

Clifford Township Newsletter

Issue 13

June 2007

Sponsored by the Clifford Township Community Alliance (CTCA)



CTCA Mission:
To improve the quality of life, the environment and the economic health of the community

2007 CTCA Directors

Chris Marcho 222-5808
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Jim Pettinato 222-3930
CoChairman

Janice Bevaque 222-9312
Secretary

Harry Phillips 222-4589
Treasurer

Dennis Knowlton 222-4509
Playground Grant

Cherie Swetter 222-4628
Media/Tree Grant

Upcoming Township Events

May 24 Gas Lease Informational Meeting
June 3 Plant Exchange and Sale
July 26-28 Clifford Fire Company Picnic

News from the Township Supervisors

Regular attendees at the supervisors' meetings can attest to the important work being done by Supervisors John Regan, Dennis Knowlton and Randy LaCroix. Whether it is responding to regular expenditures, flood disaster, or planning for the future of the community, these public servants have a lot on their plate and welcome public participation.

The township building continues to be improved. The bathrooms have been finished, allowing for the tenancy of the vacant rooms. Precious Ones Day Care owned by Laura White occupies one room. Another is used by Jeanna Lawrence. Her business is Ji Ji L. and Co. which offers home concierge services. Jeanna is also assisting the supervisors with obtaining grant money. A third space is available to any public-oriented service; inquiries regarding this space may be directed to John Regan at 222-9364 (leave a message). This rental money will pay for the township building roof loan, thus making the township debt-free. The tiling of the hallways has been put on hold because of the financial hardship caused by the November 16 flood. The supervisors have applied to FEMA and have received approval for the reimbursement of monies spent on major road repairs to the tune of \$240,000! Although a grant of \$12,500 will be coming from Susq. Co. Redevelopment Authority for the installation of two new doors on the front and side of the township building, they can not be installed until the floor is tiled after the FEMA reimbursement is received. It has been a juggling act to continue progressing on the much needed renovations while remaining fiscally responsible.

Another important issue has been the proposed sewer project. The State requires our water quality to be assessed every three years which necessitated stream, lake and well testing by an engineering firm. The test results reported to the Supervisors prompted an investigation into the possibility of sewers in the Dundaff-Crystal Lake area. The plan has sparked lively debate as to its necessity, the financial impact on those mandated to hook up and the township's financial liability should users fail to pay their monthly fees. This issue has yet to be decided. The public would be well-served by attending the monthly supervisors meetings. This is only one of the many important issues facing Clifford Township and an interested and informed public can help guide their elected officials plan for the growth and well-being of the community. The meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the township building. Please attend!

Marquee to Promote Community Events

The CTCA plans on erecting a marquee in downtown Clifford where public organizations can publicize their projects and events. This will be in addition to their access to the CTCA's Clifford Township Newsletter. Money to support and promote this outreach project is being donated by many of the organizations that will benefit from this source of advertising to all who travel Route 106. Additional information about using the marquee will be available when its construction has been completed.

The next newsletter will be published on the first of September. Organizations can mail their articles to Cherie Swetter at PO Box 130, Clifford, PA 18413 or email to Sally Fischbeck at salnbuzz@nep.net. Articles must be received three weeks in advance to ensure enough time for layout, minor editing if necessitated by space constraints, printing and mailing. Articles of general community interest (for example, gas leases) are also welcome. To purchase space in the newsletter for a business ad, please contact Cherie Swetter at 222-4628.

The CTCA would like to thank our sponsors for their investment in the community which enables even the smallest voice to be heard. CTCA meetings are at the township building the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7 PM. Please join us!

There's Gas in Them Thar Hills...

...or so it seems!! Gas and oil companies, drilling companies and land brokers have been canvassing Susquehanna County asking property owners to sign leases for gas explorations. The "paid-up" lease money may sound good, but beware... the leases are vague and may leave landowners with little control over what happens to, on or under his/her property, should drilling take place.

Here is some preliminary information. Our area seems appropriate for shallow-well drilling, generally 3000-6000 feet deep. First is the seismic testing. Once a well site is selected, the drilling process begins - a road to the site, heavy equipment, people (including some from DEP to monitor), dust and 24/7 noise. This is short-lived, usually 6 weeks or so. Underground transfer pipe lines are installed and the land is restored. The remaining landscape includes a road to the well site, a cylindrical tank on a small cement pad and some above-ground pipes, all usually surrounded by a chain-link fence. The request to conceal this with plantings is not uncommon. There is constant monitoring of the site.

There are many sub-surface issues: underground gas storage, underground pipeline usage, potable water testing, just to name a few. There is a PA "Rule of Capture", which allows gas to be extracted from under one property via a well on another property, without compensation unless a lease is signed. Not all attorneys are well versed in the dos and don'ts of gas leases.

On April 11th, over 185 people left standing room only at a meeting conducted by the Penn State Coop specialists, Earle Robbins, Tioga, Co. and Tom Murphy, Lycoming Co. and Jackie Root, gas lease consultant, Tioga Co. Topics from the basic creed, "before signing anything, understand everything" to a slide presentation including drilling and well sites to questions and answer time left attendees with much important information.

A subsequent meeting with Mrs. Root was held April 30th. The general consensus is to form a land lease group named SouthEast Susquehanna (SES), using Mrs. Root as a negotiator, which should provide property owners with more bargaining and protective power than signing an individual lease. A second group meeting will be held on **Thursday, May 24 at 7 PM** in the Mountain View High School cafeteria. Talk with your friends and neighbors. Everyone is welcome. Learn all you can to make a good decision. The companies want our land - protect yours by being informed. For more information, contact Linda Parlanti, 222-3162. (Note: This meeting is not sponsored by the CTCA, the Clifford Township Supervisors, newsletter sponsors or the Mt. View School District.)

Clifford Township Historical Society, Inc.

Renovations are scheduled to begin soon on the Hoover School. This vintage one-room school has been leased by the Historical Society and will be used to display artifacts and photos of pioneer days in the township. Anyone who would like to donate time or materials to this worthwhile project is asked to call Mark Wilmot at 679-2723.

Plant Exchange & Sale

Plus Vendors featuring: hand painted signs, wrought iron garden items, pottery, watercolors, soy candles, herbs & vegetables, hand painted clothing, jewelry, hand made dolls, and more!

Sunday, June 3, 2007
1:00 - 4:00

Crystal Park Blvd., Crystal Lake
Turn at stone pillars ½ mile from Dundaff
on Rte 247 and follow the signs

Bring 2 perennials from your garden to exchange
for 2 of like size and value
Or purchase plants grown by Garden Club members

For more information, call JoAnn at 222-3591,
Betsy at 222-9553 or Kathy at 222-9663

Clifford Cemetery Theater Project

Preparations for a Cemetery Theater Project are underway in Clifford. The Dunmore and Waverly Cemeteries in Lackawanna County have presented well attended productions of their local history portrayed and sung by performers in their respective cemeteries. The Clifford Historical Society has given its support for development and funding through state grants for the project which is planned for summer of 2008. Ideally it is hoped that living descendents of the characters will portray at least some of the parts which include the families of: the lost boy, Eber Burns; Civil War hero Owen Phillips; the Johnson family, sexton Burgess Smith's family, and Dr. Gardner's family. Period music will be an important part of the production. The work of the great Pennsylvania American composer, Stephen Foster, will be featured. Foster's first musical composition, Tioga Waltz, was written in nearby Bradford County. Singers are greatly needed! The format of the play has been designed so that in subsequent years other stories may be easily grafted on and the play can be continually transformed as interesting and important local history continues to be discovered. Interested persons please contact Carol Gargan at 222-2485 or elkdale@nep.net.

Grant Beautifies Township

The Clifford Township Community Alliance (CTCA) received a second tree grant from the Northeast Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Program. The \$11,000 grant is being used for tree removals and plantings. Planted last November, sixteen trees (maples, lindens and callery pears) now line the cemetery across from the township building and three sugar maples were added to the east entrance of the cemetery on Rt. 106. Dead or dying trees were removed from the roadside in Clifford, Royal and Dundaff with homeowners sharing 50% of the costs. This project will continue into the fall. Tree project director, Cherie Swetter, would like to thank members of the CTCA, the Mountain View Garden Club, Walczak Lumber and the public for supporting these efforts. Special thanks to Meg Suraci, project manager, for an excellent job with the many records and reports and to Lynn Conrad of the Community Forestry Program for her invaluable assistance with applying for these grants.

Newsletter Wins Statewide Award

Clifford Township has received third place honors for its entry in the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors' 39th Annual Township Citizen Communication Contest. This is the second time the newsletter has been entered in this annual contest and the second time it has received third place in the "Class 4-Newsletters" category (2500 or under population). Entries were judged on the usefulness of the information and how well the information was communicated to township residents. Publications were also judged on their overall attractiveness and readability.

Clifford Cub Scouts

This has been a great year for the cub scout pack in Clifford. Pack 190 started out with 19 boys in the fall and participated in a lot of fun things like seeing Claws and Paws Zoo in Hamlin, going to Roba's pumpkin patch and seeing some cool law enforcement tools at the Gibson State Police barracks. They've also learned the importance of helping their community by volunteering at the township's recycling days, cleaning up the Dundaff Cemetary and participating in the annual "Scouting for Food" food drive. They were also honored to receive the District's "Al Warner" award this past year. The award was named for a man who gave a lot of himself to the scouting movement and the leaders hope to instill some of that in every boy. The pack will continue to keep busy over the summer with camping, fishing and games along with regular meetings. They just held their first Pinewood Derby in years and are pleased to announce that Jordan Kochmer won first place followed by Doug & Ryan Martin in second and Albie Chapacharis finishing third. Sign ups are scheduled for **May 22nd from 6-7 pm** at the Township Building and all boys going into grades 1-5 the next school year are welcome to come and join the fun! For information, call Carrie at 222-3945.

CLIPPINGS... from the Mt. View Garden Club

The mission of the Mountain View Garden Club is to share our knowledge and love of gardening while beautifying the Elk Mountain area and surrounding communities. Since our formation in 2005, the club has made positive strides in beautifying, protecting and utilizing the public spaces, gardens and greenways by combining our creative ideas, gardening assistance and expertise. We also coordinate the volunteer efforts of many local people and organizations. We have assisted the CTCA planting trees throughout the township. In conjunction with the Clifford Township Bicentennial, we donated and planted trees at the Veterans' Memorial at the Clifford Township Municipal Building. We have done several flower plantings in the area, including the cemetery in Clifford, the Union Dale Post Office and the Clifford Volunteer Fire Department. Future planting projects include the Herrick Township Municipal Building. It is our on-going project to maintain the areas which we have planted. We have also adopted a two-mile section of Rt. 106 and hold seasonal clean-ups in the spring and fall of the year. A square dance is being planned for **September 29** at the Clifford Volunteer Fire Department. Details will be available in the next Clifford Township newsletter.

The club meetings include programs of an educational na-

ture and are generally held on the second Wednesday night of the month but change periodically to accommodate the various programs. For more information, visit our web site at www.mountainviewgardenclub.org or contact JoAnn Hall, president, at 222-3591 or Linda Shuma, membership chair, at 222-3377.

Changes in the Fire Company Picnic

As Clifford Township Volunteer Fire Company enters into its 60th year of service to the community, many changes have taken place over that time. This year will be change from a long tradition in Clifford; however, this change is in the best interest of the Fire Company and its volunteers. The annual Fireman's picnic has been a four day event for decades, running from Wednesday to Saturday. The event requires over 200 volunteers each night. With staffing, along with financial reviews and many other variables, this year's picnic will run for three nights. It will kick-off on **Thursday evening, July 26**, and conclude on **Saturday, July 28**. Stands will open around 6 pm on Thursday with the giant fireman's parade starting at 7 pm sharp. Friday night will showcase a gigantic fireworks display with Saturday having the chicken bar-b-que and the grand prize drawing of our raffle. Each night will feature live music, rides for all ages and food, food, food! Anyone interested in volunteering at the picnic, please contact us at clfst18@nep.net or 570-222-3741. **We look forward to seeing you in July!**

Tribute to Stephen Lynch (1917-2007)



On Thursday, April 12, Charter Member Stephen Lynch passed by Station 18 one last time enroute to his final resting place. As one of the Charter members, Steve was monumental in providing the structure and leadership to help place Clifford Fire and Ambulance where it is today. You'll always be in our thoughts Steve - thank you for your dedication and guidance. Please continue to keep Mrs. Lynch and Family in your thoughts and prayers. We would also like to thank Chief Rood and the crew from Ladder 58 for assisting with the processional Arch and Flag.

Township Spring Cleaning

Many thanks to Rob Keating for his second year running the township's Spring Clean Up the weekend of May 20. This effort has greatly reduced the dumping of large items (furniture and appliances). Likewise, thanks to individuals and organizations assisting with road-side clean-up. Let's encourage everyone to pick up in front of their own property- many hands make light work!



Lonsdale House 1876. The Lonsdale House was located a hundred yards west of Route 106 on Route 374 in Royal. After the Lonsdale-Brooklyn turnpike and the Clifford-Carbondale turnpike were completed in the late 1840s, Harry A. Williams built a large public house, which he called the Lonsdale House. Soon after, he added a two-story wing to this public house which included a unique attraction. The second floor of this new section sported a 30- by 50-foot dance hall with a spring floor, an unusual feature for its time. To get that spring, floors were generally made with 3x10-inch spruce joists...“a really whippy wood.” People came from miles around to attend dances and other social affairs at this popular attraction. As many as 200 people were accommodated at a time. When Lonsdale became Royal, the name of the hotel and dance hall was changed to the Royal House. It continued as a popular place for young people to meet on Saturday nights. Dance lovers from as far away as 100 miles reportedly came to enjoy the magic spring floor. Rally Wells was the proprietor when it closed in 1935. [Photo courtesy of Richard and Denise Bloxham]

Clifford Township Historical Society, Inc., is still collecting old photos of scenes in and around Clifford Township. If you have an interesting old photo and would like to share it, please see Kim at Clifford Hardware.

Clifford Township News
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