



WESTTOWN GAZETTE

A Quarterly Newsletter to the Citizens of Westtown Township - Fall Issue #31



Westtown Day 2019

GREETINGS WESTTOWN FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS.

The township is sometimes asked about the readiness and capabilities of emergency services. This concern has been more acute as the region endures the installation of pipelines carrying natural gas liquids across a large swath of Chester and Delaware counties. It is important for the Westtown community to know that the Board of Supervisors and I have attended many meetings with local and regional emergency service providers in the greater West Chester area, and we have been extremely impressed with their professionalism and capabilities.

Most recently, we had the opportunity to participate in two tabletop exercises; one simulating a regional response to a major weather event, and one simulating a regional response to an active threat (this simulation included near simultaneous mass shooting, bomb scare, and hostage incidents at locations in Westtown, East Goshen, and Thornbury). These exercises were administered by the Chester County Department of Emergency Services (DES). The participants included local police and fire departments, ambulance companies, Chester County Coroner's office, and township supervisors, public works directors, emergency management coordinators, and managers. The Barclay

Friends nursing home fire and the Bellingham shooting were incorporated as real-world examples.

The Board and I confirmed that local emergency service providers routinely train together with Chester County DES. Moreover, they have inter-governmental cooperation agreements with similar providers in Delaware and Montgomery counties to assist during large-scale events. Collectively, they have considerable personnel, equipment, and training resources. The overall take-away? Westtown and Chester County are well prepared to respond to local and regional emergencies. Please visit the Westtown and Chester County DES websites for more information. Chester County has a very impressive 9-1-1 Center and Public Safety Training Campus. They occasionally offer public tours. The Westtown community is encouraged to tour these facilities. I am confident you will walk away with a greater sense of safety and security.

Below are updates on several major projects in Westtown:

Toll Bothers at Crebilly Farm. While the Commonwealth Court has yet to render a decision on Toll's appeal of Westtown's

denial of their original Conditional Use Application for developing the Crebilly Farm tract, Toll recently submitted a new application with some site design changes, so the review process has started again. Watch out for notices on upcoming Planning Commission meetings and Board of Supervisors hearings.

Improvements at Rt. 926/Rt. 202 intersection. This is a PennDOT project that has been stalled in the "black hole" of historical, cultural, and environmental resource clearance. Westtown and Thornbury Townships have engaged the services of our state senate and house representatives to advance this project to final design and construction.

Sunoco Pipelines Project. The 16" diameter pipeline installation is nearly complete in Westtown. The installation of the 20" pipeline was scheduled to start in late September. All work in Westtown may be completed sometime in 2020.

Enjoy the fall. Prepare for winter. Dream of the summer.

Best Regards,

Rob Pingar

Rob Pingar, Township Manager

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Westtown Township, County of Chester

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



Board of Supervisors: Scott Yaw, Mike Di Domenico, Carol De Wolf

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

CHESTER COUNTY USEFUL CONTACTS & PHONE NUMBERS

Chester County Government Services Center:

601 Westtown Road, West Chester, PA 19382
 Information: 610-344-6000
 Aging Services: 610-344-6350
 Children, Youth, & Families: 610-344-5800
 Emergency Services: 610-344-5000
 Health Department: 610-344-6225
 Septic Systems: 610-344-6526
 Recycling/Hazardous Waste: 610-273-3771
 License Bureau (Dog, Fishing, Hunting): 610-344-6370
 Marriage License Bureau: 610-344-6335
 Passports: 610-344-6310
 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 Court House:

313 W. Market Street, West Chester Borough, PA 19380

District Justice for Westtown:

William Kraut (District Court 15-2-03): 610-436-5757

Chester County Conservation District:

610-925-4920

West Chester Area School District:

782 Springdale Drive, Exton, PA 19341
 Main Number: 484-266-1000 / School Tax: 484-266-1035

State Senate - 9th District:

Tom Killion: Local: 610-436-3320 / State: 717-787-4712
www.SenatorKillion.com

State House - 156th District:

Carolyn Comitta: Local: 610-696-4990 / State: 717-705-2075
www.pahouse.com/Comitta

U. S. Senators:

Robert Casey: Local: 215-405-9660 / Federal: 202-224-6324
www.casey.senate.gov
 Pat Toomey: Local: 215-241-1090 / Federal: 202-224-4254
www.toomey.senate.gov

Congress - 6th District:

Chrissy Houlahan: Local: 610-883-5050 / Federal: 202-225-4315
www.houlahan.house.gov

For Police, Fire, & Medical Emergencies, DIAL 911.

For Non-Emergencies:

610-692-5100

BULLETIN BOARD

Full Time Employment Opportunity - Public Works Foreman

This position is responsible for supervisory authority over the road and parks department employees and applicable recordkeeping. Additionally, this position is responsible for the maintenance and repair of roadways, trails, parks, right-of-ways, township maintained properties, snow removal, and storm and sanitary sewer collection systems. The desired applicant must have a HS diploma or GED, firsthand knowledge and experience in the operations of a municipal Public Works Department, along with applicable construction, mechanical, and trade experience. Valid PA driver's license required, and CDL Class B driver's license with air brake endorsement is required. Must have the physical ability necessary to perform Public Works related duties. Pre-employment physical exam and drug testing is required. Starting salary DOE. Excellent benefits package. Submit letter of interest with resume to publicworks@westtown.org.

Historical Commission Vacancy

The Commission meets on the third Thursday of the month at 6PM, with the purpose of fostering community appreciation of the Township's history. If you would like to become involved, please send your letter of interest and resume to the Township Manager, Rob Pingar (rpingar@westtown.org). Candidates must be current in all municipal obligations.

Routine On-Lot Inspections

Routine inspections and pumping are due every three years after your previous inspection or waiver, by October 31 of that year. Additional information on the SMP is provided on the township website www.westtownpa.org/onlot/.

Ready Chesco.

ReadyChesCo is used to notify you during a major crisis or emergency, and delivers important emergency alerts, such as weather, road closures, health, or community alerts. To sign up for Chester County's electronic notification system for emergency information go to <http://www.readychesco.org>.



Stay Informed

To receive information about meetings, special events, and public service announcements via email, please go to the Township website and click on the blue "Get Email Alerts" button at the top of any page.

Pay Sewer and Trash Bills Online

Westtown residents can use Visa, Master Card, and Discover to pay their utility bills online at westtownpa.org. There is no fee for this service.

Save paper!

If you would like to receive the *Westtown Gazette* electronically, send an email to info@westtown.org and request to be put on the electronic delivery list.



Public Works Department News

It was an incredibly busy summer in Westtown! The annual Road Maintenance Project resurfaced just over three miles of township roads. The project took a little longer than usual due to concrete curb and stormwater inlet replacements. The Oakbourne Road Force Main Relocation and Bridge Replacement Project has forced many of us to alter our commute, but the project is expected to be completed on schedule, with the road reopening in November. Aqua's force main replacement along East Pleasant Grove Road and PECO's vegetation management have created additional road blocks, at times making it quite a challenge for motorists, but the services we all take for granted need to be maintained. Improvements were also made to Tyson Park, including a paved walking trail, which will make the interpretive bioswale and park accessible to all.



Tyson Trail Paving



Oakbourne Bridge - Setting the Box Culvert



Oakbourne Bridge - Culvert Installation Complete

Full Time Employment Opportunity - Public Works Foreman

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If Walls Could Talk: Giving History a Voice

By Gail O. Guterl, Westtown Township Historical Commissioner

A house with a ghost. A racehorse that never raced. A home with a strong connection to a French battlefield cemetery. It is often said, "If only walls could talk!" Well, they don't, but thorough research can reveal fascinating stories about many structures. Certainly, Westtown Township has its share of homes with rich histories.

You will be able to read about them soon in the updated History of Westtown, to be posted on the Westtown Township website before the end of this year. Until then, here are a few tales to whet your appetite.

The Racehorse that Didn't

At the western edge of the township is a house that was almost ruined by a racehorse. Built by Francis Strode in 1865 as a farmhouse, this rather plain Victorian on General Howe Drive may not have had all the embellishments of that style because it was built in wartime when building supplies were scarce.

In 1875, Strode sold 46 acres to Charles C. Oat of Philadelphia, who bought the farm for his son D. Beaumont Oat, who was married to Mary E. Strode, Francis' daughter. The story goes that Beaumont and one of his three sons, Charles, mortgaged the house in the early 1900s to buy a racehorse for \$10,000. The horse died the night before its first race. Beaumont died in 1908 in debt and the house sold at auction for \$1,475 to settle his debts. The story relates that it took Charles 15 years to pay off the balance of his and his father's debts.

Thus, a Westtown property was almost ruined by a racehorse who was not to blame.

The Ghost in the Parlor

Travel about a half mile down New Street from General Howe Drive and you will come upon a stately serpentine stone house built in 1855 by Joseph and Joanna Osborne.

After many owners and estate names over the years, the house, now a church property, has been the site of many wedding ceremonies. Viewing the photos taken in the house's elegant parlor after one such ceremony, someone noticed a young man in Victorian formal dress and top hat in the photo. Is he the ghost of one of the owner's sons who was crushed by a horse and carried to the house where he died?

"This might explain the occasional footsteps heard in the house."

– Resident



“Chestnut Hill”—The Schlaanstine House/Orvis Tree Farm

Even houses that no longer exist have stories to tell, more far flung than the borders of Westtown Township. Until May 2019, an elegant stone house sat at 401 West Pleasant Grove Road originally and then 1074 Wilmington Pike, just south of the jug handle at Stetson Middle School. Built on 25 acres of land which was first owned in 1795 by Nathan Atherton, evidence of cut stone and arrowheads show a spring on the site was used by the Lenni Lenape.

After several owners, the house was purchased in March 1945 by Raymond F. and Jess Schlaanstine, who planted many unique specimen trees on the property. The couple’s 19-year-old son, Fred, had been killed in action in France in 1944. Somehow after the war, the couple received a letter from Marguerite and Jan Meyerowitz of Épinal, France, where their son was buried in the American Military Cemetery, saying they visited Fred’s grave and laid fresh flowers on it. A renowned musician, Jan Meyerowitz and his wife, Marguerite, eventually visited the Schlaanstines in Westtown and performed in a musical in Kennett Square. When the Meyerowitz’s returned to France, the Schlaanstines sent trunks of clothing to the people of Épinal.

The Meyerowitz’s emigrated to America in 1946, where Jan worked as a composer (with pieces often starring Marguerite) and taught at the City College of New York. Meyerowitz, a German composer of Jewish ancestry, met Marguerite when he went to southern France during World War II and was hidden from the Germans with the help of the French Resistance. One member of the Resistance was a singer name Marguerite Fricker, whom he married after the war.



Jan Meyerowitz Laying Flowers on the Grave of Fred Schlaanstine May 30, 1945. From the Collection of Jonathan Hoppe



The Baily House. Illustration from *Futhey & Cope’s 1881 History of Chester County, PA*

Swarthmore College in Westtown?

A stately house on 300 acres on South Chester Road might have been the main building of Swarthmore College had negotiations gone differently.

It was reported in a November 1887 article in the Daily Local News that the estate, owned by Abram Baily, had attracted the attention of those wishing to establish Swarthmore College. The article, commenting several years after the fact, said the committee offered Baily \$180 per acre; he held out for \$200.

The committee then looked elsewhere and found what they required in the Delaware County town of Westdale. They founded Swarthmore College in 1864 and changed the town name to Swarthmore. Had the parties negotiated their \$20 difference, Westtown would today be the home of the nation’s third-highest ranked liberal arts college.

Westtown Day

SEPTEMBER 29, 2019

Local residents enjoyed a gorgeous fall day at Oakbourne Park and Mansion. The event included Revolutionary and Civil War re-enactors, tours of the Oakbourne Mansion, petting zoo, carnival games, live music, food, and vendors. A highlight of the day was the presentation of the 2019 Historical Preservation Award to Mary and Fred Magner for their restoration and preservation of the Thomas Mercer & Hannah Taylor house built in 1734.

Thanks to the Historical and Parks & Recreation Commissioners, township staff, generous sponsors, and volunteers who made this annual event a huge success!

(Photos courtesy of Bonnie Raley Photography)





Friends of Oakbourne News

by Tom Bare, President, Friends of Oakbourne

In the last Gazette, I mentioned that virtually all of the lavender and roses in Oakbourne Mansion's recently renovated Clock Garden had succumbed over the winter, most likely due to the extremely wet conditions experienced throughout the previous year. The Friends of Oakbourne (FoO) removed all of these plants, and have now replaced them with different, more robust plants that will be more tolerant of both wet and dry conditions. The lavender was substituted with a dwarf fountain grass, *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hameln,' which grows in 2-3' tall clumps and develops showy bottle brush-like flower spikes that arch gracefully out from the grass mound similar to water spraying outward from a fountain. The roses were substituted with gold mound spireas, *Spiraea japonica* 'Gold Mound,' which is a small shrub that has beautiful golden leaves in the spring that turn chartreuse as summer progresses and then a beautiful yellow tinged with orange/red in the fall. Tiny pink flower clusters (corymbs) that attract pollinators appear on this shrub in the spring.



Clock Garden with Newly Planted Gold Mound Spirea (bottom right) and Fountain Grass (middle left)

During one of the nasty localized storms we've experienced this spring and summer, one of our dedicated trees (a Carolina silverbell) planted in 2015 was shredded and snapped into multiple pieces by a particularly vicious wind storm. This tree had grown quickly (perhaps too quickly!) into a beautiful specimen; the tree had a very dense round tree canopy and I believe this contributed to its susceptibility to the wind being able to shred this tree while young neighboring trees escaped damage. Keeping this in mind, FoO was able to obtain and plant an alternate cultivar of a Carolina silverbell (*Halesia Carolina* 'Jersey Belle'; GPS: 39.93609440, -75.57218987) that will grow in a more upright or columnar habit and perhaps be a bit more resistant to wind shear than the dense rounded habit of the previous variety.



Jersey Belle Carolina Silverbell with a Water Bag

Notice the green plastic bag at the base of the new Jersey Belle Silverbell tree in the picture? That is a watering bag we are using to water all of our newly planted trees this summer. The trees we planted this year were obtained from a nursery that uses the "grow bag" method of growing trees, which results in a relatively smaller root ball than "balled and burlapped" or containerized trees that we previously obtained. Because of the small root ball of these trees, it is important to keep tabs on the moisture content of the root ball to ensure that it does not dry out. The water bags hold up to 20 gallons of water, which is slowly leaked out at the bottom of the grow bag over 5 to 8 hours to thoroughly water the root ball and surrounding area. The bags are filled from a 200 gallon water tank on a utility vehicle that can easily be taken to each tree.

You may recall from the last Gazette that FoO planted three dedicated trees during this spring. All of these trees were obtained from a nursery using the "grow bag" method; since these trees were the first that we have planted that were

produced using this method, we were curious as to how they would thrive at our park. I'm happy to report that all of these trees are doing well as evidenced by the formation of numerous cones on the Blue Atlas Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca') and the appearance of flowers in late August on the Seven-Sons-Flower tree (*Heptacodium miconioides*).

And finally, I've received numerous calls from concerned park users regarding the presence of the pesky invasive spotted lanternfly (SLF) in the park. People have reported seeing the immature lanternfly nymphs and fully developed adults. I've personally seen the adult lanternfly in only one area of the park - the wooded area between the playground area and Kerwood Road. In this area, there is a grouping of several large invasive Trees-of-Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*; FYI, this is the tree featured in the novel "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn"), the preferred host for the SLF. These trees act as magnets for the SLF and there were hundreds, maybe thousands, of them on the trunks of these trees. Chester County is one of 13 Pennsylvania counties under a SLF quarantine. For detailed information on how to manage the SLF go to the link: <https://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly>. This web site has pictures of the various stages of the SLF's life cycle and provides a summary of methods to control this pest, which threatens Pennsylvania agriculture, as well as homeowner's trees and plants.



Blue Atlas Cedar Cones



Spotted Lanternfly on Tree of Heaven at Oakbourne Park



Flowers Blooming in Late Summer on Seven Sons Flower Tree

Interested in Improving The Arboretum and Surrounding Area in Your Beautiful Township Park?

Please join us at the Friends of Oakbourne's upcoming meeting at 7:00 pm on January 16, 2020 at Oakbourne Mansion. Contact Tom Bare (tmbare@hotmail.com or 610-399-1572) if you are interested in donating a park bench or tree to be planted in Oakbourne Park to honor a special person or loved one or to commemorate an important occasion.

Meetings & Events

NOVEMBER 2019

- 4, 18 - Board of Supervisors
- 6, 20 - Planning Commission
- 9, 23 - Yard Waste Collection
- 12 - Parks & Recreation
- 21 - Historical Commission
- 28, 29 - Office Closed

DECEMBER 2019

- 2, 16 - Board of Supervisors
- 4, 18 - Planning Commission
- 7, 21 - Yard Waste Collection
- 8 - P&R Winter Festival
- 10 - Parks & Recreation
- 19 - Historical Commission
- 24, 25 - Office Closed

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS - 7:30 pm
HISTORICAL COMMISSION - 6:00 pm
PLANNING COMMISSION - 7:30 pm
Township Municipal Building
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown

FRIENDS OF OAKBOURNE - 7:00 pm
PARKS AND RECREATION - 7:00 pm
Oakbourne Mansion
1014 S. Concord Road, Westtown

JAN
11th SAVE THE DATE
**CHRISTMAS TREE
COLLECTION**

Remove all decorations and tinsel.
Trees in plastic bags will not be collected.

 Find us on
Facebook

P&R Winter Festival

The Parks & Recreation Commission invites you to get into the holiday spirit at the historic Oakbourne Mansion!

SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 8, 2019
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Oakbourne Park | 1014 S. Concord Road

This free event has something for all ages:

Kids crafts • Caroling • Story time • Photos with Santa Claus
Cookie decorating • Refreshments • A gift for every child
Hand crafted items from local vendors.

Non-perishable food donations for the West Chester Food Cupboard will be accepted. If you would like to volunteer to assist with this event, please email parkrec@westtown.org.



When Recycling – Think Quality, Not Quantity

Many people are still operating under the misconception that recycling every possible scrap of paper, metal, plastic, and glass is the most environmentally sound practice. “Aspirational recycling” is severely limiting the marketability of material worldwide. Most notably, China is no longer accepting U.S. recyclables due to the high rate of contamination.

Here’s a guide for what **NOT** to put in the recycling bin:

- Anything with food waste in it - You don’t have to wash containers, but rinse to remove food scraps and residue.
- Plastic bags and film – These items get stuck in the processing machinery, resulting in expensive repairs and down time. Recycle CLEAN plastic bags, and plastic film packaging at the grocery store.
- Empty snack bags
- Greasy pizza boxes
- Used paper plates, napkins, paper towels, tissues, or diapers
- Paper cups (e.g. coffee cups, fast food drink cups) – The thin plastic lining that help prevent cups from leaking makes it difficult to process.
- Plastic straws or takeaway cup lids
- Plastic utensils
- Styrofoam
- Scrap metal, hangers, aluminum siding, or metal cookware

If you want to do something positive for the planet by recycling, then do it right. When in doubt, throw it out!



General Trash Information

Household Hazardous and Electronic Waste Collection
Pennsylvania law prohibits the disposal of hazardous waste or E-waste in the regular trash. Visit chestercountyswa.org for hazardous waste collection events scheduled throughout the county.

Tube TV’s, computer monitors, appliances, and other electronics can be disposed of at the Lanchester Landfill for FREE through the end of the year (7224 Division Highway, Narvon, PA 17555). Residents can bring up to 3 items per day. Retailers and E-waste collection events are now charging for TVs and computer monitors, so take advantage of this service!

Bulk Items

Large items will be taken on the last collection date of the month. You may put out 3 large items, such as appliances (without Freon) and furniture. **Construction debris (shingles, drywall, lumber, etc.) will not be collected.** If you are unsure about the disposal of a bulk item, please contact the Township.

Yard Waste

Collected on scheduled days. Must be in paper bags or a container that can be dumped. Branches no more than 3” in diameter & 3’ in length must be bundled & tied. Yard waste collection dates are posted on the Township website westtownpa.org, and on your utility bills. Pickup reminders are emailed to residents who subscribe to the township listserv. Subscribe on the website.

AJB Trash & Recycling Service
A.J. Blosenski Inc.
www.ajblosenski.com
610.942.2707

Discount Code: Westtown
\$25.00 off
a Roll-off Dumpster
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- Commercial Compactors
- 1-40 Yard Containers
- Event & Party Boxes
- 100% Customer Satisfaction

15 cubic yards
14ft long / 8ft wide / 5ft high

30 cubic yards
22ft long / 8ft wide / 6ft high

Dependable Roll-Off Service

Servicing Westtown Township

Discount cannot be combined with any other offer.



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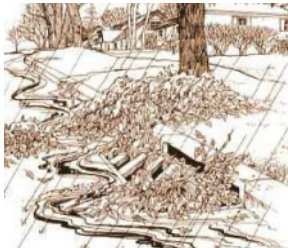
Stormwater Pollution and Yard Waste

tips for stormwater management on your property

DID YOU KNOW:

- Yard debris, including leaves and other organic plant material like shrubbery trimmings and grass clippings, are a significant source of stormwater pollution. This debris can clog culverts, storm drains, and pipes, causing flooding.
- Debris can carry fertilizers and pesticides from your yard and deposit them in streams and ponds.
- Piles of leaves and grass clippings will overload a stream's ability to process leaf litter, causing nutrient pollution and oxygen depletion.

It is easy to do your part to protect our streams and the drainage systems leading to our waterways:



- 1** Do not pile leaves or other yard waste near streams or drainage channels where they can blow or wash into creeks. Use designated leaf collection bags for curbside leaf recycling.

- 2** Do not blow leaves or grass clippings off your property into streets, streams, ponds, or drainage swales.



- 3** Recycle grass clippings and their nutrients on your lawn. Use a mulching lawnmower to recycle remaining leaves into your lawn in the fall!

- 4** Compost leaves and grass clippings along with yard waste. Select a location removed from streams, ponds, and wetlands.

