

Charlestown Township Newsletter

Summer 2022 Newsletter

www.charlestown.pa.us

Published by the Board of Supervisors

4030 S. Whitehorse Road, Devault, PA 19432 - (610) 240-0326
Township Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Monday - Friday
Visit our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/CharlestownDay/>



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Frank A. Piliero, Chairman
Charles A. Philips, Vice Chair
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Hugh D. Willig, Member

TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Christopher W. Heleniak
manager@charlestown.pa.us

BOARD MEETINGS

Supervisors

1ST Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission

2ND Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission

Semi-monthly 3RD Tuesday
@ 4:00 p.m.

Environmental Advisory Committee

2ND Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Parks & Recreation

3RD Thursday @ 7:30 p.m.

Meetings are held at the
Great Valley Middle School

Welcome to our New Township Manager

The Board of Supervisors has announced the hiring of Chris Heleniak as the new Township Manager. He was appointed at the June 6th Board meeting and started on July 5th. He comes to Charlestown after having served as Township Manager in Skippack Township, Montgomery County for over 5 years.

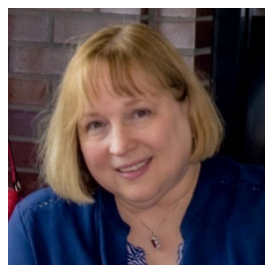
Chris holds a B.A. in Political Science from Widener University and a law degree from the Widener University Delaware Law School. He is licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.



For the past 20 years Chris has served as a volunteer firefighter with the Plymouth Fire Company No.1 in Plymouth Township. During that time, he has served in several leadership positions within the fire company and holds numerous state and national certifications.

Chris resides in Lafayette Hill with his wife, Tyla, and children, Clara and Bennett. He enjoys watching Philadelphia sports and refereeing scholastic wrestling.

He looks forward to working with the Board of Supervisors, Township Staff and Township residents to continue to make Charlestown a great place to live and work.



After 32 years with us, first as Planning Commission Secretary, and later adding the duties of Treasurer, Secretary, Administrator, and then Manager, Linda stepped down as Manager in order to gradually reduce her hours to part time beginning in 2023. She's continuing in her position as Treasurer along with other admin duties.

In her message to the Township on July 1st, she said, "I'm not ready to retire! I simply enjoy being here too much to leave, thanks to the supervisors, fellow employees, board & commission members, consultants, and most of all, the residents of the Township who define Charlestown and put our township in a class of its own."

We congratulate and thank Linda on her long years of service and extend a warm welcome to Chris as our new Township Manager.



CHARLESTOWN

DAY 2022

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH
9^{AM} - 3^{PM}

100 ACADEMIC WAY - PHOENIXVILLE, PA

CHARLESTOWN DAY ACTIVITIES

BOUNCE HOUSE - LIVE MUSIC - FOOD - VENDORS - AND MORE!

Requirements for mask wearing and social distancing will be based on state regulations at the time of the event.

Follow the Charlestown Parks and Recreation Facebook page for event details, rain dates, and cancellation announcements.

Sponsors and Vendors needed!

Please contact Info@gofoxonline.com for event sponsorship and vending opportunities.

Volunteers Invited to Apply to Join the Historic Commission/Historical Architectural Review Board

Due to a vacancy to begin 1/1/2023, the Township is seeking a volunteer to serve on its combined Historic Commission/HARB. The group consists of seven or more members who are appointed to five-year terms by the Board of Supervisors. While some members have specified roles such as zoning officer or real estate broker, this term is an at-large position open to any resident of the Township.

The Commission meets on the 3rd Tuesday every other month (Jan-Mar-May-Jul-Sept-Nov) at 4:00 p.m. at the Guidance Office at the Great Valley Middle School. Once the new Township Office is ready, meetings will take place at 11 General Warren Blvd.

Do you think you lack the experience or knowledge? Don't let that deter you from becoming involved! Anyone interested in learning about our Township's history will be an asset!

"The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity" – Dorothy Parker

If you are interested in the preservation and protection of the many historically significant structures located in Charlestown Township, please submit a letter of interest to Charlestown Township, P.O. Box 507, Devault, PA 19432 or email: manager@charlestown.pa.us



Historic Photo of Charlestown Road before the road was relocated to the east side of the Woolen Mill

Successful Summer Concert Series

The Township Parks & Recreation Board arranged for three concerts this summer. The Malarkey Brothers, a Celtic folk rock band, was rained out for their original date but are performing on Tuesday, August 2nd at the Rapp House on Yellow Springs Road starting at 6:30 p.m. Park in the Brightside Farm Park lot adjacent to the Rapp House on Yellow Springs Road just north of Hollow Road.

Below: Ray Adkins' Band, One Man Dog, a James Taylor Tribute Band, had a great turnout and perfect weather at Charlestown Park on July 7th.

Concerts were arranged, and photos taken by, Makinlee Fox of Go Fox LLC.





BIRD TOWN PENNSYLVANIA

There is a small committee being formed to direct the efforts in making Charlestown Township a Bird Town.

Bird Town Pennsylvania is a program formed under the Pennsylvania Audubon State Council, birdtownpa.org

It was developed to make bird friendly communities by restoring habitats, reducing pesticide use and in educating the public to make our land a safer more welcoming place for birds, wildlife and people to visit and live.

The committee heading Bird Town will be formed as a sub-committee of the Charlestown Township Environmental Advisory Committee. Anyone wishing to be a part of the committee should submit an application referencing Bird Town. The application can be found here:

http://www.charlestown.pa.us/misc_docs/eac_volunteer_form.pdf .

For more information, please call Pete Goodman at 610-655-5020.

Do You Have a Private Well? Temple University Seeking Study Participants



Researchers at Temple University are looking for families who drink water from a private well for a paid study. They are interested in keeping children safe from illnesses that can be spread by drinking water from private wells. Families will receive a free whole-home UV water treatment system (value of device + installation = \$1,000).

Families can participate from home. To be part of this NIH-funded study, families must have a child three years old or younger and live in select PA counties.

For more information, visit their website at www.wettrial.org, call them at (215) 204-5124, or email them at wettrial@temple.edu



Do You Have a Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) ?

Every Friday we send out an email blast letting you know what's been recently posted on the Township Website along with other updates and pertinent information. Sign up by sending an email request to: admin1@charlestown.pa.us

Meeting Date Changed

Please Note:

The Parks & Recreation Board meeting for September has been moved to Wednesday, Sept. 14th at 7:30 p.m. at the Great Valley Middle School, 255 N. Phoenixville Pike, Malvern, PA, Room 154.



Ester Estes Commemorated for Year of Service

Ester Estes, on the right seen with her family, is commemorated for her year of service on the Charlestown Environmental Advisory Committee with the planting of an American Plum tree at Brightside Farm.

New Eagle Scout Project Completed at Charlestown Park

Recently, Larisa Greway of Troop 73G completed her Eagle Scout project in Charlestown Park. If you've ever found the game of checkers to be just a bit small for your tastes, you're in luck: her project is a giant-sized checkerboard, complete with checker pieces. It's easy to find, set up near the playground and pavilions.

Larisa chose this project after thinking back to a Girl Scout trip to Switzerland she took a few years ago. In Zurich, they stumbled across a park with a giant chessboard and chess pieces, with everything ready to play. Moving the big pieces around was a fun way to spend the afternoon, and when it came time to think about her Eagle project, she thought it would be fun to bring something like that to the local area.



After adapting the idea to be a checkerboard (which may be more approachable for kids and easier to pick up for a round or two than chess), Larisa and her scout troop installed the board in early April. Next to the board is a box including the checkers and a sheet of rules to get everyone started playing. All are welcome to enjoy this fun new addition to Charlestown Park!

Update on our Relocation this Fall

The Township Office Move is scheduled to take place this fall in early November. As you may have experienced with your own projects, construction has become a little more challenging due to the difficulty in obtaining materials in a timely manner, but we're working closely with the landlord to do what we can to stay on schedule.

The new office is being fit-out by Builders Inc. through a contract with our landlord, Tin Cup Realty LLC.



We look forward to better serving our residents and businesses in the new office, which will feature a dedicated public meeting room, conference room, and handicapped access throughout the facility.

Devault Trail Activation Plan



The Devault Trail Activation plan was finalized in June 2022 and was made possible through a Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant provided by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission to Charlestown Township in 2020.

This Activation Plan, while only one step in the trail formation process, is a significant one. Besides setting forth recommendations for the appropriate groups (and structure) to acquire, own, and manage the future trail, it serves as a catalyst for the immediate next stages in the process: the formation of a working group for the inter-municipal agreement and the property research and engineering steps that continue to push the trail project forward.

Moving forward there will be opportunities for stakeholder and public input at every future step along the way. The June 2022 Activation Plan is available on our Website, www.charlestown.pa.us for your review.

Kestrels at Brightside Farm Park

by Andy Motel, Planning Commissioner



On June 8th, Dan Mummert from the Pennsylvania Game Commission successfully banded three kestrel nestlings in Box One. (One egg did not hatch.) Many people were present and it was gratifying to see that so many parents and grandparents brought children. I think they were all impressed (even if they couldn't hold one of the babies). On June 13th, Dan returned to Brightside and banded the one nestling in Box Two which is located at the opposite end of the Park near Hollow Road. (Three of the eggs in Box Two did not hatch.)

While these young kestrels have or will shortly leave the nests, they will remain near the nest boxes for a period of time while they mature, improve their hunting skills, and get occasional meals from the parents. I encourage everyone to stop by and look for them, and the many other avian residents of Brightside.

At left: Female Kestrel in her box with eggs

Dan Mummert is far too modest to toot his own horn, so I will. Yes, his job as a diversity biologist with the Game Commission includes banding kestrels and other birds, but that's just one area. Dan works on an array of subjects and covers a vast area of the Commonwealth. There are just 6 diversity biologists with the Game Commission. Dan covers Southeastern PA which includes Berks, Bucks, Chester, Dauphin, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, and Schuylkill counties. On the PGC website, you can read more about what Dan and his colleagues do.

At right: Dan Mummert approaching a kestrel box to start banding nestlings



The PGC's "Private Landowner Assistance Program found at:

<https://www.pgc.pa.gov/InformationResources/GetInvolved/LandownerPrograms/Pages/PrivateLandownerAssistanceProgram.aspx>

Through this program in 2021 Dan made suggestions for Brightside which have already significantly improved wildlife habitat, which in turn has improved the Park experience for all our residents. Dan deserves a well-earned, "Thank you!"

And a follow-up note from Dan Mummert:

Thank you everyone for your interest in kestrels and our exceptional diversity of wildlife in PA. Brightside is a tremendous example of how a park can serve the community as a place for recreation and as a place for healthy ecosystems and exceptional habitat for wildlife and it's wonderful to see the leadership and support the Township is providing to further enhance the wildlife habitat value of Brightside over the coming years.

If all goes well, I'll see you again next year for another evening of kestrel banding.

*In wildlife conservation,
Dan Mummert*

Be sure to visit Brightside and enjoy the walking trail and beautiful surroundings!



Diary of a Bat

by Veda Maany, Environmental Advisory Committee Member

Charlestown Residents,

I would like to share these diary entries written by Miss Bat while she was seeking shelter at my house. She must have left it behind when she was rescued. At the end I added an update on her condition and some other information you will find interesting.

Saturday March 26th : My senses are telling me it is spring! I feel a warmth and change in the air. I feel restless and want a head start to feel that awakening rush coming out of hibernation, despite the disapproval of the elders in my colony. I want to feel that satisfying stretch of my wings, and fly about the night sky, singing my sonic songs. I'm off into the night!

Sunday March 27th : I'm not sure what is going on but I am feeling quite fatigued, and cold. Perhaps I pushed myself too far last night because tonight I feel weak and hungry. There was a shortage of food right before hibernation time, and we all had to ration our intake. I didn't know it could affect me so much now. There has been a drop in the ambient temperature as well. I need to find a place to rest, quickly. This nook will do.

Monday March 28th : I'm still not feeling well. I can't expend any more energy other than to just try to rest here. This is not a good place to resume hibernation- it's too exposed, but it was the first place I could find to rest. I'm spending way too much energy just trying to stay warm out here.

Tuesday March 29th : As I rest here another day I have a lot of time to contemplate. Maybe the elders are right. There is something off. They say we young ones seem to have a different internal clock, and they are concerned about our wellbeing and our future. They talk about all changes- the woodlands disappearing and changes in the way our sonic sounds reflect in the air,and where are all the insects? The elders tell stories of the past when the sky was filled with food, all kinds! It was sheer exhaustion in the fall scrummaging for something to eat so I could hibernate with a nice full belly. Is the end near for me? I am feeling weaker and I'm not sure how long I can hang on here.

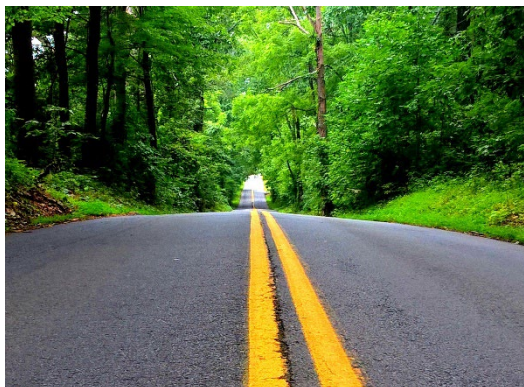
Wednesday March 30th : I sensed something approach me. First I thought for sure this was death coming for me, but now I realize I am in the presence of one of those large biped mammals- friend or foe? Not quite sure. I must go now. I am being taken away...

Miss Bat was identified as a female Big Brown Bat and was taken into the Diamond Rock Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic where she was rehydrated and nursed back to health until she achieved an acceptable weight. She was released back into her habitat on April 24th. Unfortunately, 21 other bats came through the rehab clinic throughout April and May this year with pronounced emaciation. The clinic also treated several bats experiencing miscarriages! This is an astonishing new phenomenon because in previous years, bats have been brought to the clinic for injuries only, not for malnourishment. Our local bat experts think this is likely a consequence of food supply shortages from habitat destruction and use of pesticides, especially those used for "mosquito control". Bats unfortunately have been vilified as a rabies reservoir (per CDC, most bats DON'T have rabies!) and an "evil vampire" but on the contrary, these fellow mammals provide many benefits, most importantly non-toxic pest management (including but not limited to cucumber beetles, ground beetles, scarab beetles, snout beetles and stink bugs), plant pollination, and seed dispersal, thus rendering them essential to the health of our ecosystems right here in Charlestown township.

If you see a bat injured or suffering, please contact this wonderful resource we have in our community-[Diamond Rock Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic](#). And don't forget- you may want to forgo paying for a potentially toxic insecticide service when you can take advantage of our local bats' free nontoxic pest control services!



Help Us Report Issues on State Roads



Since the majority of calls we receive to report potholes, downed trees, and other issues are state roads, we'd like your help in reporting them directly to PennDOT in one of two ways:

1. Call 1-800-FIX-ROAD (800-349-7623) or the District 6 Office at 484-340-3201
2. Go to this link to submit a Roadway Concern:
<https://customercare.penndot.gov/>

This easy to use interface will provide you with an email confirmation of your entry and provide you with a tracking number for your complaint.

A list of state roads can be found on our website at: <http://www.charlestown.pa.us/roads.aspx>

Charlestown Township
P.O. Box 507
Devault, PA 19432