

# Newport Community News



*A Newsletter of the  
Newport Township Community Organization*

*Winter 2007  
Number 12*

## **State of the Township**

*By John Jarecki*

Earth Conservancy President and CEO Mike Dziak spoke at a recent special meeting of the Newport Township Community Organization at Alden Manor.

Since the Earth Conservancy (EC) owns about 4400 acres of Township land and since its purpose is to reclaim this mine-scarred land, the future of Newport Township is closely linked to the use the EC makes of its land.

The EC was founded in the early 1990's with a \$14 million earmark to the Federal Defense budget obtained by Congressman Paul Kanjorski and with \$2 million in contributions from a local bank and eight local individuals. The money bought 16 million acres of former Blue Coal mining land. A land use planning committee developed a plan to maintain 10,000 acres of the land as green space and allocate about 2500 acres to residential use and another 2500 acres to commercial use.

In his talk Mr. Dziak said that two deficiencies have prevented the development of Newport Township: lack of roads and lack of utilities, especially water.

He said that the proposed South Valley Parkway will help meet the need for roads in that it will provide unlimited access to the Township, avoiding residential areas along Middle Road. The

(continued on page 3)

## **A Message from the President**

*Steve Phillips, a resident of Wanamie, is President of the Newport Township Community Organization*

The Newport Township Community Organization applauds

those five individuals who placed their names on the ballot during the recent election for the office of Township Commissioner, and it offers congratulations to Paul Czapacki, John Wilkes, and Michael Roke on their victories. The Organization looks forward to continuing to work together with the elected officials in a joint effort to help insure that Newport is a first class Township in fact as well as political designation.

A thank you is extended to the Board of Township Commissioners for reconstituting the Community's

Recreation Board. This was one of the five recommendations submitted by the volunteer group to the elected officials in September of this year.

It is felt that the next decade may be an important juncture in determining the future of Newport Township. Substantial amounts of undeveloped land place the municipality in an advantageous position. Wise decisions governing the use of this valuable resource will be paramount in determining whether or not succeeding generations will be bequeathed a progressive community, or one that continues to decline.

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Page 1



Governor Rendell visited Mary and Leonard Blihar in October to publicize the State's Property Tax Rebate Program. Read about it on page 7.

## People

By Heidi Selecky

### Douglas Obitz and Rosie Obitz Feddock

If you're hungry for a great cheese-steak hoagie, don't drive



Douglas Obitz and Rosie Obitz Feddock

all the way to Philadelphia. Just go down the road a piece to Mil and Jim's Parkway Inn in Alden and ask for Brother Jim's cheese-steak. You'll be glad you did!

The building had its beginnings more than a hundred years ago. First owned by Chet Polnaiczek, it was called Mins Inn and served the local miners. In the basement were washtubs where the miners bathed when their shift was done. The first floor was a popular saloon. The second floor contained small rooms rented out to the miners and laborers. On the third floor was a ballroom where dances were held. The Inn was conveniently located near the Alden train station and never lacked for renters.

When the coal industry went into decline, the inn sat vacant for forty years and fell into disrepair. Millie and Jim Obitz purchased it in 1973 with an eye to opening a restaurant. Mil had worked for the Interstate Blue Ribbon Bakery in Kingston, and Jim worked in the drywall business and in restaurant management. After six months of renovations, the Parkway opened.

While growing up, all seven of Mil and Jim's children pitched in, chopping ingredients, bussing tables, and running the cash register. Two of them, Douglas and Rosie Obitz Feddock own the business now. Jim passed away in 2004 and Mil in 2006. The cheese-steak recipe of Mil's invention is a closely guarded secret. It would win a prize in any contest!

### Ed Tarnowski

"God gave us memory, so that we may have roses in December." Roses are undeniably among the most popular flowers in the world and one of the trickiest to grow. They require constant

care and nurturing. One township resident, Ed Tarnowski of Glen Lyon, has such a knack with roses, it has earned him six ribbons from the Bloomsburg Fair since 2001. This year, he was awarded First Premium and a Blue Ribbon for the "Love" variety, a red floribunda with cream undersides. Uncle Eddie, as he is affectionately known, also has several varieties of hybrid tea roses in his garden. American Beauty, Angela Lansbury, Peace, and Chrysler Imperial are among the award winners. His personal favorites are the Peace roses because of their large blooms.

He first got started, forty years ago, when his mother Antonia could no longer care for the roses she loved. He is quick to share his knowledge. Roses require tender loving care, and must be sprayed and fed at the right time. Spring is best. The amount of sunlight and moisture is also important. Many people do not cut the stems properly. A method called "dead-heading" will increase budding. After the blossoms are spent, he suggests using sharp cutters to trim the stems at the point where five leaves grow.

Uncle Eddie will be 89 years young this month (December 19). An Air Force veteran, he served in Indochina during World War II. He was employed as a carpenter at Retreat State Hospital until his retirement. He also helped his brothers in the grocery and kielbasa business.

Congratulations on your prize-winning roses!

### Olga Yudisky

Alden resident Olga Yudisky remembers in detail the history of St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Catholic Church, which stood in the Polander Hill section of Olga's hometown and was demolished in October.

There were actually two buildings named St. Vladimir's. The first, larger than the recently demolished structure, was completed in 1893. It was the first Ukrainian Catholic church in the Nanticoke area, and Olga's mother Anna Radowsky was the first baby baptized in the church in February 1894. Father Wilensky was its first pastor. A school was built next to the church in 1895, and Mr. Kaschuba, the church cantor, taught English in the building.

About 1920 the church burned down and the parishioners converted the school into a chapel. This is the St. Vladimir's church that until October stood in Alden. Monsignor Olesh of Glen Lyon was the last pastor of the church. He said mass regularly in St. Vladimir's until his health declined. After he passed away, several visiting pastors said mass.

Recently outsiders have repeatedly broken into the church. Though they did no damage, the parishioners decided to demolish the building and protect the religious items in church, such as the book of the liturgy, the chalice, the cross, the shroud of Jesus, and the eternal light hanging from the ceiling, by sending them to the Ukrainian Museum of Philadelphia.

One member of the parish became a priest, Olga's brother Father Andrew Krasulsky, who is now pastor of two Ukrainian Catholic churches in or near Johnstown. ■

**State of the Township** ( continued from page 1)

Parkway will start at the South Cross Valley Expressway near the Middle Road exit, and run parallel to Middle Road as far as Kir-mar Parkway near the K. M. Smith Elementary School. It will cost about \$50 million, of which Congressman Kanjorski has gotten \$11 million, and the rest will come from the state. The road is scheduled for completion in about four years.

As for utilities, Mr Dziak said that we can ask the water company to provide water mains or that we can ask private companies to construct wells. He also said that Township and County officials have approached EC about proposals to put a County prison in the Township and that during the summer Representative John Yudichak suggested putting a state prison next to the County fa-



Ed Tarnowski

cility. According to Tom Ruskey, Mr. Yudicak's Chief of Staff, utilities built in the Township for prison construction, with state or other funding, would be available for residential and commercial development. So prison construction would indirectly provide another way of giving the Township needed utilities.

Mr. Dziak mentioned two other proposals made to EC that could possibly

affect the Township. First, the local startup company Ethos-Gen, in partnership with King's College, has asked EC for land on which to build a pilot plant to test their process for making ethanol from saw grass grown in its own greenhouse. According to Mr. Dziak, there would be no residues or odors associated with the plant. It would be self-contained and almost invisible. The company is now in need of investment funds. There is a stringent licensing process for such a plant, including input from Township residents, which would provide a measure of protection for us against harmful development.



Olga Yudisky

Second, a company active in New Jersey is interested in putting a photovoltaic electricity-generating farm on EC land. Mr. Dziak thinks that a good location would be behind the EC composting facility near Glen Lyon or along the Susquehanna River in farm land above the flood plain.

Mr. Dziak, in his talk to the Community Organization, sketched out for Newport residents a vision of what our community may look like in the not too distant future. ■



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## Township Public Business

By Tom Kashatus

### Nuisance Ordinance Inspector Appointed

Joseph McGuire of West Nanticoke was hired by the Newport Township Board of Commissioners as a Nuisance Ordinance Inspector at an hourly rate of \$9.00 per hour. He will receive 48 cents per mile for using his own personal vehicle during the performance of his duties. His job is to take photos of nuisance complaints furnished to him by the Business Manager Richard Zika and Code Enforcement Commissioner John Wilkes Jr. He will then return his documentation to the business office for further evaluation. Mr McGuire will conduct his investigations only from public properties. In his travels throughout the Township he will report other noted building code violations for subsequent action by code enforcement officials. Mr. Wilkes stated that it is the Commissioners' intent to have Mr. McGuire eventually attend a



Mary and Leonard Blihar talking with Channel 16 reporter Sarah Buynovsky after Governor Rendell's visit. See page 7.

two day school for building code officials so that he may quality to become more involved in the inspection and code enforcement process. At this time his responsibilities will normally allow him to work no more than two days or sixteen hours per week.

### Fire Department Notes

The recent tragedy of a man from Alden Mountain who succumbed from smoke inhalation can almost be deemed an unnecessary fatality. Initial inspection by Fire chief Dan Kowalski indicated that the home was absent of smoke detectors. The Newport Township Fire Department is currently involved in "Operation Save a Life," sponsored by WNEP TV Channel 16. The program, which is subsidized by Vector Security, has furnished three cases of Kidde smoke alarms to Newport Township this year, mainly for those persons or families who have limited income or have no one to complete the installation.

Within the past month firefighters have either issued or installed over 80 smoke alarms throughout the Township. If a resident has limited income and would like a smoke alarm or has no one to install one they already have, please call the Township municipal building at 735-2000 and inform the operator/dispatcher on duty.

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Newport Township Fire Chief Dan Kowalski

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## Township Public Business ( continued form page 4)

The Newport Township Fire Department has received an off road rescue trailer as a result of a \$10,000 grant awarded to its Consolidated Fire Department from the Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner's Office. Grant writers were Township Fire Chief Dan Kowalski and Operator/Dispatcher Paul Mierzwa. The new trailer will be remodeled to serve a dual purpose: as a command center for any emergency and as a carrier of emergency equipment such as ropes, fans, heaters, etc. There is room in the trailer to carry a "six wheeler" rescue quad and an ATV "mule" or small truck. A generator purchased with a previous grant will be the source of power to the trailer.

Newport Township has three fire companies: the Consolidated Hose Company of Sheatown and Wanamie, the Glen Lyon Hose company, and the Alden Hose Company. All companies belong to the Newport Township Fire Department and each is eligible for its own respective grants.



At its Fall Festival the Community Organization donated \$100 to the Marines for the Christmas Toys for Tots program

## New Trash Removal Contract Awarded

At a special meeting on November 14, 2007, the Township Board of Commissioners accepted one of two bids submitted by J. P. Mascaro for garbage removal in the Township over a period of three years from 2008 thru 2010. The first year removal cost of \$266,322 will increase to \$308,480 in the third year. This will include the *pick-up of one large item per month per residence*. The first year's costs to a property owner will be \$205 for garbage removal and \$30 for recycling fee, a total of \$235.



Skateboarders on Rock Street in Glen Lyon

## Donated Skate Board Equipment

As we previously reported in the fall newsletter, Randy Rush-ton of the South Valley Partnership (SVP), a group promoting community development in Nanticoke area, told the Community

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### Corpus Christi Parish

Glen Lyon  
Sunday Masses  
4:00 p.m. Sat  
9:00 a.m. Sun



Wanamie  
Sunday Masses  
11:00 a.m. Sun

Weekdays 8:30 a.m.

Pastor: Father Joe Kutch

Parish Office: 43 West Main St., Glen Lyon

Phone: 570-736-6372

email: ceparish1@verizon.net

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and  
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**Township Public Business**( continued from page 5)

Organization in August that the SVP would donate to Newport Township the equipment for a skateboard park, which it had recently purchased. But at the November Township Commissioners' meeting, Commissioner Tom Kashatus reported that the SVP had failed to take possession of the equipment from its original owner by the deadline of October 20, thereby losing the right to buy it. The skateboard equipment, therefore, is not available to the Township. ■

**Newport Notes**

The Glen Lyon Crime Watch meets on the second Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm at the Glen Lyon Italian Club.

Teena Wrubel thanks everyone who helped with the Fall Festival bake sale by contributing baked goods or selling them. ■



Earth Conservancy CEO Mike Dziak spoke at a Community Organization meeting about the Earth Conservancy and its relationship to the future of Newport Township

**Presidents Message** (continued form page 1)

The future rests in the hands of all residents. You are encouraged to take an active role in helping to chart the course of Newport's future. Do not criticize after the fact. Offer alternative suggestions, or constructive criticisms before irrevocable decisions are made.



Luis Ramos, Community Relations Manager, for the Berwick nuclear plant spoke to the Community Organization about a 3rd reactor at the plant

The Community Organization has conducted two public forums addressing topics of interest to Newport Township. The September session featured Mr. Michael Dziak, the CEO of the Earth Conservancy, who spoke about prospective new development within the Community. At the November meeting, residents were addressed by Mr. Lou Ramos, Community Service Manager for PPL, who spoke about the proposed third nuclear reactor at the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, and the utility's effect on the area's economic base.

During October, the Organization held its fourth annual Fall Festival at Holy Child Grove in Sheatown. It was a great success.

The Community Organization extends its sincere appreciation to those committed volunteers, vendors, and other participants who assisted in achieving this accomplishment. ■

(570) 735-2225  
(570) 735-0167 FAX

Middle Road  
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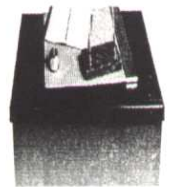
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## Seasonal Events

*Tom Kashatus wrote the article on the governor's visit. Francis Zaleski wrote about the election and attorney Christopher Kule*

### Governor Rendell Visited Mary and Leonard Blihar

On Wednesday October 17, 2007, Newport Township was



Mary and Leonard Blihar talking with Governor Rendell

honored to receive a visit by Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell, who visited Leonard Blihar Sr. (93 years of age) and his wife Mary (91) at their home in Sheatown. This is the first visit by a sitting governor in over fifty five years. Governor John S.

Fine of Nanticoke, who held the seat from 1951 to 1955, made the last visit. Former governors George M. Leader and Robert Casey visited the township in the past, but that was in their capacity of running for the office of governor.

Many dignitaries from Newport and surrounding areas were on hand to welcome Governor Rendell and his staff, but the day belonged to Leonard and his wife Mary, who have been married for over seventy years and have been residents of Sheatown since 1952. The former World War II Navy veteran and his wife, parents of four children, currently live on Williams Street. Family members Paul and (daughter) Rose Zielinski, (son) Leonard Jr., (granddaughters) Danielle and Daneen Zielinski, and (great grandchildren) Emily James and Ryan Whittaker were on hand when Governor Rendell handed the Blihar's a check for \$300 as a property tax refund. These proceeds come from the Pennsylvania Property Tax or Rent Rebate program, administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, and funded by Pennsylvania Lottery and gaming receipts. Due to the recent increase in qualifying income, this is the first time that the Blihar's received this benefit. The Blihar's son John and daughter Kathy Huk were working away in Florida and New York at the time. Leonard and Mary, a special couple, were picked at random for this honor and have made Newport Township proud now and in the past.

### Appreciation Award Presented

At our recent Fall Festival a plaque of appreciation was presented to Attorney Christopher Kule for his pro bono work in getting the Community Organization a 501(c)3 classification, which means that donations made to the organization are tax exempt and that we can apply for community development grants. His many hours of time and effort are greatly appreciated by the Newport Township Community Organization.

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## Seasonal Health

*By Carol Marcincavage*

### Influenza ( The Flu)

The Centers for Disease Control gives the following important facts about influenza (flu).

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccination each year.

Every year in the United States, on average:

- 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu;
- more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and;
- about 36,000 people die from flu.

Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), are at high risk for serious flu complications.

Symptoms of flu include the following.

- fever (usually high)
- headache
- extreme tiredness
- dry cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- muscle aches
- Stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, also can occur but are more common in children than adults

Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

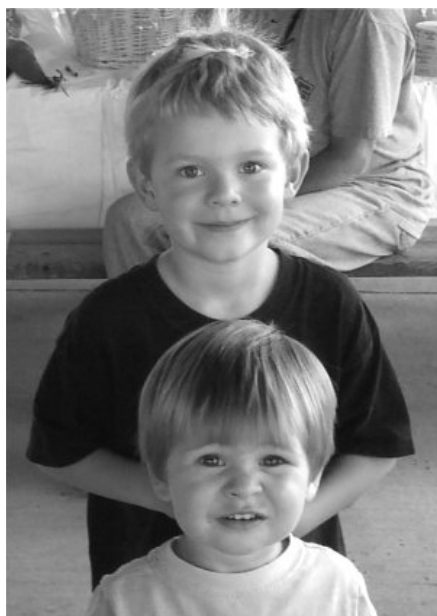
Flu viruses spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5 days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get a flu vaccination each year.

### Pets in Winter

Remember that the Humane Society advises you to take your pet inside during cold winter weather. ■

**Sesaonal Events** (continued from page 7)



Having fun at the Community Organization Fall Festival

Although Chris Kule's office is located in Wyoming County near Tunkhannock, he has ties to several Newport Township residents. The late Edward Kule, teacher and assistant principal of the old Newport High School, is his uncle. Also the late Ed Romanowski and Dave Kule, a former resident of Glen Lyon, are first cousins. Chris is a graduate of Yale University, where he played football, and Notre Dame Law School. He served in the U.S. Navy and retired from the Navy Reserves with the rank of Captain.

**Election Results**

Candidates in the November 6 election for Commissioner of Newport Township had the following vote totals.

Candidate	Votes	Candidate	Votes
John Wilkes	761	Michael Figmic	464
Michael Roke	709	William Hourigan	397
Paul Czapracki	669		

John Wilkes, Michael Roke, and Paul Czapracki were elected. The Newport Township Community Organization congratulates them and wishes them a successful term in office. ■

**Township Contact Information**

Business Manager	Rich Zika	735-4735
Building Code Official	Rich Zika	735-4735

**Township Commissioners**

Fire Department	Tom Kashatus	736-6981	┌
Police Department	John Zyla	735-1714	┌
Street Department	Paul Czapracki	736-6859	┌
Building Code	John Wilkes	735-6914	
Parks and Recreation	John Vishnefski	735-6984	

**Newport Township Authority**

John Wilkes	Chairman	735-6914
Joe Delucca	Vice Chairman	735-1138
Peter Wanchisen	Treasurer	735-1066
Stephen Phillips		735-3991
Frank Shepanski		735-1968

**Newport Township Community Organization** ┌  
110 ½ Railroad Avenue, Wanamie, PA 18634-4005

On the Internet: [www.newporttownship.com](http://www.newporttownship.com).

**Officers**

President	Steve Phillips	735-3991
1st Vice President	Russ Sager	736-6823
2nd Vice President	Tom Kashatus	736-6981
Treasurer	Steve Masakowski	735-2367
Secretary	Palmira Miller	736-6637

**Calendar of Fall Events**

Community Organization Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 6:30 pm at the Knights of Columbus building (formerly St. Denis Church) on East Main Street in Glen Lyon. Winter meeting dates are the following.

- Tuesdays January 8 and 22
- Tuesdays February 12 and 26
- Tuesday March 11

Township Commissioners Meetings are normally held on the first Monday of the month at 6:00 pm at the Municipal Building in Wanamie. Winter meeting dates are the following.

- Mondays February 4, March 3

Note: A special Commissioners organization meeting is scheduled for Monday January 7, 2008 at 5:00 pm at the Municipal Building, which will replace the regular January meeting.

**Newsletter**

The Newsletter of the Community Organization is printed four times a year. Its purpose is to tell Township residents about the Organization's activities and about their community.

**Newsletter Staff**

Editing	John Jarecki	736-6620
Township Business People	Tom Kashatus	
Health, Photography	Heidi Selecky, Paul Jarecki	
Seasonal Events	Carol Marcincavage	
Advertisements	Francis Zaleski	
	Linda Hourigan, Barbara Pelak,	
	Paul Jarecki, Heidi Selecky	
Distribution	Joe Maloney, Faye Maloney, Mary Margaret Kashatus, Steve Masakowski, Sia Sager, Bob Conner	

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about this newsletter, please call John Jarecki at 736-6620 or e-mail him at [jjarecki@pa.metrocast.net](mailto:jjarecki@pa.metrocast.net).