A number of questions have been raised regarding an article in the Philadelphia Inquirer, on 11/2/2011, about the fact that the Township’s Bond Rating had been lowered. Comments were made that this might suggest a deteriorating financial condition of the Township. Actually, this is not the case. In fact, the Township has been able to improve its financial position considerably over the past few years. The actual indebtedness of the Township stood at a total of $23,795,000 on December 31, 2005. At the end of 2012, the total amount will be $13,890,000. This represents a decrease of over 41%. This amount reflects an acceleration in repayment, in excess of that which would result by the normal scheduled retirement of debt. The recent borrowing, which prompted the article, was a refinancing of prior debt, and allowed the Township to take advantage of today’s lower interest rates, thereby saving more than $620,000, net, after all costs.

In early 2010, Moody’s Investor’s Service, the New York based ratings agency, announced a “universal recalibration” of ratings for state and local government debt. This action represented a change in the methodology used to determine rankings of municipal credit. As a result of this universal recalibration, the Township’s rating position was increased two levels, from the “A1” awarded in 2006 to “Aa2”. When the agency systematically reviewed the Township’s 2011 refinancing, they realized that they had artificially elevated the Township’s status and made a correction to “Aa3”. The end result is that the Township’s rating position was increased by one level from that of 2006. The fact that this was positive was pointed out by the Township’s Investment Banker, Mr. Michael Wolf of Boenning and Scattergood, Inc., who stated that a measure of the Township’s current financial fitness was recognized with the most recent rating and that for the first time, no municipal bond insurance would be required, thereby saving approximately $50,000 on the refinancing.

The Township hopes to be able to use the new Moody’s rating and the lower interest rates available to refinance additional debt in 2012.
**HOW TO PREPARE ITEMS FOR RECYCLING**

**GLASS**—Green, Brown & Clear; Bottles or Jars only. Rinse Clean. Remove lids and rings. Labels may be left on. NO plate glass, ceramics, drinking glasses, etc.

**PLASTIC**—Must be marked with #1 through #7 inside triangle on bottom. Rinse clean. Remove lids and discard. Labels may be left on. NO unmarked containers or containers marked with other than #1 through #7 inside the triangle on bottom. No antifreeze or motor oil containers.

**ALUMINUM BEVERAGE CANS**—Rinse clean. Cans may be flattened. No bottle or jar lids, no pie plates or aluminum foil. NO other aluminum items.

**BI-METAL CANS**—Rinse clean. Cans may be flattened. Examples include pet food cans, soup cans, vegetable cans. NO cans with plastic parts. NO paint or aerosol cans.

**NEWSPAPER, MAGAZINES, PHONE BOOKS, JUNK MAIL, SMALL CARDBOARD BOXES (CEREAL, CRACKERS, ETC) & OFFICE PAPER**—Combine in paper bag or bundle and tie.

**YARD WASTE/LEAVES**—Can not be placed in the regular trash. Only collected on the scheduled collection days. Must be in biodegradable paper bags or in a container that can be dumped. Branches must be three foot in length and tied. Collection dates are posted on the Township website www.westtownpa.org, in the Township Gazette and on the utility bills.

**CARDBOARD BOXES**—Must be in three foot squares, tied and placed next to the recycling bin. This is necessary because of the compaction 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.

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I have been a privilege to serve as one of your supervisors for the past six and half years, so thank you for giving me a chance to do my part to keep Westtown a great place to live. I would also like to thank my two fellow supervisors and the wonderful township staff that have all worked together to accomplish major goals.

One of our most important accomplishments has been reestablishing the township’s financial strength. When I came into office, our bond debt exceeded $24 million, which was one of the highest per capita debt loads in the county. Our debt is now about $15 million, which has allowed us to improve our credit rating and lowered the cost of any future borrowing. We reduced the debt by selling the old municipal building to retire a bond, refinanced our bonds twice and actually lowered the amount of total bond indebtedness. Westtown can now also boast a healthy capital reserve account.

Six years ago, the road maintenance program in Westtown had gone from a normal 20 year repaving cycle to nearly 40 years. We have greatly increased the amount of road maintenance to return towards a normal repaving cycle. We have repaired the bridges on Oakbourne Road and New Street, so they are now safe and much more resistant to flood damage.

One area where I take full credit—along with my wife Eva—is the renaissance of Oakbourne Mansion, which has gone from being an under-used white elephant to a centerpiece of the township, that is largely self-sustaining (See separate article). At the same time, this board has resurrected the Park & Recreation Commission, which holds a growing number of events for children and young families. Board efforts continue to open up more playing fields for individual and team use at the many schools in Westtown, at the township’s parks and through a cooperative program with surrounding townships.

Westtown can also thank its supervisors for maintaining the township’s unique rural open space. Although our township is in the midst of westward suburbanization, Westtown still holds onto its agricultural heritage. We have several private farms that provide fresh produce to its residents, as well as many country trails, pastoral vistas and abundant wildlife that all can enjoy (See separate article).

No doubt there are areas where our residents think we should have done more. Those issues and challenges will be up to the next board, and probably many more boards to come. This work is never done. For now as I leave office, I can truly say that I am proud of this board’s accomplishments. I wish the next board as much success as we have had. Thank for you allowing me to serve you.

WESTTOWN PROUDLY WELCOMES TOM HAWS TO OUR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Board and Staff look forward to working with him!

I am 36 years old. I grew up in Wilmington, DE, and spent many weekends and summers in Westtown visiting my grandparents who were residents from 1962 to 2005. I graduated from Salesianum High School (’94) and went on to Ursinus College (’98) and graduated with a B.S. in biology. Upon graduating college I started working in the pharmaceutical industry. I have been in this industry for 15 years with 10 years at GlaxoSmithKline. I’m currently a clinical research scientist in the cardiovascular area running clinical trials. I hold 2 patents, 1 I am an author on numerous journal articles and I am an editor of a textbook on good clinical practices. I am married to my wife of 12 years Trish Haws. We have 2 sets of twins. My oldest girls, Lexi and Kaylee will be 10 years old in February. My youngest set of twins, Gracie and Tommy will be 3 years old in February. We have a beagle named Sadie. We moved into Westtown in 2005. My kids are a huge part of who I am and I am currently the Treasurer of the PennWood Home and School Association and a proud member of the W.A.T.C.H DOGS group at PennWood. In my spare time I enjoy the outdoors, working in our garden and swimming in our pool. I love to read both fiction and non-fiction books, I typically read a book within 10 days or not sooner. I enjoy watching and playing sports and I am an avid Philadelphia sports fan. Most of all I enjoy spending time with my wife and 4 kids.

Outgoing supervisor Tom and his wife Eva have jointly served Westtown for more than 21 years of the 30 years they have lived in the township.

Tom Haw’s Bio supplied by Tom Haw's

WESTTOWN GAZETTE

FROM OUR EMERGENCY MANAGER

While we all hope for a White Christmas, fluffy snow and not too much of it, it is winter and we need to be prepared for the possibility of severe weather. The best advice is, as always, be prepared. You should have basic supplies on hand to get you by for three days, just in case you get stranded in your car without power and/or water. Figure on a gallon of water per day per person for drinking and sanitary needs, food that doesn’t need to be cooked, a radio and flashlights with fresh batteries, any necessary medical supplies, and some nice warm blankets. Don’t forget your pet’s needs as well.

In some cases, it will be possible to get out, but you still may not have power or heat. The township has a plan to open the Township Building as a Comfort or Warming Center if there is a need. When it makes sense, the main meeting room will be opened to township residents to give you a place to warm up, get a hot drink, find out what’s going on, and charge up your cell phone. It won’t be a shelter, just a place to warm up. If sheltering is necessary, the Red Cross will provide that.

The Supervisors and the Emergency Management Team will watch the weather forecasts, and if it looks like a Warming Center might be appropriate, a message will be put on the Township website (www.westtownpa.org) and an email will be sent to the Westtown list (another good reason to be on the list), letting you know it is a possibility. Once the decision is made to open, another email will be sent and the message on the Township answering machine (610-692-1930) will be changed to let you know the hours of operation.

Your Emergency Management Team

THE BREATH OF LIFE

by Tom Bare

Did you know that it takes about six fully grown trees to absorb or “neutralize” the 300 pounds of carbon dioxide formed by burning one tank of gas in your car and about 240 trees to absorb the carbon dioxide produced from an average year of driving your car?

Did you know that plants and trees are responsible for the earth’s annual breath? Our planet breathes once a year with the levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide reaching a peak during April through June (the exhalation) and then decreasing to a minimum during September and October (the inhalation). Most of Earth’s landmass (and trees and plants) is in the northern hemisphere and that’s why the carbon dioxide levels are minimized in the late summer/early fall when our plants are active and “inhaling.”

Did you know that one of the most cost effective and beautiful ways to help to decrease levels of carbon dioxide (that is, to produce a deeper inhalation during the earth’s annual breath) is to plant trees?

Why all of this talk of trees? The Friends of Oakbourne have planted well over a hundred trees and shrubs in Oakbourne Park over the last six years. Many of the trees have been dedicated to honor a special person or loved one or to commemorate an important occasion. The Friends of Oakbourne Tree Dedication Program is an ideal way not only to honor a person or event but also to enhance the beauty of our unique park and in a small way to help our planet rid itself of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide and other pollutants.

If you are interested in dedicating a tree in Oakbourne Park, please contact the Westtown Township Manager (610-692-1930) or the Friends of Oakbourne Tree Program Chair, Tom Bare (610-399-1572), Requests for almost any kind of tree or shrub can be accommodated and prices range from $150 to $500, depending on tree variety and size. Donated trees are recognized with a small plaque inscribed with information regarding the donor/recipient, tree and date of planting and displayed in the park’s Oakbourne Mansion.

A trio of Dogwoods planted in the arboretum to replace an aging Dogwood which had died.

Two Copper Beech trees planted in the Oakbourne Mansion Arboretum in 2011 (foreground) and 2007 (background) which will eventually replace nearby old Copper Beech trees which are in decline.

WESTTOWN GAZETTE

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

WESTTOWN GAZETTE

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP
MY TRIBUTE TO OAKBOURNE MANSION
By Eva Foster, Chair, Oakbourne Mansion Commission

At the heart of Westtown Township is Oakbourne Park and the Victorian mansion that has dominated the 35-acre site since 1872. One hundred years later, Westtown Township purchased the land and building, but time and disuse have taken their toll ever since.

Six years ago, the Board of Supervisors created the Oakbourne Mansion Commission to raise funds to make much-needed improvements to this magnificent structure. The Oakbourne Mansion Commission has raised thousands of dollars by renting the facility for weddings, parties and other events. These rentals have paid for repairs to the floors, lighting, walls and electrical system, as well as adding air conditioning and upgrading the kitchen. All these improvements have been made at little or no cost to the taxpayer.

For me, this work has been a labor of love. Not only have I been able to make dozens of people very happy with their events, but I have helped Westtown revive a wonderful asset that all can enjoy for generations to come. My term has come to an end, and I will certainly miss Oakbourne and all the spectacular events that have taken place there in recent years. It was a major stop on the Chester County Day tour in 2007 when we turned the mansion into a designer “show house” full of Victorian furnishings. We had another open house this year for Chester County Day. The park and mansion is now the site for an annual British car show and an internationally sanctioned Concours d’Elegance for Jaguars. They will again be at Oakbourne on June 2, 2012.

The most magical time of year at Oakbourne is the holiday season when we decorate the Mansion in Victorian style with trees in every room and festoon the windows and stairway with garland and wreaths. There are always a few paid private holiday parties, but there is also a free children’s event for residents and an open house for township staff and volunteers to thank them for their hard work through the year.

I am happy to report that Oakbourne has made major progress in its much-deserved renaissance, but there is much more work to do. Hopefully, the township will continue to rent the facility, not only to fund further improvement, but also to subsidize the many free or nearly free events enjoyed by various residents’ groups, organizational meetings and youth events. The people and groups who rent Oakbourne for their events have taught us a lesson: that which is not earned is not valued. I hope Westtown residents will continue to value this jewel that is still the centerpiece of our township.

“Native Plants, Birds, Bees, Butterflies, and Healthy Watersheds: What’s the Connection?”

和 Penn State Brandywine

jointly welcome
Mark Gormel
Native Plant Horticulturist,
Consultant, Lecturer, and
Nature Photographer

Sunday,
February 12, 2012
2:00pm-3:30pm
Penn State Brandywine
Tomeszko Building Auditorium
25 Yearley Mill Road, Media, PA 19063
http://www.brandywine.psu.edu/Information/lnp.htm

“Native Plants, Birds, Bees, Butterflies, and Healthy Watersheds: What’s the Connection?”

Free and open to the public.
Preregistration requested: Contact CRC at: crc@nml.com or 610-892-8731
Cell phone contact in case of questionable weather 610-470-6960

For more information please see: www.crcwatersheds.org

My Tribute to Oakbourne Mansion

Oakbourne Mansion is at its best during the holidays when it is decorated in Victorian splendor and enjoyed by residents young and old.
WESTTOWN EAST-GOSHEN REGIONAL POLICE

Driving Safely this Winter and all Year Long...

With the Winter season firmly upon use there are a few things to remember to prepare yourselves and your loved ones for a safe time while driving:

1. Clear ALL snow and ice off of your windows, lights, roof, trunk and hood areas… not only will this increase your vision but it will also prevent snow or ice from dislodging from your vehicle and potentially causing an accident. In Pennsylvania if snow or ice from your vehicle causes an accident involving death or serious injuries you could be liable and given a citation with a fine of between $250-$1000.

2. Prepare your vehicle for winter driving by ensuring that you have tires with adequate tread depth to provide traction in snowy and icy conditions. Put a winter ready kit in your car that contains the following items:

   • Flashlight with extra batteries
   • Flares of reflective triangles
   • Jumper cables
   • Cell phone with extra batteries
   • Extra car fuses
   • Rags or paper towels
   • General first aid kit
   • Gallon jug of water
   • Roll of quarters, dimes and nickels
   • Non-perishable food items
   • Blanket, extra set of clothes
   • Winter formula window washer solvent
   • Non-clumping kitty litter to use for extra traction
   • Ice-scaper, snow brush and shovel
   • Tire chains

3. USE your headlights…. By PA law you are required to use your headlights between sunset and sunrise as well as when you cannot discern something on the highway from 1000 feet away due to weather conditions (i.e. snow, rain, etc) and anytime that your windshield wipers are in use due to weather conditions. If in doubt turn them on… it makes you more visible to those around you and your surroundings more visible to you.

4. If the weather conditions are questionable…. DON'T drive unless it is absolutely necessary. By reducing the amount of traffic on the road you allow emergency vehicles to get around easier and have fewer non-emergency calls to respond to as well as allowing the plow truck operators greater ease in getting the streets cleaned up quickly and safely.

5. And lastly, this one applies all year long…. PA has what is known as the "Steer Clear Law". When approaching a scene with emergency vehicles present (police, fire, ambulance, tow trucks, etc) you are required to move over or if that is not possible you must SLOW down. Those in violation are subject to fines and possible license suspension.

Snow Shoveling Tips

After a snowstorm, how many times have you shoveled your driveway or sidewalk only to have it plowed in?

Road Department suggests that you wait until the street is cleared before you shovel the last five feet of your driveway or your sidewalk. Always clear an area to the right of your driveway (as seen in the diagram below) to give the snow on the blade of the plow a place to empty before it gets to your driveway. This way you won't have to do the same job twice.

Remember, it is illegal to push snow from a parking lot or driveway onto a township roadway.

WESTTOWN RETAINS ITS AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE

By Tom Foster

While many residents may consider Westtown a suburban community, our township has been able to retain much of the agricultural heritage that has been at its roots for the past 35 years. More than 1,000 acres of the total 5,000 acres making up Westtown are in the township’s Agricultural Security District, which is a state and county program that allows a municipality to recognize land as agricultural and to provide some degree of protection against eminent domain and nuisance complaints, as well as qualify it for potential inclusion in various conservation programs.

The vast majority of this farmland is found in large properties such as Westtown School, Crebilly Farm and Wynnorr Farm along Route 926. The wonderful productive grow and sold by Pete Flynn and Joe Stratton on two of these properties is enjoyed by residents of Westtown and many surrounding townships. But there are also a surprising number of properties with only 10 to 30 acres throughout neighborhoods in the township providing beautiful view sheds, wildlife refuges and probably some free tomatoes if you know the landowner. Horses, sheep, poultry and even a few cows still graze in our agricultural parcels, small and large. These farms provide a unique rural atmosphere to our residents, pay taxes, use little or no township services and provide neighborhood buffers. Quite a bargain for everyone.

In addition to this "official" agricultural land with at least 10 acres, there are at least 100 private properties in the township with more than two acres. About eight years ago, a township open space committee held a seminar for these landowners showing them how they could increase the agricultural use of their land to make it more enjoyable and productive. As a result, many of these properties now contain sizeable gardens, small pastures and even a few beehives.

The purpose of efforts such as the Ag Security District and the open space seminar have been to keep more of Westtown in agriculture and rural open space and less in development. So far, the effort has been largely successful. No farmland or open space in Westtown’s Ag Security District has been lost to any type of development since the Marshall Jones farm was developed into Rustin High School about seven years ago. However, none of these private properties are in a conservation program that would guarantee permanent agricultural status. The landowners are understandably hedging their bets about how Westtown will develop in years to come. Any of these properties could be lost to development with the stroke of a pen.

The precarious nature of agricultural land in Westtown makes the small amount of township-owned open space in farming very important. Total public ground in Westtown amounts to about 320 acres. About 10 acres are for administration and public works, and about 25 acres are in active recreation. More than 265 acres is undisturbed woodlands, meadows, wetlands and streamside buffers that are an important part of the township’s storm water management system. This ground provides natural landscapes, neighborhood open space, walking trails and wildlife habitat, but is unlikely to be used for anything else. Only about 18 acres of the total open space are farmed. The two farmed parcels were recently put in long term leases to protect their agricultural status.

As residents who have a small farm, my wife and I treasure Westtown’s agricultural heritage, and we actively work to maintain it though grassroots efforts with like-minded people. We welcome hearing from any residents that share our belief. Feel free to email us at westtown@comcast.net.
TIPS FROM THE WESTTOWN-EAST GOSHEN REGIONAL POLICE

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For me, this work has been a labor of love. Not only have I been able to make dozens of people very happy with their events, but I have helped Westtown revive a wonderful asset that all can enjoy for generations to come. My term has come to an end, and I will certainly miss Oakbourne and all the spectacular events that have taken place there in recent years. It was a major stop on the Chester County Day tour in 2007 when we turned the mansion into a designer “show house” full of Victorian furnishings. We had another open house this year for Chester County Day. The park and mansion is now the site for an annual British car show and an internationally sanctioned Concours d’Elegance for Jaguars. They will again be at Oakbourne on June 2, 2012.

The most magical time of year at Oakbourne is the holiday season when we decorate the Mansion in Victorian style with trees in every room and festoon the windows and stairway with garland and wreaths. There are always a few paid private holiday parties, but there is also a free children’s event for residents and an open house for township staff and volunteers to thank them for their hard work through the year.

I am happy to report that Oakbourne has made major progress in its much-deserved renaissance, but there is much more work to do. Hopefully, the township will continue to rent the facility, not only to fund further improvement, but also to subsidize the many free or nearly free events enjoyed by various residents’ groups, organizational meetings and youth events. The people and groups who rent Oakbourne for their events have taught us a lesson that which is not earned is not valued. I hope Westtown residents will continue to value this jewel that is still the centerpiece of our township.
I have been a privilege to serve as one of your supervisors for the past six and half years, so thank you for giving me a chance to do my part to keep Westtown a great place to live. I would also like to thank my two fellow supervisors and the wonderful township staff that have all worked together to accomplish major goals.

One of our most important accomplishments has been reestablishing the township’s financial strength. When I came into office, our bond debt exceeded $24 million, which was one of the highest per capita debt loads in the county. Our debt is now about $15 million, which has allowed us to improve our credit rating and lowered the cost of any future borrowing. We reduced the debt by selling the old municipal building to retire a bond, refinanced our bonds twice and actually lowered the amount of total bond indebtedness. Westtown can now also boast a healthy capital reserve account.

Six years ago, the road maintenance program in Westtown had gone from a normal 20 year repaving cycle to nearly 40 years. We have greatly increased the amount of road maintenance to return towards a normal repaving cycle. We have repaired the bridges on Oakbourne Road and New Street, so they are now safe and much more resistant to flood damage.

One area where I take full credit—along with my wife Eva—is the renaissance of Oakbourne Mansion, which has gone from being an under-used white elephant to a centerpiece of the township, that is largely self-sustaining (See separate article). At the same time, this board has resurrected the Park & Recreation Commission, which holds a growing number of events for children and young families. Board efforts continue to open up more playing fields for individual and team use at the many schools in Westtown, at the township’s parks and through a cooperative program with surrounding townships.

Westtown can also thank its supervisors for maintaining the township’s unique rural open space. Although our township is in the midst of westward suburbanization, Westtown still holds onto its agricultural heritage. We have several private farms that provide fresh produce to its residents, as well as many country trails, pastoral vistas and abundant wildlife that all can enjoy (See separate article).

No doubt there are areas where our residents think we should have done more. Those issues and challenges will be up to the next board, and probably many more boards to come. This work is never done. For now as I leave office, I can truly say that I am proud of this board’s accomplishments. I wish the next board as much success as we have had. Thank for you allowing me to serve you.

**WESTTOWN PROUDLY WELCOMES TOM HAWS**

**TO OUR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

The Board and Staff look forward to working with him!

I am 36 years old. I grew up in Wilmington, DE, and spent many weekends and summers in Westtown visiting my grandparents who were residents from 1962 to 2005. I graduated from Salesianum High School ('94) and went on to Ursinus College ('98) and graduated with a B.S. in biology. Upon graduating college I started working in the pharmaceutical industry. I have been in this industry for 15 years with 10 years at GlaxoSmithKline. I’m currently a clinical research scientist in the cardiovascular area running clinical trials. I hold 2 patents. I am an author on numerous journal articles and I am an editor of a textbook on good clinical practices. I am married to my wife of 12 years Trish Haws. We have 2 sets of twins. My oldest girls, Lexi and Kaylee will be 10 years old in February. My youngest set of twins, Grace and Tommy will be 3 years old in February. We have a beagle named Sadie. We moved into Westtown in 2005. My kids are a huge part of who I am and I am currently the Treasurer of the PennWood Home and School Association and a proud member of the W.A.T.C.H DOGS group at PennWood. In my spare time I enjoy the outdoors, working in our garden and swimming in our pool. I love to read both fiction and non-fiction books, I typically read a book within 10 days not sooner. I enjoy watching and playing sports and I am an avid Philadelphia sports fan. Most of all I enjoy spending time with my wife and 4 kids.

Outgoing supervisor Tom and his wife Eva have jointly served Westtown for more than 21 years of the 30 years they have lived in the township.

**FROM OUR EMERGENCY MANAGER**

While we all hope for a White Christmas, fluffy snow and not too much of it, it is winter and we need to be prepared for the possibility of severe weather. The best advice is, as always, be prepared. You should have basic supplies on hand to get you by for three days, just in case you get snowed/iced in without power and/or water. Figure on a gallon of water per day per person for drinking and sanitary needs, food that doesn’t need to be cooked, a radio and flashlight with fresh batteries, any necessary medical supplies, and some nice warm blankets. Don’t forget your pet’s needs as well.

In some cases, it will be possible to get out, but you still may not have power or heat. The township has a plan to open the Township Building as a Comfort or Warning Center if there is a need. When it makes sense, the main meeting room will be opened to township residents to give you a place to warm up, get a hot drink, find out what’s going on, and charge up your cell phone. It won’t be a shelter, just a place to warm up. If sheltering is necessary, the Red Cross will provide that.

The Supervisors and the Emergency Management Team will watch the weather forecasts, and if it looks like a Warming Center might be appropriate, a message will be put on the Township website (www.westtownpa.org) and an email will be sent to the Westtown list (another good reason to be on the list), letting you know it is a possibility. Once the decision is made to open, another email will be sent and the message on the Township answering machine (610-692-1930) will be changed to let you know the hours of operation.

Your Emergency Management Team

**THE BREATH OF LIFE**

by Tom Bare

What are green, red, yellow, orange and brown, can be tall and majestic or short and spindly, are able to clean the air of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide and other pollutants, provide life-giving oxygen, and can cover mountains, meadows, and yards with shelter for fellow creatures on our planet? Of course, the answer is “trees.”

Did you know that it takes about six fully grown trees to absorb or “neutralize” the 300 pounds of carbon dioxide formed by burning one tank of gas in your car and about 240 trees to absorb the carbon dioxide produced from an average year of driving your car?

Did you know that plants and trees are responsible for the earth’s annual breath? Our planet breathes once a year with the levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide reaching a peak during April through June (the exhalation) and then decreasing to a minimum during September and October (the inhalation). Most of Earth’s landmass (and trees and plants) is in the northern hemisphere and that’s why the carbon dioxide levels are minimized in the late summer/early fall when our plants are active and “inhaling.”

Did you know that one of the most cost effective and beautiful ways to help to decrease levels of carbon dioxide (that is, to produce a deeper inhalation during the earth's annual breath) is to plant trees?

Why all of this talk of trees? The Friends of Oakbourne have planted well over a hundred trees and shrubs in Oakbourne Park over the last six years. Many of the trees have been dedicated to honor a special person or loved one or to commemorate an important occasion. The Friends of Oakbourne Tree Dedication Program is an ideal way not only to honor a person or event but also to enhance the beauty of our unique park and in a small way to help our planet rid itself of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide and other pollutants.

If you are interested in dedicating a tree in Oakbourne Park, please contact the Westtown Township Manager (610-692-1930) or the Friends of Oakbourne Tree Program Chair, Tom Bare (610-399-1572). Requests for almost any kind of tree or shrub can be accommodated and prices range from $150 to $500, depending on tree variety and size. Donated trees are recognized with a small plaque inscribed with information regarding the donor/recipient, tree and date of planting and displayed in the park’s Oakbourne Mansion.

Two Copper Beech trees planted in the Oakbourne Mansion Arboretum in 2011 (foreground) and 2007 (background) which will eventually replace nearby old Copper Beech trees which are in decline.

**A trio of Dogwoods planted in the arborium to replace an aging Dogwood which had died.**

*Bio supplied by Tom Haws*
**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 Kraul (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 – 610-344-6692
- License Bureau (Dog, Fishing, Hunting) 610-344-6370
- Marriage License Bureau 610-344-6335
- Office of the Aging 610-344-6009
- Passports 610-344-6050
- Recorder of Deeds 610-344-6330
- Tax Assessment 610-344-6410
- Voters Services 610-344-6410

**Chester County Conservation District - 610-696-5126**
- Chester West Area School District 829 Padi Pike, West Chester, Pennsylvania 19380
- Main Number 484-266-1050
- School Tax 484-266-1035

**State Senate District - 26th District**
- Edwin B. Erikson – Local 610-635-4100 – State 717-787-1350
- email erikson@pasen.gov

**State House District - 18th District**
- Tom H. Kilian – Local 610-325-1541 – State 717-772-0855
- Email: kilianp@pahouse.gov

**U. S. Senate**
- Pat Toomey – Local – 1-215-597-7200 – Federal – 1-202-224-4254
- www.toumeysenate.gov
- www.caseysenate.gov

**Congressional District – 7th District**
- www.mahan.house.gov

For Police, Fire, and Medical EMERGENCIES, DIAL 911
For NON-EMERGENCIES, dial 610-692-5100

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**HOW TO PREPARE ITEMS FOR RECYCLING**

**GLASS**—Green, Brown & Clear; Bottles or Jars only. Rinse Clean. Remove lids and rings. Labels may be left on.
NO plate glass, drinking glasses, etc.

**PLASTIC**—Must be marked with #1 through #7 inside triangle on bottom. Rinse clean. Remove lids and discard. Labels may be left on.
NO unmarked containers or containers marked with other than #1 through #7 inside the triangle on bottom. NO antifreeze or motor oil containers.

**ALUMINUM BEVERAGE CANS**—Rinse clean. Cans may be flattened. No bottle or jar lids, no pie plates or aluminum foil. NO other aluminum items.

**BI-METAL CANS**—Rinse clean. Cans may be flattened. Examples include pet food cans, soup cans, vegetable cans.
NO cans with plastic parts. NO paint or aerosol cans.

**NEWSPAPER, MAGAZINES, PHONE BOOKS, JUNK MAIL, SMALL CARDBOARD BOXES (CEREAL, CRACKERS, ETC) & OFFICE PAPER**—Combine in paper bag or bundle and tie.

**YARD WASTE/LEAVES**—Can not be placed in the regular trash. Only collected on the scheduled collection days.
Must be in biodegradable paper bags or in a container that can be dumped. Branches must be three foot in length and tied. Collection dates are posted on the Township website westtownpa.org, in the Township Gazette and on the utility bills.

**CARDBOARD BOXES**—Must be cut in three foot squares, tied and placed next to the recycling bin. This is necessary because of the compaction 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.

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**CALENDAR SCHEDULE**

**Christmas Trees** will be collected on Saturday, January 14th. Please have curb side by 7:AM. Nothing on the tree. Not in a bag.

The following is the schedule for winter/spring yard waste collections:
- **Saturday February 25th** – dumpster at Police Station – 9:00am – 1:00pm
- **Saturday, March 24th** – curb side by 7:00am
- **Saturday, April 17th** – curb side by 7:00am
- **Saturday, May 7th** – curb side by 7:00am
- **Saturday, June 9th** – curb side by 7:00am

The Township Office will be closed on the following dates:
- **New Years Day** – January 2nd
- **Martin Luther King Day** – January 16th
- **Presidents Day** – February 20th
- **Good Friday** – April 6th

All Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission Meetings, and Park and Recreation Meetings are held at the Township Municipal Building, 1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown. Time 7:30pm

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**REMINDER**

Utility bill payments must be RECEIVED in the Township Office by the due date shown on the bill to avoid late payment penalties. Postmarks will not be accepted.

**Unused or Expired Prescriptions** will be collected at the Westtown-East Goshen Police Building on Saturday, April 28th from 10am to 2pm. Drop off in the lobby.

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**Bulletin Board**

christmas tree pickup

Saturday, January 14, 2012. At curb by 7am. No tinsel, ornaments. Do not bag.

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**Westtown Township Board of Supervisors**
- Charles P. Barber
- Carol R. DeWol
- Thomas F. Haws

Street Address: 1039 Wilmington Pike • West Chester, Pennsylvania 19382
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 79 • Westtown, PA 19395-0079
Phone: (610) 692-1930 • Fax: (610) 692-9651 • www.westtownpa.org
(Comments for the Manager & Board of Supervisors) - supervisors@westtown.org

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**For Sale at the Township Office**
Color print of Oakbourne – $15
Commemorative Place – Oakbourne Tower – $5
Note Cards – Oakbourne Mansion – $5.00 each, 12 for $5
A number of questions have been raised regarding an article in the Philadelphia Inquirer, on 11/2/2011, about the fact that the Township’s Bond Rating had been lowered. Comments were made that this might suggest a deteriorating financial condition of the Township. Actually, this is not the case. In fact, the Township has been able to improve its financial position considerably over the past few years. The actual indebtedness of the Township stood at a total of $23,795,000 on December 31, 2005. At the end of 2012, the total amount will be $13,890,000. This represents a decrease of over 41%. This amount reflects an acceleration in repayment, in excess of that which would result by the normal scheduled retirement of debt. The recent borrowing, which prompted the article, was a refinancing of prior debt, and allowed the Township to take advantage of today’s lower interest rates, thereby saving more than $620,000, net, after all costs.

In early 2010, Moody’s Investor’s Service, the New York based ratings agency, announced a “universal recalibration” of ratings for state and local government debt. This action represented a change in the methodology used to determine rankings of municipal credit. As a result of this universal recalibration, the Township’s rating position was increased two levels, from the “A1” awarded in 2006 to “Aa2”. When the agency systematically reviewed the Township’s 2011 refinancing, they realized that they had artificially elevated the Township’s status and made a correction to “Aa3”. The end result is that the Township’s rating position was increased by one level from that of 2006. The fact that this was positive was pointed out by the Township’s Investment Banker, Mr. Michael Wolf of Bonning and Scattergood, Inc., who stated that a measure of the Township’s current financial fitness was recognized with the most recent rating and that for the first time, no municipal bond insurance would be required, thereby saving approximately $50,000 on the refinancing.

The Township hopes to be able to use the new Moody’s rating and the lower interest rates available to refinance additional debt in 2012.