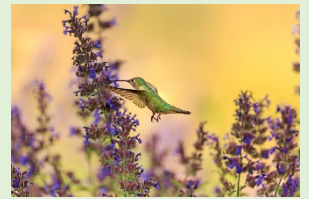




Charlestown Township Newsletter



Spring 2023 Edition

www.charlestown.pa.us

Published by the Board of Supervisors

11 General Warren Blvd. Suite 1, Malvern, PA 19355 (610) 240-0326

Township Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Monday - Friday



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Supervisors

1ST Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Environmental Advisory Committee

2nd Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission

2nd Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission

3rd Wednesday @ 1 pm
Jan-Mar-May-Jul-Sep-Nov

Parks & Recreation Board

3rd Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Hearing Board

Scheduled on as-needed basis

Meetings are held at the Township
office, 11 General Warren Blvd.
Suite 1, Malvern

Looking Forward to Fair Weather Fun

Plans are in the making for this year's Parks & Recreation Program and we hope you'll join us for these special events:

FREE CONCERT

The Charlestown Historical Society will present a free concert at its Wisner-Rapp House headquarters at 3020 Yellow Springs Road - adjacent Brightside Farm and Park on Thursday, June 22, 2023 from 7 pm to 9 pm featuring bluegrass music by "Borderline" from Yardley, PA. Bring your lawn chairs and beach blankets!



Charlestown Day – Sept. 30th

There's always a lot to see and do at our annual community day event at Charlestown Park.

Bounce house, bubbles, booths, performers, and much more is being planned for our 2023 event!

Summer Concert Series

Five concerts are being planned for Thursday nights in July and August, with Wednesdays and Fridays being the rain dates. Most will be at Charlestown Park, but one may be at the Brightside Farm adjacent to Wisner-Rapp House. Bring a blanket or camp chair.

Details will be made available on the Township website and Facebook Page closer to the concert dates.

Visit www.charlestown.pa.us and <https://www.facebook.com/Charlestown Day/>

2023 Chester County Household Hazardous Waste Events

RESIDENTIAL ONLY – BUSINESSES AND CONTRACTORS WILL BE TURNED AWAY

NO TVs, ELECTRONICS, LATEX PAINT OR FREON APPLIANCES WILL BE ACCEPTED

Charlestown Township is a 2023 Participant in the Chester County Hazardous Household Waste Event Program. Three of the four annual events remain for 2023. Bring unwanted hazardous household, automotive products, home maintenance, lawn and pest control products to the next Collection event. You must register online for an appointment time. Go to www.chestercountyswa.org

For a list of items Accepted and Not Accepted, go to:

<https://www.chestercountyswa.org/120/HHW-Collection-Material-List>

Friday, June 23, 2023

Coatesville Learning Center

1635 East Lincoln Highway, Coatesville, PA 19320

(Stone Walled Entrance – Veterans' Drive - same entrance as CAT Brandywine- Rt. 30 across from Dairy Queen)

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023

Oxford School District Admin. Building

125 Bell Tower Lane, Oxford, PA 19363

Saturday, October 7, 2023

Government Services Center

601 Westtown Rd, West Chester, PA 19380

Maximum Amount Accepted – 25 gallons or 220 lbs/No Metal Drums

Please take your cardboard boxes home to recycle at the curb or local drop off



- Do not mix materials.
- Tighten lid on all containers. If container is leaking, pack in larger container with newspaper to soak up leaks.
- Bring all substances in original containers with labels. Items must be identifiable.

The Ruby Throated Hummingbird

- by Pete Goodman, Environmental Advisory Committee Member

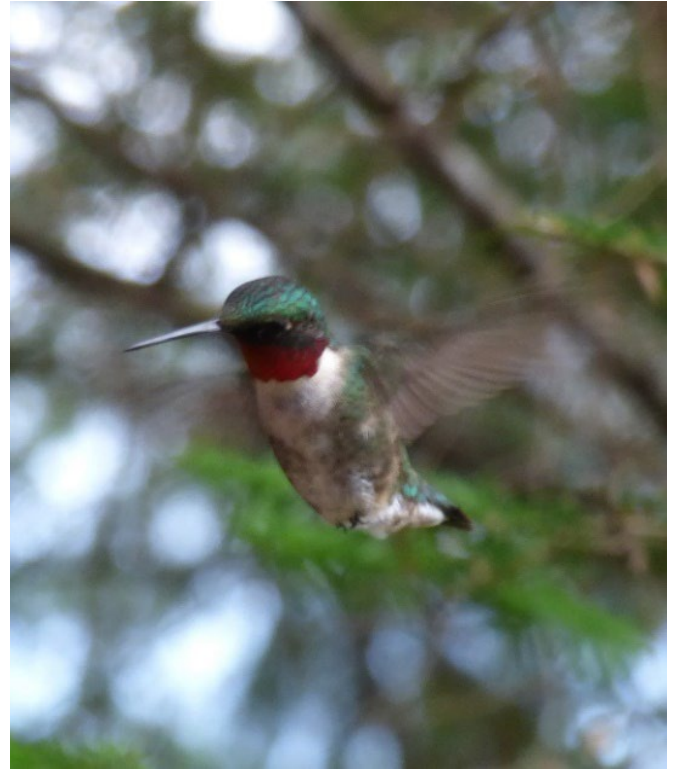
There are lots of interesting birds who live or pass-through Charlestown. One that has come to be of special interest to me in recent years (especially during the locked-up-at-home covid years) is the ruby throated hummingbird. These very small migratory birds are simply amazing. When I say small, I mean really small – like the last two knuckles of you index finger small - 3.5 inches or so weighing about as much as 2 ½ paper clips (1/10 of an ounce).

Their wings beat at such a furious pace (40 – 80 wing beats per second) that you generally hear the whirring buzz before seeing them. They sound like a giant bee. They have a long needle-like bill that they insert into flowers and hummingbird feeders to feed on nectar and syrup. Hummingbirds also eat small insects and spiders and are super pollinators.

These little birds are dynamos of energy. They seem to be in perpetual motion and fly at incredible speeds for such a small bird. The constant motion is necessary to keep that mighty engine fed, darting from flower to flower using their bristle-brush tongue to draw up the nectar. Occasionally if you are a vigilant watcher, you get rewarded by seeing one sit on a branch or a feeder for a brief moment before they are off and gone again in a flash.

They are most beautiful if you can catch them in the right light. Their backs are an iridescent green that runs up and onto their heads. It seems to glow when the sun hits them at just the right angle. The female is a bit plainer than the male with a whitish underside extending up to under her beak. The male has an iridescent ruby red collar just below his head with a white collar below that. If you see them in bright sun light, they reflect the ruby -red color dramatically as would the fine gem stone.

Hummingbirds mate in our area. For years I have searched trying to find a nest. I have never seen one in our area. From what I have read they are small little cups about 2 inches in diameter, neatly constructed with fairly thick walls, the outside of which is lined with lichens and the whole thing is



typically tied and glued together with spider webs. Typically, two white pea-sized eggs are laid.

To help out these amazing little birds think about what you are planting in your gardens. Plant native plants that have bright colored flowers and will bloom in cycles throughout the growing season. Some examples of plants that hummingbirds like and are great natives with good color are Cardinal flower, fireweed, jewelweed, pink wintergreen, thistle, purple aster and trumpet honey suckle.

Hummingbirds go south for the winter. Some over-winter in Florida and around the gulph coast to Texas. Other will cross 600 miles of the Gulf of Mexico and winter as far south as Costa Rica. The ruby throated hummingbirds arrive in our area in April and head back south in late September.

If anyone is interested in being part of the Charlestown Bird Town Committee please contact me, Pete Goodman, either

by cell phone or email (610-655-5020/
peteg5020@gmail.com).

Parks & Recreation Board Seeks New Members

The Charlestown Township Parks & Rec Board is seeking volunteers to serve with us. The Board was created to enhance recreational opportunities for all ages.

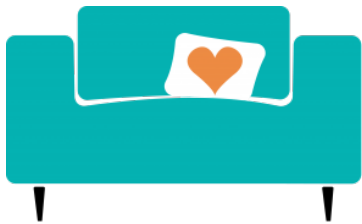
The Parks and Recreation Board is a 7-member board with a 5-year term and advises the Board of Supervisors on matters of recreational policy and the development and maintenance of parks and trails in the Township, including the 44 acre Charlestown Park on Township Line Road, 75 acre Brightside Farm Park, the future Jenkins Park on Valley Hill Road, the Pickering Trail between Charlestown Road and Route 29, and other trails and open space throughout the Township.

The Parks and Recreation Board meets to discuss topics related to Township parks and recreation programs and to plan special events throughout the year.

We seek members who have an interest or knowledge in the area of Parks & Recreation. The Board meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Building. Please submit a letter of interest to manager@charlestown.pa.us.



Charlestown Day 2022 photo by G. Csete



Community Warehouse Project **of CHESTER COUNTY**

A Message from the Community Warehouse Project of Chester County

We are a local furniture bank that collects gently used furniture and housewares and then distributes these items to families, individuals, and veterans in need throughout Chester County. Our clients are referred to us by over 60 social service agencies throughout the area. We served over 400 Chester County households last year.

We would like to suggest that your residents consider donating their items to our program instead of putting them out for bulk trash. This is a way to recycle perfectly usable items instead of going to the landfill.

Our warehouse is located at 800 E. Virginia Avenue, Building 3, West Chester, PA 19380 near Henderson High School. Donations must be pre-approved by sending photos to donations@communitywarehouseproject.com or to our phone at 484-473-4360. We are always open for donation drop offs on Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday mornings from 9 to 12 and every third Saturday of each month from 9 to 1pm. Other drop off dates are available by appointment.

Please email or call with any questions gbrion@communitywarehouseproject.com or 610-505-2200.

When Seconds Count: Addressing for Emergencies



Your house number can save your life. If you have an emergency, 9-1-1 will first ask: **WHERE is your emergency?**

Placement of your house number is critical. Make sure your house number is clearly visible from either direction of travel, and is not obscured by shrubbery.

Placing the number at the base of your driveway is a good first indicator to identify your home. If you have a long, winding driveway and/or multiple buildings on your property, you should install a second set of numbers on your principal structure, your home.

Remember that emergency personnel need to see your number in the dark of night and in foggy and rainy weather as well as on a clear day. Reflective numbers can make the difference here.

Along with addressing, consider whether you need to add some outdoor lighting to guide not only emergency personnel but also visitors and delivery service providers to ensure their safety as well.

This spring as you begin sprucing up your yard and home exterior, check your property's address display and upgrade it if needed.

Please make this a priority for you and your family's continued safety!

Ordinance Specifications for Displaying your Address

- Address numbers shall be located on the property where the principal building is located.
- Address numbers shall be Arabic in design with a minimum height of four inches.
- the numbers are visible from both directions of travel on the street.
- Mount your address to the principal building's front wall or to a porch or other fixed appurtenance in front of the principal building in the general vicinity of the main entry way or main path of travel which leads to the main entrance from a street, or otherwise separately mounted upon the face of a wall or upon a post or mailbox in the front yard of the premises.
- Any post used for numbers shall be no more than six feet above the road grade.
- Make sure the numbers have a contrasting background, arrangement, spacing, size, and uniformity so they may be read during daylight hours by a person with normal vision if the numbers are viewed from the center line of the facing street.
- The numbers shall be placed so that trees, shrubs and other obstructions do not block the line of sight of the numbers from the center of the street.



PA NATIVE SPECIES DAY MAY 18

Sponsored by the Charlestown Township Environmental Advisory Committee

Featuring:

1. For the Kids an ART CONTEST.
2. For the Adults a Quiz.
3. For Everyone an Event at Brightside Farm Park on May 18. See our table, talk to us about the Changes, learn about Bird Town. Hours are 8 am – noon and 3 pm – 5 pm. Park in the walking trail parking lot where the big kiosk is located.

See the Charlestown Township EAC's [webpage](http://www.charlestown.pa.us/environmental_advisory_committee.aspx) for more details!

http://www.charlestown.pa.us/environmental_advisory_committee.aspx

Turnpike Widening Project Construction Begins April 2023

The Turnpike Commission is reconstructing and widening approximately four miles of the Turnpike between Milepost 312 (just west of the Downingtown Interchange) and Milepost 316 (near the Valley Hill Road overpass in Charlestown). The existing four-lane roadway will be upgraded to six lanes. The project will also include construction of new stormwater facilities, replacement areas for wetlands and streams. No sound barriers are being installed in Charlestown's section of this project.

If you'd like to check the status moving forward, please visit the project website at:

www.paturnpike.com/traveling/construction/site/milepost-312-316-reconstruction



**BIRD TOWN
PENNSYLVANIA**

At the February 6th meeting, Ms. Heidi Shiver, Birdtown Pennsylvania President, presented the Board of Supervisors with an award for the Township achieving the status of Birdtown USA.

Ms. Shiver presented the Chairperson with an official Certificate of Recognition along with plaques and signage indicating Charlestown Township had been approved as a Birdtown USA community. The signage will be installed this Spring at Brightside Farm Park and Charlestown Park, plus

several roadside locations.



PAPER IS A LOVABLE RECYCLABLE

— by Patti Lynn CPR Recycling Resources

When you talk about recycling, it's likely that plastic is the material on everyone's minds. "Plastic is confusing!" (Yes, it is!) "Do we really need it?" (Yes and no)

But paper? Not so much. Why not? Because paper is one of the easiest materials to recycle, and it has a long history of recyclability in the US (1600's by many accounts). Recycling one ton of paper saves 3.3 cubic yards of our precious landfill space!¹

Paper can be recycled 5-7 times. The longer the paper's fibers, the more times it can be recycled into a new product before it loses its integrity. Today's copy paper can be next week's newspaper, then next month's paper towels.

Using recovered paper in mills is more economical than using virgin fiber. The process does not require extreme heat for melting, as it does for plastic, glass, and metals. Energy costs are a concern, however most of the mills in our eastern region have very efficient systems. Philadelphia's Newman Mill, for example, has a closed loop system that co-generates, producing its own steam and electricity. Using 100% recycled feedstock, Newman Paper manufactures chip board used in the making of packaging, gameboards, puzzles, candy boxes, book covers and many other everyday products.

About 80% of US paper mills depend on used paper to manufacture some or all their products. ¹

Overall, the fiber mill industry is healthy, there is plenty of recyclable fiber feedstock available and trucking and labor are finally finding some stabilization.

WHAT PAPER IS ACCEPTABLE IN RECYCLING BINS? Clean loads are essential! Unsoiled junk mail, magazines, newspaper, office paper, flattened cereal boxes/paperboard and corrugated, and CLEAN pizza boxes (NO FOOD OR GREASE!).

Not all paper collected for recycling in Chester County ends up at the same mill. Each has their own unique limits on what specific fibers they need and contamination levels. **Always check with your municipality or private recycling hauler to know what is acceptable.**

Let's be Trash Smart. Appreciate your paper when you use it and love it enough to easily recycle it!

¹ ISRI 4/5/23, <https://www.isri.org/recycled-commodities/paper>



Woof! Just a friendly reminder that in order for us to provide the best experience to our visitors, and to protect your pets as well as the ecological health of our parks and trails, all dogs are required to remain on leashes at all times. Also, please pick up after your dogs! These rules are enforced by state law and township ordinance.

2023 Earth Day Clean Up in Pictures



Many thanks to Troop Leader Jeannine Espenshade for these photos of troop members from Troop 440, who have been volunteering at Brightside Farm for TEN YEARS!



Left and Center Photos by Karen Buzzi from Brownie Troop #480 and Girl Scout Troop #41233 conducting a clean up at Charlestown Park. Thank you to all the troop members and Troop #41233 leaders Karen Buzzi Ghosh and Shirley Fung, and Troop #480 leaders Amanda Glatfelter and Andrea Miller for spending your day volunteering. Photo above right by Environmental Advisory Committee Chair Carol Armstrong of Stephanie Yocum and Thomas Yang along Route 29 in Devault.



At right: Makinlee Fox helped promote the event and also picked up trash on Charlestown Road with Scott Ammerman. Her photo of roadside JUNK is at left.

We also extend our thanks as always to the residents of Charlestown Meadows, who clean up at their community each year. Frank Pafumi has led the charge for many, many years and has passed the torch to Pamela Smyth, who joined him in leading the group this year.

Creating a Grassland Bird Sanctuary at Brightside Farm Park:

Why it Matters

- by Linda Csete

If you're a regular visitor to Brightside Farm, you will have seen big changes taking place this year and may have questions about the removal of hedgerows and other vegetation from the grounds. We'd like to share some of the details with you. In depth professional assessment reports are available on our website.

A Brief History of Brightside Farm



Above: Pano of Brightside Farm by George Csete

Prior to 1996, Brightside Farm consisted of two parcels owned and operated by the Pyle family. The Township acquired 20.6 acres in 1996 and the remaining 55 acres in 2000. Since that time, the majority of the ground has been left as former agricultural fields except for limited haying operations, mowing, and a community garden area. A grass walking trail was paved in 2017 and has become popular with our residents. A stream and its floodplain cut through the northwest of the park where volunteers maintain riparian buffer plantings.

A New Direction

Along with the current amenities, which will remain in place, a new plan is underway. In April 2021, John and Patty Werth of the Valley Forge Chapter of the Audubon Society conducted a bird walk at Brightside and they were extremely impressed with its potential as a rare grassland habitat. They had observed birds that are rarely seen in Southeastern Pennsylvania there, such as the Eastern Meadowlark.

In 2021, Planning Commissioner Andy Motel requested an assessment from the PA Game Commission, which was offered at no charge and was undertaken by Dan Mummert, a diversity biologist. He provided us with a Wildlife Diversity Management Recommendation report for Brightside Farm.



At right: Kestrel Eggs by Andy Motel

Based on these recommendations, in 2022 the Supervisors hired Resource Environmental Solutions (RES), which was the organization responsible for developing the meadows at Longwood Gardens. The Supervisors asked them to assess the site and create an Ecological Restoration Plan to translate the findings into actionable items that have now been prioritized and will be implemented to benefit the human, wildlife, bird, pollinator insect, and floral residents of the Township. This action plan will transform Brightside Farm into a Grassland Bird Sanctuary. RES's Ecoassessment Report, available on our website, provides details on the existing habitat types and conditions, and potential interventions.

The reports were presented by RES during a public meeting of the Board of Supervisors on February 6th. Previous meetings had been conducted in 2022 discussing the plan.

Below: Vesper Sparrow photo by Kayann Cassidy. The Vesper Sparrow is a grassland species not commonly seen in Southeastern PA due to the rarity of the grassland habitat they require.



- continued on p. 10

Why a Grassland Sanctuary?

There's been a steep population decline throughout North America of grassland birds. Some of the causes are more frequent mowing of fields, and residential and commercial development. Birds at risk in our area include the Eastern Meadowlark, American Kestrel, Barn Owl, Grasshopper sparrow, Field Sparrow and Northern Harrier.

Converting a portion of our open space to functional grasslands has been identified as a high priority by the Township. Although picturesque, Brightside Farm Park contained numerous hedgerows consisting mostly of non-native, invasive shrub and tree species. Most breeding grassland birds rely on large, unbroken tracts of open grassland that are free of hedgerows, tree lines, and other structures that allow predators to compromise nesting suitability. To create a grassland habitat, it was agreed that critical vegetation management is key.



Next Steps

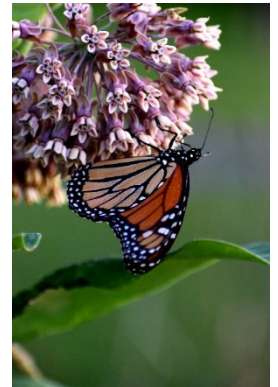
In February 2023, the hedgerows were removed. Any herbicides used by RES were applied by licensed, experienced, professionals according to labels, safety sheets, and industry accepted best practices. Eradication of invasive species and their seed stock is crucial to optimizing

habitat to promote growth of native seed.

After controlling the invasive species, a native grassland seed mix will be drill seeded. The hedgerow areas will be seeded with the same mix as the grasslands.

Maintenance will include spot treatment of invasives over the first three growing seasons along with strategically timed, selective mowing.

All oak and hickory trees will be protected, along with all older, open-form native trees. Few trees on site are older than 80 years and these will be maintained. This conversion to savanna should result in approximately 60% openness and 40% canopy closure (retained second-growth trees), with clustered plantings of native shrubs.



These proposed enhancements will develop over time and will be managed in concert with the PA Game Commission's observations and professional recommendations. RES's plan will increase the suitability of the onsite grasslands and improve other features of the site, including an increase in native insect diversity, foraging habitat for reptiles and amphibians, increased small mammal population diversity and abundance, soil character development, added protection of the riparian buffers, and stormwater mitigation.

Our vision is to see Brightside Farm Park become a unique natural sanctuary for all to enjoy by creating a legacy of beauty, harmony, and peace.

This Article was compiled referencing Dan Mummert's Wildlife Diversity Management Recommendations along with these publications from Resource Environmental Solutions (RES):

Ecoassessment Report January 2023*

Ecological Restoration Plan January 2023*

RES Powerpoint from February 6, 2023 Presentation at the Board of Supervisors Meeting*

* These materials are available on the Township's website: www.charlestown.pa.us . Look for additional notices of future public meetings where this program will be discussed, and please join us!

Blue birds and Monarch Butterfly photos by Julie Amandor

Road Improvement Updates

Signal Upgrades for Phoenixville Pike & Yellow Springs Road

In late 2021, the Township obtained a \$699,000 grant from the state Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED). The additional match is being shared by Charlestown and East Whiteland Township to cover the remaining \$200,000 cost.

Charlestown's traffic consultant, Traffic Planning & Design (TPD), is preparing the design while East Whiteland's consultant, McMahon & Associates, is performing the land survey. Each traffic engineering firm will review the others' work before submitting to PennDOT. TPD will prepare the bid package in early 2024. Construction is anticipated for Spring/Summer 2024.

Sidewalk Improvements at Rt. 29 (Morehall Road) and Yellow Springs Road

In 2022, TPD assisted us with obtaining a \$177,417 state DCED grant to install sidewalks along with the associated traffic improvements at the intersection of Morehall Road and Yellow Springs Road/Warner Lane.

Construction is anticipated in Fall 2023.

Ongoing Planning

The Township has had an Act 209 Plan in place since 2014. This plan contains a roadway sufficiency analysis and capital improvements plan that we review and update each year during budget season. Our Planning Commission discusses traffic needs at many of its monthly meetings in order to recommend future improvements.

Road Paving this Summer 2023

Each year since 2000, we've selected 2-4 of our 76 Township owned roads to improve so the overall condition of them is in the good to excellent range. Three Ponds Lane and the Pickering Spur are on this year's schedule for road resurfacing.

PennDOT owns 19 of the roads in our Township, and they are the major collector roads including Route 29, Route 401, Charlestown Road, Phoenixville Pike, Merlin Road, among others. This link to the PennDOT District 6 Website provides details on various road improvements scheduled throughout Chester, Bucks, and Montgomery Counties and provides an easy to use system to submit road concerns:

[District 6 Construction Projects and Roadwork \(pa.gov\)](https://www.penn.gov/district6/construction-projects-and-roadwork)

Route 401 (Conestoga) and Valley Hill Road

Even if both roads of an intersection are PennDOT owned, the Township is responsible for maintaining the traffic signals. In 2021, we successfully obtained a CMAQ grant that will cover all the costs of improving the Rt. 401/Valley Hill Road signals.

Our traffic engineering consulting firm, Traffic Planning & Design, prepared conceptual design plans to satisfy the grant eligibility requirements.

The project will begin in Spring 2024 and include channelization improvements, adding left turn lanes on Rt 401 for both northbound and southbound traffic, and updating the signals and their timing patterns.

We Want and Need your Input!

We appreciate hearing from you if you discover a missing road sign, pothole, or other road hazard, or if you have a suggestion for a future road improvement. Email the township office at admin1@charlestown.pa.us or call the office at 610-240-0326.

Memorial Day Commemorative Service

Charlestown Revolutionary Cemetery

Charlestown Historical Society and Charlestown Parks and Recreation to host Memorial Day Commemorative Service Monday, May 29th, 2023 at 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM at the Charlestown Cemetery (Revolutionary War cemetery, across from the Charlestown Playhouse). Parking is available at the Playhouse.

Here is an outline of our program:



1. Invocation by Rev. Eric Woodworth (former pastor at Charlestown Methodist in the Village)
2. Singing of the National Anthem by Jan Swaar from Methodist Church
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Raising and lowering of the two flags by Malvern Boy Scout Troop #7
5. Special speaker/presenter- TB
6. Benediction by Rev. Woodwort
7. TAPS performed by local Bugler- TBD

Event programming provided by John Martin, CHS

Event production and coordination provided by Makinlee Fox, Charlestown Parks & Recreation

Follow the Charlestown Parks and Recreation Facebook page for event details and updates

Please email info@gofoxonline.com with any questions or for additional information

Charlestown Township

11 General Warren Blvd. Suite 1

Malvern, PA 19355