

FOX CHAPEL BOROUGH NEWSLETTER

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Fox Chapel Borough &
Fox Chapel District Association



Spring 2015

Support Your Fire Department

Watch for a letter in the mail from the Fox Chapel Volunteer Fire Department requesting financial support for the future purchase of a new pumper truck to replace its 1998 Seagrave pumper when that vehicle reaches 20 years of age. The VFD is hoping to raise \$600,000 by 2018 through annual appeals. This is the first time such an appeal has been made by the fire department and the appeal is being made at the Borough's request to free up Borough funds for expenditures in other areas. All funds donated will be received by the Borough and placed in a restricted account to be used exclusively for the future purchase of fire vehicles and equipment. All firefighting equipment is housed in Borough-owned and maintained buildings.

This fundraising appeal will supplement existing efforts to replace equipment nearing the end of its useful life. For example, the 2015 Borough budget has appropriated \$554,125 to replace the VFD's other 1994 Seagrave pumper (20 years old) and \$134,426 to purchase 17, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) units (\$7,900 each), which are the masks, regulators, packs, and bottles that enable our fire fighters to breathe when in smoke and flames. The fire department has applied for grant funds to potentially offset some of the cost of the SCBA purchase. SCBA costs have more than doubled over the past 20 years and pumper trucks cost \$400,000 more than they did 30 years ago.



The fire department's primary source of income is an annual State Fire Relief Aid Grant. From 2003 - 2011, the department received approximately \$80,000 per year from the State. Since 2011, the annual grant has gradually declined by \$10,000 to a low of \$70,000 in 2014. This has significantly stressed the fire department's relief fund. Member life insurance premiums cost the department \$50,000 per year and routine equipment repair, maintenance, and replacement costs run \$15,000 annually.

The Borough has been running a very tight budget because earned income tax (EIT) revenue has been stagnant since 2008. EIT collections peaked in 2007 and 2008 at \$2.8M then dropped \$500,000 the following year. In the years following, the Borough has not yet returned to 2007 and 2008 EIT levels. In 2008, EIT accounted for 45% of the Borough's revenue with real estate tax at 30% followed by charges for services at 15%. By 2014, EIT accounted for only 32% of the Borough's revenue with real estate tax almost equal at 31% followed by charges for services at 25% (primarily sewage charges). In order to help the Borough deal with budget constraints and the significant cost increases in modern fire-fighting apparatus and equipment, Borough Council has requested that the fire department begin making supplementary funding appeals directly to the residents, as is done by most other communities with volunteer firefighters, and the VFD has agreed to assist the Borough by doing so.

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How your fire department's equipment and training affects your home insurance bill

Did you know that the overall quality and performance of your fire department can affect the cost of your home insurance? Homeowner's insurance companies utilize the Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating or similar analyses to assess fire risk in determining insurance premiums. Fifty percent of the ISO rating reflects the quality of the fire department including adequacy and age of equipment, sufficiency of staffing, level of training, and geographic location of fire stations. Evaluation of the water supply comprises 40% of the ISO rating. This evaluation looks at hydrant size, type and installation, frequency of inspection, flow-testing programs, existence of alternative water sources, and the amount of available water, both in terms of volume and pressure, compared with the amount needed to suppress fires. The remaining 10% of the rating reflects the community's emergency communications capabilities, including 911 telephone and dispatch systems.

Fire trucks that are 20 or more years old are no longer National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)-certified as a "Class-A" pumper which impacts the ISO rating. We are required to have at least two full-time operational engines in our Borough, hence the need to replace one engine in 2013 and a second in 2018. More than half of Fox Chapel's current SCBA (firefighter breathing units) have pressurized canisters (bottles) that have reached the end of their life cycle and are required to be replaced. All of the current face mask lenses are no longer compliant with National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH) standards as they are not made of a high-grade, heat-tolerant (non-melting) plastic polymer. In addition to the safety of our fire fighters, vehicle and equipment replacements are needed to keep your insurance premiums as low as possible.



Be Thankful for our Volunteer Firefighters

Volunteer firefighters provide an enormous economic benefit to our community and our nation. It is estimated that volunteer firefighters save American taxpayers billions per year that can be reinvested in infrastructure, police protection, and social and other community programs. The role of emergency responders changed with the events of September 11, 2001. These attacks against America changed the expectations of local emergency providers who are clearly each community's first line of response, regardless of the event. The homeland is only secure when the hometown is secure.

Volunteer firefighting is not a minor commitment. Training requirements keep increasing because volunteers are now being called upon to do more than put out fires. Terrorist attacks and improvised explosive devices, vehicle airbag deployments, malfunctioning solar panels and wind turbines, ethanol and natural

gas fires, and electric-and-hydrogen-powered vehicle accidents – these are just some of the emergencies for which training is needed.

Voluntarily preparing to face such hazards requires certain kinds of personal and social qualities, the physical capacity to do the work, and the stamina to continue strenuous activity for hours with little rest. The work requires firefighters to "think on their feet," rapidly assess the problem at hand, plan a course of action and react quickly when conditions change. A firefighter must maintain a constant and heightened awareness, never losing sight of the broader picture while tending to a specific task.

The time demands placed upon volunteers are significant. Americans spend about 1/3 of their time at work and 1/3 of their time asleep, which leaves only 1/3 of their time for family, household activities, and leisure time that, for our firefighters, includes volunteering. To-

day, there are more two-earner homes which means that housekeeping duties have to be shared. When you couple that with the expanding role that fire service is seeing – requirements to learn more, do more, and train more – it means that the time volunteers have available to dedicate to fire service is being reduced at the same time that fire service is requiring more time.

Here in Fox Chapel Borough, we are lucky to have a robust, experienced, and well-trained volunteer fire department comprised of firefighters that – in their "other" lives – include doctors, lawyers, students, landscapers, small-business owners, financial service professionals, and more. The Borough's goal is to keep the department well-equipped and ready to protect our community at all times. Please consider the value of their service to the Borough when you are asked to support a fund drive for a new pumper truck in the coming months.





Earth Day

Come join us for a walk in the woods on Saturday, April 25th, from 1 PM to 3 PM, as we celebrate Earth Day and pick up some litter that may have accumulated over the winter and get some exercise after a long season indoors. Cleanup supplies will be provided and people who care about the Squaw Run valley will provide the energy and enthusiasm. Park at McCahill Park parking lot. See you there!



Mayor's Memo

I would like to recognize the many Borough residents who serve on the Committees that keep our Borough running smoothly. These are all volunteers and are serving because they care about their community! Our Council meets every month and has seven residents making the many decisions to manage the business of the Borough. This group brings a diverse mix of abilities to deal with the many issues at hand. The Park Commission has a number of residents who are very talented professionals and are giving their time to maintain and improve one of the most important amenities of Fox Chapel. Many of us who use the parks know that this open space so close to the city sets Fox Chapel apart from other communities. The Environmental Advisory Committee makes recommendations to Council regarding environmental disturbances (including new home construction and house additions) and looks at major tree removal requests. One member of the EAC, Peggy Jayme, devotes a tremendous amount of time to the tree committee to look at many tree removal requests. (We remind residents that tree removal requests are handled at the Borough office, and staff is available to assist). Our Planning Commission meets when the need arises to look at land use and development, and our Zoning Hearing Board meets if there is a need to look at the fair and equitable use of our zoning ordinance. We have depended on the 3 volunteers on this board for many years. You can refer to the names of all these committee members later in the newsletter, and you will probably recognize many of your neighbors!

As we continue to expand and improve the trails in Fox Chapel, we remind residents that we will soon have a volunteer group working on trail clearance. Anyone interested can contact the Borough office.

When you read this newsletter, we hope that winter is over and we are having a beautiful spring! We know that our Public Works staff had a busy winter with long hours to remove snow and salt our roads. Thanks to Dempsey Bruce and a great crew! I still believe that no one does it better!

- Alex Scott



Fill Soil Available

The Borough's Public Works Department often has fill soil available during road construction projects. If interested in fill soil, please contact Dempsey Bruce, PWD Superintendent, at 412/963-1100 x 119.



Hard to Recycle Collection Events

Visit the website prc.org for its 2015 schedule for hard-to-recycle event locations.



Holiday Garbage Collection Delays and Office Closings

- Memorial Day -
(Monday, May 25th)

- 4th of July -
(observed Friday, July 3rd)

Garbage collection Memorial Day week will be Tuesday through Saturday. The Borough office will be closed both of these holidays as noted. Garbage will be collected on Friday, July 3rd.





Shady Side Academy News

Shady Side Academy Spring Admissions Open Houses

Families interested in learning more about Shady Side Academy are encouraged to attend a spring admissions open house to tour campus, meet the faculty and school head, and more. RSVP online at www.ShadySideAcademy.org/VisitUs.

Junior School (PK-5, Point Breeze): Thursday, April 23, 9:15 a.m.
Middle School (6-8, Fox Chapel): Thursday, April 23, 9 a.m.
Senior School (9-12, Fox Chapel): Wednesday, April 29, 9:30 a.m.

Shady Side Academy Summer Programs

Shady Side Academy offers a wide array of affordable, fun summer programs for kids ages 3-18 on its Senior and Middle School campuses in Fox Chapel. Offerings include day camps, sports, arts and science camps, and for-credit summer school classes. Learn more at www.ShadySideAcademy.org/Summer.

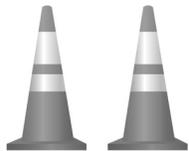
Hillman Series Presents Popovich Comedy Pet Theater April 11

The Hillman Performing Arts Series at Shady Side Academy welcomes Popovich Comedy Pet Theater on Saturday, April 11, at 7:30 p.m. Moscow circus veteran Gregory Popovich combines comedy with the extraordinary talents of his performing pets, including 15 cats, 10 dogs and six geese. A portion of proceeds benefits the Animal Rescue League of Pittsburgh. Tickets are \$15-28 at www.TheHillman.org.

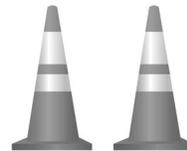


Primary Election

The 2015 Primary Election will be held Tuesday, May 19th. If you do not know your voting location, please go to the Allegheny County website at www.alleghenycounty.us/elect and select Find Your Polling Place under Additional Information. Type in your address and your polling location will be displayed.



Road Projects



This spring, the Public Works Department will install underdrains, repair catch basins and manholes, and replace storm and sanitary pipes along North Drive, South Drive, James Ross Place, Colbert Lane, Edgewood Road and La-Tourelle Lane. During construction season, please remember to obey posted speed limits and keep alert for temporary barricades and equipment; do not remove signs, barricades, covers or cones that may be in use in construction areas; and, follow directions of traffic control personnel when driving past workers or equipment. These roads will be paved in late summer. Your cooperation is appreciated.



Dog Park

Dog parks are growing in popularity across the United States. It is a wonderful privilege to have off-leash park areas in Fox Chapel. Dog parks benefit our dogs, their owners and the community by promoting good physical health and socialization for everyone. They have also been shown to make dogs better canine citizens!

With this privilege comes great responsibility. Safety - for other people and dogs - is the top priority. While most pet owners are aware of the importance of a safe dog park, it is a good idea to review the rules and regulations to ensure our parks remain that way.

It is against the law to allow a dog to be dangerously out of control anywhere. Any off leash dog that injures someone is obviously out of control as is any dog raising fear about the possibility of injury. A scary dog is the same as one that bites.

Pennsylvania law states: It shall be unlawful for the owner or keeper of any dog to fail to keep at all times the dog.....under the reasonable control of some person. Voice commands fall under the category of reasonable control. A dog that does not respond to their handler's voice command is not under reasonable control. A dog not in sight is not in control: owners must be in view of their dogs at all times.

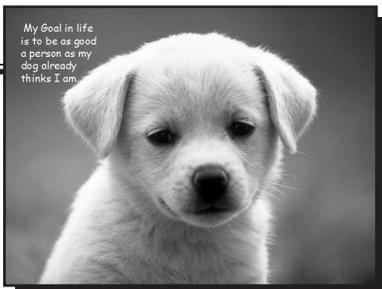
Although the dog parks are primarily used by dog owners and walkers, you may also encounter hikers, runners, or equestrians. With thickets of vegetation, twists and turns of a path it is easy for a person or dog to be startled by something suddenly appearing. A startled dog may instinctively bite. Teaching your dog a few key skills, like a reliable recall or behavior modification, helps keep them safe and contributes to a more enjoyable dog-park experience for all.

Think your dog is too old to learn a new trick? MythBusters Jamie Hyneman and Adam Savage proved this to be false with two 7 year old Alaskan malamutes who didn't know a single trick in the book. After 4 days of training, they were able to heel, sit, stay and shake! Check out www.familydogobedience.net if you need help learning some new tricks.

Dog park rules are listed along the trails. Please take a minute to review them. Residents are encouraged to immediately report dangerous and/or unattended dogs to the borough police by calling 911. Parking permits are available at the Cooper-Siegal Library and Beechwood Farms.

We want to continue to enjoy our wonderful parks with our canine friends. Please help ensure we keep this privilege by following the rules and regulations.

No Dogs are permitted in Salamander Park, Scott Park, McCahill Park or the Trillium Trail. Off leash dog parks include Riding Meadow and Old Squaw. Dogs must be leashed between the hours of 11 am and 3 pm on Lockhart Loop.



TRILLIUM TRAIL DEER FENCE, GARLIC MUSTARD PULLS YIELD MORE WILDFLOWERS

Results are in! Excluding deer, to first prevent killing and injury of Trillium and volunteer effort to removed harmful invasive plants like Garlic Mustard, help Trillium and other wildflowers to grow and flourish.



The overabundance of deer allows Garlic Mustard, a wintergreen noxious invader, to overtake the forest floor. To fight back, Professor Susan Kalisz received a National Science Foundation Federal grant (<https://www.nsf.gov/about/>) to help pay for a fence to exclude deer and prevent attack from happening in the first place. Then the Fox Chapel Parks Commission led an effort to remove the Garlic Mustard from the parks, giving the wildflowers a chance to recover and thrive. Over the past four years, we have had 108 volunteers, mostly Fox Chapel Area High School students, who pulled 296 bags of Garlic Mustard in both Salamander and Trillium Trail Parks (careful not to interfere with the study). Our goal is to clear the forest of Garlic Mustard, and we need your help again this spring.

The Trillium and other wildflowers are recovering because of this science-lead community coordinated work. This also means that when your children go on a school field trip to our local park, and all of them do in FCASD, there is something for them to see. Not all parks have such rich biodiversity available for school lessons. Most parks are barren, green, but barren landscapes, so no curriculum. We have a unique, strategic asset, a real world place for STEM education right in our backyards! Often, Susan and her team are there doing real science, where students can see science in action. In Trillium Trail, the children work with teachers and Audubon Educators, learning in a FCASD Outdoor STEM Classroom, that is also a National Science Foundation research site of international importance. Results published in the [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#), May 2014, (PNAS impact factor is 9.737, that is almost 10 times higher than any other publication, Rock Star!), showed that excessive deer population hurt native plant biodiversity. “When people walk in the woods where deer are overabundant, they don’t realize what’s missing,” reports the lead project investigator, Professor Susan Kalisz.

Read more about why this research is so exceptional:

- Read more about the Pitt story here: <http://www.news.pitt.edu/news/excessive-deer-populations-hurt-native-plant-biodiversity-pitt-led-study-says>
- Proceedings of the National Academy of Science paper may be found here: <http://www.pnas.org/content/111/12/4501.full?sid=a0f078b5-2e25-4993-a9d9-d109856d845d>

Volunteers Needed for the 2015 Garlic Mustard Pull

Please come, rain or shine, with four large plastic garbage bags, bug spray, and gardening gloves. The plants are easily pulled by grasping them at the base, but you can bring a small hand trowel to loosen surrounding earth and ease removal of the few difficult individuals. **Parents must attend children. No drop-offs.** If student community service – bring your form! Email: Maria C. R. Harrington, Ph.D. at mariaharrington_2000@yahoo.com

Weekend 1: May 16 (Saturday)

Session I: 9 AM - 12 PM • Session II: 1 PM - 4 PM

April 17 (Sunday)

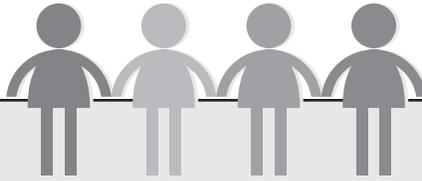
Session I: 9 AM - 12 PM • Session II: 1 PM - 4 PM

Weekend 2: May 23 (Saturday)

Session I: 9 AM - 12 PM • Session II: 1 PM - 4 PM

May 24 (Sunday)

Session I: 9 AM - 12 PM • Session II: 1 PM - 4 PM



Area Rotary Clubs Sponsor Community Appreciation Day

Three area Rotary Clubs are sponsoring a Community Appreciation Day on Sunday, April 26 at Squaw Valley Park in O'Hara Township. Entertainment and games will be featured as well as food booths and a 5 PM performance by the Fox Chapel Area High School Band. Admission is free. The Rotary Clubs of Fox Chapel Area, Sharpsburg/Aspinwall and Oakmont are sponsoring the event which begins at noon and concludes with the high school band concert.

"This is Rotary's way of thanking the people of the communities we serve," said Ralph Hutchison, past president of the Fox Chapel Rotary who is the chair of this event. "We also are offering the local charities we sponsor the opportunity to publicize themselves and show the public the good work that they do."

- Giant Eagle has donated a \$500 gift certificate and a \$200 food basket that will be raffled off at the event to cover costs.
- Music will be provided prior to the band concert.
- A tennis clinic at the park's courts and a baseball contest on the park's ball fields will highlight the games offered.
- Refreshments will include hot dogs, hamburgers, beverages and homemade pies.
- Area fire and EMS services will display trucks and equipment.

Charities invited to participate include: Aspinwall Meals on Wheels, Audubon Society, Backpacks for Hunger, Boyd Community Center, Boys Scouts' Camp Guyasuta, Cooper-Siegel Community Library, North Hills Community Outreach, Sharpsburg Family Worship, St. Margaret Foundation, St. Vincent DePaul Pantry and Volunteers of America.

Area Rotary Clubs also are contributing towards the purchase of a TrackChair, a motorized wide-tire wheelchair that enables the disabled to cross fields and uneven terrain. A TrackChair, targeted by Rotary for donation to wounded area veterans, will be displayed at the event.

For more information, please visit the website of Fox Chapel Rotary at: <http://portal.clubrunner.ca/4994>

George Dull, President
sgdtime@aol.com

Tom Benic, Publicity Chair
412-781-9463
Tom@Benic.net



Flower Sale

The Squaw Run Garden Club will hold its annual flower sale on Saturday, May 2nd, at Squaw Valley Park, O'Hara Township from 9 AM to 2 PM. A wonderful selection of annuals, perennials, herbs, vegetables, hanging baskets and planters will be for sale as well as the ever popular perennial plants dug from members' gardens. Proceeds from the May Sale benefit local gardening projects such as the Aspinwall Riverfront Park, Cooper-Siegel Community Library, Camp Guyasuta and provide educational grants to local schools. Put it on your calendar so you won't forget to come to Squaw Valley Park to support your community and browse our selection of wonderful plants!



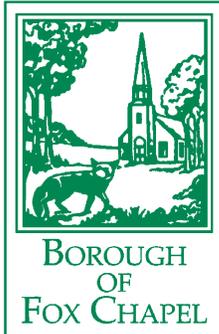
BOROUGH OF FOX CHAPEL

401 FOX CHAPEL ROAD

PITTSBURGH, PA 15238

(412) 963-1100

www.fox-chapel.pa.us



**BOROUGH OF FOX CHAPEL
ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS**

**BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

Andrew C. Bennett, *President*
Jay S. Troutman, *Vice President*
Harrison S. Lauer
Ann R. Meyer
James M. Royston
Thomas A. Karet

Walter A. Scott, III, *Mayor*
Joy A. Hardt, *Treasurer*
Gary J. Koehler, *Manager*

Meets each month on the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:00 P.M.

**ENVIRONMENTAL
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Walter A. Scott, III, *Chairman*
Bruce H. Laswell
Peggy G. Jayme
Daniel H. Sliger
Jay S. Troutman
Nanette Bennett
Austin Henry

Meets as needed on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:00 P.M.

**PLANNING
COMMISSION**

Harrison S. Lauer, *Chairman*
Nanette Bennett
Lane D. Dively
James M. Royston
Jeffrey B. Todd

Meets as needed on the 3rd Monday of the month at 5:30 P.M.

PARK COMMISSION

James W. Pashek, *Chairman*
Nancy Fales
Dotty Beckwith
Jay Troutman
Brian Shema
Maria Harrington
Dotty Nielsen
Liz Nelson

Meets the 2nd Monday in March, June, September and December at 9:00 A.M.

**ZONING
HEARING BOARD**

Richard E. Jaynes, *Chairman*
John B. Montgomery
Kim Chrisman

Meets as needed on the Wednesday following the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:00 P.M.

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS
Office 412-963-1100**

Extensions:

Administration 0
Building Permits/Zoning..... 113
Public Works 119
Sewer Department..... 126

Police Dept. 412-963-7220

**MEETINGS ARE HELD IN THE BOROUGH BUILDING AND ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
ALL RESIDENTS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND.**