

Sycamore Township

NEWS

SPRING 2014

In this Issue

- 1 Letter from the Trustee
- 2 Home Theft Protection
- 3 Introducing Rob Penny, Fire Chief
Spring Fire Safety
Calendar of Events
- 4 Facility Rentals
Twilight Concert
Festival in Sycamore
- 5 Township Tidbits
Sycamore Township Electric
Aggregation
- 7 Fair Housing Act Policy
Welcome New Businesses
- 6 Road Work Ahead
Trash Bash Date Changes
- 8 Contacts

The fall and winter months in Sycamore Township have been very busy, and even though it might seem like the cold and snow will never end, spring will be here before we know it!

As we conclude a challenging winter season, I think it's important to say Thank You to the many people who work so hard to make the bad weather months a little more bearable. For example, the snow season arrived early – even before the leaf collection season was over – and we owe a Thank You to our Maintenance Team members, for their tireless commitment to making sure Township roads remain passable. Since our trucks are used for both leaf collection and snow removal, that meant switching some trucks to snow equipment, then back to leaf vacuuming to collect the last of the leaves, then converting back to full time snow equipment. We appreciate the extra efforts of our Maintenance crew during these difficult days.

Thank You also to our Fire Department, which always sees an increase in activity during the winter months. They've responded to more auto accidents, more falls on the snow and ice, and the many cases of broken water pipes and frozen sprinkler heads – all while coping with the hazardous conditions caused by the winter weather.

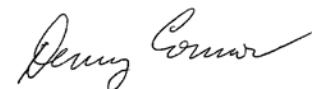
Thank You to our Sheriff's Patrols, who also deal with dangerous temperatures and road conditions while responding to weather-related auto accidents. They also handled the added holiday traffic congestion around our retail districts, while keeping our residents safe. We're grateful for their dedication.

Thank You to our administrative staff, which tackles the day-to-day activities of our busy Township. We had a steady stream of shelter and Community Room rentals and sports field usage, and a record year in Zoning permit applications. Staff members continue to learn new skills, so they will be better prepared to serve the needs of our Township residents and businesses.

A final Thank You is also in order – to the voting residents of Sycamore Township, who approved our fourth Joint Economic Development Zone (JEDZ). Revenues from all four JEDZ will help us close some of the gap created by the loss of funding from Columbus, and will allow us to maintain and strengthen the core services that make Sycamore Township a great place to live, work and play.

On behalf of Board President Cliff Bishop, Trustee Tom Weidman, Fiscal Officer Rob Porter and myself, Thank You to all of you, for your continued support of our Township. We look forward to another great year in 2014.

Sincerely,



Denny Connor, Vice President



Denny Connor,
Vice President



Police and Crime Prevention



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

Residential burglaries literally hit close to home. There is almost nothing more personal than having one's home and one's privacy invaded by a criminal.

The most important thing you can do is CALL THE POLICE to report a crime or any SUSPICIOUS activity when it is occurring. You have to be the eyes of your neighborhood. And remember you can always remain a pair of anonymous eyes!

Home burglaries often occur during the day while families are at work or school. While residential burglaries seem random, burglars usually choose their targets. Unoccupied homes with easy or concealed access and quick escape routes are frequent targets. In many cases, burglars will ring doorbells to check to see if anyone is home and then break in if it appears that no one is there. If you see any behavior that looks out of place, call and report a suspicious person. Write down any vehicle plate numbers and the description of any people or vehicles involved.

Once inside your home, burglars look for small expensive items that are easily traded for cash or drugs. Favorite items include cash, jewelry, laptops, CD/DVD players, game consoles, watches, guns and small electronic devices. Quick cash is needed for living expenses and drugs.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND MAKE YOUR HOME A LESS LIKELY TARGET WITH A FEW COMMON SENSE TIPS:

Lighting:

- Install lights by all exterior doors. Use lights at night.
- Install outside light fixtures where the bulb is hard to reach.
- Illuminate house numbers for quick emergency service response. Put the house numbers on the mailbox too.

Vehicles:

- Close the garage door and cover windows so no one can see inside.
- Hide garage door openers, GPS units and other valuables from open view inside your car.

Doors & Windows:

- Install a monitored residential alarm system.
- Change the locks when moving into a new residence.
- Always lock your doors and windows.
- Give your neighbor the spare key – don't hide it outside.
- Use dead bolt door locks on exterior doors and double cylinder dead bolt locks if glass is within three feet of the lock.
- Add auxiliary track-type locks, removable drop bars, wooden dowels, or pinning devices to windows and sliding glass doors.
- Trim shrubs back from doors and windows. Don't give burglars places to hide.
- Use motion sensors and photocells on exterior floodlights.

Personal Information:

- Keep valuables in a safe deposit box.
- Use a locking mailbox.
- Record all makes, models and serial numbers from electronics.
- Avoid placing boxes from recently purchased electronics out in public view; discard them, cut them up and place them in trash bags.

Dealing With Strangers:

- Report suspicious persons and activity to the Police immediately
- Never let strangers enter your home.
- Hire only reputable workers and ask for references.
- Never give keys to workers.
- Never leave notes for anyone on the door.

While on Vacation:

- Have the Post Office hold your mail.
- Park a neighbor's car in your driveway.
- Use timers on indoor lights to give the impression you are home.
- Sign up for the Sheriff's vacation check program by calling (513) 683-3444 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. After hours call Sheriff's Headquarters at (513) 825-1500.

Finally, don't wait to report any suspicious activity or a suspicious vehicle in your neighborhood, call our non-emergency dispatch number at (513) 825-2280.



EMS/Fire Department



Rob Penny
Fire Chief

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Rob Penny and I am the Interim Fire Chief of Sycamore Township. I've been with the department since it began in October of 1995 holding the positions of Captain and Assistant Chief. I have been responsible for the overall operations of the department, both fire and EMS.

In 1999, I brought the concept of using 12 lead Electrocardiogram (ECG) monitors to the fire department so our EMS personnel could detect heart attacks and other cardiac problems in the field. This concept is now a part of our everyday protocol for medical emergencies involving cardiac problems. We can detect a heart attack in the field and transmit the ECG to the hospital. Over the past few years the hospitals have developed a Cardiac Cath Team that can be activated 24 hours a day 7 days a week based on the ECG we send them. When our patient arrives at the hospital they are sent to the Cath Lab right away; no waiting in the emergency room.



I would like to share a safety tip with you. When spring and summer arrive we start working on projects around the house. If you are going to use any type of oil based stain, paint thinner or even linseed oil, you need to be aware of safety hazards associated with the disposal of the oily rags you may use. Each year there are a number of fires in homes as a result of the improper disposal of oil soaked rags. A wadded up oily rag will build up heat and combust which can lead to the total devastation of your home. The proper method for disposing of



oily rags is to soak them in a soapy solution for a few minutes and then spread them in a flat single layer somewhere outside, in an area free of children and pets, so the product can cure and dry. This way not enough heat can build up to cause a fire. Once the rags have become hard and dry they can be discarded. Do not throw oily rags in the laundry to wash them or place them back in a storage area for another use.

Please stay safe this spring.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Chipping Program

April 5/ May 3/ June 7
8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Behind Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Rd.

Document Shredding

April 19
10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
Behind Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Rd.

National Day of Prayer

May 1
12:00 P.M.
Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Rd.

Compost Giveaway

May 10
8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Hartzell Methodist Church
8999 Applewood Dr.

South Trash Bash

Friday, May 16
Noon – 4:00 P.M.
Saturday, May 17
8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Rd.

North Trash Bash

Friday, May 30
Noon – 4:00 P.M.
Saturday, May 31
8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
McDaniel Park
7841 School Rd.

Twilight Concert

June 22
5:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
Bechtold Pavilion
4312 Sycamore Rd.

Festival in Sycamore

July 11-12
6:00 P.M. – Midnight
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Rd



WATCH OUT!

With the advent of more sunshine and warmer temperatures, more and more people will be out and about. This is especially true for two wheeled vehicles, including bicycles, scooters, and motorcycles, as well as pedestrians. Make sure to look twice when entering or leaving intersections, and watch out for children and adult bicyclists.



Parks and Recreation



Mike McKeown
Parks & Recreation
Director

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 792-7259 for shelter rental information. Call 792-7270 for Community Room rental information.



TWILIGHT CONCERT DATE ANNOUNCED

Keep Sunday, June 22nd open to enjoy some of the great sounds of the big band and swing eras. The Jump 'n' Jive Show Band will be on hand to fill the air with 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 Rd. 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.

22ND ANNUAL FESTIVAL IN SYCAMORE TO FEATURE CLASSIC ROCKERS

Make your plans now! July 11th and 12th promise to be two of the most memorable days of the summer as the 22nd annual Festival in Sycamore rocks in Sycamore Township from 6:00 P.M. – Midnight at Bechtold Park. Appearing on Friday, July 11th, will be FRAN COSMO, former lead singer for the multi platinum band BOSTON. With hits including *More Than a Feeling*, *Peace of Mind*, *Long Time*, and *Smokin'*, this will be a fantastic show. Saturday, July 12th, will feature two all time Festival favorites whose performances will make this an unforgettable night. Classic rockers AMBROSIA, with hits including *How Much I Feel*, *You're the Biggest Part*, *Nice Nice*, and *You're the Only Woman*, will deliver what promises to be another extraordinary performance. Closing out the night will be the legendary classic rock band THE GUESS WHO. The band's last performance at the Festival drew rave reviews that resulted in countless requests to bring them back this year. They will be performing all of their many hits.

again offer the popular RIDE FOR FIVE program. Pay \$5.00 each day and ride the rides all night long!

We hope to see you on July 11th for FRAN COSMO, former lead singer of BOSTON, and Saturday, July 12th, for AMBROSIA and THE GUESS WHO. Watch for the summer newsletter for the full schedule of bands and times.



TOWNSHIP TIDBITS

BLOCK WATCH MEETING DATE TBD

The next Highpoint Block Watch meeting is tentatively scheduled for March. Please check the website calendar for the date and time at www.sycamoretownship.org or call Deputy Mike Bittermann at (513) 218-2369.



Fiscal Officer Rob Porter swears in Trustees Tom Weidman and Cliff Bishop for their new terms at the first Trustee Meeting of 2014.

THE SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOU!

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 5, 2014 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.*



Fiscal Officer Rob Porter and Sycamore Township Trustees Tom Weidman, Cliff Bishop and Denny Connor honored Firefighter/EMT Gregory L. Roth upon his retirement after 40 years of dedicated service to Sycamore Township.



Trustees Denny Connor, Tom Weidman and Cliff Bishop present a resolution honoring the 2013 Moeller Football Team for winning the State Championship for the second consecutive year to Gus Ragland, Stephen Langenkamp, Sam Hubbard and Coach John Rodenberg.

THE SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP ELECTRIC AGGREGATION

In 2010, the residents of Sycamore Township decided that "opt-out" natural gas aggregation was a good investment. Opt out aggregation is a process where all Township residents who are account holders with Duke Energy are automatically put in a group for buying energy, unless they specifically "opt" themselves out. In the two years the program has been operating, Township residents have typically saved 25% each month on the cost of their natural gas.

The success of the natural gas program has prompted your Board of Trustees to look at a similar program for electric. In the past, electric aggregation has been an "opt-in" program, which means that the resident must contact the aggregator or electric provider to be included in the discounted rates. You probably receive many offers in the mail for lower electric rates. If you look carefully at the terms, it may be for as little as six months or as long as one year, and often you will receive multiple offers from multiple providers.

In the May 7, 2014 primary election, Sycamore Township residents will be asked to approve a ballot measure that will give the Township the ability to provide an opt-out electric aggregation, similar to the natural gas aggregation program. The premise of the two programs is the same -- try to find the lowest rate for our residents and make it automatically applied to their bill, instead of requiring each resident to seek their own rate. Electric aggregation programs in other

communities have resulted in significant savings to the residents.

In order for the Township to become an Aggregator, the residents must approve it via a ballot initiative. Passage of the program will then allow the Township to shop for electric rates using the buying power of all residents, which could result in a lower rate for those who choose to participate in the program.

It is important to understand that this vote simply gives the Township the ability to become an aggregator, and does not mean the program will begin. With the recent volatility of the electric market, the Board of Trustees feels it will be a good tool to have to combat rising electric rates. If the Township is able to get a good rate for its residents, then the program would commence. However, if the rate is not competitive and the individual resident can get a better rate, then the Board would not initiate an aggregation program.

If the voters approve the program, and the Township chooses to become an electric aggregator, you will still have the ability to keep your current provider by opting out, just like you do for natural gas. If you have any questions about aggregation, please do not hesitate to contact the Township Offices.





Planning and Zoning

THE FAIR HOUSING ACT AND FAMILY HOMES IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

The Office of Planning and Zoning at times receives phone calls from residents inquiring about zoning restrictions for “Group Homes” in residential districts in Sycamore Township. Section 3-2 of the Zoning Resolution permits a “Family Home” in a residential district as of right.

The Zoning Resolution defines a “Family Home” as “A residential facility shared by at least six (6) but not more than eight (8) mentally retarded or developmentally disabled individuals plus paid professional support staff provided by a sponsoring agency either living with the residents on a 24 hour basis or present on shifts, who live together as a single housekeeping unit in a long-term, family-like environment in which staff persons provide care, education, and participation in community activities for the residents in order to enable them to live as independently as possible in a residential environment. This definition shall not include an alcoholism or drug treatment center, a work release facility for convicts or ex-convicts, or other housing facilities serving as an alternative to incarceration.”

The Zoning Resolution further goes on to state that “Family” is “A person or group of persons occupying a premises and living as a single housekeeping unit, including a “family home” as herein defined, but as distinguished from a group occupying a boarding house, fraternity/sorority house, hotel or other type of contractual living quarters.”

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, the Fair Housing Act, states that developmentally disabled individuals living together as a single housekeeping unit are a protected land use class and local laws may not impede their right to occupy a residential dwelling. The intent of the Sycamore Township Zoning Resolution is to be in compliance with the Fair Housing Act.

Such establishments are required to maintain the property in a proper single family manner and must meet the provisions of the Ohio Basic Building Code and Administrative Fire Code. If you have any questions about this or any other zoning issue, please call the Office of Planning and Zoning at 792-7250.

SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP WELCOMES NEW BUSINESSES!



Lori Holiday and Angie Fairbanks, USA Regional Chamber; Steve Sudberry; Liz Castellini-Sudberry, owner; Congressman Brad Wenstrup; Holly Beltz; Stephen Shaw, Madeira Chamber of Commerce; Denny Connor, Sycamore Township Trustee; and Connor Carroll, USA Regional Chamber at the Grand Opening of Home Care Assistance

Home Care Assistance has opened for business in the Shoppes of Kenwood at 7712 Montgomery Road. The mission of Home Care Assistance is to change the way the world ages by providing older adults with quality care that enables them to live happier, healthier lives in their own homes. Contact them at (513) 891-CARE (2273) or visit www.homecarecincinnati.com.



Open now in the Kenwood area at 7324 Kenwood Road is **The Ring Supplier**, Cincinnati’s new Diamond Bridal Store. The Ring Supplier is a division of a 100 year old U.S. company that has partnered with one of the world’s largest diamond cutters, supplying clients with the very best selection and value.



Cooper’s Hawk Winery and Restaurant has opened at 8080 Montgomery Road featuring upscale, casual dining, a working winery and tasting room.

Maintenance Department



Tracy Kellums,
Superintendent

ROAD WORK AHEAD

This year Sycamore Township will once again have an extensive road program made up of several different processes, enabling the Township to get the most mileage out of your money. While the list of roads that are to be worked on in 2014 has yet to be finalized, the processes that will be used have been established.

For years the roads in Sycamore Township have been on a twelve year cycle for repaving. This was an aggressive program meant to keep all roads in the Township in new or good condition. Unfortunately, as you are all aware, the Township has been hit hard by cuts in income from the State of Ohio which have affected the budget in all departments. This loss of revenue, coupled with the Trustees' desire to keep taxes at a minimum, has forced the Township to look for other cost effective solutions to lengthen the life of the roads.

One of the techniques that the Township has been using for several years now is a micro-surface called Blackmat. This process has been used in areas throughout the Township including

Dillonvale, McCauley Woods, Rossmoyne, Kenwood and others. Blackmat is a thin overlay that is a cold process installation; it is less than twenty five percent of the cost of milling and repaving a road and extends the life of the pavement upwards of fifty percent.

Blackmat is not new pavement. When it goes down it is a little rougher than new pavement and doesn't look as neat in the curb lines. It is also more of a logistics problem for installers and residents due to the fact that it cannot be driven on until it has set. Therefore, residents could be out of their driveways for more than a day. The Township and the contractor will always give you advance warning when your street will be affected by this process so that you can make proper arrangements. We at the Township realize that this is an inconvenience to our residents but we hope you understand that this course of action is necessary to keep the roads in the condition that you have been accustomed to at a price that is affordable.

If you have any questions about this or any other road work please call Superintendent Tracy Kellums at 513-792-7257 and he will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

TRASH BASH DATE CHANGE

This year both the South and the North Trash Bash will be held in the spring:

South Trash Bash

Bechtold Park 4312 Sycamore Road 45236
Friday, May 16, 12:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M. and
Saturday, May 17, 8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

North Trash Bash

North Sycamore Recreational Facility, School Road Entrance,
7841 School Road 45249
Friday, May 30, 12:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M. and
Saturday, May 31, 8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

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 but they must be 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 2014

Cliff Bishop, President

Denny Connor, Vice-President

Tom Weidman, Trustee

Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer

R. Douglas Miller, Law Director

Tracy Kellums, Superintendent

Mike McKeown, Parks & Recreation Director

791-8447 – Fax 792-8564

Greg Bickford, AICP, Planning/Zoning Director

Assistant Administrator

792-7250 – Fax 792-8571

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

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
CINCINNATI, OH
PERMIT NO. 1693

“There’s More in Sycamore”



Trustees available to better serve you



Cliff Bishop
President



Denny Connor
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.