



The Borough of East McKeesport

Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

MARCH 2016

VOL. 7 ISSUE 1 NEWSLETTER

**TO ALL BOROUGH RESIDENTS:
911
IS NOT ONLY FOR EMERGENCIES
CALL 911 ANYTIME
YOU NEED A POLICEMAN**

USING 911

In 1957 the National Association of Fire Chiefs recommended a single number when reporting fires. In 1967 the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice recommended that a single number be adopted for reporting emergencies nationwide. In November of that year, the FCC and ATT chose 9-1-1 for a number of reasons: it was brief and easy to remember; it was not used as an area code, office code or service code; it can be dialed quickly. In 1968 the first call was placed (Alabama). By the end of the 20th Century, 93% of the US and Canada was using the system. In 2006, East McKeesport came on board.

The use of 911 has expanded a lot over time. One of the more recent expansions has greatly benefited small boroughs like ours. Rather than have an on-site officer on call 24/7 to accept non-emergency calls, we can keep our policemen on the road at all times, and you and I can call 911 any time we need a police officer, emergency or not. Please do not be hesitant to call 911 – just notify the operator immediately that this is not an emergency call. This will benefit all of us.

GREEN GROCER

Now here's some really good news for people who want a local produce stand – the GREEN GROCER is set up every Friday from 4:00-4:45 in Wilmerding in front of Westinghouse School. They sell in season produce and also fresh meat – and they accept cash and food stamps. Stop down the next Friday you are free and support this new local venture!!! If we support it, we'll be able to keep it!!!

MS FUNDRAISER

The women of the Moose are sponsoring a fundraiser for MS on Sunday, April 10 from 2pm until 6pm. at the Senior Center on Chicora St. The cost is \$6.00, which includes spaghetti, salad, and a roll. There will also be a bake sale. Donations are welcomed! Please set the date aside and plan to attend.

NEWSPAPER LOSS

As you are surely aware by now, the McKeesport Daily News became defunct as of December 31, 2015 (and many of us, who have read it since childhood, are sorely missing it). At the same time, the Tribune Review arbitrarily decided that it will no longer deliver its paper to us in this area. Therefore, effective January 1, 2016, all Borough advertising will appear in the Pittsburgh Post Gazette, which is still in operation and IS continuing to deliver to us in eastern Allegheny County. Thank you, Pittsburgh Post Gazette!

COUNCIL OFFICERS

Congratulations to Donna Ferrainolo, newly-elected Council President, and John Ekiert, newly-elected Vice President of Council. Mrs. Ferrainolo is beginning her 17th year on council and has successfully participated on every committee at one time or another. Mr. Ekiert was elected to Council 2 years ago and has very actively served on the Police committee and on Planning and Services. We know that under their leadership our Borough will continue to move forward in dynamic ways. Also Congratulations to the two newest members of Council, Carley Sciulli and Paul Rosa, Jr. who have been working diligently and attending newly elected councilors classes to better serve the Borough.



CLEAN UP DAY

One of our most successful volunteer activities, which occurs twice a year, is Clean-Up Day. This spring it will be held on Saturday, April 23rd from 10AM-12PM. We will meet at the East McKeesport Senior Building and move with our group to various corners of the community to pick up trash that passersby have rudely thrown over our roadways throughout the winter. Volunteers will have the opportunity to meet and enjoy the company of other residents, as well as being invited to enjoy pizza lunch, which will be served at community building afterward. Interested parties can receive a letter recognizing their community service, if they so desire. Please plan to join us for this activity – the more the merrier!!! Thanks for your ongoing support!

STORM WATER NEWS CORNER

You, the public are an important partner in the campaign to preserve Western Pennsylvania's greatest asset – our water supply. Pure water is essential for all forms of life. Keeping our water safe from contamination is in everyone's best interest. In each newsletter, we will be providing tips on how you can help preserve this vital commodity.

When you wash your car at home, where does that water go? It likely goes onto the street where it is collected in a storm sewer which transports it to a stream or river. If you use harsh chemicals to clean your car, they will also go into the stream where they can kill fish or wildlife that may drink the water. It is better to go to a commercial car wash where the water is cleaned and reused or if possible, wash your car in a grassy area where the water will filter into the ground instead of running off into a creek.

Salt is another source of water contamination. While we all want to clear the snow and ice from our walks and driveways to be safe, please remember to use salt or other de-icers sparingly. Use only as much as needed. This will help minimize contamination and also save you money! More information on how to protect our water resources is available at www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater

OFFICER MINNAJI AMBULANCE CALL

On December 16th, 2015 Officer Steve Minnaji and the paramedics from Eastern Area EMS were called to a residence on 5th Avenue for a person who was having chest pains. Officer Minnaji arrived on scene first and rendered aid until EMS arrived to treat the patient. Once the ambulance arrived, Officer Minnaji blocked traffic until the ambulance left for the hospital. Shortly after the patient was put into the ambulance, one of the medics alerted Officer Minnaji that the patient went into cardiac arrest and that they needed him to drive the ambulance to the hospital. With Officer Minnaji driving the ambulance to the hospital, both paramedics were able to resuscitate the patient, keeping him alive until they arrived at the hospital. The patient then went directly to the operating room where doctors performed lifesaving surgery that allowed him to be with us today and on his way to recovery. Thanks to everyone for a job well done.



LOCAL TAX RETURN IS DUE APRIL 18

It's that time of year again. The 2015 local earned income tax return filing deadline is approaching. The due date is extended to Monday April 18 this year because Washington DC is commemorating Emancipation Day on Friday April 15.

Did you know the quickest way to get your refund is to file online? If you live and work in Pennsylvania, you can e-file on our tax administrator's secure website, which is available 24/7 at www.KeystoneCollects.com.

Keystone Collections Group's e-file is the easy, fast and secure way to file your 2015 tax return. It lets you file your tax return when it is most convenient for you. You will need your W-2, your Social Security Number and any other income documents that may apply (such as a PA-UE or a Schedule C). Keystone redesigned e-file to make it even faster and more user-friendly.

If you have questions regarding local tax filing, visit Keystone's Frequently Asked Questions or call Keystone's Taxpayer Helpline at 1-888-328-0565 to speak with a local, knowledgeable Taxpayer Service Agent. You can also email your questions 24/7 to Taxpayer Support. Taxpayer Service Agents try to respond to all online inquiries within three business days.

Taxpayers with earned income in 2015 are required to file a Final Tax Return by Monday, April 18.

CHILD SEAT SAFETY CHECK

WHEN: Thursday, March 10th, 2016 from 3pm to 6:30 pm
WHERE: EAPS EMS, 192 11th Street, Turtle Creek, PA 15145

Sponsor: Eastern Area Prehospital Services
Police Officers from Departments all over Allegheny County including East McKeesport will be there to make sure that your child is riding in your car safely. They will inspect your car seat to make sure it is properly installed in your vehicle. There is no cost but you MUST HAVE AN APPOINTMENT. Contact 412-885-0266 to make an appointment.

FACES OF EAST MCKEESPORT POLICE OFFICER JOE PODOLAK

December 2014 was a good month for us. That was when we hired Officer Joe Podolak, a very personable, intelligent and hard-working young man. Deciding that he wanted to be a policeman at a very young age, Joe's focus in high school was computers. A 2011 McKeesport High School graduate, he then attended Kaplan Institute, where he graduated with an associate's degree in Criminal Justice in May of 2013. Joe then moved on to the Allegheny County Police Academy - from there he came to East McKeesport, and what a great break for us. Officer Podolak says, "I like working in East McKeesport. It's a very nice town with knowledgeable, friendly officers, who all work well together. Compared to many places, we have very little crime, and the majority of the people here are so very nice, even if there is a problem." He says that it is "pretty quiet in Wall, as well."



When he's not at work, Officer Podolak enjoys his 2 miniature pinschers. The 2nd of 4 boys, he and his brothers often go to work out at the gym together. His oldest brother runs his own computer business. Officer Podolak often works the shift beginning at 8 P.M. When he sees kids out after midnight, he often takes them home in the back seat of his police car. "There is no reason someone who is 14 should be out after midnight." It is so rewarding to meet and talk with the members of our wonderful police force. Thanks, Joe, for taking the time to talk with me!

CHRISTMAS PARTY

What a marvelous Christmas party the children of our Borough attended. Yes, we served our usual pizza from Merlino's (which is always a real highlight), and, yes, Home Depot once again volunteered to come help our kids make a marvelous wooden 3 piece statue that was a great hit, and, yes, Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus visited with all our kids and posed for a zillion pictures. But there were a few really fun additions to the day, also. There was a really



a really neat cookie table with icing and various sprinkles that enabled our kids to make their own desserts, and there was the best face painter ever, who made our children into marvelous creatures, dazzling with sparkles. Everyone had a fabulous time, and I still smile when I think about it.



EASTER PARTY

Might I suggest that if you enjoyed the Christmas party and would like another good time, or, if you missed our Christmas party and would like to see what you've been missing, you should sign up for our Easter Party, to be held on Saturday, March 26 from one until three. We'll again be serving the best pizza in town (Merlino's), our Easter bunny will be bouncing around everywhere and will be delighted to be photographed with your kids, a magician will astound you with his tricks, and the Easter egg hunt will bring joy to all the different age groups. Just to be sure we have enough food and fun stuff, please make sure to sign up your children ages 12 and under by registering with Connie at 412-824-2531 by MARCH 14TH. Then we'll all come and have another grand time together!!!! Just an FYI - the Halloween party will be October 23 from 1-3 and the Christmas party will be on December 17 from 1-3, as well.

SNOW ANGELS

There is a tremendous opportunity to be a volunteer in your own neighborhood on your own schedule! Here in East McKeesport we have many senior citizens/adults with disabilities who just cannot perform many daily tasks, like shoveling snow and going grocery shopping. Many of these people do not even get visitors in their homes anymore. This is a fabulous opportunity for adults and TEENAGERS to get to know their elderly/infirm neighbors and to feel great about yourself for being a real asset to East McKeesport. You can do it for as little as an hour a month or on an 'as needed' basis. "How?" you ask. BECOME A SNOW ANGEL!!! Just call 211 or visit OpenYourHeartToASenior.org to be a wonderful gift to a senior who needs some real help!!! Please - do it now!!!

NEW POLICE CAR

In December the Borough purchased a 2016 Ford Explorer and the Police Department put the new vehicle into service, replacing the 2005 Ford Explorer. The old Explorer served the Borough well but had reached the end of its useful life as a police vehicle. The new vehicle is equipped with a video camera system, mobile computer system and a new color design. This vehicle allows the officers and the Borough to have 2 four wheel drive vehicles in the winter months when the weather is bad, allowing both officers on each shift to better respond to all calls and emergencies.



EAST MCKEESPORT TRIVIA

Ed Mandich, lifelong East McKeesport resident and retired mailman, sent me, 2 years ago, some trivia information, which I filed but never used. I have just recently pulled it out of a box of files, and would like to share some of it with you. Ed says that "Starting on Broadway, up the hill past the #2 fire hall, there used to be a ballfield where Sara and Edna Streets are now located, and the local kids played softball there all summer. Turning around and coming down Broadway, if you look down Carson Street, the first house on the left was a confectionary store that sold penny candy. All the kids rode sleds down Broadway, too, turning right on Chicora and ending up on Melrose Street. At that corner of Broadway and Chicora, where Forgie-Snyder Funeral Home now stands there was a great place called Bolton's Meat Market. Across the street from Snyder's was the home and office of Dr. Hackman, M.D. (anyone remember him?) and there was an underground passage under the house (if you went down a secret flight of steps, through a cupboard, you ended in the passage)." Thanks, Mr. Mandich – and there will be more in the next newsletter!

NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY POLICE WEEK

Every year, America sets aside a week to salute the men and women who do the difficult, dangerous and often thankless work of safeguarding our communities. Our police officers embody the very idea of citizenship – that along with our rights come responsibilities, both to ourselves and to others. To the men and women who carry the mission to protect us, our schools, our businesses, our children, we owe our unyielding support. Just as police officers never let down their guard, we must let never let slide our gratitude. We must extend our thanks not only in times of tragedy, but for every tragedy averted – every accident avoided because a patrol officer took a drunk driver off the streets, every child made safer because a criminal was brought to justice, every life saved because police officers raced to the scene. In honor of these men and women, May 15 has been declared National Peace Officers Memorial Day, and May 15-21 has been designated Police Week. East McKeesport is a well protected town, thanks to our police. Please take a moment during Police Week to extend your appreciation to our wonderful police department members!! Thanks.

NORTH VERSAILLES LIBRARY ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

- LEGO CLUB – School age kids – Legos provided – every Thursday @ 4:30
- STARRY STORY TIME – Toddlers to Grade 1 – Story time – March 24, April 28, May 26
- EGG-TASTIC EASTER EXPERIMENTS – All ages–sign up required –experiments with eggs – Mar 22, 6:30
- SPRING PLANTING –All ages – sign up required –plant seeds and take them home to grow –Mar 29,6:30
- POKEMON TRAINING – All ages – sign up required –Tues April 12, 6:30
- EARTH DAY SUPER HEROES – All ages – sign up required – use reclaimed materials to create superhero masks, capes, etc. Tues April 19, 6:30
- LET'S GO FLY A KITE –All ages – sign up required – kite making and games – Tues May 17 6:30
- FAFSA OPEN HOUSE – Jayeann Harr (Higher Education Access Partner rep) answers question and gives information re: filing for financial aid for college. Tues Apr 5 6:30

FOR ADULTS

- NOVELS AT NIGHT – Call library to get name of book – First Thurs of month –Mar 3, Apr 7, May 5 6:30
- COMPUTER CLASSES – Sign up required – limit of 4 per class – Mar 8, Apr 14, May 10 – 6:30
- SPRING FLEA MARKET – 27 tables – refreshments – 50/50 – volunteers welcome – Sat, Mar 19, 8A-2P
- SPRING BINGO - \$500 jackpot – lunch included –volunteers welcome – Mar 6, May 15 – noon
- FAFSA OPEN HOUSE – Jayeann Harr (Higher Education Access Partner rep) answers question and gives information re: filing for financial aid for college. Tues Apr 5, 6:30
- ELECTION DAY BAKE SALE – drop off donations Mon, Apr 25 or Tues Apr 26. Sale – Tues, Apr 26, 10A-8P
- LIBRARY BOOK SALE -gently used books –Fri May 6, 10A-4 P, \$5 per bag – Sat May 7, 10A-4P, regular sale
- SPRING CONCERT – Chuck Owston – Celtic and folk inspired music – Thu May 12, 6:30

NOTES

It's spring again and the calls are already coming in about dog poop in other people's yards. Please enjoy walking your dog, but please, at the same time, do not leave your poop behind. You will be cited! It's the law!

Is there something you would like to read about? Do you know of anyone, adult or child, who deserves to be recognized? Is your local organization having an event? Call or write Kathi, 412-823-8831 or kathi722@aol.com. Thanks

FACES OF THE COMMUNITY

ROXANNE EICHLER, MAGISTRATE

Welcome to Roxanne Eichler, newly elected Magistrate for East McKeesport, North Versailles. A lifelong resident of the area, Roxanne grew up in North Versailles, graduated from East Allegheny High School, attended Penn State University for her BS degree and went to Duquesne University for her law degree.



Afterwards, she raised 5 children locally and spent 25 years on our school board. This fall she won the local election to

become magistrate. Aware of the many services provided by the County, Judge Eichler is determined to support various rehabilitation services so they become truly accessible to our local communities. Did you know there was a Truancy Intervention Program, a Batterers Intervention Program, a Center for Victims in McKeesport, a Retail Theft Alternative Program??? Judge Eichler would like to bring these programs closer into our communities and make them more accessible to community members.

The Magisterial District Courts are the first tier of the Unified Judicial System of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Judge Eichler will conduct summary level trials in traffic, criminal, fish and game law, dog law, construction code and ordinance cases; preside over landlord tenant actions and civil cases when the amount sought is under \$12,000; conduct preliminary arraignments and set bail; preside over preliminary hearings; issue arrest warrants and search warrants; issue Emergency Protection from Abuse orders; issue Emergency Orders in cases of Elderly Abuse; and perform weddings. We welcome Judge Eichler and look forward to working with her to bring healthy interventions into our community.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITIES

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Pittsburgh is now seeking a Partner Family to own and occupy a 3 bedroom home at 1019 Park Ave. in East McKeesport. The home will be rehabilitated by Habitat in partnership with our volunteers and the selected Partner Family. Habitat's estimated completion date for this home is the winter of 2016.

All HFHGPH homes are sold to low-income families in need at no profit, using a 30-year interest free mortgage. The typical monthly housing payment for a Habitat home is between \$450-\$550/month, including taxes and insurance.

If you are interested in learning more about HFHGPH's Homeownership Program, or know of a family or individual that you believe could benefit from our services, please contact Habitat for Humanity of Greater Pittsburgh at info@pittsburghhabitat.org or 412-351-0512

Additional information can also be found online at: <http://www.pittsburghhabitat.org/homeowner.html>
About Habitat for Humanity:

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Pittsburgh's mission is the elimination of substandard housing in Allegheny County and throughout the world, making decent shelter a matter of conscience and action. HFHGPH works in partnership with volunteers and low-income families in need, to build or renovate homes, which are then purchased by these families through no-profit, no-interest mortgages. Families must meet HFHGPH's eligibility guidelines to be qualified to purchase a Habitat home.