

Sycamore Township NEWS

Spring 2015

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Welcome to Spring!

Thankfully winter is almost over and even though Mother Nature got in a few last bouts of snow and ice, they were not a problem for your maintenance crew. This year, despite the low salt reserves, the crew did an outstanding job of maintaining clear roads. Thanks go out to Road Superintendent Tracy Kellums and his crew for a job well done! You may have noticed that we are now spraying the roads prior to expected snowfalls – this is a combination of environmentally-friendly brine and beet juice. This allows us to conserve salt and make the roads safe at the same time. All the equipment used for the spraying was fabricated in house, saving thousands of dollars.



Cliff Bishop,
Vice President

2014 was the busiest year on record for our Fire Department, which responded to over 4,200 fire and EMS runs. Thanks go out to these dedicated men and women for their efforts in keeping us all safe. Rest assured, when you call they will be there to provide professional and prompt service.

As we move forward in 2015, you will notice several developments entering the final phase of construction. The Jewish Hospital expansion will add 140,000 square feet of new treatment areas including private rooms and a world renowned bone cancer treatment center. The Kenwood Collection will see its first retail and office tenants and the new TriHealth medical facility will open. These developments will provide many needed services, and will contribute to the overall economic health of the Township.

Road and infrastructure projects continue to progress. This summer we will see the completion of the Hosbrook Road expansion. In addition, ODOT is beginning a project that will increase the capacity of the I-71 / Montgomery Road entrance and exit ramps to improve traffic flow. Finally, several new sidewalk projects will begin this year, linking even more neighborhoods to make the Township even more pedestrian-friendly.

The electric aggregation program will begin later in March with a very favorable rate of .584 cents per kilowatt-hour. The Township gas aggregation program has saved Township residents tens of thousands of dollars since its inception and we expect great savings with the electric program as well. More information on this program may be found on page 5.

Financially, the Township is on stable ground despite the cuts from the State of Ohio. The Joint Economic Development Zones are performing as expected and have stabilized revenue. Your Board of Trustees will always seek ways to maximize your tax dollars without compromising services. In fact, it has been almost 10 years since the last property tax levy was requested.

On behalf of Board President Denny Connor, Trustee Tom Weidman, Fiscal Officer Rob Porter and myself, thank you to all of you, for your continued support of our Township. Enjoy the spring weather!

Sincerely,

Cliff Bishop
Vice President



Police and Crime Prevention

SPRING SAFETY TIPS: HANDLING PANHANDLERS



Chris M. Kettelman,
Lieutenant
Hamilton County
Sheriff's Office

You may have noticed from time to time the panhandlers located at the intersections and interstate off-ramps located throughout Sycamore Township. While most of us feel the need to assist those truly in need and wish to do everything we can for them, there are several things to consider before handing out your change to that homeless vet or laid off worker. In the following paragraphs I would like to explain some of the laws pertaining to panhandling, as well as provide some tips you can use in the event you are solicited for donations from these individuals.

Your Sheriff's Office understands that being homeless and in need certainly is not against the law and we, just as much as any resident of the Township, would like to see those who need assistance get what they need to succeed. Bearing this in mind, there are laws in the state of Ohio that prohibit the solicitation of donations from motorists on a highway (for legal purposes, a highway is any paved, dedicated roadway used for motor vehicle traffic). Section 4511.51 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) specifically prohibits anyone from "standing on a highway for the purpose of soliciting employment, business, or contributions from the occupant of any vehicle." There are exemptions to this ordinance, but only for those with a permit issued by the Township to a charitable organization. These laws are written not to make it difficult on panhandlers; rather, they are written to ensure their safety and the safety of pedestrians and the motoring public. People darting in and out of cars asking for change at the end of the Kenwood Road exit ramp from I-71, or in the middle of the intersection at Montgomery and Kenwood Roads, is a recipe for disaster.

If you are approached by one of these individuals, here are some tips to keep in mind:

Take precautions for your safety.

While most panhandlers are perfectly harmless, there are some who have untreated mental illness or may be fugitives from justice. Trust your instincts. Keep your doors locked. If you do decide to speak or give something to a panhandler, be cordial but cautious by rolling your window down only part way.

Please do not hand out cash.

While a lot of panhandlers are truly in need, there is also a small and tight knit yet growing number of "professional panhandlers" who network. If an area becomes known as a place where a lot of money can be solicited, more and more panhandlers will solicit in that area. If you truly think that the person is in need, you can keep a stash of fast food gift cards in small denominations or bottled water with granola bars tied around them to hand out to the panhandlers. While there are laws prohibiting the solicitation of contributions from motorists, there are no laws prohibiting giving the solicitor something. Additionally, handing out the gift cards or water bottles instead of cash will ensure that your donation will not be used to fuel possible drug or alcohol habits.

If you feel you must give money, please give money to one of the numerous social service organizations that provide services to the hungry or homeless.



cincihomeless.org



hcjfs.org



freestorefoodbank.org



centerforrespitecare.org



dropinn.org



lys.org

EMS/Fire Department



Rob Penny, Fire Chief

Spring is here, it's time to put away the snow shovels and prepare for your favorite spring activities like barbecuing, entertaining, outdoor sporting events, yard work and everyone's favorite—spring cleaning. When you are clearing out unwanted items it's a good time to check your home for unsafe conditions, to ensure your family is safe from potential fire hazards. Here are a few fire safety tips to help you perform your annual spring cleaning and keep your family safe.

BBQ / Grilling Safety Tips

All barbeque grills must only be used outdoors—using a grill indoors or in an enclosed space is not only a fire hazard, but it exposes occupants to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation. Always position the grill well away from combustible objects—buildings, fences, deck railings and landscaping can easily and quickly ignite. Have your grill cleaned and serviced. Check all propane tanks and lines for leaks and damage. Never leave a lit grill unattended. If you are using a charcoal grill never dispose of the coals in a container that is combustible. Charcoal can hold heat in tiny embers in the center of a piece of coal that can appear to be out. Throwing unwanted coals in the garbage can allow the coals to build up heat and ignite anything around them. I have experienced decks and homes catching fire because fireplace embers or grill coals were placed in a combustible container or garbage bag and set out for the trash.

Safety Tips in and Around the Home

- **Remove leaves and trash from carports and garages:** Combustible materials are dangerous if they are exposed to heated automobile components, especially those left under the vehicle.
- **Properly store flammable liquids and home chemicals:** Make sure that gasoline and home chemicals are well marked and out of the reach of children and pets. All flammables, especially gasoline, should be stored in a cool dry place outside the house or work area in an approved container.
- **Recycle:** Get rid of old newspapers, magazines and junk mail. These items tend to pile up and can greatly contribute to the severity and spread of fire.
- **Dryer Vents:** If clothes are still damp at the end of a typical drying cycle or require longer times than normal to dry, this may be a sign that the lint screen or the exhaust duct is blocked. Pay particular attention to lint build-up in clothes dryer vents and in the exhaust ducts. Correct this by cleaning the lint screen/filter before or after drying each load of clothes. Clean the dryer vent and exhaust duct periodically. Clean behind the dryer where lint can build up. Keep the area around the dryer clean and free of clutter.
- **Smoke Alarm Maintenance:** Smoke Alarms require only three minor scheduled tasks: First, replace the batteries once a year. Second, keep them clean. Just as you would dust your furniture, dust your smoke alarms to make sure they are free of dust and debris that may interfere with proper functioning. Third, test your smoke alarms monthly.
- **Spring Duties for the Fire Department:** Spring time brings duties to the firefighters as well. You may see a fire truck or fire department staff vehicle in your neighborhood this spring when we are servicing the fire hydrants on every street in the Township. All fire hydrants require cleaning, greasing the threads, painting the hydrant and checking to make sure they are functioning properly. Some hydrants need to be flow tested; this is how we determine how much water flow in GPMs (Gallons per Minute) the hydrant is capable of producing. If you see our firefighters out in your neighborhood please feel free to stop and talk to them about any questions or concerns you may have.

The Sycamore Township Fire Department wishes everyone a safe and happy spring time.

Rob Penny
Fire Chief

Parks and Recreation



Mike McKeown,
Parks & Rec. Director

CLASSIC ROCK GREATS TO APPEAR AT FESTIVAL IN SYCAMORE

Two classic rock greats will appear at the 23rd annual Festival in Sycamore, to be held July 17th and 18th at Bechtold Park. The talented Mark Farner, formerly of Grand Funk, will make his second Festival appearance on Friday, July 17th. He was the guitar player and lead voice on many of Grand Funk's biggest songs, including *Closer to Home*, *Locomotion*, *Bad Time to Be in Love*, and many others. His last appearance at the Festival drew rave reviews. The legendary band Kansas will make their first Festival appearance on Saturday, July 18th. Known for tremendous hit songs including *Carry On Wayward Son*, *Dust in the Wind*, and *Point of Know Return*, among others, Kansas will bring an exciting, fantastic show to Bechtold Park.

As always, great food will be served by area restaurants. The popular "Ride For Five" will be back. Watch for the summer Newsletter for details on times and other bands at the Festival.

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE TWILIGHT CONCERT

Mark your calendar now for Sunday, June 21, 2015 and look forward to enjoying some of the great sounds of the big band and swing eras. The Jump 'n' Jive Show Band will be performing familiar standards and fabulous contemporary big band and swing music. The concert will be held from 5:00 - 7:00 P.M. at Bechtold Pavilion, 4312 Sycamore Road. Admission is free. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and a picnic basket and enjoy the great outdoors while listening to this great band. Food and refreshments will not be available at the concert. Call 792-7275 if the weather is questionable. Call 791-8447 for more information.

*Jump 'n' Jive
Show Band*



MARK FARNER



KANSAS

TOWNSHIP TIDBITS

SHELTERS, COMMUNITY ROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT

Having a picnic, birthday party, family reunion, meeting, or any kind of friendly get together? Consider renting a shelter at Bechtold Park or the Community Room at Schuler Sports Complex. They are available at very reasonable prices. Call 791-8447 for shelter rental information and 792-7270 for Community Room rental information.



THE SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP ELECTRIC AGGREGATION

Sycamore Township voters approved aggregation for electricity in 2014 by a large margin. The program begins in March 2015 and will have a locked in rate of 5.84 cents per kilowatt hour thru the December 2017 billing cycle. The new rate will start to appear on the bill you receive in April. This is lower than Duke Energy's current rate of 6.1 cents per kilowatt hour and is significantly lower than the expected rate of over 7 cents per kilowatt hour that Duke Energy will charge in May. Residents that were with Duke Energy UTILITY were automatically included in the program unless they specifically opted out.

Residents that are with another provider, as outlined below, who want to join the aggregation program need to contact their current provider to be released so they can join the program. Residents that are current DUKE ENERGY RETAIL customers may join the aggregation program without penalty. In order to join the program, you must contact Mrs. Janice Howard at Duke Energy Retail, 513-287-2097 and ask to be placed in the Sycamore Township Aggregation Program. The new rate will take effect in 1-2 billing cycles. You WILL NOT have to pay an early termination fee.

Residents that are with another third party supplier may be eligible to join the aggregation program. You will need to contact that supplier and return your service to DUKE ENERGY UTILITY. They may charge an early termination fee for which you are responsible. Neither Sycamore Township nor Duke Energy will pay this fee on your behalf. After you have had 1 or 2 billing cycles with DUKE ENERGY UTILITY, you may contact Duke Energy Retail to be added to the aggregation program.

WE NEED YOU!

Sycamore Township is looking for some energetic volunteers to help out at Township activities such as the Festival in Sycamore, Car Show, Twilight Concert, and Luminaria. This is a great opportunity to meet new people and get involved in your community. It's also a lot of fun. If you're interested in getting involved, call Mike McKeown at 792-7270 or email mmckeown@sycamoretownship.org.

Not up for volunteering? Email your news, event information, and/or photos to newsletter@sycamoretownship.org. Be sure to include your name and contact information. The deadline for our summer issue is May 8, 2015 by 4:30pm.

We reserve the right to edit submissions for space and clarity. The number of contributions printed per issue is subject to space available.

Planning and Zoning

Spring brings the promise of warmer weather and with it thoughts of home improvement projects!

Please keep in mind that a zoning certificate is required for the following residential projects:

- New Single Family Homes
- Room Additions
- Garages
- Decks
- Pools
- Sheds/Accessory Use Structures
- Fences/Retaining Walls
- Front Porches
- PODs (Movable Storage Units)
- In-Home Occupations

A zoning certificate ensures that the project is compliant with the current zoning resolution. For most residential projects, with the exception of fences and sheds under 200 sq. ft. in area, the zoning certificate is the first step in the process and a building permit through Hamilton County Building Department will also be required.

Zoning certificate applications, submittal requirements and fee information are available on our website at www.sycamoretownship.org. Many residential projects have no review fees associated with them, and those that do have minimal fees, provided residents apply prior to beginning any work. If you have any questions or are unsure if a permit is necessary, please call the Planning and Zoning office at 513-792-7250 before starting your project.

NEW BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT!

Fresh Healthy Café, featuring a menu full of fresh, healthy ingredients, has opened for business in the food court at the Kenwood Towne Centre. Also new to Kenwood Towne Centre are Apex Sunglass Hut, The North Face and Vengeance.

Open now in the Kenwood area at 6475 E. Galbraith Road is Metro Online Auctions, which offers online estate sales and auctions.

Home Dialysis Training, a home dialysis training and support facility, has opened at 4750 E. Galbraith Road, Suite 103.



SPRING EVENTS

Highpoint Neighborhood Watch Meetings

March 23 & April 20, 7:00 PM
Schuler Community Room
11580 Deerfield Road

Chipping Program

April 4, May 2, & June 6
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Behind Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Road

Document Shredding

April 18, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Behind Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Road

National Day of Prayer

May 7, 12:00 PM
Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Road

Compost Giveaway

May 9, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Hartzell Methodist Church
8999 Applewood Drive

2015 South Trash Bash

May 15, 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
May 16, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Road

2015 North Trash Bash

May 29, 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
May 30, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
McDaniel Park
7841 School Road

Twilight Concert

June 21, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Bechtold Pavilion
4312 Sycamore Road

Festival in Sycamore

July 17–18, 6:00 PM – Midnight
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Road

Maintenance Department



Tracy Kellums,
Superintendent

ROAD WORK AHEAD

If you have traveled through the Kenwood area over the past couple of years, no doubt you have noticed road construction going on. Well, that is not going to change in 2015.

Work on the Montgomery and Hosbrook Roads project has progressed throughout winter and will continue into spring. In addition to this project, there will be several more in the Kenwood area.

First, there will be an underground utility project on Galbraith Road extending from Kenwood Road to Montgomery Road. This project should bid in early spring and be under construction this summer. The end result will be a more dependable delivery of power to residents, along with more aesthetically appealing surroundings.



Second, there will be another project on Hosbrook Road that will start where the current project ends just south of Ronald Reagan Drive and extending to Euclid Avenue. The purpose of this project is to calm traffic on Hosbrook Road. It should also bid this year with construction starting as soon as possible. Although there will be some inconvenience during the construction, the end result will be slower traffic on Hosbrook Road creating a safer environment for the residents.

Third, there is going to be an ODOT project that will improve the I-71 exit and entrance ramps at Montgomery Road. The work is scheduled to begin late May or early June. The goal of this project is to provide better traffic flow in this heavily traveled corridor.

All of these projects will amount to plenty of activity in the area. We ask you to slow down and drive with caution through construction zones. Please be courteous to other drivers as well as construction workers to ensure we get through road work season safely.

As always if you have any questions about this or any other road work in the Township, call me at the office at 513-792-7257 or reach me via e-mail at tkellums@sycamoretownship.org. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.



Tracy Kellums, Superintendent/Assistant Administrator

ABOVE: photos from last year's annual Trash Bash

KEEP SYCAMORE BEAUTIFUL AND JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL TRASH BASH!

Do your part to help keep Sycamore Township looking good! Keep your garbage cans out of sight. Store them in the side or rear yard, or in a garage or shed after trash collection day. Also... Join us for the 2015 Trash Bash! See calendar on page 6 for dates and times.

As always, Sycamore Township Maintenance staff will be on hand to offer assistance to all residents at both events. Trash, junk, debris, old tires, used motor oil, construction materials, furniture, lawnmowers, and appliances of all kinds will be accepted.

Mattresses and box springs will also be accepted provided they are wrapped in plastic or in a plastic mattress bag.

Please note that paint, household chemicals, pesticides, and yard waste including brush and leaves will not be accepted.

Be prepared to show proof of residency.

Contacts

Spring 2015

Denny Connor, President

Cliff Bishop, Vice-President

Tom Weidman, Trustee

Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer

R. Douglas Miller, Law Director

Tracy Kellums, Superintendent

792-7257 – Fax 792-8564

Mike McKeown, Parks & Recreation Director

792-7270 – Fax 792-8564

Greg Bickford, AICP, Administrator

791-8447 – Fax 792-8564

Rob Penny, Fire Chief

792-8565 – Fax 792-8564

Chris M. Kettelman, Lieutenant

District Three Commander

Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

774-6351 – Fax 774-6350

Fire and Police Emergency – 911

www.sycamoretownship.org



8540 Kenwood Road
Sycamore Twp., Ohio 45236

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"There's More in Sycamore"



Trustees available to better serve you



Denny Connor
President



Cliff Bishop
Vice President



Tom Weidman
Trustee



Robert C. Porter III
Fiscal Officer

You can leave messages for your elected officials by calling the Sycamore Township Administration Office at 791-8447.