The Westtown Gazette

THE QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE CITIZENS OF WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

From the Westtown Township Board of Supervisors

Carol R. DeWolf, Chair
Thomas A. Foster, Vice Chair
Charles P. Barber, Police Commissioner
Chester County Useful Contacts and Phone Numbers

Government Services Center – 601 Westtown Road
Chester County Court House – 2 N. High Street, West Chester Borough
District Justice for Westtown – William Kraut
(District Court 15-2-03) – 610-436-5757
Chester County Court House & Government Services Center
  Information – 610-344-6000
  Children, Youth & Families – 610-344-5800
  Department of Emergency Services – 610-344-5000
  Health Department – 610-344-6225
  Septic Systems – 610-344-6126
  Recycling/Hazardous Waste – 610-273-3771, ext. 226
License Bureau (Dog, Fishing, Hunting) – 610-344-6370
Marriage License Bureau – 610-344-6335
Office of the Ageing – 610-344-6009
Passports – 610-344-6050
Recorder of Deeds – 610-344-6330
Tax Assessment – 610-344-6105
Tax Claim/Lien Bureau – 610-344-6360
Voters Services – 610-344-6410
Chester County Conservation District – 610-696-5126
West Chester Area School District –
  829 Paoli Pike, West Chester PA 19380
  Main Number – 484-266-1000
  School Tax – 484-266-1035
State Senate District – 26th District
  Edwin B. Erickson – Local 610-853-4100 – State 717-787-1350
State House District – 168 District
  Tom H. Killion – Local 610-325-1541 – State 717-772-0855
U. S. Senator
  Robert Casey – Local – 1-215-405-9660 – Federal – 1-202-228-0604
  www.casey.senate.gov
Congressional District – 7th District
  Joe Sestak – Local 610-892-8623 – Federal – 1-202-225-8137

SEWER AND TRASH BILLS
Starting in January residents will receive one bill that will include both trash and sewer bills. The Township’s new financial software will print a new, combined bill which can be paid using one check to pay both sewer and trash fees. Those residents who have signed up for automatic bank deduction of these fees will see only one transaction on their bank statements.

New Trash/Recycling Contract
The Board of Supervisors approved a new three year contract with A. J. Blosenski at their November 19th regular meeting. Your collection day will remain the same (West of Shady Grove Rd – Monday pickup; East of Shady Grove Rd – Thursday pickup). You will still have unlimited trash collection, co-mingled recycling and bulk pickup your last pickup day of the month. Please review the items that can be recycled on the Refuse and Recycling page. Even though you have unlimited collection of trash PLEASE RECYCLE. THINK BEFORE YOU THROW.

Attn: All High School Students:
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designed a website for High School Students called Your Environment, Your Choice – www.epa.gov/teensgogreen. The web site encourages you to reduce, reuse and recycle and to become “environmental stewards”. Check it out.

Additional information for children, middle-school, students and teachers may be found at www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/index.htm.

See Township Calendar on Page 10
In December, the residents of Westtown received a letter which indicated that there would be an increase in real estate taxes, trash/recycling fee, and sewer fees in 2008. Coming before Christmas, the letter was not intended to upset any holiday festivities. Rather, the purpose was to explain the planned action before the Supervisors formalized it so that the Board could receive any public comment.

The letter, which was also posted on the website, clearly pointed out the financial limitations in which the Township will find itself in 2008. Most notably, taxes, which account for 62% of Westtown's revenues, were projected to increase by only 0.5% in 2008. This is a decrease from the usual level of 2.5% increase in a normal year and reflects the general state of the economy and the housing market at this time.

At the same time, the Township is experiencing expenditure increases in a number of categories which outpace the inflation rate. Notable in this regard is the cost for trash collection. 2007 marks the end of the Township's 5 year contract, and Westtown has rebid for an additional 3–5 year term. A major component of the cost of trash collection involves the price of vehicle fuel. The price of gas is considerably higher than in 2002, the last time the contract was bid. In fact, the low bid Westtown received for 2008 is $633,400. This compares with the contract price of $400,000 for 2007. Westtown Township is not the only community in the area experiencing such cost increases. A survey of neighboring Chester County municipalities indicates that those who have recently bid the work have comparable expenses.

Another issue has been the higher costs for emergency services, such as police, fire or ambulance service. The cost for police services, which constitutes close to 50% of the Westtown budget, has increased by approximately 8% for 2008.

continued on next page
In addition, the cost for fire services has increased in the past few years as the fire companies have needed to modernize their aging equipment and hire fire fighters since area growth has put a strain on a limited number of volunteers.

A third area of cost increase is the public sewer system. When the Township was required to take over the system a number of years ago, it was necessary to undertake a number of immediate improvements to what was a declining system. These improvements included the construction of a completely rebuilt and enlarged treatment plant which required that Westtown borrow funds thus creating a significant debt which must be repaid. The plant was not the only part of the system in need of improvement. The sewer lines which run to the plant were in such condition they required major repair or replacement. During the past year the Township undertook a number of these repairs to the collection system.

The Board of Supervisors do not take lightly the increase of any fees, be they taxes, sewer rates, or trash collection fees. However, sometimes the alternative is worse. Westtown did hold the line where it could. But, in many cases, this is not possible. Programs may be cut back, but where the Township has a continuing responsibility, such as road maintenance, this would not only be foolish, but would be counter productive, as it would only make maintenance that much more expensive in the future.

Residents Will Select Own Septic Provider Under Proposed On-Lot Inspection Program

Several months ago, the Board of Supervisors held public meetings on proposed plans for extending the public sewer system in the Eastern half of the Township. After considering the public comment and analyzing the high cost of both sewer line construction and plant upgrades required by DEP, the Board decided not to move ahead with the proposed public sewer expansion. Based on recommendations from DEP, the Board instead decided to implement an on-lot sewer system management program that would accomplish two goals. First, it would gather accurate data on the condition of all on-lot systems throughout the Township, so the Board could determine which neighborhoods really need public sewers and which do not. Second, it would give residents the information and education they needed to keep viable on-lot systems operating at optimal performance.

This on-lot management program has two different elements. The first is the establishment of an on-going program to maintain on-lot systems. Each homeowner with an on-lot system will be required to perform periodic maintenance and to make necessary repairs. Many people already do this, but some do not, which is why DEP is now requiring all municipalities to adopt such maintenance programs. While the details of this program are not yet final, the Township definitely wants residents to continue to hire a service provider of their own choosing. The role of the Township is simply to make sure that the maintenance is being done and to maintain records on the program.

A second element of the on-lot management program is a one-time inspection of every on-lot system in the Township to evaluate their condition and to precisely determine which areas may need public sewer in the future. The Board of Supervisors is still determining which of two approaches to take: Either have the property owner contract directly with a certified contractor or have the Township contract for the service. In either case, the property owner will be responsible for the cost. By having the Township as the contracting party there will be considerable savings. Specifically, six different service providers have quoted the cost of an inspection to be between $250 and $350. If the property owner contracts directly with a service provider, he or she would pay this fee directly. If the Township contracts with the service provider, DEP will reimburse the Township for 85% of the cost, so the resident would then only have to pay 15% of the inspection cost, or around $50 for this one-time inspection.

The Board of Supervisors hopes that this explanation corrects the misinformation that is being spread and assures residents that they will continue to control which service provider maintains their systems. More details on this entire on-lot management program will be published in the next Township newsletter. A public hearing will be held early in 2008 by the Board of Supervisors before a final decision on which approach the Township will take.
More than 3,000 people visited Westtown Township’s Oakbourne Mansion during its week-long Decorator Show House that took place from September 29 to October 7, 2007. The mansion was open for seven days to the general public, and for the first time, for the Chester County Day tour on October 6.

The mansion was dressed up in its full Victorian charm thanks to efforts of some of Chester County’s leading decorators and antiques dealers. Each room on the first floor was decorated in period antiques and luxurious furnishings. Decorators included John W. Bunker & Son, Springhouse Antiques, Andersen & Stauffer Furniture Makers, Perennial Pleasures, Transfauxmations and Cullen & Wolf. The gardens in front of the mansion were completely redone at no cost to the Township by C Gardens and Stoney Bank Nurseries.

The opening Gala Preview Party held on Saturday, September 29 allowed 120 generous sponsors and supporters of the mansion to have the first look at the Decorator Show House. The guests enjoy an open bar, butlered canapés by Brandywine Catering, piano music by Scott Davis and art presented by the ARC of Chester County. Photos of the event were taken by Gifford Photography.

On the two Sundays during the show house week, a sumptuous lunch was served by Pace One Restaurant.

The Week to Remember series of events served several purposes. The Township wanted to show off the mansion to residents who may not be aware of this wonderful community asset. The Oakbourne Mansion Commission also saw the open house as a way to help in its efforts to market the property as a rental facility for weddings, parties, business meetings and other events. The weeklong event was also a fund-raising effort by the Township to support renovations of the historic mansion. The primary sponsor for the event was Gawthrop Greenwood Attorneys at Law. Additional sponsors included the First National Bank of Chester County, HP Builders, Faulkner Buick, Pontiac & GMC, McCormick Taylor Engineers, Boenning & Scattergood, Legal Internet Solutions Inc., Goose Creek Farm Inc., West Chester Jaguar and Eva Foster, Chair of the event and her husband Tom.
In early December of this year the Westtown road department was out spreading salt on some icy roads. During this period of bad weather we received several complaints from our contract snow plow operators that the trees overhanging the roadway were causing damage to the trucks. This is an expense item for Westtown Township.

The problem of low hanging trees over the road has been mentioned several times in the past year. The Department began a survey to identify the properties that have overhanging branches. Starting in the western end we found 80 properties with trees that will cause interference, and unnecessary expense for repairs of damaged equipment during snow plowing operations. Letters have been sent to the owners of these 80 properties. By the time you receive this issue of the newsletters we hope to have the remainder of the Township surveyed and the residents notified.

Earlier in the year we had significant success with this type of campaign in the Sage Road area and we hope for similar cooperation in the rest of the Township.

At our December 3, 2007 Supervisors meeting an ordinance was passed that defined the criteria for clearing snow from sidewalks and the responsibility for the repair and maintenance of curbs and sidewalks. We hope to have a companion ordinance approved later this winter that will define the nature and remedy for defects in curbs and sidewalks.

As I ride through the Township I am constantly aware of the beauty of this area and pride of ownership is quietly evident in the high level of maintenance on the housing and grounds. Attending to the trees and shrubs overhanging the roads and intersections can be expensive but this type of maintenance is essential to maintain the beauty of our area.

John Wilson
Building Inspector
Heating equipment is a leading cause of home fires during the months of December, January and February, and trails only cooking equipment in home fires year-round.

Energy-saving tips

Saving energy isn’t just about saving money for homeowners. Saving energy is beneficial on a global scale. The world is facing dwindling energy reserves, and the more we save, the better our future will be. Here are some things you can do.

Heating systems

- Set thermostats at 68°F (20°C) when the house is occupied during the day and then turn it down at night or when you’re not home (60°F (15°C) is recommended). There are programmable thermostats that you can buy from local hardware and lumber stores that can do this automatically and easily. They are inexpensive, reliable and easy to install. This would not be recommended for “heat pump” systems if it would cause auxiliary heating to come on.
- Make sure supply and return vents, radiators and baseboard heating units are not obstructed by furniture, appliances or other objects and that air can flow freely to and from them. This will maximize the efficiency of your system and help distribute warm air throughout the room.
- Clean or change furnace filters in forced hot air systems once a month or more often as needed.
- Have your heating system maintained and serviced according to manufacturer’s instructions (usually once a year). Dirty filters, coils and fans reduce airflow throughout the system, which decreases performance and can damage your system. Scheduling your service in the early fall when technicians are not as busy will probably save you money as well.

- Check heating ducts for air leaks from joints and holes. Check with your local hardware store for the proper listed mastic or tape to use for the particular job.
- Insulate your hot water tank with an insulating jacket according to manufacturer recommendations. Some newer tanks already are insulated, so check product literature to determine if insulation is needed. Insulate the first six feet of the hot water pipes connected to the water heater.
- You can turn down the thermostat in rooms that have all of the following: are unoccupied; can be closed off (closed doors) from the rest of the house; and have their own heating zone. However, do not do this if it adversely affects the rest of your system or could lead to freezing water pipes.

Windows & doors

- Install caulking, weather stripping or use spray-in foams around exterior windows and doors or those between heated and unheated spaces (garages, basements, crawl spaces, attics). Read instructions for spray foams carefully. Expanding foams can exert enough pressure to cause doors and windows to jam or stick.
- During the heating season, keep draperies and shades open during the day on your southern facing walls to allow sunlight to enter. Keep them closed at night to reduce heat loss and the chill or “draft” you may feel from cold windows.

Exhaust fans

- Did you know that your kitchen or bath fan can pull out a houseful of heated air in just one hour?
- Turn off all fans as soon as they have done the job. Consider installing a timer switch instead of a manual switch to limit the unnecessary.

Bob Gliem
Township Fire Marshal

Don Herb
Assistant Fire Marshal
The Brandywine Valley Association (BVA) has kicked off their Red Streams Blue Program with Projects in the Plum Run and Radley Run watersheds. Both Plum Run and Radley Run are listed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as impaired which means that these streams do not meet their designated use as Warm Water Fisheries. As a result these streams appear in red in impaired waters map of the Brandywine Creek. The ultimate goal of the BVA’s Red Streams Blue Program is to turn all red streams (impaired) in the Brandywine watershed into blue streams (unimpaired). To achieve this goal the BVA first assesses the in-stream conditions such as type of insect larvae living in the stream, habitat along the stream, discharges into the stream, bank conditions and the amount of trees along the stream. After completing a detailed study of each stream, a comprehensive restoration plan is developed. This plan lists actions which can be taken that will minimize the impacts and improve the water quality of the stream. The assessments of both the Plum Run and Radley Run watersheds have been completed and in early 2008 the restoration plans will be finished. With the help of everyone in these watersheds, we hope to put these plans into motion and make improvements that will turn these Red Streams Blue.

Sediment eroding from stream banks during rainstorms is the major impairment in our local waterways, the BVA has started a Bank Erosion study in Radley Run. To quantify the amount of sediment washing away from the stream banks, pins are inserted at the high flow level and half way up the bank. These bank pins are inserted along an 80 meter section (10 meters apart) of the stream. Monthly the amount of pin exposed or covered is measured and recorded. The data collected will give information on the rate of bank erosion and whether restoration actions have changed this rate. We have already put 4 sets of bank pins in place and are making monthly measurements. If you see us out there stop and take a look.

To learn more about the Red Streams Blue Program or to get involved in your watershed visit the BVA website at www.brandywinewatershed.org or contact the BVA at 610-793-1090.

CRC and Habitat Resource Network to Host “Rain Gardens and More” Workshop
Sat. Feb. 9th at Penn State Brandywine

On Saturday, February 9th, Chester Ridley Crum Watershed Association (CRC) and Habitat Resource Network (HRN) of Southeastern PA are co hosting “Rain Gardens and More” at Penn State Brandywine (formerly Delaware County) campus on Route 352 in Middletown. The program, which begins at 10 AM in the main Athletic Building, features a one hour lecture on rain gardens by Catherine Lenzi, owner of Yellow Springs Nursery and landscape designer who lectures frequently on the subject. This will be followed by a review of the design and site visit of the newly installed naturalized detention basin on the Penn State campus. After the conclusion of the program at 11:30 AM, there will be an optional site visit of the Toft Woods naturalized basin, and rain garden/rain barrel installations in Upper Providence.

Admission is $5 per person, but free registration is available to Westtown residents since the Township is a sponsor. Participants are requested to pre register with CRC at crc@nni.com or by calling CRC at 610-892-8731. Participants may also register the day of the event by arriving by 9:45 AM. More details are available on CRC’s website, www.crcwatersheds.org.
WESTTOWN-EAST GOSHEN REGIONAL POLICE DEPARTMENT

Criminal Investigation Division
1041 Wilmington Pike
West Chester, PA 19382
www.westtownpolice.org

WESTTOWN-EAST GOSHEN REGIONAL POLICE DEPARTMENT,
THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND THE
NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION JOIN TO PROMOTE
SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE FIREARMS OWNERSHIP AND STORAGE.

“PROJECT CHILDSAFE”

The Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department is offering free gun locks and firearms safety educational material to the residents of Westtown, East Goshen and Thornbury Townships. The gun locks and firearms safety material has been received through a grant sponsored by the United States Department of Justice. Additional information about the safety program is available by visiting www.projectchildsafe.org

Locks are available at the police department located at
1041 Wilmington Pike, West Chester, PA 19382
Monday through Friday between the hours of 08:30 AM and 4:30 PM

BEHIND THE BADGE

WESTTOWN EAST GOSHEN REGIONAL POLICE

On Tuesday, October 16th the Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department honored Corporal Guy Rosato and his K-9 Rikko for their 8 years of service in the K-9 Unit. Rikko, a purebred German Shepherd born in Hungary, served as the Police Department’s K-9 for the last 8 years until his retirement on October 16th. He was responsible for numerous drug and weapons seizures as well as criminal apprehensions. The Police Department also welcomed its newest member, Lex, a 19 month old Belgian Malinois born in Holland. Lex was trained in narcotics detection, tracking and apprehension. His handler is Officer Tony Ruggieri a 6 year veteran of the Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department.

(Pictured in the photograph are Officer Tony Ruggieri and Lex, Dr. McGrath, Cpl. Rosato and Rikko and Chief Dumond).
Composting

Composting bins and information on Composting are available at the Township Office during regular business hours. Did you know that grass, leaves, and other wastes from lawns and gardens account for an estimated 18% of the annual municipal waste stream? Most yard waste can be composted along with fruit, vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, and egg shells. The end product from composting is great soil/mulch for your flower, trees, or vegetable garden. THINK COMPOSTING

LEAVE YOUR GRASS CLIPPINGS AS YOU MOW. Clippings provide nutrition of your lawn. They are comprised of water, organic matter, nitrogen, and a small amount of phosphorus – all things your grass needs.

Because clippings supply up to 50% of a lawn’s nitrogen needs over the season, you will not need as much fertilizer. Clippings from regular mowings will NOT cause thatch build up and will not hurt the grass.

PLEASE DO NOT DUMP YARD WASTE CLIPPINGS, BRANCHES OR LEAVES IN THE STREET WHERE IT CAN WASH INTO STORM DRAINS, OR IN PARKS, ALONG STREAMS, OR PILED AT THE BASE OF TREES.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICKUP –
SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 2008

The Township Office will be closed on the following dates:

January 21st, Martin Luther King Remembrance Day
February 18th, Presidents Day
March 21st Good Friday

All Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission Meetings are held at the Township Municipal Building, 1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown.

January 2008

Board of Supervisors: 7th and 21nd, 7:30 PM
Planning Commission: 9th, and 23rd, 7:30 PM
Friends of Oakbourne: 10th, 7:00 PM – Oakbourne Park – Meeting Room
Oakbourne Mansion Commission: 15th – 7:00 PM – Township Building

February

Board of Supervisors: 4th and 19th – 7:30 PM
Planning Commission: 6th and 20th -7:30 PM

March

Board of Supervisors: 3rd and 17th – 7:30 PM
Planning Commission: 5th and 19th – 7:30 PM
Friends of Oakbourne: 13th, 7:00 PM – Oakbourne Park – Meeting Room

April

Board of Supervisors: 7th and 21st – 7:30 PM
Planning Commission: 9th and 23rd – 7:30 PM
Friends of Oakbourne: 10th, 7:00 PM – Oakbourne Park – Meeting Room
## RECYCLING AND TRASH INFORMATION

### CHISTMAS TREE PICKUP
SATURDAY JANUARY 12TH, Trees must be out by 7:00 AM – leave nothing on the tree. Do not put in a bag.

### Computer Recycling
Staples Office Supply Store is now collection used computers/printers at all their locations. There is a charge of $10.00 item.

### Ink Jet Cartridges
Call 1-800-941-9656 for free recycling/donation bags- also available at the Township Office.

### Bulk Pickup
If you have any item with Freon (refrigerator, air conditioner or dehumidifier ) you must have the Freon removed, and a sticker on the item stating that it has been removed, or it will not be picked up on your bulk pickup date. Call the Township Office for information on Freon removal.

### Holiday Pickup
The following are the official holidays for A. J. Blosenski: New Years Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Trash will not be collected on these days. Your makeup days are: Monday Pickup – trash/recycling is collected the Saturday before the holiday. Thursday pickup your trash/recycling is collected the Saturday after the holiday.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to Prepare Items for Recycling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glass—Green, Brown &amp; Clear</strong>: Bottles or Jars only. Rinse Clean. Remove lids and rings. Labels may be left on. <strong>NO plate glass, ceramics, drinking glasses, etc.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plastic</strong>: Must be marked with #1 through #7 inside triangle on bottom. Rinse clean. Remove lids and discard. Labels may be left on. <strong>NO unmarked containers or containers marked with other than #1 through #7 inside the triangle on bottom.</strong> No antifreeze or motor oil containers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aluminum Beverage Cans</strong>: Rinse clean. Cans may be flattened. No bottle or jar lids, no pie plates or aluminum foil. <strong>No other aluminum items.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bi-Metal Cans</strong>: Rinse clean. Cans may be flattened. Examples include pet food cans, soup cans, vegetable cans. <strong>NO cans with plastic parts. NO paint or aerosol cans.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Newspaper, Magazines, Phone Books, Junk Mail, small carbord boxes (cereal, crackers, etc) &amp; Office Paper</strong>: Combine in paper bag or bundle and tie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yard Waste (excluding leaves)</strong>: May be included in regular pickup. Bags of grass not to exceed 50 lbs. Branches acceptable in tied bundles no longer than 3’ in length.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cardboard Boxes</strong>: Must be cut in <strong>three foot squares</strong>, tied and placed next to the recycling bin. This is necessary because of the compacting system of the recycling truck. Unfortunately if the cardboard is not prepared this way it will be taken with the regular trash. Cereal boxes and similar cardboard items may be combined with newspaper.</td>
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A.J. Bloenski, Inc. specializes in prompt deliveries, efficient and personalized service to meet the needs of our customers at all times.

For complete waste removal services call, 610-942-2707
Fax: 610-942-2495

Service Includes:
Residential • Commercial • Industrial • Construction
Special Pick-Up • Roll Off Container Service

ajblosenski@nni.com • www.ajblosenski.com