

News, Resources, Current Events and Other Information for Residents and Property Owners of West Chillisquaque Township -- Northumberland County

In this edition:

Boy is it wet out there -- See Flooding recap on Page 3

Staffing Changes -- Happy news of retirement and sad news of a passing resulted in several staffing changes -
- See page 2 for more information.

Montandon Community Days
Save the dates -- May 24-27

Dog Updates -- See page 2 for updated dog information.

"Read Between the Lines" -- See page 2 about an upcoming change.

Culver Visit -- State Representative Lynda Culver has scheduled May 18 from 9-11 to meet with residents at the Township Building on any areas of concern.

Upcoming Township Meetings:

- Monday March 12 at 7:00 pm
- Monday April 2 at 7:00 pm
- Monday May 14 at 7:00 pm
- Monday June 4 at 7:00 pm

(all are subject to change)

Help STILL Wanted -- Community Disaster Assistance:

Thanks to those who responded with a willingness to help in case of emergency. Fortunately, the flooding events did not require the use of this type of assistance, but we continue to look to build a larger group of volunteers and schedule training. Please contact us if interested.

"Who Ya Gonna Call??"

The following is contact information you may find useful for Township business and issues (570 Area Code):

Township Municipal Building – 523-3911

This is an un-staffed office – leave a message and your call will be returned in several business days or call one of the other numbers below as appropriate.

Township Maintenance Building/Roadmaster 742-8102

Township Supervisors:

Vaughn Murray, Chairman 524-0460

Doug Everitt, Vice Chair 524-2745

Willard Miller, Supervisor 524-9777

Code Enforcement/Zoning Permits

Jeff -- Light-Heigel and Associates – 524-7742
(or 800-257-2190)

Building Permits

Curtis -- Light-Heigel and Associates – 524-7742
(or 800-257-2190)

Sewage Enforcement Officer (septic systems)

James Sanders – 922-1218

Milton Regional Sewer Authority (public sewer)

742-3424

Township Secretary/Municipal Services Tax

Cherie Boyer – 524-9889

Township Treasurer

Cherie Boyer – 524-9889 *NEW

Township Real Estate Tax Collector

Cherie Boyer – 524-9889 *NEW

911 Center Non-Emergency Number -- 523-1113

Milton State Police Barracks -- 524-2662

Email requests to: WCcomment@dejazzd.com

(This information will be updated and repeated in each newsletter)

Township Treasurer:

The township was extremely saddened by the sudden loss of Clyde Boyer who had served as Township Treasurer since 1993.

Clyde was instrumental in refining township bookkeeping and record-keeping techniques and bringing his years of experience to keep the township books in a very detailed and orderly fashion. He would provide excellent advice on how to manage township financial affairs. In addition to that, being a lifelong resident of the township, he brought a wealth of experience to all aspects of township management and operations.

We are pleased to announce that Cherie Boyer has agreed to step up and take the place as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Township. She had worked side-by-side with Clyde and was very familiar with all of the processes involved with the position and this has allowed for a very orderly transition. Township Management will continue to work with Cherie to make sure all procedures continue in an orderly manner and are properly documented.

Main Street Line Painting/Relocation:

Any of you who live along or travel along Main Street in "downtown" Montandon know that the Eastbound Lane is very narrow. Cars and especially trucks hug the line and often cross it when driving through town. Turns from side streets on the Southside of town to go East, require crossing into the Westbound lane. The township contacted PennDOT and requested they review the situation. They were also contacted by residents expressing concern.

PennDOT has agreed that the line needs to be moved to equalize East and Westbound lanes between Railroad Street and Third Street while still allowing safe parking. They have also agreed to paint a white line on the Northern edge of the Westbound driving lane. There have been instances where parked cars are hit by cars traveling West. Parking spaces will not be created, but the white line will serve to help define the area for parking, versus the travel lane and should lead to improved safety conditions both for those parking and driving on this road.

This will be done during the warmer months of 2012. Please be prepared for this change. We are requesting that PennDOT notify us of when they expect to perform this task. At this time we will attempt to notify all residents who live and park along that section of the road. PennDOT will only be able to paint the white line if vehicles are removed at that time. We appreciate your cooperation as they attempt to improve the safety along this increasingly busy stretch of highway.

Dog Issues Follow-up:

Thanks to those who responded to the request in the last newsletter. We have received comments from residents that the "dog issues" seem to have gone away for the most part.

In addition, if you have other "dog problems", please be aware that you can refer them to State Dog Officer, Alan Fegley, at 570-286-0424, and he is available 8 to 4 Monday thru Friday.

He can only deal with dog issues such as dog bites, quarantine of dogs and stray dogs. If the stray dog has a ID, he returns the dog to the owner. If the stray does not have an ID, he takes the dog to the SPCA. He is responsible for enforcing the PA dog laws. There are no local laws.

He has the power to fine a dog owner. Dogs do not have to be on a leash, but the owner must have reasonable control of the dog.

Any cruelty or abuse of dogs should be reported directly to the SPCA. He has no ability to do anything about that issue.

Tax Collector -- Thanks for Years of Service and Willingness to Take Over:

The Township would like to thank William Phillips for his years of service as Tax Collector for the township. He has retired from the position and Cherie Boyer was appointed interim Tax Collector and then as "permanent" replacement until the next election, which will be held in 2013. Best wishes to Bill as he enjoys his full retirement and thanks to Cherie for stepping up to fill this position.

Flooding Recap

2011 was a year of record rainfall for the area. Records were shattered long before the year ended, and then we received even MORE rain. Just when things would start to dry out, it would rain again. Residents of the township were subject to several flooding events during the year. Several residents had to deal with major flooding from the Susquehanna River and Chillisquaque Creek.

In addition to stream flooding, residents had to deal with basement flooding issues for much of the year. Several are still dealing with it. For some, this was just a minor inconvenience and resulted in the need to run a sump pump for a few days, weeks or even months. Others were subject to major basement flooding that either lasted for almost the entire year, spanning into 2012 or experienced major basement flooding of several feet as well as damages to walls, foundations, floors and utilities or items stored in their basement. Some are dealing with "all of the above".

After most area communities were recovering from the Hurricane and Tropical Storm events, we received even more rain and some of our most widespread problems when the water table reached such levels that standing water was left in places that have not seen water since the 1972 floods. Back yards, far from the river and that had not seen standing water in nearly 40 years became lakes, ponds and rivers leading to even more damage. Mosquitoes were at record levels and State Officials assisted with evaluating the problem and control efforts. Fortunately colder weather arrived and assisted in solving that problem. However it may return when the weather warms up.

Unfortunately, there is nothing that any of us can do to fight mother nature. Rainfall, natural topography and sandy soil conditions of the township can't be controlled. The initial basement flooding in the Spring actually started several days after the rain stopped as water draining from neighboring hills raised the water table. The flooding was not the result of the immediate rainfall, but more the fact that the entire water table reached extremely high levels and never had a chance to recede. When the rains continued, the water simply pooled on the surface and ran into basements, escalating the problem, when other communities were actually already starting to recover. The water table remains at very high levels. Moderate rainfall events still cause increased basement flooding and even cause local streams to flood more rapidly. It may be months or years before the water table returns to "normal" levels. This has been a cyclical problem and sure enough, will likely return again. It may be this year, the next several years, or maybe not again for many years, but it WILL be back and unfortunately could even be worse. Township residents are urged to prepare for future flooding events.

The township has worked with and continues to work with various officials, such as Legislators, PennDOT, Environmental and other Permitting Agencies as well as the Norfolk Southern Railroad to try to keep drainage ditches open, but this will have minimal impact on the water table. There are many hurdles to overcome, and even with cooperation, nothing can be done to significantly lower the water table. Nature is what it is.

We also have been working closely with Emergency Management officials at the Federal, State and Local levels to see what we can do as a township to help residents and try to reduce impacts in the future. Some residents have received State and Federal assistance. Fighting Mother Nature is not an easy task, but steps can be taken to prepare.

Some things to remember:

1. At all times, please be considerate of your neighbors. If you need to pump water, please consider the impact. This is critical during freezing weather as you can be held liable if water being pumped creates ice conditions on sidewalks and state or local roads resulting in property damage or injury to others.
Remember that you may not pump this type of water into the public sewer system.
2. Residents are reminded of the Township's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Flood insurance is available to ALL residents, but you should study carefully what NFIP does and doesn't cover. More information can be found at www.floodsmart.gov/
3. Ordinances are in place to help from making matters worse. Stormwater and floodplain regulations are taken very seriously in our township and the events of the past year are a good example of why.
4. **Homes damaged during the flooding are subject to all provisions of Zoning and Building codes, especially those mandated by the NFIP. If your property was damaged, it must be repaired in accordance with the various codes. You should contact Zoning and Building officials listed on page 1 for further assistance.**

Question/Comment? Submit via email @ WCcomment@dejazzd.com or by mail at PO Box 252 Montandon

WEST CHILLISQUAQUE TOWNSHIP
485 RAILROAD STREET
PO BOX 252
MONTANDON PA 17850

«Name»
«Addr1»
«Addr2»
«City»

Web Site -- The Township is still working on a web site. Unfortunately the flooding events and other issues in 2011 simply made this a lower priority. Thanks to those who provided some feedback. We continue to look for any ideas that any of you may have. As always, you can contact us at WCcomment@dejazzd.com.

Mailing List -- Remember, we are still trying to build an email list to distribute these newsletters and other information electronically. Thanks to those who have provided this information. It allowed us to notify you all electronically of the change in Zoning Officer. Please send us your name and email address and we will send future newsletters to you electronically instead of in the mail. Also don't forget to let us know about email address changes or you will no longer receive the information.

Newsletter Frequency -- If you think it's been a long time since a newsletter went out, you're right. Numerous events simply left very little time to work on a newsletter. We plan to continue to provide a newsletter several times per year. This will depend on items to report and time availability of the "editor" and other pressing issues. We will also continue to send out small "blurbs" of information to everyone on the newsletter distribution list, when appropriate. So, if you have email, that is the way to receive timely information from the Township! If you would like to receive information this way, please provide us with your email address as indicated above. Let us know if you have information or ideas for future newsletters. Let's hope that 2012 is "less eventful" than 2011 was!!!