



DON'T MISS.....

Spring/Summer 2010

- Note from the Chairman's Desk
- Thank You to Contributors of 2008 Per Capita Tax Refund
- Don't forget to check out the Township's website [www.longswamp.us](http://www.longswamp.us) for great up-to-date information

# Longswamp Ledger



**PLEASE NOTE:** The Township's mailing address **NO LONGER** includes the post office box number. The mailing address is simply be 1112 State Street, Mertztown, PA 19539.

## **NEW TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR...**

**Michael A. Sacks**, newly-elected to the Longswamp Township Board of Supervisors, has many ideals and a vast background as a new Supervisor. Mike's background consists of holding two terms as a School Board Member of the Brandywine Heights Area School District, which included two years as Vice President of the School Board. He has served as a Den Leader of Longswamp Pack 575 for 13 years as well as more than a decade as an Assistant Scout Master of Longswamp Troop 575. Mike has also been an active member to many of Longswamp Township's Committees, including the Traffic Study, he has also served as both Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Environmental Advisory Council. Mike believes that civil service can be done in many ways through helping your neighbors, participating with local youth organizations, helping your local church, supporting your local athletics programs and school district events, as well as supporting your local emergency services as different ways of giving back to the community as it has given to you. He wants to keep Longswamp Township and the small-town feeling for as long as he can by working as actively as possible while welcoming the community to continue their participation in the many township meetings and events.

## **2010 Census Bureau ~ "Take 10 Campaign"**

The U.S. Census Bureau is encouraging everyone to take 10 minutes to answer the 10 simple questions on the 2010 Census form. They can't move forward until you mail it back.

In March of 2010, census forms will be delivered to every residence in the United States and Puerto Rico. When you receive yours, just answer the 10 short questions and then mail the form back in the postage-paid envelope provided. If you don't mail the form back, you may receive a visit from a census taker, who will ask you the questions from the form.

When you fill out the census form, you're making a statement about what resources your community needs going forward.

Accurate data reflecting changes in your community are crucial in apportioning seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and deciding how more than \$400 billion per year is allocated for projects like new hospitals and schools.

That's more than \$4 trillion over a 10-year period for things like new roads and schools, and services like job training centers.

Visit [www.2010census.gov](http://www.2010census.gov) for additional information and compare the mail back participation rates for your community.

***Mark your calendar...*** The first **Longswamp Township Historical Society Meeting** is scheduled for Wednesday, May 12, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the Upstairs Conference Room of the Township Building. Please contact Supervisor Maryann Lantz at 610/682-7388 ext. 25 for further details.

We look forward to seeing you and hearing your thoughts as we start-up this new group. We would like to gather and reflect on township memories of the past and co-ordinate future meeting dates with those in attendance.

# ~ LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP PARK ~

## 2010 Park & Recreation Calendar of Events



*\* Specific Event Date and Time Will Be Announced Closer to the Month of the Event \**

**May 28th** - 6th/7th Grade Spring Dance  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
\$3.00 fee

**June 12th** - Community Yard Sale  
8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
\$5.00 and \$10.00 spaces

**June 21st thru August 6th**  
Summer Playground Program  
Week-days 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**July 3rd** - Fireworks Celebration with Blue Mountain Gang (begins at dark)

**August 11th**  
Reading Philharmonic Performance  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**September \*** - Yard Sale  
\$5.00 and \$10.00 spaces

**September \*** - 6th/7th Grade Fall Dance  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
\$3.00 fee

**October 23rd** - Halloween in the Park  
*(raindate - October 30th)*

**December 3rd**  
Open House and Tree Lighting with Santa

*~ events are subject to change ~*

*Please contact MaryBeth Hendley at the Township Office for confirmation and further information at 610/682-7388 ext. 29*

## Happenings In & Around Longswamp Park



### Park & Recreation Committee Members WANTED

If you are interested in serving the community as a member of the Park & Recreation Committee, please do not hesitate to contact MaryBeth Hendley at the Township Office at 610/682-7388 ext. 29. Come and join the fun!

Please note that any flyers or solicitations of any sort that you wish to hang on Township property at the park or on the kiosk need to be submitted to the Township Staff during normal business hours for their approval based on the content of information.

### BUS TRIPS

Would you be interested in a bus trip to Longwood Gardens in the Spring or Winter of 2010?

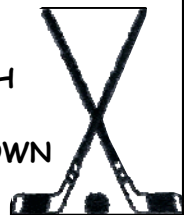
If we can get enough interested residents, we will get a Bieber Bus to make the trip!

Please contact the Township Office at 610/682-7388 ext. 29 to get on the list.

Once we have a full bus, we'll book the trip.

THANK YOU TO MR. STEVEN SPESAK WHO RECENTLY DONATED A VOLLEYBALL NET TO THE TOWNSHIP... IT IS A GREAT ASSET TO OUR PARK!

**STREET HOCKEY IS COMING TO LONGSWAMP PARK!! WE WILL BE HOLDING AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING ON FRIDAY, APRIL 16TH AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM OF THE TOWNSHIP BUILDING. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO MEET THE COACH AND ASK QUESTIONS. ALL YOU'LL NEED TO SUPPLY IS YOUR OWN EQUIPMENT (STICK/GLOVES/PADS, HELMET).**



### LOST AND FOUND

IF YOU FEEL YOU MAY HAVE LOST AN ITEM IN THE TOWNSHIP PARK OR ANYWHERE ON THE TOWNSHIP PREMISES, PLEASE CONTACT THE TOWNSHIP OFFICE DURING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS AT 610/682-7388.

## OUR ENVIRONMENT



### FOR THE BIRDS...

#### *Sharing our properties with PA's Winged Wonders*

Your property may already provide for birds and contain important habitat elements: mature trees, woodlands, unfarmed fields, a diverse landscape. Now, Audubon Pennsylvania, along with **LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP** invites you to become a part of a growing network of Pennsylvania landowners who care about birds and their allies.

The **Bird Habitat Recognition Program** allows any property owner - residential, school, business, or public park - to register the property with Audubon and join a community of property owners interested in sustainable landscaping. Applicants only need to have the presence of at least 25% native trees and shrubs on the property and a source of water accessible for birds.

There is no charge to join the **Bird Habitat Recognition Program** and attractive yard signs are available to applicants as a gift for a tax-deductible donation to Audubon Pennsylvania. For more information, contact Steven Saffier at 610/666-5593 ext. 112 or register on-line at <http://pa.audubon.org/habitat>.

In the continuum of "backyard" conservation ecology, Audubon Pennsylvania will soon introduce **Bird Town, PA**, a program in which entire townships can register and receive regular assessments of tree coverage, carbon sequestration, water conservation, bird resources and other sustainable measures. **Bird Town, PA** is contingent on the number of individuals registered in **Bird Habitat Recognition** so each property is an important part of the larger mosaic.

The Environmental Advisory Council currently has a seat open for a voting member. Applicant must live in the township in order to participate. A background in biology or environmental issues is helpful, but not required. Interested parties should contact Mike Sacks at the Township Office... 610/682-7388 ext. 24.



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE 3RD ANNUAL EARTH DAY CLEAN-UP AND HELP MAKE LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP CLEAN AND GREEN!

Saturday, May 1, 2010

9:00 a.m. to Noon

~ **RAIN OR SHINE** ~

*(In the event of extreme weather, listen to WFMZ)*

**We will be meeting at the pavilion behind the Longswamp Township Municipal Building**

Join community members from around the Mertztown area as we work together for a few hours to clean-up local sites. One group will remove brush and debris from the nature trail and do some planting of Native plants in the trail and install Habitat for the Wildlife. The other group will clean-up trash along Mertztown and Valley Roads.

Please wear shoes and clothing appropriate for outdoor work. Light snacks and refreshments will be served.

Please call Cathi Kratzer at 610/641-0268 or Judy Sechler at 610/682-2934 or e-mail the Environmental Advisory Council at [eac1@ptd.net](mailto:eac1@ptd.net) for further details and registration information.

*Sponsored by the Longswamp Township Environmental Advisory Council and The Great PA Cleanup  
[www.greatpacleanup.org](http://www.greatpacleanup.org)*



## Zoning & Codes Enforcement Highlights

A reminder in relation to the Longswamp Township Burning Ordinance No. 214, adopted by the Longswamp Township Board of Supervisors on September 28, 2004 and some important points to keep in mind...

Open burning may not take place either before sunrise or after sunset and may not be conducted on Sunday or any holiday.

### ***IMPORTANT REMINDER from the ZONING OFFICE...***



Most Longswampians have a full year in which to pump their septic system. Experience has shown us that those who wait until the end of that year to pump, often run into unexpected difficulties.

As a result, they end up violating the cycle's deadline. We encourage residents not to wait until the end of your cycle year to pump in order to avoid any unforeseen problems. **PLEASE NOTE CYCLE 1 IS NOW IN EFFECT FROM JULY 1, 2009 UNTIL JUNE 30, 2010.**

### **How to Hire a Reputable Contractor**

Consumers who hire a home improvement contractor can follow some basic steps to make sure the person or company is legitimate and able to do the requested work.

To choose a reputable contractor, you should:

- Call your local builders association for a list of its members.
- Ask if the contractor is a member of a builders association.
- Verify that the contractor is registered with the state Bureau of Consumer Protection.
- Take your time when choosing a contractor. Most problems occur when consumers fail to investigate contractors carefully before hiring them.
- Ask for an insurance certificate to verify current workers' compensation and general liability insurance.
- Ask for references. Talk with others who have had work done by the contractor about the company's capabilities and quality of workmanship.
- Make sure the contractor has a permanent business location and a good reputation with local banks and suppliers.
- Include any warranties, guarantees, or other promises in the written contract. Always insist on a written contract and written change orders. (These are required by the state's Home Improvement Consumer Protection Act, which took effect July 1st.)
- Be specific about starting and completion dates. Some delays are unavoidable and beyond the contractor's control.
- Beware of an unusually low bid or low advertised price. If a contractor cannot pay for labor, materials, and overhead, you are both in trouble.
- Select a contractor you are comfortable with—one who understands your tastes and needs and with whom you can communicate easily.

**Warning Signs of possible trouble when selecting a contractor include:**

- The contractor does not display a state-issued registration number on all documents or advertisements.
- You cannot verify the name, address, and telephone number or credentials of the contractor.
- A salesperson tries to pressure you into signing a contract by using scare tactics, threats, or intimidation.
- Although reputable contractors sometimes offer special discounts for advertising purposes, be wary of those who offer unusually low prices in exchange for advertising. Protect yourself by asking for a list of previous clients who also were offered the special rate in exchange for advertising considerations. Call the references and ask them if they received the promised quality workmanship and special rate.
- The contractor does not comply with your request for references or the previous clients have some reservations about the contractor.
- You are unable to verify that the contractor is insured.

**SOURCE:** *Pennsylvania Business Association... for a free brochure, call 800/692-7339 or log onto [www.pabuilders.org](http://www.pabuilders.org)*

# Township Roads



The Township Road Crew wishes to thank all the residents of Longswamp Township for their co-operation and patience during a record-breaking year of snow removal. We'd also like to thank everyone for all their words of encouragement and letters of thanks which kept their spirits up thru the never-ending snow storms of 2010.

The Road Crew is thinking ahead of warmer Spring temperatures and are putting the memories of this year's snow fall behind them.

Thank You from the Longswamp Township Board of Supervisors, Road Crew, & Township Staff

The Township Road Crew will be paving South Park Avenue (from Tower Road to State Street) beginning this Spring.

The Township Road Crew will also be performing base repairs on North Park Avenue from State Street to Old Topton Road this Summer as well. A few things to watch out for are:

- \* The road being closed to install drain pipes.
- \* Grinding or reclamation of the road.
- \* Installing new shoulders.
- \* Trees being trimmed back.
- \* Cutting shoulders with the grader.

In order to promote safety for motorists as well as children coming and going to school, please continue to be aware of the reduced school zone speed limits at the Longswamp Elementary School...

The reduced speed limit of 15 mph should be observed week-days from 8:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 3:50 p.m.



## 2010 Special Waste Collection Spring Schedule...

### Household Hazardous Waste

April 10, 2010 - Exeter Township Municipal Building

### Electronic Waste

April 16 and 17, 2010 - Exeter Township Municipal Building

### Pharmaceutical Waste

April 24, 2010 - Exeter Township Municipal Building

### Tire Collection and Paper Shredding

May 1, 2010 - Exeter Township Municipal Building

## BERKS COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY

633 Court Street - 14th Floor SC

Reading, PA 19601

<http://www.co.berks.pa.us/swa>

Phone: 610/478-6362

**2010 Recycling Schedule...** Recycling containers are available at the Topton Borough Park located on West Barkley and South Cherry Street from Wednesday through Sunday.

Wed., April 21st to Sun., April 25th

Wed., May 19th to Sun., May 23rd

Wed., June 16th to Sun., June 20th

Wed., July 14th to Sun., July 18th

Wed., August 11th to Sun., August 15th

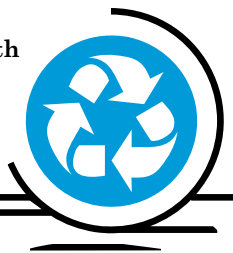
Wed., Sept. 8th to Sun., Sept. 12th

Wed., Oct. 6th to Sun., Oct. 10th

Wed., Nov. 3rd to Sun., Nov. 7th

Wed., Dec. 1st to Sun., Dec. 5th

Wed., Dec. 29th to Sun., Jan. 2nd



*Please remember it is never appropriate to leave recyclables outside the drop-off container. If the containers are full, please take your recyclables home and contact the Berks County Solid Waste Authority at 610/478-6362 for an alternative location.*

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK...**

Up until now, we have experienced hard times, but they could become much harder without your help and support to our local volunteer emergency services.

The Topton Volunteer Fire Company is called upon by us in the event of an emergency and in order to keep this viable service operational, they need to call upon us for your help. While we realize that times may be difficult financially, we are asking for your generosity with any type of monetary donation – no matter how small - in order to help off-set the costs associated with the daily operations of the Fire Company as well as the potential future purchase of two very much needed fire/rescue apparatus.

In cold hard numbers, the tax base of 2.32 paid by you to Longswamp Township is comprised of 1.51 mils as the general real estate tax, .21 mils for the fire protection services tax, .16 mils for the emergency services tax, and .44 mils for the debt services tax. As you can see, the .21 mils paid is such a small portion of what is necessary for operating the Fire Company's daily fixed costs, such as insurance, utilities, maintenance of equipment, and training staff, let alone the purchase of new and very costly equipment.

The Topton Volunteer Fire Company has responded to a total of 232 calls for service during 2009, 154 of these calls were in Longswamp Township and resulted in 5,214 staff hours. During 2009, the Fire Company averaged a turn-out of 12 personnel responding per call. The same personnel also participate in non-incident related activities such as business meetings, fund raising events, public education, and other work details for a total of 1,329.5 staff hours and their training events totaled 808 staff hours. The Topton Volunteer Fire Company has an average response time of 7 minutes, 4 seconds. We are sure you will agree, the over-view of these statistics are extremely impressive and could possibly change if we are unable to keep our local volunteers and find it necessary to have a paid service.

Your donation will play a key role in determining the future of this important issue as you would have a lot to lose – namely, your hard-earned money – if the Fire Company becomes a paid service rather than continuing as a local volunteer service. Let's keep our on-going sense of community by giving what we can to such a worthy cause. The Longswamp Township Board of Supervisors does not want to see a tax increase that would create any type of financial hardship for our residents; however, that unfortunate reality exists if this urgent issue is not addressed in order to pay for such a viable service and their much needed equipment. Thank You.

The *Brandywine Community Library* sponsors free *Foreign Independent Film Nights* on the third Friday of the month. All shows begin at 7:00 p.m. in the multi-purpose room of the Henry Health Center on the campus of the Lutheran Home Campus in Topton. Please do not hesitate to contact the Library directly at 610/682-7115 if you should have any questions.

The film feature for April will be shown on Friday, April 16th: "Troubled Water" (*Norwegian with English subtitles*)... 120 mins. Winner Audience & Jury awards Hampton's Int'l film festival

**Synopsis:** Jan, recently released from prison after serving time for the murder of a child, has always maintained his innocence and is ready to put the past behind him. A gifted organist, he takes a job at an Oslo church under his middle name, Thomas. His talent and gentle manner quickly earn him the respect of his superiors, as well as the love of the pastor, Anna. Thomas even overcomes his initial panic to return the affection of Anna's young son, Jens. But his past catches up with him when Agnes, a local teacher, comes to the church on a school visit and recognizes the organist as Jan, the young man who was convicted for the murder of her son.

The film feature for May will be shown on Friday, May 21st: "For My Father" (*Hebrew with English subtitles*)... 100 minutes Winner Audience Award (Best Film) Moscow Int'l film festival (Filmed in Israel and Germany)

**Synopsis:** Terek, a Palestinian forced on a suicide mission in Tel Aviv to redeem his father's honor, is given a second chance when the fuse on his explosive vest fails to detonate. Forced to spend the weekend in Tel Aviv awaiting its repair, Terek must live amongst the people he was planning to kill. To his surprise he connects with several Israelis on the outskirts of society, including the beautiful Keren, who has cut off contact with her Orthodox family and upbringing. With nothing to lose, Terek and Keren open up to one another, and an unlikely love blooms between two isolated and damaged individuals, raised to be enemies. However, with the deadly load of explosives still strapped to him, he must spend 48 hours in the city, caught between the men that sent him—who can blow up his bomb remotely, the Israeli police patrolling the streets and his new-found companions. Spending this time with Keren and his new friends, Terek discovers the spark of life returning to fill his soul, but when the weekend ends, Terek must make the decision of his life.

*These films are award winning foreign and independent films which generally cannot be seen in theatres. They are unrated and are intended for adult viewing.*

**LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP WISHES TO THANK THE FOLLOWING RESIDENTS FOR THE GENEROSITY  
OF THEIR DONATION TOWARD THE FOLLOWING EVENTS.  
THE CONTRIBUTION OF YOUR 2008 PER CAPITA TAX REFUND IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!**

**JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> FIREWORKS - \$108.50 IN DONATIONS RECEIVED**

Preston Boyer	Patricia A. Lauman	Pauline Seidel
Valerie Boyer	Thomas E. Lauman	Ed Singer
Barbie Brensinger	Leon Mazurie	Becky Singer
Danielle Brensinger	Joan Mazurie	Phyllis Steltz
Rick Brensinger	Arlene Mazy	Stanley Steltz
Clarence Burkhard	Deborah Moyer	Franklin Trexler
Joshua Hock	Ricky Moyer	Joseph Vangeri
Damon Kowolewski	Jennifer Schoch	

**PARK CONCERTS - \$34.40 IN DONATIONS RECEIVED**

Chris Conrath	Sandra Heller
Nancy Fulton	Alison Patterson
Ronald Fulton	David Patterson
Aroll Heller	

**TOWNSHIP PARK ELECTRIC SIGN - \$24.50 IN DONATIONS RECEIVED**

Kristine Chase	James Hubble
Brian Herman	David Oswald
Michelle Herman	Kimberly Oswald
Adrienne Hubble	

**TOWNSHIP GENERAL FUND - \$88.40 IN DONATIONS RECEIVED**

M. Lucille Brenneman	Howard King
Robert P. Brenneman	Paige Kowolewski
Brian Conrad	Edward P. More, Jr.
Cindy Conrad	Tammy Schaeffer
Neil Conrad	Tim Schaeffer
Murray Hamilton	Elaine Seip
Paullette Hamilton	Terry Seip
David Heck	Jonathan Shultz



**LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**1112 STATE STREET**

**MERTZTOWN, PA 19539**

Jennifer Wassell-Bonser, Secretary/Administrator

Joni McPike, Treasurer/Financial Manager

Gena Strzelecki, Administrative Assistant/Open Records Officer

Mary Beth Hendley, Assistant Administrator/Director - Parks & Recreation

**Tel: 610/682-7388 Fax: 610/682-9067 [www.longswamptwp.us](http://www.longswamptwp.us)**

**LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP REFERENCE LOG**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Steven C. Wyka, Chairman  
Maryann Lantz, Vice Chairman  
Michael Sacks, Supervisor

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Richard N. Meier, Chairman  
Donald C. Siegfried, Vice Chairman  
Cathi Kratzer, Secretary  
Bruce Godfriaux  
Stanley Bauman  
David Q. River  
Frank Karoly

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING DAYS**

2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DAYS**

1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

**ZONING HEARING BOARD**

Preston Boyer, Chairman  
Karl L. Fenstermacher  
Steven Parks  
Peter Silbermann (Alternate)

**ENGINEER**

Hanover Engineering Associates  
252 Brodhead Road, Suite 100  
Bethlehem, PA 18017-8944  
610/691-5644

**SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT**

Hanover Engineering Associates  
252 Brodhead Road, Suite 100  
Bethlehem, PA 18017-8944  
610/691-5644

**TAX COLLECTOR**

Lorraine A. Meck  
9540 Longswamp Road  
Mertztown, PA 19539  
610/641-9119

**BUILDING INSPECTOR**

Lehigh Valley Inspection Service, Inc.  
P.O. Box 423  
Orefield, PA 18069  
610/395-3827

**ZONING OFFICER**

**CODE ENFORCEMENT**  
**ASST. SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT**  
Edmund W. Bender  
610/682-7388 ext. 35