield Township**
7:45pm | 3rd Monday of Every Month
- Historical Commission**
9am | 1st Wednesday of Every Month
- Board of Supervisors Meeting**
7pm | 2nd & 4th Thursday of Every Month
- Planning Commission**
5:30pm | 3rd Thursday of Every Month



At the annual “Preview of 2019” presentation, the Person of the Year and two finalists were presented with their checks for their respective organizations, as well as state citations. From left to right: Supervisors Mike Dwyer and Annette Atkinson; Jonathan Alatae, representing Rosemary Brown and Mario Scavello’s office; Dawn Paskiet accepting on behalf of her husband Daniel Paskiet, 2018 Person of the Year and nominator Jessica Thxxx; finalist Francis Oquendo for the Boy Scouts; finalist Thomas Watson for Meals on Wheels; and Supervisor Mark Oney.

A WORD FROM YOUR
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

Mike Dwyer, Mark Oney, and Annette Atkinson

Okay, so where was the real winter? We were prepared with sharp plow blades, cinders, ClearLane (better than salt), gassed up and ready to go! But where were the blizzards? Sure, there have been a couple of snow days, but nothing like the last few years. Are we experiencing the calm before the storm? Is there no reason to stock up on bread and milk? Well, we cannot predict the weather, any better than the Farmer’s Almanac or the guys and gals on TV, but we can say with certainty that 2019 is shaping up to be a great year already!

We started off the year with the 2018 Person of the Year and Volunteer Appreciation Banquet. Again, congratulations to our 2018 Person of the Year, David Paskiet (Phoenix Martial Arts Society), and the finalists Francis Oquendo (Boy Scouts of America) and Thomas Watson (Meals on Wheels). And a special thank you to all the selfless volunteers and committee members who build our sense of community.

As most of you read in the last newsletter, and can see in your recently delivered County / Municipal / Library tax bill, there is no Municipal tax increase for 2019. Another great start to the year! That means for the past 7 years, our municipal taxes have remained the same, even though costs for everything, including sharp plow blades and bread and milk have gone up. At the township, we look to minimize expenses wherever we can, and if Mother Nature wants to help out every so often, that’s great too.

We also delivered the “Preview of 2019” to the public in our January meeting. Some highlights are the biggest development projects the township has seen since the PriceChopper shopping center and WaWa store in 2012, namely, the Apartments at Mt. Nebo (more on page 5), the potential sale of the Country Club of the Poconos golf course and Whispering Pines Banquet Hall, and the construction of a Cultural and Community Center which will house the Library of the Smithfields and a Red Cross certified shelter for emergencies.

In 2019, we are looking forward to potentially selling the Country Club of the Poconos golf course. The golf course, with a substantial development site, could prove to be financially feasible for a respectable buyer. While we would not expect a White Castle or Cemetery (even though one is said to often lead to the other), we are hopeful that the national trend in hotel development will soon happen in our township as well, especially now that Fernwood has transitioned from resort hotel to a World Peace Center (more on page x).

In 2019, we are hopeful that a new Cultural and Community Center that will house the Library of the Smithfields will be completed at Echo Lake Park on Route 209. Our own library and community center that is also planned to provide a Red Cross certified shelter during storms and provide space for community gatherings will undoubtedly become the centerpiece of our township. The overall support for this project from our residents, business owners, and the community at large is tremendous. We believe the Pocono Arts Council’s position statement, “Culture Builds Community”, is right on the mark. And we are ever thankful to those in our township, like our Persons of the Year and their organizations, who strive to build a culture of community by their efforts.

Your Township Supervisors

Middle Smithfield Township Administrative Office
147 Municipal Drive East Stroudsburg, PA 18302
570-223-8920 | info@mstownship.com
MiddleSmithfieldTownship.com

Middle Smithfield Township Board of Supervisors
Annette Atkinson | Chairperson | x124
Michael Dwyer | Vice Chairman | x123
Mark Oney | Supervisor | x125

Middle Smithfield Township Staff

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Resources Director & Assistant Administrative Director
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Open Records & Right to Know Officer
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Dave Manter | On Lot Sewage Enforcement Officer
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recept@mstownship.com | x100

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Coordinator, Golf Committee & Homeowners
Association Liaison
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Patrice Dume | Economic Development Manager
pdume@mstownship.com | x130

Dana Francis | Municipal Projects Assistant
& Historical Commission Liaison
dfrancis@mstownship.com | x121

Kevin Dixon | Country Club of the Poconos
Pro Shop Manager
kdixon@mstownship.com | 570-223-8099

Committee Chairpersons

Ray White | Golf Advisory Committee | x205
golfadvisorycommittee@mstownship.com

Jenna Componovo | Parks & Rec | x201
parksandrecreation@mstownship.com

Jenna Componovo | Litter & Beautification | x202
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Carrie Wetherbee | Historical Commission | x203
HistoricalCommission@mstownship.com

Gina Bertucci | Economic Development | x204
EconomicDevelopmentCommittee@mstownship.com

Mal Law | Zoning Hearing Board | x112

FINANCE: TREASURER'S NOTE

Treasurer, Supervisor: Mike Dwyer | Budget & Finance, Manager: Ray Wolfe

7 YEAR ITCH: SCRATCH OUT TAXES 7th year of no municipal tax increases

By Mike Dwyer

Once again, the township heads into a new year without a tax increase. That makes 7 years since any increase in municipal taxes. The major reason for no tax increase is due to the increase in the tax base. With new businesses moving in, residential stabilizing, and resident income increasing, the same level of taxes yields more income for the township. The need to continue to see growth in our township is necessary so the tax rate does not have to change.

That's all good news, but what do we foresee in the near future? It is difficult to predict how the overall economy will fare throughout the year. Some economists predict a slight slowdown but not a major decline. The soon-to-be rolled out County Reassessment will certainly affect our residents and business owners, and the outfall of this new valuation is hard to predict. Due to the value of your home or business, compared to the prior assessed value, you may see a real estate tax increase or decrease – or no change at all.

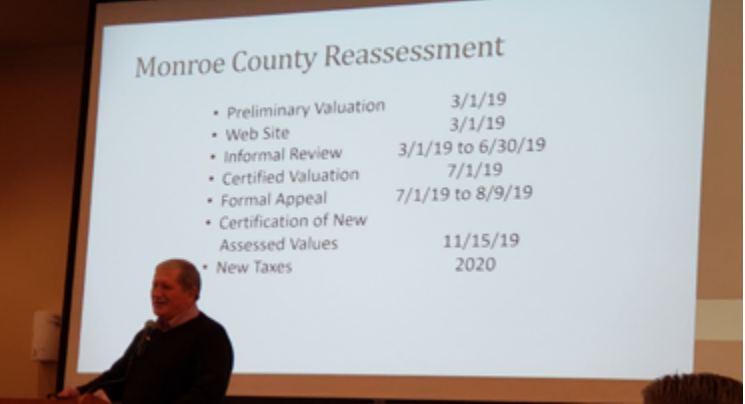
Based upon the 2019 Municipal Budget, there are a number of improvements that are planned for the near future. Road improvements are certainly a high priority, along with repairing/replacing some of the bridges in our township. We are hopeful that the State (PennDOT) will pave Route 402 and Route 209, as they said they would many years ago. We also anticipate a number of new businesses to come to Middle Smithfield in 2019. A new 96-unit apartment complex is in the final planning stages, a Dollar General store is looking at a parcel in our township, and we are looking forward to a new Library of the Smithfield to be constructed in Echo Lake Park. The library/community center will undoubtedly become a centerpiece of our township and would be a welcome addition. With the proposed Red Cross certified shelter within the building, we will have a centrally located space available to our residents in their time of need.

There are also other developments that may occur in 2019. Improvements to our parks are expected in 2019 as well. Plans are being developed to make changes at the Judy Putek Park along Municipal Drive, Eagle Scout projects are planned for Echo Lake Park, and expansion of the Community Gardens

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Chair of Monroe County Commissioners John Moyer gives a re-assessment update at the Report to Business earlier this year.

MONROE COUNTY RE-ASSESSMENT

By John Moyer, County Commissioner

The reassessment of all 100,000 properties in Monroe County is finally drawing to a close. This project was required because of vastly different assessed values being assigned to properties of similar character throughout the County. Since the last county-wide reassessment was completed in 1988 and implemented in 1989, property values have changed dramatically. The goal of the reassessment project is to ensure that all property owners pay their fair share of taxes.

The time line for the remaining stages of the project is as follows:

March 1, 2019 – Property owners will receive a document that shows the tentative values assigned to their properties. At the same time, a web site will be made available to explain how values were set. This site will also show the values assigned to properties throughout the County.

March 1 – June 30, 2019 – Property owners who believe there is an error in the way their property was valued can schedule an informal review to point out the possible inaccuracies.

July 1, 2019 – Based on the information collected during the informal review, property owners will receive a copy of the certified valuation of their property.

July 1 – August 9, 2019 – Owners who believe their property's assessment is incorrect can schedule a formal appeal with an Auxiliary Board of Assessment Revision

November 15, 2019 – Based on the results of the formal appeals, the County's Chief Assessor will forward the new assessed property values to each municipality and school district.

January 2020 – All taxing authorities will use the new assessed values to establish taxes. County and municipal taxes will be due by June 30, 2020; school taxes will be due September 30, 2020.

Middle Smithfield Township Restaurant Week March 31st - April 7th



RESTAURANT WEEK 2019 Back by Popular Demand! Includes Smithfield this year too!

Running Sunday March 31st to Sunday April 7th, local residents, neighbors, and visitors alike will enjoy discounted menus and/or dishes from participating restaurants in Middle Smithfield Township. And this year, Smithfield is participating!

There is something special for every plate! Customers can expect Italian, American, Hispanic, and so much more. With Smithfield joining in this year, locals will have even more great options when looking for a bit to eat. After the successes of the past years, this year promises to be even better!

RESTAURANT WEEK KICKOFF EVENT

**FREE FOOD SAMPLES -
FREE WINE and BEER TASTINGS!**

Stop by the Whispering Pines in Country Club of the Poconos on Sunday March 31st, at 6:30pm to 8:30pm, and sample some of the great menu items you can find in Middle Smithfield Township during Restaurant Week! This event kicks off the Restaurant Week program, while giving participants the opportunity to meet and greet restaurant owners as well as other residents in the community!

In conjunction with the kickoff, the Pocono Photo Club will host their Photography Exhibit in Middle Smithfield

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WELCOME NEW MEMBER ANTHONY HOMER

By Patrice Dume

The Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Committee would like to welcome our newest member, resident of Middle Smithfield Township for 19 years, Anthony Homer! He has three daughters who all attended and graduated from East Stroudsburg South High School.

Anthony has nearly 30 years of extensive expertise in the pharmaceutical and vaccines industries, and currently works in Research and Development at Sanofi Pasteur in Swiftwater as Biostatistics PPMH Franchise Head, where his responsibilities include leading a team of statisticians in the design and execution of clinical trials in pediatric and adult populations. Anthony's wife, Bernadette



Homer, is also employed at Sanofi Pasteur. Sanofi is a global leader in healthcare, and is a biopharmaceutical company focused on human health.

Anthony previously served as an adjunct faculty member at Northampton Community College. Anthony comes with a wealth of knowledge while bringing a resident's perspective to the committee. He is excited about being able to assist in fostering economic prosperity to the township.

The Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Committee meets every 2nd Monday of the month at 6:00 pm and as always the public is welcome to attend.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Gina Bertucci | Vice Chairperson: Joe Memoli | Secretary: Beverly Brown
Members: Chris Barrett, vacancy | Economic Development Manager: Patrice Dume

THE APARTMENTS AT MT. NEBO

**Biggest project in Middle
Smithfield since PriceChopper**



Currently in the Land Development stage, the proposed 96 unit apartment complex is perfect for millennials or seniors! Walking distance to shopping center, public transportation, the state's "park 'n ride", and storage units on site. Reasonable rents include utilities such as public sewer, public water, snow removal, trash removal – and no maintenance!

Said Planning Commission Member and Supervisor Mark Oney, "There's definitely a need for professional rentals in our area – currently, the only option is whole house rentals. Busy young professionals and commuters are often inexperienced at, or unprepared for, or just don't have time for maintaining a whole house plus grounds. This is perfect."

Stay tuned for more information as the project progresses.

SHOP LOCAL 2018 WRAPPED UP

By Patrice Dume

The Shop Local program was a great success this year! The 2018 Shop Local program marks the 5th year of the program's existence and ongoing success. The program is a WIN-WIN for both business owners and Middle Smithfield Township residents. It is an exclusive program for Middle Smithfield Township shoppers who want to save money and support

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ZONING

Zoning & Code Enforcement Officer: Shawn McGlynn | zoning@mstownship.com | 570-223-8920 x126 | **Zoning Department Administrator:** Judith Acosta | jacosta@mstownship.com | 570-223-8920 x128

Zoning Hearing Board: Mal Law – chairperson, Josephine Ferro – vice chairperson, VACANCY, apply now, Art Jenkins, Jeff Senholzi, Melonie Schmid - alternate



COLD SHOULDER TO BAD PARKING

By Judy Acosta

Snow is on the horizon. Don't be caught out in the cold holding a ticket for illegal snow removal or unlawful parking during a snow emergency.

Under section 138-7 of the Township Code, it is unlawful to throw, shovel or otherwise move, pile or dump snow or ice removed from sidewalks, driveways or other areas onto any public road. CASE IN

POINT: Roads were beautifully clear during one icy snow event – except for slippery spots on Upper Lakeview where some residents threw their snow into the street. Please don't do that.

It is also unlawful to park a vehicle on any public road and right of way if the Township has declared a snow emergency. (Remember that Facebook post about declaring an emergency? That's part of what it means!) Violation of the ordinance shall result in a fine of \$50.00.

Please cooperate with our hard-working Public Works Department as they work tirelessly to combat the hazards of snow and/or ice on the Township's public roads.

IN THE ZONE

by Judy Acosta

Middle Smithfield Township is committed to our community volunteers and to providing support and training to those who serve. The members of the Zoning Hearing Board play a crucial role in the community. Members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors to render decisions on specific types of land use appeals and applications.

It is important that the members have a thorough knowledge of the boards functions and responsibilities. For that reason, Middle Smithfield Township is hosting a PSATs seminar entitled "Duties of the Zoning Hearing Board Member" on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, 6:30 – 9:00 pm. In this course, Elam Herr, retired PSATS' assistant executive director and the chair of the East Hempfield Township (Lancaster) zoning hearing board, offers a wealth of experience and will help you to better navigate the challenge of being a member of the Zoning Hearing Board, from making decisions on contentious public issues to learning the ins and outs of the Municipalities Planning Code.

Topics to be covered include procedures for deciding variances and special exceptions, handling hearing-related questions, Ethics Act requirements and much more. Attendees will also learn specific, practical tips that will leave them better prepared for their next meeting or hearing. While this course is geared more toward newer zoning hearing board members, those looking for a refresher on their obligations will also benefit. Register online here: <https://connect.psats.org/trainingevents/upcoming-events?webproductid=4D1960D0-D523-E911-A967-000D3A4E750B> or call 717-763-0930.

THANK YOU TO THE ZONING HEARING BOARD VOLUNTEERS

The Zoning Office, along with the Township Supervisors and staff, would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the dedicated members of the Zoning Hearing Board for their voluntary service to their community in 2018.

Mal Law, *Chairman*,
Josephine Ferro, *Vice Chairman*
Art Jenkins
Frank Primrose
Jeff Senholzi,
Melonie Schmid
Gary Morris

Due to moving out of the area, Frank Primrose resigned his position from the Zoning Hearing Board early in 2018 after many years of service. The Board of Supervisors appointed Gary Morris to fill the vacancy in November of 2018. Gary's term expires December 31, 2023.

Recently, after decades of service, Mal Law also resigned from the Zoning Hearing Board. He began his community service in 1980 with

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At the re-organizational meeting on January 7, 2019, the Board of Supervisors appointed Judy Acosta to the new position of Assistant Zoning Officer and Assistant Code Enforcement Officer. Judy has served the township in the position of Zoning Administrator since 2014.

SFM Consulting, LLC, with Shawn McGlynn as their representative, continues to serve the township as Zoning Officer, Building Code Officer, Code Enforcement Officer and Floodplain Administrator.



Middle Smithfield welcomes Gary Morris to its Zoning Hearing Board. Gary, a Paraprofessional with the East Stroudsburg School District, is no stranger to civic duty: he is also Judge of Elections, a position he's held for 11 years.

SNOW EMERGENCY DECLARATION.... WHAT DOES IT MEAN

By: Michele L. Clewell

During any emergency condition, including inclement weather, parking within the cart way or shoulder area of any Township road is prohibited at any time. "Ordinance No. 54 of the Township of Middle Smithfield, Monroe County, Pennsylvania provided for the Regulation of Parking of Vehicles on Township Roads and for the Towing of Vehicles Parked on Township Roads during Emergency Conditions".

In other words, when the Board of Supervisors declares a snow emergency it allows the Public Works Director and/or Roadmaster to have any vehicle within the cart way or shoulder area removed at the owner's expense **without** warning.

The township makes every effort for residents and visitors to be notified when an emergency declaration is declared. We do this by posting the information on FaceBook, the website and through Text-caster. However, please understand that although "you" personally may not have been told, the declaration is still in effect. By continuing to check the social media outlets, or signing up for Textcaster, you will be better informed. Middle Smithfield Township website is www.middle-smithfieldtownship.com. Textcaster is a permission based text of your choosing. If you are interested in learning more about it, call the township at 570-223-8920 ext. 100 or visit the website and type in "Textcaster" in the search toolbar.



PLANNING COMMISSION

Chairman: Bob Early | **Vice Chairman:** Parin Shah

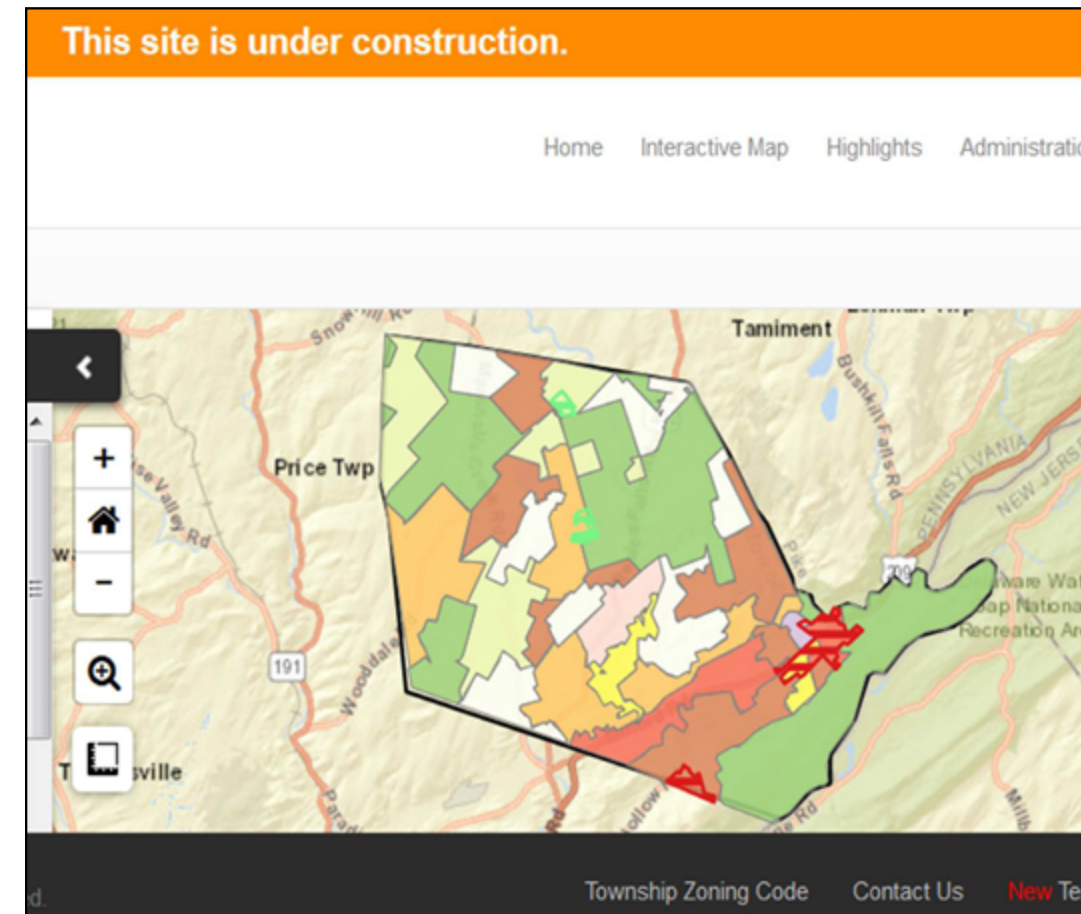
Members: Wayne Bolt, Mark Oney

Engineer: Gilmore & Associates Fred Courtright | **PE Solicitor/ Solicitor Firm:** Weitzmann, Weitzmann, and Huffman | **Recording Secretary:** Michele Clewell

Alternate: Carrie Wetherbee

COMING SOON TO OUR TOWNSHIP WEBSITE:

eCode360 MapLink makes it easier for business owners, residents and realtors to understand township zoning requirements by presenting Zoning Code data from eCode360 in an interactive Township Zoning map from ZoningHub.



At their meeting on February 6th, the Monroe County Commissioners appointed Supervisor Annette Atkinson to the Monroe County Planning Commission. The MCPC mission: The citizens of Monroe County will continue working together to sustain and improve our quality of life by ensuring that the county's environmental, economic, and cultural assets are within reach of all its people." Middle Smithfield keeps moving forward, Planning for the Future!



Mal Law giving a historical talk in front of the old map he donated to the township.

PARKS & RECREATION



Director: Mike Dwyer | **Chairperson:** Jenna Componovo
Lead Coordinator, Dog Park: Vacancy
Lead Coordinator, Community Gardens Park: Michelle Dellavalle
Lead Coordinator, Judy Putek Park: Dan Timpson
Lead Coordinator, Resica Park: Jamie Frailey
Liaison: Christopher Rain | crain@mstownship.com

TOWNSHIP PARKS:

- MiddleSmithfieldTownship.com/parks/
- **Leroy W. Lewis Dog Park**
108 Leroy’s Lane (off of Milford Road/209; adjacent to the National Recreation Area)
facebook.com/MSTDogPark
 - **Echo Lake Park**
5206 Milford Rd (on Route 209 across from the Middle Smithfield Evangelical Presbyterian Church)
facebook.com/MSTEchoLakePark
 - **Judy Putek Park**
182 Municipal Drive (across from the Municipal Building)
facebook.com/MST-Judy-Putek-Park-1570884379874069/
 - **Resica Park**
1 Gravel Ridge Road (behind Resica Elementary School)
facebook.com/MSTResicaPark
 - **Community Gardens Park**
989 Coolbaugh Road (4 miles north of 402/ Coolbaugh Road intersection)
facebook.com/MSTCommunityGardens
mstCommunityGardensPark.com/

REGIONAL PARKS

- (i.e., formerly Eastern Monroe Regional Park Commission)
- **Mt. Nebo Park**
406 Mt. Nebo Road (in Smithfield Township) East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
facebook.com/MtNeboPark
 - **River’s Edge Family Bike Park**
123 River Road (in Smithfield Township) East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
facebook.com/RiversEdgeFamilyBikePark

NATIONAL PARKS

- **National Park Headquarters**
1978 River Road Bushkill, PA 18324
facebook.com/DelWaterGapNPS/
nps.gov/dewa/index.htm
- **Hidden Lake** (national park within our township)
no street address; entrance near Hidden Lake Drive and Keystone Road
delawariver.natgeotourism.com/content/hidden-lake-bushkill-pa/del163a03909b0065c79
facebook.com/HiddenLakeMST/

THE ICE RINK RETURNS!

The ice rink is back at the Dog Park for winter 2019!

The ice rink is located in the Small Dog Area of W. Leroy Lewis Dog Park from December to March. It will be removed in March (date TBD) when it gets too warm to freeze the water. The Small Dog Area is reserved for skaters while the ice rink is in place. The Large Dog Area will remain open to dogs of all sizes for the winter and the Small Dog Area will reopen to dogs after the ice rink is disassembled.

Why put an ice rink at the Dog Park, and not another park? The MST Dog Park is the perfect place for our ice rink because of its
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Master Gardeners
Penn State Extension

CLASSES FOR 2019

(And a beekeeping class by the Monroe County Beekeepers Association!)
*“And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!”*

Greetings gardeners! Can’t wait to get your next seed catalog to peruse in front of the fire after shoveling snow? You’re not alone! Mark these classes in your calendar. All classes are taught by Penn State Certified Master Gardeners, and certified Monroe County Beekeepers Association Beekeeper.

In addition to these classes, the Master Gardener in Residence program returns, where every Saturday from about 11am to noon or a little after, the public can “Ask a Master Gardener” for advice on anything (well, mostly gardening, but they’ve been known to give great advice on other things too.)

Event dates are subject to change, or may have a rain date TBA. **NEW FOR 2019:** All Master Gardener classes will be given at the Middle Smithfield Township Building, and then we’re all off to the Community Gardens Park for hands on training afterward.

Master Gardener Classes for 2019	
EVENT	DATE & TIME
Cold Crop Planting	Sat. 3/16, 11am
Spring Planting	Sat. 4/13, 11am
Potato Planting	Sat. 5/18, 11am
Raised Plot Design	Sat. 6/15, 11am
All About Bees	Sat. 7/20, 11am
Drying Herbs	Sat. 9/21, 11am
Garlic Planting	Sat. 10/19, 11am



RAIN COULDN’T DAMPEN THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT AT THE 6TH ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING

On Friday November 30, MST held its 6th Annual Tree Lighting event at the pavilion at Echo Lake Park. Despite uncooperative weather forcing two reschedules, the event was a great success.

Attendees were treated to a free commemorative candle, a program, and complimentary hot cocoa provided by Exploria Resorts. Holiday music, provided by the East Stroudsburg High School North Band entertained the crowd at 6pm. The Eastern Monroe Public Library’s new bookmobile was also in attendance. At 6:30, Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived at the park, escorted by the Marshalls Creek Fire Department, to

light the tree and visit with the children. Each child who visited with the Claus was able to have their picture taken, tell Santa what they wanted for Christmas, and got a candy cane from Mrs. Claus.

Back by popular demand, a seven minute holiday themed fireworks display followed the Claus’ arrival to celebrate the lighting of the tree and the start of the holiday season.

Many attendees also brought donations in the form of toys for Toys for Tots and non-perishable food which was donated to the Bushkill Outreach Food Pantry; two organizations that help share the

cheer for families in need every holiday season and throughout the year.

The Board of Supervisors and the Parks and Recreation Committee would like to thank Exploria Resorts, Paul Bakner and the high school band, the Pocono Photo Club, Marshalls Creek Fire Company, township constables, the Eastern Monroe Public Library, and the Bushkill Emergency Corps for volunteering to participate at the event and make it such a great success.

For more information about MST parks, please contact the Parks Department at 570-223-8920 x119 or Parks&Recreation@mstownship.com.

MAKE YOUR BED AT MST COMMUNITY GARDENS IN 2019

Attention, gardeners! Are you interested in having a plot at the MST Community Gardens?

Come garden with us in 2019 by reserving a plot at Community Gardens Park on Coolbaugh Road. The Penn State Master Gardeners will be back this year with their learning series and their demonstration garden to help you grow your best garden.

For more information or to reserve your garden bed, please call 570-223-8920 x119 or email crain@mstownship.com, or stop by the Township Building at 147 Municipal Drive. Plots reservations require a short reservation form and a \$50 refundable deposit per plot to hold your spot. There is a maximum of 3 plots per

household during the initial signup period.

We hope to hear from you soon and look forward to another great growing season in 2019!

MST Community Gardens Park is located at 989 Coolbaugh Road. MST parks are open daily during daylight hours. For more information, call 570-223-8920 x119, email parks&recreation@mstownship.com, or visit www.facebook.com/mstcommunitygardens.



ADOPT A ROAD IN 2019!

**Want to help keep your neighborhood clean?
Consider adopting a road!**

The MST Adopt a Road Program organizes our residents, businesses, and organizations who want to keep our streets litter-free. Individuals or groups can adopt a 2 mile stretch of road and pledge to pick up litter along their stretch at least twice a year. These cleanups can coincide with our twice yearly litter program, 1000 Feet of Street, or at any time at the adopter's convenience. Your two mile stretch is marked with a sign to let your neighbors know that you are helping to keep MST pretty.

If you are interested in adopting a road, please contact Christopher Rain at 570-223-8920 x119, or email crain@mstownship.com. A list of roads available for adoption can be provided. All cleanup equipment including bags, pickers, and gloves, are provided by the township when you clean your road.

Thank you to our great residents, organizations, and businesses who adopt roads including:

Big Ridge Drive – Jan Basler & Bruce Taylor
Brushy Mountain & Barren Roads – PA Treatment & Healing
Buroojy Court – Robert & Eileen Early
Charley Drive – Darlene & Mark Picchianti
Coolbaugh Road, south section – Monroe County Young Democrats
Coolbaugh Road, center section – Van Solkema Family
Coolbaugh Road, north section – Kaylatime & Angel Hernandez
Firestone Lane – Resica Falls Scout Reservation
Foxmoor Drive – Monroe County Meals on Wheels
Gravel Ridge Road – Bob and Anne Marie Pohlman
Hidden Lake Drive – Kathy Mitchell
Keystone Road – Gary Waxman
Macy Way, et al. – Halterman & Meryweather Families
Marjorie Court & Timber Mountain Drive – Frank Lowe
Michaels Road – James Meegan
Municipal Drive – MST Board of Supervisors
Oak Grove Road – Mountain Stream Baptist Church
Pocono Wild Haven Estates (all roads) – PWHE Beautification Committee
Sand Hill Road – Juliette Ryan-Caines
Sellersville Drive – Vazquez Landscaping LLC
Stoney Acres – ESU Student Activity Association
Summit Drive, et al. – Stephen & Elsie Della-Calce
Turkey Ridge Road – Annette Atkinson
Upper Lakeview Drive – Robert Post
Wooddale Road, PWHE to Price Township line – Meryweather & Halterman Families
Wooddale Road, PWHE to Marshalls Creek – PWHE Beautification Committee

Adopt a road today and add your name to the list!

OAK GROVE & RECYCLING

www.ogmmcpb.com
Chairperson | Mike Dwyer



The Oak Grove Multi-Municipal Compost Processing program is jointly operated and available to residents of Middle Smithfield, Smithfield and Lehman Townships.

The facility is centrally located at 3305 Oak Grove Drive in Middle Smithfield Township and is open Monday – Saturday, 7 am – 2 pm. Closed Holidays

To use the facility you must be a resident of one of the 3 participating townships or a commercial business (via permit only) located in the townships.

Acceptable materials include leaves, shrubs (no roots) and shrubbery, tree trimmings, and branches cut into 3 -4 foot lengths and no larger than 12 inches in diameter.

BUDDHIST TEMPLE HOLDS FIRST CEREMONY

JinYin Temple of Sino Esoteric Buddhism hosted a 2019 Spring World Peace Prayer Ceremony on Saturday, February 16 at the former Fernwood Resort in Middle Smithfield Township. This was the first public prayer ceremony since the establishment of the temple.

Spiritual leaders from all over the world used the temple blessing ceremony as an opportunity to bridge cultural and religious divides.

People from all over the world gave speeches, all of them upbeat in celebration of the temple. The event was held in conjunction with a number of local and



national organizations including Monroe County United, the World League of Sino Esoteric Buddhism Associations, and others. The Reverend Cynthia Crowner of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Poconos spoke on behalf of Monroe County United.

Local leaders echoed their hopes for unification in our communities. "We embrace balance. Which means we embrace our diversity as much as we

embrace how much we are all the same underneath," Annette Atkinson, Middle Smithfield Township Supervisor said.

The hope is that this turns into a place for people to learn from each other so they can be brought closer together. "We need to promote the respect of different civilizations to find the ways to resolve our differences, co-exist peacefully," said Vajra Master Jinke Xuanlei of the Temple.

THANK YOU TO THE ZONING HEARING BOARD VOLUNTEERS

(continued from page 6)


an appointment to the township planning commission. Mal has been involved with the community long enough to remember attending a township meeting in Sterling Schoonover's kitchen!

In 2018, the Zoning Hearing Board held seven hearings in 2018 on four separate matters. The PMPEI Course in Zoning was also hosted by the Township and attended by Zoning Hearing Board members in March. The Zoning Hearing Board holds meetings on an as-needed basis to hear and render a decision on appeals from the determination of the Zoning Officer and applications for variances among other things. Section 083-050 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies their jurisdiction.



Lisa Villano won this beautiful wreath from Richards Tree Farm just by activating her Shop Local Discount Card! Lisa was very happy! Patrice Dume, Economic Development Manager, delivered the wreath to her at her job!






EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

The East Stroudsburg Area School District announces the beginning of kindergarten registration for the 2019-2020 academic year. For a child to be eligible to enroll in kindergarten for the 2019-2020 school term, he or she must turn five years old on or before September 9, 2019.

To register your child, contact Central Registration located at 50 Vine St., East Stroudsburg, PA between 8:00 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. at 570-424-8500 x10902 for an appointment.

A complete registration package is available online at <http://www.esasd.net/register>.

Two acceptable proofs of residency documents are required at the time of registration, verification of birth date and immunization record. (See registration packet.)



PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director, Supervisor: Mike Dwyer
Public Works Department Administrator: Karen Stapleton |
kstapleton@mstowship.com | 570-223-8920 x118

SEWER
Joan Woisin | Sewer Department
Manager | jwoisin@mstowship.com
570-223-892 x115

PUBLIC WORKS IN 2019

By Mike Dwyer

This year, our Public Works Department will continue to improve township roads according to our 10-year plan. Since its inception, in 2012, we have completed over 75% (55 miles) of road improvements, including paving, drainage reconstruction, major safety improvements and maintenance, including clearing brush, trees, and removal of other obstruction. In 2019, planned improvements include the township roads you see listed in the chart on this page.

Bridging the Gap

Along with the roads listed in the chart, we will be reconstructing bridges within the township. In 2019, two of our bridges, on Big Ridge Drive and on Village Drive, will be totally demolished and replaced. As part of the replacement, a slight realignment will occur to improve the driving lanes and, quite honestly, to decrease expenses.

We will also be constructing a new “temporary” entrance to Country Club of the Poconos off of Sellersville Drive. This actually used to be the entrance to County Club of the Poconos many years ago, while construction was taking place. Due to the deterioration of the “big bridge”, this temporary ingress/egress will be developed while planning, financing, and construction can be accomplished to replace the bridge. At an estimated cost of over \$3,000,000, we are looking at every option to acquire funding, including from the State and Federal Government. We were wondering if naming rights to this temporary access road could be available to local advertisers for the right price – someone has also already suggested “Diss Way”.

Our Public Works crew is out plowing, or cindering, or cutting away fallen trees in all types of weather so you can get to and from your destination. They also maintain our 5 parks (and regional parks), maintain our equipment and vehicles (Buddy Arnst made me say that) and are available practically 24/7. Your patience is always needed if we have to delay you while we are working, but the crew is doing the best they can to make our township safe, in any type of weather.



PRESIDENT OF COG LEADS SAFETY MEETING

Supervisor Mike Dwyer, who is also the President of the Pocono Mountain Council of Governments, convened a meeting at the Monroe County Control Center for all Monroe County townships. The meeting included Township and State Representatives throughout the county for the purpose of discussing safety measures that all forms of local government could and should institute. In the last 5 years, disgruntled and/or disturbed people have already killed township employees as well as bystander members of the public within the County. In response, all municipal buildings are or will be secured more than before. Along with Active Shooter training by Corporal Acosta, Firearms Investigator/Chief Firearms Instructor of the Monroe County Sherriff’s Office, the meeting also focused on ways to improve on employee safety.



2018 ROAD PROJECTS	
We continue to be ahead of our 10-year Road Improvement Plan (by every 10 years, each township road will have been improved)	
Road	Action for 2019
Charlotte Way / Prairie Lane	Pave
Denise Lane	Pave
Diss Way (i.e., the temporary access road to CCP)	Construct
Fish Court	Pave
Freeman Tract	Pave
Primrose Lane	Pave
Turkey Ridge from Upper Lake to Winona	Pave



Adam Schellhammer, Monroe County Conservation District Director, present the benefits of rain gardens, using native plants, and other devices to plan for stormwater.

MS4 FOLLOW UP: ARE THEY REALLY TAXING RAIN NOW? (MS4: Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System)

Pennsylvania adopted the Storm Water Management Act decades ago to reduce flooding and pollution from stormwater runoff. The Monroe County Planning Commission and the Monroe County Conservation District worked with local municipalities to develop plans for managing stormwater. Municipalities also adopted their own ordinances regulating runoff from construction and development to conform with their stormwater management plans.

Now that the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has tasked municipalities with implementing Pollution Reduction Programs, you might be hearing more stories about “MS4” from other parts of the state, using click bait terms such as “rain tax”. Our Fall 2018 newsletter carried a thorough article by Michele Clewell on MS4 (for quick article access: bit.ly/mstStormwater), And, recently, township Supervisor Mike Dwyer (also Public Works Director – Public Works is charged with implementing MS4) and township Supervisor Annette Atkinson (also a Boardmember of the Brodhead Watershed Association) represented Middle Smithfield Township, and presented our MS4 challenges, process and progress to other municipalities in Monroe County, and talked with them about MS4 at the Monroe County Control Center.

Organized by the Brodhead Watershed Association and run by BWA Executive Director Bob Heil, attendees to this workshop also heard from Monroe County Conservation District

(continued on page 20)

SEWER UPDATE

2019 Capital Improvement Projects:

Rehabilitation of Pump Station 4 – Maple Lane
This project has been awarded to Blooming Glen Contractors with a start date in early 2019. The estimated cost is \$135,499. This project involves the replacement of the piping in the wet well and valve vault and new control panel.

Mt. Nebo Sewer Extension:
MSTSD applied for a grant for the expansion of the sewer line through the Commercial Zone to the North side of Route 209 at Mt. Nebo and were awarded \$231,950. Bids opened on 9/13/18 for the sewer crossover of Route 209 portion of this project. Bid awarded to Wexcon, Inc. The estimated cost for this portion of the project is \$76,700, to start in mid-March.

Generators
In 2019 we will upgrade our existing generators at the Fernwood Sewer Treatment Plant and at the pump stations. This is being done to save on labor time for Public works whom need to fuel the generators during power outages and fuel costs as the generators are older models that are not fuel efficient.

Sewer payments are net 30 days; the Billing Cycle is quarterly:

Quarter	Billing Date	Deadline to pay	\$25.00 Late Charge Applied
First Quarter	Jan 1 st	Feb 2 nd	March 3 rd
Second Quarter	April 1 st	May 2 nd	June 3 rd
Third Quarter	July 1	Aug 2 nd	Sep 3 rd
Fourth Quarter	Oct 1 st	Nov 2 nd	Dec 3 rd

ABOUT THE 2018 PERSON OF THE YEAR AND FINALISTS



DAVID PASKIET
2018 PERSON OF THE YEAR
Phoenix Martial Arts Society

David was nominated for his work with Phoenix Martial Arts Society- which is the only 501(c)3 martial arts program in the area. David has been practicing martial arts for over 45 years and has spent the last 10 years passing on his knowledge, primarily to children. He started Paskiet Martial Arts in 2009, and sought to create a community based program accessible to all students regardless of income or ability. After 8 years, with a team of dedicated board members, he formed Phoenix Martial Arts Society. There is no fee to participate, only requested donations to keep the program running and he has not received any financial compensation.

David has made an impact specifically by training kids with special needs, who have found a home in his program. He has challenged them to do the best they can, accepted them for who they are, quirks, limitations, special needs and all. He has also offered classes to students with parents serving in the military overseas or children who have lost a parent and who need a little extra guidance.

In addition to Phoenix Martial Arts, as a Navy veteran, he has served with the Monroe County Joint Veterans Honor Guard.



Phoenix Martial Arts:
phoenixmartialartssociety.com/
David Paskiet, President & Founder
info@phoenixmartialartssociety.com
Mailing: Po Box 326, Analomink, PA 18320
Physical: St Paul's Lutheran Church, 139 Craigs Meadow Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
Class Schedule: Tuesday & Thursday 6:30-7:30 PM 6—12 Year olds
7:30-8:30 PM 13 thru Adults

Who We Are: We are an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) Public Charity whose classes inspire and develop self-discipline, confidence and leadership skills while learning to defend oneself and having a great time! Our certified instructors will teach age appropriate Isshin-Ryu Karate as well as grappling, judo and self-defense techniques. Each class focuses on the traditional Okinawan karate values and skill sets. Our classes offer a unique light- hearted but disciplined class atmosphere that keeps the students interested as they are learning the skills, and are pushed to excel. Watch character develop and grades go up!

History: Starting originally as Paskiet Martial Arts in 2009, David sought to create a community based program that was accessible to all students, regardless of ability or income. After eight years of dedication to his art and his students, David, along with a team of dedicated board members, formed Phoenix Martial Arts, the only non-profit 501(c)3 martial arts training program in the area. This program provides martial arts education, and all of the benefits that come with training, to all students, regardless of their ability to pay, asking only for a donation to keep the program running.



FRANCIS OQUENDO
2018 PERSON OF THE YEAR FINALIST
Boy Scouts

Francis Oquendo was nominated for the work he does with Boy Scouts of America Troop 87 and St. John's Church. He serves as a committee member of Troop 87 and is a mentor coach for scouts looking to become an Eagle Scout as well as overseeing their Eagle Scout projects until their completion. He also serves as a Merit Badge counselor for multiple activities in the Pocono District. He organizes the annual Camporee, which involves canoeing on the Delaware River and an overnight camping weekend. He also puts together overnight trips, historical hikes, and assists with the Pocono District Klondike Derby in Jonas, PA in January. He also serves as the Troop Chaplain and trains scouts district wide to be Troop Chaplain aides.

He also retrieves and distributes the International Peace Light, which is transported every year from the original lamp from the eternal flame located in Bethlehem, Israel to JFK Airport in NYC. He is also responsible for bringing the peace light to the Middle Smithfield Township building.

Also, he is the president of the St. John's Pastoral Council, Eucharistic Minister, and sometimes altar server. He teaches CCD to youth in preparation for Confirmation and organizes the monthly Scout Sundays in order to give scouts the ability to complete "Service to God," requirements. He has also organized scout visits to other denominations in order to expand their experiences and views. Francis Oquendo is also 4th Degree Knight of Columbus who supports all the initiatives, charitable works and is a leader in our Council 11935 of St. John Council Parish.

Francis served in the US Air Force from 1971-1976 as a Life Support Technician. He also served in the Vietnam War in Thailand @ TAKLI Air Force Base. From 1974-1976 he was a member of the U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Team, the

Thunderbirds, and served as a Life Support soldier. He was nominated as Airman of the Month and was a sergeant when he retired.



Boy Scouts of America-
Minsi Trails Council Pocono District:
<http://www.minsitrails.org/>
Alan Lippincott, District Chairman
michael.lapolla@scouting.org
Mailing: 991 Postal Road,
Allentown, PA 18109

Meeting Schedule: 2nd Thursday of the Month, 7 pm, St. Luke's Ambulatory Training Center, Tannersville.

Who We Are: The Boy Scouts of America (the BSA) is one of the largest Scouting organizations in the country and one of the largest youth organizations in the United States, with more than 2.4 million youth participants and nearly one million adult volunteers. The BSA's goal is to train youth in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through participation in a wide range of outdoor activities, educational programs, and, at older age levels, career-oriented programs in partnership with community organizations. For younger members, the Scout method is part of the program to instill typical Scouting values such as trustworthiness, good citizenship, and outdoors skills, through a variety of activities such as camping, aquatics, and hiking.

The local Minsi Trails Council, BSA serves nearly 11,000 youths through the leadership of 5,000 adult volunteers. Serving 6 counties, the Council provides programs to youth throughout the Anthracite Region, Pocono Mountains and Lehigh Valley in Pennsylvania along with western New Jersey.

History: The local Scouting heritage dates back 100 years to 1910 when the council's first Scout troops were established in Allentown and Easton areas. The Minsi Trails Council has three Scout Camps located in the Pocono Mountains that serve more than 5,000 campers annually.



Gary Smith (middle) of Pocono 96.7 and the Gary in the Morning Show enjoys a moment with Louis Santiago (left, Scoutmaster of Troop 87, Bushkill for over 14 years) and Person of the Year Finalist, Francis Oquendo (right). Not only was Gary Smith one of 5 judges for the 2018 Person of the Year, he was also a generous sponsor and DJ.



Person of the Year and Volunteer Appreciation Banquet. Left to right: Supervisor Mark Oney, State Representative Rosemary Brown, Supervisor Annette Atkinson, POTY finalist Francis Oquendo, Person of the Year David Paskiet, POTY finalist Thomas Watson, County Commissioner John Christy, and Supervisor Mike Dwyer.



THOMAS WATSON
2018 PERSON OF THE YEAR FINALIST
Meals on Wheels

Thomas Watson worked at Fed-Ex, and retired in 2013.

He is a member of Mountain Stream Baptist Church where he serves as a Deacon. He also volunteers for the

Garden-of-Giving, Meals on Wheels, Middle Smithfield's twice a year 1000 Feet of Street litter pickup program, as well as the Adopt-a-Road program all year round. He also participates with a group from church to visit the Meadows at Stroud Nursing Home to visit and engage the Alzheimer's patients by talking with them, singing songs and conducting devotions.

In his free time he enjoys gardening and building 1/35th scale World War II Military models.



Monroe County Meals on Wheels, Inc.
<https://www.monroemeals.org/>
Heidi Fareri, Executive Director
hfareri@monroemeals.org *
570-424-8794901

Polk Valley Road, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
(At the corner of Hickory Valley Rd & Polk Valley Rd.)

Who We Are: Monroe County Meals on Wheels plans, supplies, and delivers nutritious and appealing meals, with the help of volunteers, to homebound individuals who are physically or mentally unable to shop for and/or prepare meals for themselves. They are a 501(c)3 Pennsylvania corporation. History: Church Women United organized Monroe County's first and only Meals on Wheels program in 1972 with the support of the Monroe County Clergy Association. In October of that year, Monroe County Meals on Wheels began delivering meals to 11 clients in Stroudsburg with the assistance of various county groups, including Visiting Nurse, AARP, MH-MR, and the Cooperative Extension Service. 46 years later, our volunteers deliver to more than 230 clients within 10 routes throughout Monroe County.

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Recently, Boy Scouts of Troop 87 attended a Board of Supervisors meeting to get their Eagle Scout project plans approved. They are adding fitness stations at Echo Lake Park. From left to right: Ivan Larregui, Assistant Scoutmaster; Brandon Larregui, Scout; James Pavlovsky, Parent; Matthew Pavlovsky, Scout; Louis Santiago, Scoutmaster; Doreen Santiago, Chairperson

SHOP LOCAL 2018 WRAPPED UP

(continued from page 5)

their community. But how does it help our community? Local dollars spent, local jobs created. Local businesses that thrive create local jobs. The 2018 program incorporated Shop Local Facebook Movie Clips of participating business and some got over 1,000 views.

Overall, there were over 500 registered activations averaging about 9-30 activations a day. The program increased awareness of businesses to consumers through various media outlets, such as Facebook, website, television and print media coverage. When asked about her Shop Local Card, township resident Sue Meehan says:

"I used mine at Foodtown for 20% off a catering order. The deli people were very happy to accept the discount and the food was great. Just order 24 hours ahead. I've loved this program. I also used it at the Ace hardware, Great Clips, and Pub 570. Best thing is that every merchant was happy to give the discount. Thanks to each of the businesses that participated this year. We try to shop local all year as much as we can. It is nice to get this reward especially during the holidays."

The goal for 2019 is to increase card activations and make the program even more attractive for residents. Residents who activated their card, received a survey emailed to them in January. If there are any suggestions or comments about the program feel free to mention it. Furthermore, we thank all those that participated and we look forward to another successful year!

Are you a business owner in Middle Smithfield Township? Want to learn more about the MST Shop Local Program? Give us a call at 570-223-8920 ext 130!



RESTAURANT WEEK KICKOFF EVENT

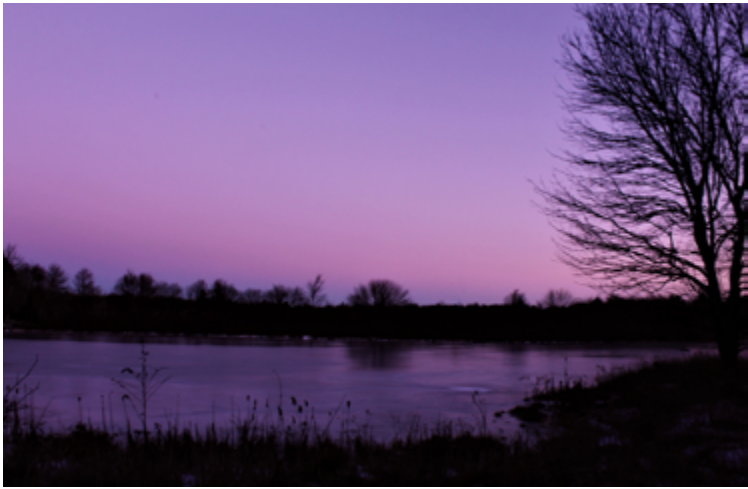
(continued from page 5)

Township, joining with our Economic Development Committee. While enjoying unique food and wine pairings, residents will be able to view great art pieces from the Pocono Photo Club. This free event will be a night filled with art, music, wine, food and fun! And the best part is that everything is FREE!

FREE KICKOFF EVENT DETAILS

**Sunday March 31st
6:30-8:30PM**

**WHISPERING PINES BANQUET HALL
ENTERTAINMENT, FREE FOOD, FREE
WINE TASTING, PHOTO EXHIBIT**



Township resident Neil Boushell captured this lovely winter sky and frozen waters at Leisure Lands in Middle Smithfield Township. A Pocono Photo Club member, and you can see more of Neil's work at the PPC Photography Exhibit on March 31.



Proposed Cultural and Community Center will also house Library of the Smithfields, Red Cross Certified Emergency Shelter.

CULTURE BUILDS COMMUNITY

As most have heard by now, one of the projects proposed for 2019 is a Cultural and Community Center in Echo Lake Park. Since inheriting the Whispering Pines building (the clubhouse for the Country Club of the Poconos Golf Course) from the past administration, the current administration has sought to maximize its use for the public by using the building for community events, and offering the facilities to non-profits for their use. The annual Veterans Luncheon, Restaurant Week Kick-Off, and the Person of the Year and Volunteer Banquet are some examples of annual community events held at the building, and everyone from Bushkill Outreach to the Boy Scouts have enjoyed use of the facility as a Community Center.

One of the things we heard at the Commissioners "Report to Business" last month is that a study revealed, among other things, that our youth is missing that sense of belonging – a sense of community. (A sense of community is a common theme, thoroughly examined at the Volunteer Banquet, and the remedy is personified by the 2018 Person of the Year and the two finalists.) So a Community Center is needed.

The Whispering Pines has also been used as a comfort station during storms and extended power outages -- a place where residents could grab a hot shower, warm up, and charge their devices. Now, as you've read about in our past newsletters, the Whispering Pines is proposed for sale (along with the township owned golf course.) A proper Red Cross Certified shelter in the center of the township would sure come in handy, given the lengthy power outages our township seems to suffer with the extreme blizzards, and even tornados we receive!

At the same time, the lease for the Library of the Smithfields is expiring and they need a new home. (In 2014 the library signed a five-year lease for a space on Seven Bridges Road in Smithfield Township, but this lease is unsustainable. At the time, the library trustees saw this as an emergency move, necessitated by the deteriorating condition of the too small library at Foxmoor Village, with a leaking roof and continuing problems with heating and air conditioning, and difficulties with the landlord that owned the land beneath the library.) The library needs a sustainable space of similar size and features.

One of the most crucial and over overlooked benefits of a library facility matched to the needs of the community it serves is a kind of "value added" element it brings to the community where it is located. Because libraries provide both a gathering point for community groups and a resource center for the municipality, a library - as much as its school or its roads or its parks, becomes a kind of billboard for the community, a defining feature. A draw. A centerpiece.

The proposed permanent location of the Library of the Smithfields in Echo Lake Park in Middle Smithfield, with a significant part of a building also housing a meeting space for a community center / cultural center and local museum, is a perfect location to serve library patrons in the eastern third of the county. The location on Route 209/Milford Road is on the main business corridor connecting Smithfield and Middle Smithfield, with traffic of 18,000 trips daily. The location, within an already existing, non-taxable parcel, makes logical sense. (In other words, no more parcels come off the tax rolls, which only increases the burden on the other taxpayers.)

The proposed new Library will be built as a joint effort of the Eastern Monroe Public Library and Middle Smithfield Township. A good public library is more than a repository of books. It is a community education and cultural center and an incubator for community groups throughout the area. The branch manager of the Smithfields library has a degree in biology and anticipates the park setting will allow her to offer programs in birding and natural history. A computer lab will provide residents not only with Internet access, but computer classes that enhance job skills as well as enjoyment of online resources.

Increased property values, job skills development, and strengthening of social services are all examples of the public value libraries create. That means that these are ways in which libraries benefit even those who never set foot inside.

Public libraries are natural partners in local economic development efforts, and many studies have been done showing the positive return on investment Libraries provide. They are usually centrally located in a community (as we are proposing) and provide a variety of resources designed to foster human growth and development, promote early literacy and school readiness, and develop workforce capacity.

The new facility will finally give residents of Smithfield and Middle Smithfield townships the library they deserve and need.

We are sure that the new Community Center and Library will be a wonderful place for our community to gather, a resource for all to enjoy, and the shelter will be invaluable when we need to open during the storms.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Funded entirely by donations, not taxes

Bushkill Emergency Corps (Ambulance)
(570) 223-1906, BushkillEmergencyCorps.com
Captain - Bill Duffy (elect)

Marshalls Creek Fire Company
(570) 223-8445, facebook.com/MarshallsCreekFireCO
Fire Chief - Joe Luisi, Jr


WINTER FIRE SAFETY

By Holly Freese

Heating & Carbon Monoxide Safety— half of home heating fires are reported during the months of December, January and February. Make sure you follow all manufacturers’ instructions when installing all heating appliances. All fuel burning equipment should be vented outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and alarms should be installed.

The NFPA recommends the following to prevent heating fires and CO poisoning:

- Keep flammable items away from heat sources
- Never use your oven to heat your home
- Have qualified professional install stationary heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to local codes and manufacturers instruction.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected by professionals yearly
- Turn of portable heaters before going to bed
- Always use the correct fuel specified for each kind of equipment
- Make sure fireplaces have a sturdy screen
- CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. CO alarms should be interconnected so that if one goes off, they all go off.
- If CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a location outdoors with fresh air before calling for help
- Move all vehicles from a garage immediately after starting it.
- All generators should be outdoors and away from windows, doors and vent openings. NEVER run a generator in a garage.
- Gas and charcoal grills can produce CO and should only be used outside.



Carbon Monoxide Safety

Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

HOME HEATING EQUIPMENT

Have fuel-burning heating equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in. When using a fireplace, open the flue for adequate ventilation. Never use your oven to heat your home.

FACTS

- ❗ A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time.
- ❗ In 2010, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 80,100 non-fire CO incidents in which carbon monoxide was found, or an average of nine calls per hour.

- CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes or standards. For the best protection, interconnect all CO alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement and mounting height.
- Choose a CO alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- Call your local fire department's non-emergency number to find out what number to call if the CO alarm sounds.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month; replace them according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. If the battery is low, replace it. If it still sounds, call the fire department.
- If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help from a fresh air location and stay there until emergency personnel declare that it is safe to re-enter the home.
- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO — only use outside.



BUSHKILL EMERGENCY SERVICES

by Deborah Kulick

If you have visited our website or Facebook page recently, you found that Bushkill Emergency Corps has launched a new logo. It reflects the importance of EMS in the healthcare system today. Today's EMS is very different from the earliest days. The days of “swoop and scoop” have passed and now it has become truly a part of the healthcare system. Today's EMS system saves lives every day, is much more demanding and has a much higher cost.

Bushkill Emergency Corps started as and continues to be a community-based non-profit serving our community with members of the community. When it was established in 1965, the ambulance corps was comprised of local volunteers with the old American Red Cross Standard First Aid course and a driver's license. The back up to the volunteers in their rehabbed unit was the hospital's janitorial staff dropping their mops, grabbing an ambulance and just driving fast to and from your emergency.

The services provided were basic and certainly not on a regular basis. The old telephone tree system would start the call to service and once some people agreed to answer the call, maybe 20 minutes later the ambulance would roll as they responded

from their homes. The ambulances were used ambulances and stocked with surplus military bandages and a will to do something good.

Fast forward to today, 50 plus years later and the services provided are an extension of the hospital Emergency Room. Equipment and trucks rival the value of a home upwards of \$285,000 just to have everything necessary to do the job. Various valuable equipment that save lives replace those surplus bandages and have costs up to and exceeding \$50,000 for one specific piece. Training costs range from the hundreds of dollars to well over \$10,000 and more for advanced training.

When the ambulance corps started, there were about 600 calls per year. That was considered quite busy. Today Bushkill Emergency Corps is dispatched to more than 3,600 calls per year, making it among the busiest in Monroe County and Lehman Township. The complexity of calls today requires higher standards of training, more medications, more equipment and yes, dedicated personnel. Gone are the respond from home days, now an ambulance is out-the-door and enroute in a 2 to 3-minute window of time.

When the organization first started local businesses were happy to repair the occasional problem with an ambulance and since it was used less frequently, the issues were generally small. Easy fixes as it were. Today's vehicles are complex and require trained mechanics with expensive parts for repairs. Fuel costs then were well under a dollar a gallon and even during the shortages in the 70's, ambulances came first, and fuel was donated for all needs. No need to talk about the costs today!

From the start the Corps offered a subscription for purchase since the

(continued on page 24)

TAX CREDITS FOR FIRE AND EMS VOLUNTEERS

Complete your forms now!

By Michele Clewell
Last April, the Middle Smithfield Township Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a new ordinance and resolution for Volunteer Service Tax Credits for volunteer fire and EMS personnel.

Ordinance 220 allows Middle Smithfield Township to grant local tax credits to active volunteers at volunteer fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical service agencies. Volunteers who are eligible can receive up to \$250 towards their local earned income tax and 10% of their township property tax.

The supervisors hope this will act as an incentive for other residents to volunteer for local emergency services in a time when volunteers are desperately needed.

Criteria must be met for volunteers to receive local tax credits, including: volunteers must be in good standing defined by the bylaws of the agency they volunteer for, volunteers must achieve a minimum of 50 hours of service a year, and volunteers on probation according to the bylaws of the agency are not eligible for tax credits.

There are forms (Township and Berkheimer) that must be completed and returned to the Middle Smithfield Township Secretary (Michele Clewell). Download them off our website, and get them in soon. (MiddleSmithfieldTownship.com/12279/fire-ems-tax-relief-credit/)

The Chief of each volunteer fire company or the supervisor of the nonprofit emergency medical service agency should be contacted by eligible volunteers in order to start the process of receiving your tax credit.

FIND FIRE & EMS ONLINE!

Marshalls Creek Fire Co.
(570) 223-8445
112 Marshalls Creek Rd
East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania 18302
Facebook: @marshallscreekfireco

Bushkill Volunteer Fire Co.
(570)588-6033
124 Evergreen Dr
Bushkill Pa. 18324
Facebook: facebook.com/Bushkill-Volunteer-Fire-Company-1643189702644270/

Shawnee Fire Co.
(570) 476-0736
102 Firehouse Ln
East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania 18301
Facebook: @shawneefireco36
Website: ShawneeFire.org/

Bushkill Emergency Corps
570-223-1906
P.O. Box 174, Bushkill, Pa 18324
office@bushkillemergencycorps.com
facebook.com/BushkillEmergencyCorps/



BE IN THE KNOW

2018: Two blizzards, a tornado and multiple power outages that lasted for days. Were you in the dark about the relief offered by Middle Smithfield Township? Receive Textcasts to your phone and/or email for important emergency and relief information. Free water, free ice, warming and charging stations, hot showers – and information. Be in the know!

Visit:
MiddleSmithfieldTownship.com/mst-text-alerts to sign up!

GOLF

COUNTRY CLUB OF THE POCONOS

Chairman: Ray White | Vice Chair: Craig Weatherbee

Secretary: Mike Sweeney | Members: John Smith, Mike Yesunas

Member and Pro Shop Manager: Kevin Dixon | 570-223-8099

Golf Committee Liaison: Holly Freese | 570-223-8920 x132



COUNTRY CLUB OF THE POCONOS MAKES TOP 20!

By Kevin Dixon

Great News! Golf Advisor named Country Club of the Poconos to their Top 20 best courses in the state for 2018. These ratings are based strictly on golfer reviews. To qualify the course must allow public access with reviews on Golf Advisor. With our beautiful vistas and great course conditions golfers are taking notice. We are looking forward to even a better rating in 2019.

Membership

Just because it's winter doesn't mean you can't think about golf. Get ready for the season now, and buy a 2019 membership for Country Club of the Poconos Municipal Golf Course.

Some of the benefits you'll get when you join at CCP golf, along with the best golf value in the Poconos are:

- Full access to the course & clubhouse facilities
- Unlimited play any day—includes greens fees and handicap fees
- Member locker room facilities
- Preferred and advanced tee times
- Members only golf outings and special events
- Discounted greens fees for guests
- Pro-shop discounts
- And more....

Memberships cost \$850 for a single membership or \$1,050 for a couples membership. Does that sound like too much for you to afford all at once? No problem! **We accept monthly payments over the course of the season (8 months) for around \$100!**

For more membership information and how to join call 570-223-8099 or visit www.ccpagolf.com

WE'RE ALL FORE THE COMMUNITY!

We are proud to support the many charitable organizations in our neighborhood, and we are proud to donate our time and facilities to help good folks fundraise. Need funds for your organization? Give us a call and let's talk about a golf outing.

Some of the charitable golf outing fundraisers scheduled for 2019:

- Tall Cedars (to benefit military veterans) May 4th
- ESU Lambda Iota Charity Fundraiser April 28th
- Mady's Angels Charity Fundraiser May 19th
- ESU Phi Sigma Kappa Memorial Fundraiser July 20th
- Wounded Warrior 8" Cup Charity Fundraiser Sept 7th
- Marshalls Creek Fire Company Sept 28th

MS4 FOLLOW UP: ARE THEY REALLY TAXING RAIN NOW?

(continued from page 13)

(MS4: Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System)

Director Adam Schellhammer, the Monroe County Planning Commission, and Mike Hickman of the Center for Watershed Protection.

Municipalities in other parts of the county, and in some other parts of PA, have instituted "stormwater fees" to help pay for the state-mandated infrastructure improvements necessary to implement MS4. Those not in favor of it are calling it a "rain tax"; however, it is a fee, not a tax, based on the amount of impervious (e.g., paved) surfaces of the parcel. The more impervious surface, the more stormwater runoff there is – and the more sediment and pollution there is to clean. The difference between a tax and a fee is subtle – a fee is based on impact, and everyone, including tax exempt properties, must pay it.

One of the things Middle Smithfield is doing is encouraging the use of pervious concrete in projects. Pervious concrete (also known as permeable pavement or porous concrete) is a specific type of pavement with a high porosity that allows rainwater to pass through it into the ground below. It isn't new – it's been seen in Europe as early as the 1800's. Projects currently planned to use pervious concrete in Middle Smithfield are the proposed Cultural and Community Center housing the Library of the Smithfields, and the Apartments at Mt. Nebo. Pervious concrete



Frozen Resica Falls in Middle Smithfield Township, by resident Roy Hubbard (www.RoyHubbard.com) member of the Pocono Photo Club. You can see more of Roy's work at the upcoming Pocono Photo Club exhibit at the Whispering Pines Banquet Hall on March 31st.

reduces stormwater runoff and returns water to underground aquifers. It also traps suspended solids and pollutants, keeping them from polluting the water stream.

Paula Heeshan, in her September 2018 report of the Monroe County Conservation District to the Brodhead Watershed Association states "Stormwater management measures are largely working in Monroe County . . . even on July 22, when 3.84 inches of rain fell within 24 hours here, streams did not reach flood stage."

Stormwater management practices are designed to address a storm dumping up to 3.92 inches of rain, occurring on average once every five years. Stormwater management plans are designed to help replace natural systems when land is altered by development. Untouched, nature processes and absorbs rain with plants and soil, allowing precipitation to recharge groundwater and slowing runoff to streams and rivers. When development alters the natural landscape, creating impervious surfaces that speed and increase surface water flow, properly designed stormwater management systems help control flooding and prevent or limit soil erosion.

Good stormwater management plans also reduce the amount of surface pollutants that reach waterways. These pollutants range from eroded soil to pesticides or gas/oil and other contaminants that may be on parking lots or roadways."



BANQUET HALL AT WHISPERING PINES

Banquet Hall Liaison: Christopher Rain
570-223-892 x119



BANQUET HALL TAKING RESERVATIONS FOR 2019:

Accepting Shop Local Discount until March 31!

The beautiful Whispering Pines banquet hall is now taking reservations for all your golf outing, charitable, or private party needs in 2019!

Our dining room area is comprised of two rooms separated by a majestic floor to ceiling stone fireplace, providing flexibility for your event. The larger room includes a dance floor and seating for up to 150. The smaller room is perfect as a breakout room or smaller dinner needs with seating for up to 30. Each room is equipped with a TV for your audio/visual needs. A completely equipped commercial kitchen includes china place settings, silverware and glassware for your use. The bar area can seat 26 and is ready to supply your favorite beverage.

Do you have a Shop Local Card? Book an event for 2019 by March 31 and get a 50% discount on a standard four hour rental! Booking must be finalized during promotion period (December 1 to March 31). Actual date of the event can be at any time. You must show your Shop Local Card at the time of booking. Promotion applies to a standard four hour rental only. Charges for additional hours and bar services still apply at usual pricing.

Please call Chris Rain at 570-223-8920 x119 or email crain@mstowship.com for availability and costs. Non-profit organizations may receive a discounted price or qualify to have the fees waived. Let us help you make your next event special.



YOUR MUNICIPAL TAXES PROVIDE:

- **74 miles of municipal roads maintained**
This includes several bridges, snow plowing/ ClearLane/ cinders, at least 8 miles of roads paved every year, drains cleaned, trees trimmed, and spring and fall leaf pick up.
- **Speaking of bridges** – three bridges in the township need to be replaced
- **MS4 program:** state mandated pollution and sediment reduction program
- **Recycling** program, including the leaf composition facility.
- Twice annual dumpster day township **cleanup** and freecycle.
- **Community reinvestment:**
 - ◊ Building a **sense of community**, for example, litter and beautification efforts such as Adopt-a-Road and 1000 feet of street, Streetscaping, and community events
Note: The cost of events such as Memory Makers and the Tree Lighting are defrayed by sponsorships by our local businesses -- some events such as the Egg Hunt, Trunk or Treat, and Person of the Year are 100% funded by our sponsors!
 - ◊ Economic Development; supporting our local businesses through programs such as Restaurant Week and Shop Local
- **5 established parks**
 - ◊ Echo Lake on Milford Road
 - ◊ Judy Putek Park on Municipal Drive
 - ◊ Resica Park on Gravel Ridge
 - ◊ Community Gardens Park on Coolbaugh Road
 - ◊ W. Leroy Lewis Dog Park at Leroy’s Lane
- **Golf** course and Banquet hall.
- Community planning, **zoning** and zoning enforcement (such as cleanup and blighted areas).
- **Communication** and information (newsletters, website, Facebook, MST message boards, signage, etc.)
- **Community involvement:** residents can participate in their own committees, including Historical, Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, Litter and Beautification, and Golf.

INCOME TAXES: THE “BERKHEIMER TAX”

By now, you should also have received a mailing by Berkheimer. Local Income Taxes must be filed every year. Prepare your local income tax return when preparing your Federal & State returns.
Berkheimer Associates processes the Local Income Tax returns. Forms, instructions and filing information can be found on their website: <https://www.hab-inc.com/forms/forms-for-individuals/>.

WHAT IS YOUR TOWNSHIP DOING TO HOLD TAXES DOWN?

Reducing spending, and increasing income

Cutting costs: All township employees are charged with cutting costs wherever possible, without reducing services. For example, township employees share the responsibility for office and building maintenance, reducing by several thousand dollars a year.

We have installed energy saving devices such as Basic Power that reduce our utility usage, saving thousands of dollars a year. Recently, we negotiated a new lower rate per kilowatt hour that will save thousands. Our Budget and Finance Manager negotiated savings account rates that are better than CD’s. Little tweaks like that add up. We also cut costs by achieving an economy of scale – volume or bulk buying via memberships to professional organizations that act as a buying group, such as COG (Council of Government) and Co-Stars. We also aren’t penny-wise and pound foolish- we invest in better equipment and materials because, in the long run, it saves money.

Increase income: Middle Smithfield gets income from a number of sources, such as the taxes you pay, the fees we received from building and zoning permits, and the grants we get from the state, federal, and private programs which help to stretch your tax dollars in completing projects. But, rather than increase your taxes, we seek to increase the number of entities paying taxes. In other words, rather than increase the tax burden for each tax payer, we seek to increase the number of tax payers, or to put it another way -- increasing the tax base. With more tax payers to share the burden, the cost to each is spread out. Programs such as sewer financing and LERTA are designed to attract tax-paying businesses such as Autozone, Dollar General, etc. in an effort in keep not just your municipal taxes low, but to hold the line on school taxes as well. Speaking of attracting tax paying businesses:

Attracting tax-paying businesses: The most recent example of the township’s effort to increase the number of tax-paying businesses in the township is the transitioning of the golf course property into a tax-paying property. (Currently, because the township owns the property, there is no property tax revenue.)

The 320 acres includes part of the municipal golf course, and the golf holes themselves will remain as golf holes or open space for the neighboring community. This C2 parcel has also been accepted into the LERTA tax abatement program. The township hopes the availability of commercial land adjacent to the golf course, with incentives such as sewer financing and the LERTA tax abatement, will attract a qualified buyer with a project consistent with the township’s mission and vision statements. A developer would have the option of creating a project compatible with a golf course, and purchase both the commercial land and the golf course. (Stand-alone golf courses are not popular investments, and reduces the chances of the township selling its golf course.) A sale of the golf course and adjacent acreage would put that land back on the tax rolls and a compatible business would create jobs, and not adversely affect school taxes as more residential development could.

LERTA: Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act

Sewer: Financing the future improves cash flow
Improving our local economy by encouraging our existing businesses to grow, and attracting new ones.

The burden on current tax payers can only be eased by expanding the tax base (i.e., getting more tax payers to share the tax burden, such as new commercial ventures.) We cannot gain land area (I.e., we cannot gain more taxable land parcels), but we can look to improve the area that exists.

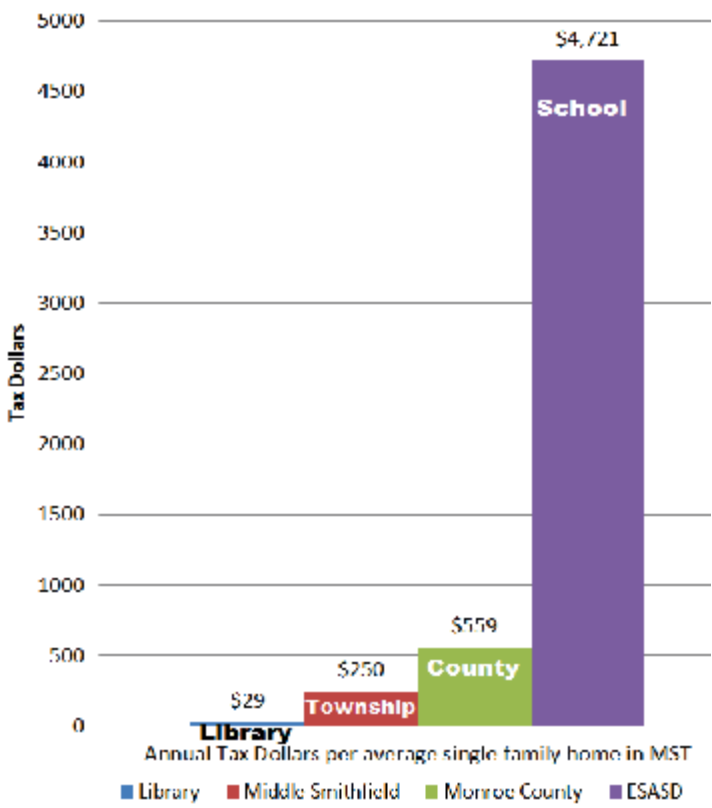
The LERTA program provides tax abatement incentives to encourage improvements, rehabilitation, and new construction.

The sewer financing program allows business to finance their sewer tap in fees after paying for the initial 2 EDU tap in fee, improving cash flow, and allowing for more investments in our community.

The need for incentives to bring in more businesses is obvious. Many cities and townships throughout the county have turned the corner and are now seeing their local economies growing. The supervisors, commissioners, and majority of the school board want to see more businesses to share the tax burden and more jobs available locally.

If you would like to learn more about our programs, or if you are a business looking to expand or relocate to our township, please call us at 570-223-8920 or email mclewell@mstownship.

ANNUAL TAX DOLLARS PER AVERAGE SINGLE FAMILY HOME IN MST



Close to 60% of the single family homes in Middle Smithfield Township pay less than \$250 a year in municipal taxes (less than \$21/month)

88% of single family homes in Middle Smithfield Township pay less than \$420 each year in municipal taxes. (less than \$35/month)

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Carrie Wetherbee | **Vice Chairperson:** Robert Huffman
Secretary: Charisse Fallon | **Member:** Kim Williams | **Member:** Patricia Francis
Historical Commission Liaison: Dana Francis | dfrancis@mstownship.com
570-223-892 x121



HISTORICAL ARCHIVE PHOTOS

Here is a photo from our historical archive. We upload photos periodically, be sure to follow us on Flickr (<https://tinyurl.com/y8o5yrxm>) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/MSTHISTORY/>) for this walk down memory lane.

If you recognize yourself, a friend or family member in any of the images, please contact us with as much information & detail as you can provide at mclewell@mstownship.com

BUSHKILL EMERGENCY SERVICES (continued from page 19)

organization was not funded through local taxes, assuring that all members of the community would be "subscribers" providing both support and benefits from the program. These dollars assured that the basic needs of the Corps were met, that the vehicles, buildings, utilities, training needs, supplies and any needs for personnel were met. A yearly budget could be accommodated at about the \$2,000 mark. What a difference from today when the requirements to provide constant coverage mandated by the state, the training and equipment needs top the \$1,000,000 mark just to be able to serve the community and respond when called. What does make Bushkill Emergency Corps different is the fact that it is still community-based. It is the only EMS agency that accepts volunteers (although they are a rare breed today given the time and cost of training) who now just supplement the career staff. As a result, the Corps has some career providers who not only live in our community, but spend time giving back as well. Today

the organization responds to all 911 calls wherever they are directed. Most recently, because of lack of community support in areas above our service area, there is no ambulance service available, so it has become necessary for Bushkill Emergency Corps to cover those communities as well. Community support can come in many ways. Last year Bushkill Emergency Corps sent out almost 18,000 subscription requests to our service areas of Lehman Township, Middle Smithfield Township, most of Smithfield Township and the lower portion of Price Township. These subscriptions are important to maintain the organization's daily needs, staffing, vehicles, supplies as well as utilities and buildings. It will surprise many to know that less than 925 responses were received. While we thank those who responded, that is not enough financial support to maintain your pre-hospital services. When everyone supports a necessary and vital life-saving service, it can provide for the community it serves. The advent of changes in the healthcare

system also is reflected in emergency care. Years ago, Medicare had 287,000 reasons a recipient (patient) could call for an ambulance and a payment would be made, today that number has been reduced to 28,000 reasons. This is one reason why the organization wrote off more than \$950,000 in billings last year although it billed out \$2.2 million plus. The monies received from all insurance payment sources was just over \$620,000.

The issue is clear. To be the first link in your healthcare, to be available for your need or the need of your family, to work with our mutual aid partners in EMS, there needs to be a consistent and viable funding method. Less than 925 responses from your neighbors or you puts a heavy burden on the providers serving you each and every day. To properly support EMS in our community, everyone will need to become a part of the solution. Municipal support provided by all residents will create a stronger and more reliable income base. Then we will all become neighbors helping neighbors.

THE ICE RINK RETURNS!

(continued from page 8)

convenient location along Milford Road, easy access to parking, and a pre-existing fence to surround the rink, which is needed for safety. Also, because our Dog Park was built with two enclosed spaces, we can use the Small Dog Area for the ice rink and still have the Large Dog Area open to dogs of all sizes over the winter.

The ice rink is open daily during daylight hours, weather permitting. Please check that the rink is frozen before skating. Skaters must provide their own equipment and use the ice rink at their own risk. MST does not provide any maintenance to its parks over the winter, including plowing out the parking lot after snow storms. Skaters must clear the ice of any snow before use. All park rules still apply.

W. Leroy Lewis Dog Park is located at 108 Leroy Lane along Milford Rd. (Rt. 209) just south of the National Park entrance. It is open to the general public every day from sunrise to sunset. For more information about MST parks, please contact the Parks Department at 570-223-8920 x119 or Parks&Recreation@mstownship.com.



(continued from page 15)

What We Do: Our volunteers deliver a hot and a cold meal on 10 routes through Monroe County, Monday through Friday. About 25 clients also receive pre-delivered meals for the weekend. In addition to meals, our volunteers provide a daily safety check and a human connection to many who are isolated. Our monthly pet food program provides a couple of weeks of pet food to those clients who need help caring for their 24/7 companions. In addition, we provide birthday and holiday gifts - for many clients, this may be the only recognition they receive on these important days.



MERRY MAT MAKERS ARE EVEN MERRIER!

By Merle Turitz, Director, RSVP

Thanks to the extraordinary support and coverage of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) by Middle Smithfield Township Supervisors in the township newsletter, the Merry Mat Makers gained two new volunteers after reading about the exciting recycling project.

Middle Smithfield residents Andrea and Dave Schnitzler read about the volunteer group that meets twice a month at the East Stroudsburg Senior Center Loder Building. Dave served in the US Navy and learned to crochet during his service. After reading the article, Andrea started collecting grocery bags and sorting them by color. Together they cut the grocery bags and created the "Plarn", which is the plastic yarn that is crocheted together to create a comfortable padded sleeping mat, that is both waterproof and bug-proof.

Mats are distributed to the area's homeless residents through the RSVP network of local agencies. Dave and Andrea showed up at their first meeting with three completed mats! Not only were the mats done correctly, but Dave used the various colors to create pleasant designs, sure to brighten someone's day. At the next meeting, Dave and Andrea displayed a mat with a big smiley face crocheted into the plastic. Andrea, with all her enthusiasm, began pointing at each color of the design and named which store that particular color bag came from. Originally hailing from Rhode Island, Andrea said some of the bags with brighter colors actually came from New England stores, not found here in Pennsylvania. Both she and Dave get a kick when they are able to locate bags with bright colors, stating that it adds an element of whimsy that keeps the project fresh and exciting.



Dave is posing with the mat he crocheted with the Smiley Face. They joined the Merry Mat Makers after having read about the group in the MST Newsletter.

Also as a result of the Middle Smithfield Township coverage of the Merry Mat Makers, our local news station WBRE showed up at the Loder House on January 14th to film the group in action. Dave was able to display the smiley face mat for all to see!

The Merry Mat Makers are comprised of about a dozen RSVP Volunteers who meet on the second and fourth Monday of each month. They are always seeking new members, but you don't have to be an RSVP volunteer to contribute to the project. We have a group of 4-H students in the Stroudsburg area who are learning to make the Plarn that will be delivered to the Merry Mat Makers. We have a group of seniors in the Friendly Community Center in Mountainhome who meet weekly to collect bags and create the Plarn. Several people have dropped off clean grocery bags, sorted by color, at the RSVP office that will be recycled into sleeping mats.

Merry Mat Maker team leader Marlene Green explains, "There are so many ways to help. This is a great project for young scouts or church youth groups. They can simply collect bags, learn to cut them into loops and create balls of the plastic yarn, or even try their hand at crocheting." For the RSVP volunteers, they are socializing, making new friends, using their hands creatively, helping the environment and the homeless all at the same time.

If you are interested in learning more about RSVP or the Merry Mat Makers project, please call the RSVP office at 570-420-3747.

7 YEAR ITCH: SCRATCH OUT TAXES

(continued from page 4)

Park are just some of the things that will start to develop in 2019.

The financial condition of our township is also dependent upon our volunteers. Our Fire Departments and Ambulance Corps need help! There is plenty of opportunity to serve your community through the volunteer fire or ambulance service, and much of it may not have anything to do with firefighting or attending to the sick and injured. There is also plenty more that can be done to support the fire and ambulance services that does not include running into burning buildings or other emergency situations. Each organization has committees, all of which you will be welcomed to join. Running and maintaining fire and ambulance services is time consuming and at times, costly,

so the volunteering of your time has significant value. Just the maintenance of the building and grounds alone can be quite costly. Maintaining a computer system, or attending to regular truck and equipment maintenance, as well as coordinating fundraising, banquets, memorial services, member activities, and many other things can be done by the volunteers.

I am sure that we can accomplish great things in 2019, not only because of our great staff, but because we have so many volunteers who come out and pitch in for a better Middle Smithfield. We are always looking for more volunteers. If you would like to contribute some time and energy into seeing more and more great things, please sign up for one of

our events. It's a great way to "volunteer lite" – if you don't have time to commit to a committee that meets monthly and works throughout the year, try volunteering for 4 hours a year, on just one event.

FREE TAX HELP FROM



Free tax help will be provided by AARP at the Middle Smithfield Township building every Tuesday from 9 am- noon from February 1 to April 16. The AARP provides free tax help to low and moderate income taxpayers, especially those 60 and older. For more information see below or call 570-223-8920.

Residents who have not been pre-verified but wish to obtain a REAL ID will be required to bring original versions or certified copies of the following documents for verification to a local driver license center:

- **Proof of identity**, such as an original or certified copy of your birth certificate with a raised or embossed seal, or a valid U.S. Passport or Passport Card. Birth certificates with a sticker rather than an embossed seal will not be accepted.
- **Proof of Social Security number** by providing your Social Security card. The name on the card must match the name on your current driver license or photo identification card.
- **Proof of legal name changes**, such as marriage certificates or court orders issued by a family court. You must have documentation to show all name changes from your original name on your birth certificate to your current name.
- **Proof of current, physical address**, such as your current, unexpired driver license or state issued ID card, vehicle registration or utility bill. TWO forms of proof must be provided.

More information about REAL ID in Pennsylvania, including frequently asked questions and additional guidelines on documents required for REAL ID, can be found at www.penndot.gov/REALID.



REAL ID PRE-VERIFICATION EVENT

at Middle Smithfield Township, March 15th, 5-8pm

To help ease the Real-ID process for our community, State Representative Rosemary Brown will host a Real ID Pre-Verification events at the Middle Smithfield Township building on the evening of March 15th. PennDOT workers will be available to pre-verify residents for Real ID. The first event will be on Friday, March 15, 5-8 p.m., at the Middle Smithfield Township Building, 147 Municipal Drive, East Stroudsburg, and the second event will be on Friday, March 22, 5-8 p.m., at the Monroe County Safety Center, 100 Gypsum Road, Stroudsburg.

Registration is required for these events. To register, or for more information, please call Rosemary Brown's office at 570-420-8301.

Effective Friday, March 1, PennDOT will begin issuing REAL IDs. A federally accepted form of identification must be used as identification to board a commercial flight or visit a secure federal building starting Oct. 1, 2020. A Pennsylvania REAL ID will fulfill this requirement, as will a U.S. Passport.

Under state law, REAL ID is optional for Pennsylvania residents. PennDOT will continue to offer standard-issue driver's licenses and photo IDs.

Pennsylvanians who have pre-verified their required documentation for obtaining a REAL ID may apply online to receive it without visiting a driver license center. PennDOT has indicated those IDs will be mailed out to recipients in 10 business days.

Don't pay to file your taxes.

VITA

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Our IRS-Certified, trained volunteers will prepare and file your federal, state and local income tax returns for FREE with no hidden fees or charges!

This FREE appointment-only tax preparation service is for low-to-moderate income Monroe County households earning \$54,000 or less in 2018.

Call to schedule your FREE appointment today!
Contact Lucas DeBartolo (570) 629-5657 Ext 117



UNITED WAY OFFERS FREE TAX HELP

By Michael Albert

United Way of Monroe County recently launched a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The program targets low-moderate income families in Monroe County. IRS-Certified and trained volunteers will prepare and file eligible client's federal, state and local income tax returns for FREE with no hidden fees or charges. The service is by appointment only and is available to anyone in Monroe County with a household income of \$54,000 or less in 2018.

To schedule your free appointment, call Lucas DeBartolo at 570-629-5657, ext 117.

In addition, as an alternative for households with an income of \$66,000 or less, United Way offers a FREE online tax preparation and submission process, powered by H&R Block, and supported through United Way. Simply visit MyFreeTaxes.com to prepare and submit your state and federal taxes.

You earned your money. Keep more of it. File your taxes for FREE. For more information about United Way of Monroe County, to get involved, or to support United Way's Impact Initiatives, visit UnitedWayMonroe.org. If you or someone you know needs community assistance dial 2-1-1 to speak with someone who can guide you through all the services available in Monroe County, PA.



United Way
of Monroe County
UnitedWayMonroe.org



United Way's Community Investment Team

UNITED WAY IS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN AND WOMEN

By Michael Albert

United Way of Monroe County is looking for volunteers to join our Community Investment team for 2019. Each year, United Way works with for-profit and non-profit partners to raise funds to help move the needle on key issues – including hunger, homelessness and early childhood education - in Monroe County. Local nonprofits submit applications to United Way proposing a project or program that achieves specific outcomes that align with one of our three initiatives:

- Access to Healthy Food – increasing access to healthy food for the food insecure;
- Supporting Working Families – increasing access to high-quality pre-k and after-school programs; and
- Help When Needed Most – providing individuals and families in crisis with improved access to community services.

United Way works with volunteers from the community to determine in which programs our community should be investing to achieve the greatest positive impact in our community. Volunteers interested in the process will help to determine how United Way invests in partner programs, and will get the opportunity to visit agency sites to see partner programs in action. This requires a somewhat flexible schedule during the last two weeks in March and the first two weeks in April. Volunteers must have access to email and the internet. A volunteer orientation takes place on March 6th.

To learn more or to register to volunteer, go to www.VolunteerMonroe.org. Under "recent opportunities", click on "Community Investment Process: Program Panel Member".

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JOURNAL

Mike Manter

Township resident Neil Boushell captured this lovely winter sky and frozen waters at Otter Lake in Middle Smithfield Township. A Pocono Photo Club member, and you can see more of Neil's work at the PPC Photography Exhibit on March 31.