

# THE Milemarker

East Brandywine Township Newsletter

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## Election Puts Spotlight on Voter Concerns *Township Vows to Improve Communication*

**T**HE NOVEMBER 5TH ELECTION WAS a watershed event for East Brandywine Township. It brought out an unprecedented number of local residents determined to make their voice heard on local issues.

The crux of the matter was the vote for East Brandywine Township Supervisor. After an intense campaign, the incumbent, Jay Fischer, won over his challenger, Kyle Scribner.

Mr. Fischer was quick to acknowledge a lack of communication between the Township and its new residents as a prime reason for Scribner's spirited campaign. "During this campaign," he said, "it became apparent to me that the Board of Supervisors needs to do a better job of giving our residents opportunities to communicate their concerns to us."

Part of the problem is that the Township relies on a very small administrative staff of three—the same number as in 2000 in spite of rapid growth since then with substantially increased needs. The

Township also relies heavily on volunteers—who, among other tasks, run the Planning Commission, the Open Space Committee, the Historical Commission and the Park and Recreation Board. Back in 2008, *The Milemarker* estimated that these volunteers saved the Township going on \$400,000 a year in operating costs. On the plus side, the small staff and volunteer contributions are important reasons why the Township is in a healthy financial condition. But, as Mr. Fischer said, he wants the Township to deal more effectively and efficiently with residents. Other questions were asked of the Board at this well-attended meeting.

**What's the Township doing about the dilapidated buildings on Horseshoe Pike** near the Bondsville Road/Hopewell Road intersection? Vice Chairman Hudson Voltz, who chaired the meeting, said the Township has begun action to have



For many Township residents, the November election offered an opportunity to voice opinions on local issues such as traffic congestion, open space planning, and fiscal management.

the owners demolish the properties after lengthy discussions on repair of the buildings went nowhere.

**Can the Township put in a left-hand turn arrow on the light at Bondsville and Hopewell Roads? And a light at Horseshoe Pike and Bollinger Road?**

Mr. Voltz: That's a matter for the state Department of Transportation. The Township has little say.

**What can be done about the traffic congestion on Horseshoe Pike?**

Unfortunately, this is again, a state matter. At the Supervisors' Dec. 5 work session, Chairman Jay Fischer said a letter asking for help is going to State Senator John Rafferty and State Representative Becky Corbin with copies to neighboring townships traversed by Horseshoe Pike. Township personnel have had many discussions

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### HOW THEY VOTED

| Polling Place               | Fischer     | Scribner    |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Methodist Church (North 1)  | 273         | 161         |
| Township Building (North 2) | 306         | 450         |
| Baptist Church (South)      | 517         | 415         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>1096</b> | <b>1026</b> |

In the Nov 5 election, almost 52% of registered voters in East Brandywine cast ballots, compared with a countywide vote of just under 23%. In the May primary, 23% of local voters cast ballots.

WHO, WHEN  
& WHERE



**Township Board of Supervisors**

CHAIRMAN Hudson L. Voltz, Esq.  
VICE CHAIRMAN Jay G. Fischer, Esq.  
MEMBER Arnold Krings

**Township Public Meetings**

MEETINGS HELD AT TOWNSHIP BUILDING

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

First Thursday at 8:00 a.m.  
Third Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

PLANNING COMMISSION

First Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Second Tuesday at 7:30 a.m.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Second Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Second Monday at 7:30 p.m.

ORDINANCE TASK FORCE

Third Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

First Monday at 7:30 p.m.

**Fire/Ambulance/Police**

Fire and Ambulance ..... 911  
Police (emergency) ..... 911  
Police (non-emerg) ... (610) 383-7000  
Police Admin ..... (610) 269-4300  
Police Website ..... www.ebtpd.org

**Recreation**

EBYA ..... www.ebya.org  
DARC ..... www.darcinfo.com  
PARK AND RECREATION BOARD EMAIL  
parkandrec@brandywine.org

**Township Staff Directory**

Hours: M-F, 9 a.m. to noon; 1-5 p.m.  
Dial (610) 269-8230.

Press the appropriate extension.

200 Norann King,  
Building Department

201 Mary Beth Smedley,  
Secretary/Treasurer

203 Scott Piersol, Township Mgr./  
EMC and Fire Marshal

204 Matthew VanLew, Roadmaster  
100 Police Administration

TAX COLLECTOR Dennis Mulhern  
(610) 269-8230, x210

**Tax Information**

County Taxes ..... (610) 344-6361  
Tax Claim Office ..... (610) 344-6360  
Assessment Office ..... (610) 344-6105  
EIT & LST ..... (610) 269-4402  
School Taxes ..... 1 (866) 300-1714

## Election Puts Spotlight on Voter Concerns

*continued from page 1*

about this congested stretch of road with State officials but face many bureaucratic obstacles to get action.

In conclusion, let's also note that the Township wants some help and cooperation from its residents. The Planning Commission, the Youth Aid Panel (see related story on page 3), and the Bondsville Mill Park Committee all are in need of volunteers. The Park and Recreation Board would welcome help. As would East Brandywine Youth Athletics. And the East Brandywine Fire Co., while separate from the Township, is always in need of help—not just firefighters but people willing to work in the children's programs, fund raisers, any one with the skills to write grant proposals, and those willing to assist with various administrative duties.

## Rotary Clubs Compete to Help Food Bank

The Thorndale Rotary Club has challenged the Coatesville Rotary Club to a "food fight"—to see which club can gather the most food, by weight, during the month of February for the Chester County Food Bank. The winning club gets an evening out at the other club's expense. The Food Bank told the clubs that March is the month when it's in greatest need of food to meet the needs of the many Chester County residents who are without enough. The East Brandywine Township Building will be one of the collection points for donations. The needs include canned soups, canned fruit, tuna, peanut butter, cereals and other packaged goods. To be avoided: glass containers and expired items. Donations should be brought in during the month of February.

## Ordinance Now Complete for Solar Installations

After lengthy discussion, public comment and review by the Chester County Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors has an ordinance governing the installation and maintenance of solar energy facilities. It primarily concerns installations in homes and businesses that use the electricity generated to offset utility costs. It also covers the installation of solar farms.

The goal is to allow the safe use of solar energy systems while providing guidelines to minimize any negative impact on other residents. This might include such issues as public safety, glare and storm water management.

The Supervisors say these requirements are not intended "to hinder the ability of citizens to supplement their energy supply through the proper use of solar energy systems." Indeed, they say, they support and encourage use of



Ami Trost, owner of Blue Moon Florist, in front of her solar panel array.

solar energy systems that abide by the rules.

Residents must get a Township permit before installing a system. As part of the permit process, the applicant must supply written proof that the local electrical distribution utility was informed of the applicant's intent to install a solar energy system.

For a full report on the ordinance's requirements, contact the Township office.

# A Program to Help Kids Who Make Stupid Mistakes

**T**HE KIDS WERE BORED. What to do? Bash a few mailboxes? Hunt a good site for a little graffiti scoring? Sneak into a neighbor's overgrown backyard and sip a beer? Make sure the parents are down for the night and slip outside—and break the teenage curfew?

"All kids make dumb mistakes," says Mitchell Goldfarb, a member of the Township's Youth Aid Panel. They find out how bad the mistake is if a member of the Township's Police Department shows up. The officer who discovers the wrongdoing will issue a citation but if it's a first offense and the young person seems genuinely contrite, he can then turn the offender over to the Youth Aid Panel.

This seven-member body of volunteers, formed just a decade ago, is a counseling group that talks to the offender and his or her parents, judges if this was just a dumb mistake, sets certain tasks to complete in the next 30 days—put in volunteer time, read a book, write apologies—and if the work is done and the kid appears to have learned a lesson, then the police citation will be scrapped. But failing to complete assigned chores, faking contrition—not being sorry for doing wrong but just being sorry for being caught—or showing "attitude" means that the Youth Aid Panel will not sign off.

By and large, the program has paid off extremely well. The panel has handled more than 100 cases over the years, sometimes in bunches. In October, it had five to handle, for example. In each case, at least two panel members deal with a single case. Mitch Goldfarb and Sally Riddle, both panelists from the beginning, recently discussed the program and both have high praise for it and for the cooperation they receive from the East Brandywine Police Department. Chief Mark Kocsi, who created the local program, and Lieut. Gene Babetski, the police liaison with the panel, score high points with panelists. Lieut. Babetski, in turn, says the police are "very appreciative and supportive of" the panel. While he is actively involved with

the panel he never sits in when young people and their parents are being interviewed.

Before going to work, panelists undergo training from Conflict Resolution Services for Delaware and Chester Counties, based in Media. This group developed out of the observation that neighbor and family cases coming before District Justices often did not get resolved. The system did not get to the root of the conflict and, as a result, conflicts often escalated.

Conflict Resolution Services says the Youth Aid Panels that were born from these observations "provide juvenile offenders the opportunity to go before a panel of trained community members who work with them to create a resolution which holds them accountable for their actions, encourages them to make amends, includes an educational component and recommends community service."

What kind of activity brings police and young offenders together? Mostly low level offenses, says Lieut. Babetski: criminal mischief, such as mail box bashing or graffiti; other vandalism; trespassing (two favorites: Community Park after it closes at dusk and the Bondsville Mill Park); small-time retail theft; under-age drinking; or, very often, breaking the Township curfew rules, which are strict. Anyone under the age of 18 must be home between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. the following day except on Fridays and Saturdays; from June 15 to September 15 the hours are 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. The ordinance says that the juvenile may break the curfew if he or she is with a parent or pursuing an errand or business on behalf of a parent or has a job that goes past the curfew hours—and can prove it.

The Youth Aid Panel deals only with kids under age 18. Most are between 11 and 16.

Once the police recommend that an offender go before the Youth Aid Panel it schedules a meeting with the offender and the parents. Panel members don't lecture; that's what their training taught them. "The keys are the child's

## HELP WANTED

Seven of the original 11 members of the Youth Aid Panel still are active 10 years after it was formed in 2003. They are Shelley Francies, Karen Elrod, Kristopher Givens, Jill Givler, Mitchell Goldfarb, Sally Riddle and Evelyn Samuels. It now wants some new volunteers. Contact Lieut. Gene Babetski by e-mail at [ebtpd@ebtpd.org](mailto:ebtpd@ebtpd.org) or by phone at 610 269-4300.

attitude and cooperation," says Sally Riddle. Panelists ask about goals and aspirations, hobbies and interests, they want to know about school report cards and discuss the infraction that started the whole process. They also encourage cooperation from parents, usually willingly given—though there is occasional hostility.

In 10 years, only one kid who came before the panel had another run-in with the police.



A no-no: hanging out in the Community Park after its dusk closing—and possibly breaking the curfew ordinance.

# Vietnam Diary: From War Duty to Building New Schools

**W**HEN BUD BRUTON WAS FLYING a frail reconnaissance plane over the tree tops of the Vietnamese jungles, trying to spot enemy forces in the midst of the Vietnam War, he thought about getting out of the country “hell, all the time.”

When he did get out in 1969, after a year of being shot at as he called in combat aircraft and naval fire to wipe out his attackers, he put in a few more months State-side, then settled down and returned to civilian life. He went into business, raised a family and settled into a less pressured life in East Brandywine.

Then, in 2002, he decided to go back.

The shadows of Vietnam had just refused to go away. “A day doesn’t go by that some image doesn’t come back,” he recalled recently. “It gets worse as you get older.” The immediate spur to action came from an ad Mr. Bruton read in a veterans’

magazine. It was about a group called the Vietnam Veterans’ Restoration Project (VVRJ) that offers help in Vietnam.

The goal of the team Mr. Bruton joined was to build schools for children—kids whose families, as members of a Vietnamese ethnic minority, had helped the U.S. war effort. He was concerned about how he would react to being in former enemy country. But within a few hours of arriving in Hanoi his worries vanished. He soon came to see the Vietnamese he met as “hardworking, diligent people, entrepreneurial, with respect for their elders.” An emotional trip to his old bases in Hue/Phu Bai and Dong aHaHa ended up with hugs and tears. “About 60% of the people we met were under 35. They had no concept of what the war had been about,” Mr. Bruton recalls.

Since his first VVRJ trip in 2002, Mr. Bruton has been back eight more times and plans to make his 10<sup>th</sup> visit next May. Each trip lasts two to three weeks, and over the years his group has built eight schools, with a ninth scheduled to open next spring, at a cost of \$30,000 to \$40,000 each—much of the money raised by individual members of the team.

Mr. Bruton’s wife Jacque has joined him on two of the trips—“and she loved it. She thought the Vietnamese people were wonderful.”

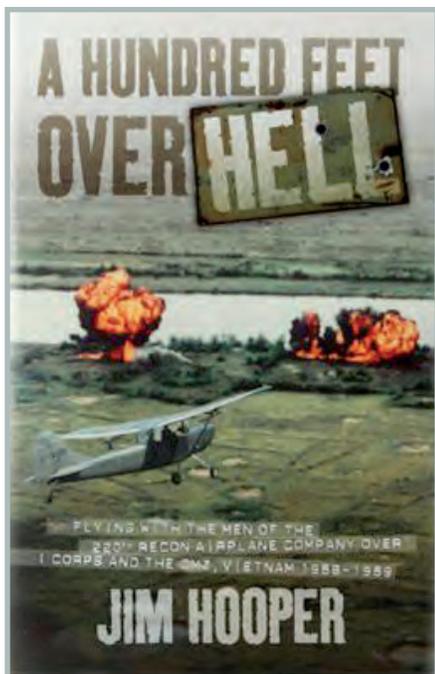
The whole Vietnamese experience began in 1968 when Charles W. Bruton Jr.—better known to his friends as Bud—emerged from Washington and Jefferson College an ROTC grad who, he says today, “was a hawk. I believed in what we were doing in Vietnam.”

He’d expected to be flying helicopters but was assigned to the 220<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Airplane Company of the U.S. Army and posted to Dong Ha, just south of the DMZ and the last military air field before the border with North Vietnam.

Mr. Bruton became one of the Catkillers, pilots who flew out in propeller-driven—and slow—Bird Dog Cessna(0-1) aircraft, skimming over the border to spot enemy movements. John Hooper, a war correspondent who saw these men in action, wrote a book about them called “One Hundred Feet Over Hell,” which includes many of Bud Bruton’s memories of his Vietnamese experiences.

In his book, Hooper records what a commanding officer wrote of these aviators some years later. “Those who flew these missions were unique: self-reliant, aggressive, determined and tenacious. And because they were virtually on their own from takeoff to landing, it also required a personality bordering on controlled recklessness.” Insiders called them the Myth Makers.

This gung-ho officer finally got R&R in Hawaii and the first chance in many months to see his wife. Spending time there, he was shocked to find such opposition to the war and the public disregard for those in the service. “This was nuts,” he recalls. “No one in the States gives a damn”—a bitter revelation for someone



Left: The cover of the book about the Bird Dogs written by a foreign correspondent and published by Zenith Press, an imprint of MBI Publishing Co. of Minneapolis. Above: The frail, slow-moving Cessna that the Bird Dogs flew in the war zone.



Mr. Bruton at his desk in the "war room."

who'd seen so many of his colleagues maimed or killed.

When he finally left Vietnam in 1969, he still had to complete his Army contract and spent it at Fort Rucker in Alabama—and after formal discharge continued with the Pennsylvania Guard until 1983, putting in many more hours of flying time.

Back in civilian life, Mr. Bruton spent many years with a friend and partner in the insurance business and got involved in community affairs. He and his wife bought a two-plus acre lot on Hadfield

Road in East Brandywine and in 1974 built a home there—and still live in it. He ran for office and was elected to the Township Board of Supervisors but later lost a re-election vote. Looking back he says his heavy commitment to the Pennsylvania Guard meant he didn't spend as much time as he would have liked on Township business. Also, he says, "I felt the Township wanted to grow and some of the others disagreed."

After an amicable split with his long-time insurance colleague in 2004, Mr. Bruton founded Bruton Financial Partners in Downingtown with three of his five sons (a fourth works for Comcast, a fifth for Krispy Crème). They service the financial needs of corporate and municipal pension funds, including that of the East Brandywine Police Department, and those of high-asset individuals. In all, the firm has about \$260 million in assets under management, Mr. Bruton says.

This Vietnam vet admits he's now slowing down a bit but he still enjoys showing up and dealing with his clients. His sons sometimes kid him about his office, heavily decorated with pictures and memorabilia from his service years. Mr. Bruton says with a smile: "They call it the war room."

## RISING REVENUES PUT TOWNSHIP IN SOUND FINANCIAL STATE

Rising revenues and fairly frugal budgeting are putting East Brandywine on an increasingly sound financial basis. The projected growth in revenue for 2014 continues a positive trend that began in 2011. As a result, there will be no increase in real estate taxes or the refuse and recycling fee this year. The tax rate will continue at 2.75 mils and the refuse and recycling fee at \$245.

Township Manager Scott Piersol reported to the Board of Supervisors that "revenues from real estate and earned income taxes continue to outpace our conservative projections." He said property valuations in the Township increased from \$533.7 million in November 2012 to \$564.2 million in November 2013, a 5.4% increase, due primarily to new construction activities. Total 2014 revenues are projected to be \$6,442,876. Total expenses are projected to be \$5,941,818. These totals should lead to a capital reserve allocation of about \$475,000.

Mr. Piersol said building permit activity increased significantly in 2013. "Pulte Homes' Applecross Country Club and Southdown Homes' Hideaway Farms projects continue to move towards completion, and existing homeowners are making significant improvements in their properties. The Hillendale development may begin construction some time in 2014. A \$130,000 increase in permit fee revenue is estimated." Public safety, the largest single budget item, is expected to increase by about \$89,800 in 2014, Mr. Piersol said, to a total of \$1,949,805. This accounts for 32.8% of the total budget, although the percentage will decline by 1.2% from the 2013 figure. Most of the increase is related to employee salary and benefit costs.

## A BUSY OPERATION TO AID TROOPS IN BATTLE OVERSEAS

Operation Military Christmas Stockings once again was a community success story but with a new twist. The organizer of the fall 2013 event is a military wife, Michelle Mascherino-Mills. Her husband John has been on seven deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan over the past nine years of his 20-year career.

"He's able to relay to me the wants and needs of a lot of the soldiers in need throughout the year and especially the holidays," says Ms. Mascherino-Mills. "Last year (2012) he and his soldiers were deployed over Christmas." For the October 2013 event, he was deployed at the Municipal Building—one reason the event went off with military precision.

In all, the Operation gathered 500 parcels (this year the focus was on quality of content rather than numbers filled) to send to Afghanistan. For a very busy three hours or so a team of volunteers packed a wide variety of donated gifts from individuals and businesses in and around the Township. Donors also paid for sending the gifts to their destination, where chaplains distributed them.



The gift packages for troops serving in Afghanistan piled up outside the Municipal Building on Operation Military Christmas Stocking day.

## Fire Company's Fast Action Brings Hospital Plaudits

**T**HOMAS JEFFERSON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL recently recognized four members of the East Brandywine Fire Co. for their expert care of a young man critically injured in a touch football game at the Community Park.

It was a cold January morning, just over a year ago, when a group of long-time school friends, home for the Christmas holiday, gathered at the Park for a game of touch football. At the same time, a newly-appointed group of fire and EMS officers from the Fire Company were meeting at a nearby house to discuss plans for the upcoming year.

As the meeting was ending, a message went out to the Fire Company's QRS (quick response) unit and to Minquas Ambulance in Downingtown, reporting an injured person at the Park. Collin Miller, an emergency medical technician, and QRS driver Pat Ferry reached the Park within minutes, where Mr. Miller

determined that Darren Hepke, the injured football player, was in critical condition with a damaged spinal cord. He called for a paramedic unit from Brandywine Hospital, a MedEvac helicopter from Philadelphia, and two more emergency medical technicians from the Fire Company, Adam Edwards and Fire Chief John Edwards.

The emergency team immobilized Mr. Hepke and readied him for immediate transfer to Thomas Jefferson's spinal cord center. He underwent immediate surgery. This was followed by weeks in the hospital and Magee Rehab for treatment where he had to learn to walk again. Without the speedy treatment he could have spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair.

By the summer of last year, Mr. Hepke was over his injury and is, again, a very healthy young man. All four Fire Company members received thanks, not only from Mr. Hepke, but also from the medical staff at Jefferson.

## Bob Spatola Honored *Citizen of the Year*

The Chester County Chamber of Business and Industry named Bob Spatola, one of the Township's leading citizens, its distinguished Citizen of the Year. The award recognizes someone who has made a major contribution to the community. In Mr. Spatola's case, he was honored for his work with Thorndale-based Handi-Crafters, a non-profit organization that helps about 400 people with physical and emotional disabilities in their quest for meaningful work.

Mr. Spatola is a past president of Handi-Crafters, teaches a weekly art class there and was the driving force in a major capital campaign. Its principal building was named the Spatola Center in his honor in 2010.

The Spatola family has made a number of contributions to the East Brandywine community including the land that is now used as Spatola Park.

## In Memory of Cam *A Campaign to Fight Pediatric Cancer*

**C**AMERON EVANS WAS A TECH-SAVVY BOY who loved to run—and at age 13, while a student at Downingtown Middle School, he was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia. His mother Regina recalls “he equated his challenge fighting cancer with a running race.” On his own website he wrote “as we run through life, we step into many moments, both good and bad, but as long as we don’t change our shoes too much, there’s nothing we can’t handle.” He died in May 2012, aged 14.

While he was ill, his friends at DMS and Downingtown High School West started a support campaign they called Cure4Cam and, after his death, his parents Doug and Regina, Township residents, with help from family and friends, started the Cure4Cam Childhood Cancer Foundation in his memory. Its mission

is to raise community awareness of pediatric cancer—the number one cause of death by disease of children under age 15 in the U. S.—and support the search for new treatments.

Many groups and companies are providing financial aid. One of the biggest fund-raising campaigns now under way is the Cure4Cam Shoe Drive. Its goal is to fill 1,200 bags each with 25 pairs of new or “gently used” shoes by March 31. Even before the official campaign began at Thanksgiving, Brandywine Wallace Elementary School collected about 375 pairs of shoes. As of early December, the total was up to 56 bags, each with 25 pairs, for a total of 1,400. The Chester County Turkey Trot made a big contribution.

A non-profit organization, Funds-2Orgs, will pay the Foundation a dollar amount for each pound of the total collected. It will then send the merchan-



dise to developing nations such as Haiti, Uganda or India to be used in creating micro-enterprise opportunities for families or communities with little or no income.

As of early December, the Cure4Cam campaign planned multiple mini shoe drives with businesses and organizations throughout the area. One key collection was at the Township Municipal Building.

Companies are helping, too. For example, West Pharmaceutical Service in Eagleview took on Cure4Cam as a beneficiary of its West Without Borders program. Another Eagleview firm, DSM, donated funds from an employee golf outing.

Downingtown’s STEM Academy National Honor Society planned its first annual Cam-a-thon, a dance marathon to fight pediatric cancer with students seeking donations and sponsorships. The event took place on Feb. 21. On April 27, the second annual Muddy Shoes Relay, an open community charity event at Downingtown High School West, will also raise funds for Cure4Cam.

For more information about the group, contact [regina@cure4cam.org](mailto:regina@cure4cam.org) or go to the website [cure4cam.org](http://cure4cam.org).



The Cure4Cam campaign has been making money and raising public awareness of pediatric cancer with its used shoe collections.

**Thank You, Scouts.** The Board of Supervisors paid special tribute to two local Boy Scouts at its Nov. 20 regular meeting. Here Township Manager Scott Piersol is seen with Eric Cooper, left, and Alex Buczala. Eric Cooper put in many hours working at the Community Park. Alex Buczala paid his dues at the Bondsville Mill Park. Both boys' projects were part of their Eagle Scout program.

