



THE

# East Brandywine MILEMARKER

Volume 11, Number 3

www.ebrandywine.org

Fall 2004

## Surprise Price Increases Stall Municipal Complex

Township Supervisors got a nasty shock in mid June when they opened bids for construction of the proposed new municipal complex: the total was close to \$5.4 million, almost 40% higher than an estimate by the consulting engineers last January and more than 50% higher than that figured by the township in its earlier planning. Moreover, the newest figure does not include additional spending for furniture and communications equipment.

The Supervisors voted to reject all bids and agreed to reexamine the building plans. The two-story complex is designed to house the municipal offices on the upper floor and the Brandywine Regional Police on the lower and to accommodate projected growth needs for the next 20 years.

Before the rejection vote, the Supervisors spent close to an hour at their July 1 meeting in an often-testy exchange with Steve Karabin, the representative of Reading-based UAI Group, the project manager. The main bone of contention was the January estimate by UAI that the construction bids were not likely to exceed \$3.9 million. Commissioner Hudson Voltz said he and his colleagues were "very disappointed at the lack of foresight by UAI [in anticipating the bid totals]. I don't see how they could be so far off."

Mr. Karabin blamed sharp price increases, particularly for steel, in a "very volatile" 2004 building market for the high bids with some prices rising 25% to 40%. He also said many contractors are so busy

*continued on back page*

## Signs Of The Times

Like most nearby townships, East Brandywine's roads are marked with many signs—personal, commercial and unusual. A summer trip along Horseshoe Pike turned up these distinctive samples:



**The old welcome sign disappeared and then this new one showed up. We'd love to know who crafted it. Please tell us!**



**As far as we know, there are no real plans to sell Spatola Memorial Park. But any offers...?**



**Belief runs deep in many local homes.**

## Who, When & Where

### Board of Supervisors

David A Kirkner, CPA, Chairman  
Jay G. Fischer, Esq., Vice Chairman  
Hudson L. Voltz, Esq., Member

### Township Public Meetings

#### • Board of Supervisors

First Thursday at 7:30 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.

#### • Township Ordinance Force

Fourth Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

All meetings in McCausland Hall,  
1214 Horseshoe Pike.

### Important Numbers

Fire and Ambulance ..... 911  
Police (emergency) ..... 911  
Police (non-emergency) ..... 383-7000  
Poison Control ..... (215) 386-2100  
Police Administration ..... 269-4300  
Police FAX ..... 873-4550  
Township Administration ... 269-8230  
Township FAX ..... 269-4157  
email ..... [www.ebrandywine.org](http://www.ebrandywine.org)

**Township Offices open  
Monday to Friday,  
9:00 a.m. to noon and  
1:00 to 5:00 p.m.**

## Telephone Directory

The Township Directory is available from any touch-tone telephone 24 hours a day. Just call **269-8230** and press one of the extensions shown.

### Township Staff Directory

- 4 Patti Piersol, Taxes (Voice mail)
- 5 Mary Beth Smedley,  
Secretary/Treasurer
- 1104 Norann King, Building Dept.
- 6 Scott Piersol, Manager,  
EMC and Fire Marshal
- 7 Matthew Vanlew, Roadmaster
- 8 Police Administration Office

### Township Information Directory

- 1130 Curbside Trash
- 1131 Curbside Recycling
- 1132 Bulk Trash
- 1134 Leaf Collection and Xmas Trees
- 1135 Cardboard/Corrugated  
Drop-off
- 1136 Motor Oil and Other Waste  
Recycling Drop-off
- 1140 East Brandywine Youth Athletics

# Verizon To Offer Internet Service

Comcast's virtual monopoly on providing broadband service for East Brandywine residents is coming to an end. Verizon told township officials in June that it intends to overlay its existing copper cable and equipment in the township with fiber optic transmission lines. This will allow service upgrades, including DSL and internet connections and enhanced telephone service.

CCG of West Chester will install the new lines for Verizon. A Verizon official said the work will be "unobtrusive" and was scheduled to begin in late July or early August and take about 12 months to complete.

## Urgently Needed! New Webmaster

Here's a challenge for any resident who likes to play around on the Web, has a few hours a month to contribute to a good cause and wants to find out more about what's going on in the community: take on the job of East Brandywine Webmaster. Any potential volunteer can check out the scope of the job by clicking on to the township site, [www.ebrandywine.org](http://www.ebrandywine.org).

The need for a willing volunteer is urgent. Four years after launching the site John Bryer, the man who's built it into a model communications center for past and current township matters, no longer has time to handle the site. He suggests that this could be an ideal role for a technologically savvy newcomer who wants to get more involved in the community. Here's a partial job description including some "must haves":

A decent working knowledge of a Web publishing tool, such as Microsoft FrontPage. Even better would be "some tool a little higher on the Web publishing food chain," says Mr. Bryer.

A PC that can connect to the Internet, needed to "publish" changes to the Web site. A simple dial-up connection is sufficient, but a broadband connection,

such as cable or DSL, is better.

Adobe Acrobat "Writer" to be able to create PDF files to upload to the Web. An ability to manipulate clip art and digital pictures is a plus.

Thoroughness and solid communication skills are essential.

As for the time commitment, Mr. Bryer figures he spends about five hours a month. The bulk of new information involves updating the minutes from various township bodies and the regular flow of news from the township manager's office. Quarterly, the *Milemarker* newsletter is loaded on to the site.

Interested? Send Township Manager Scott Piersol an e-mail at [scottpiersol@ebrandywine.org](mailto:scottpiersol@ebrandywine.org).

# Freeloading To End On Trash Collection

Between 100 and 130 property owners in East Brandywine choose to toss rather than pay their annual township bills for trash and collectibles pick up. Those who don't mend their ways are going to face fines, fees and the equivalent of a lien on their properties if they fail to pay off any backlog and keep current on future bills.

Collectively, these deadbeats have amassed a debt of more than \$77,000, including interest, on fees due and payable since 2000. Some skipped their first collection bill last year; some haven't paid in years.

To correct this situation, the township will send letters to all offenders demanding payment within 30 days. If the receiver can't provide a valid excuse (for example, the owner has such a volume of trash that he or she contracts with a hauler to have it removed regularly), then the township will file a municipal claim against the property. A lien can't be filed for non-payment of a fee but the filing will be similar to a lien; when the property is sold any money owing to the township will have to be paid before the deal can go through. Meantime, interest on outstanding bills will accrue at the rate of 1% a month.

To get up to date on trash fees, delinquents will have to pay any unpaid bills, interest, the solicitor's cost for filing a claim and administrative costs. These extras will run to a couple of hundred dollars.

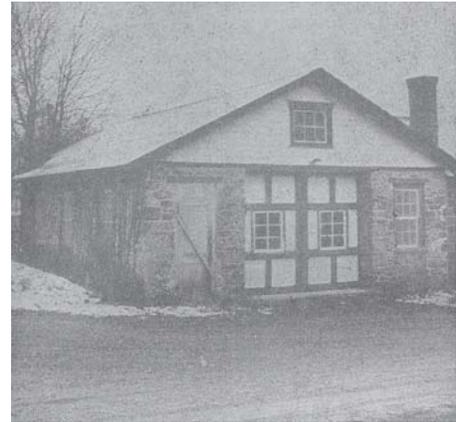
# Taking Pride In Protecting Our Community For 50 Years

The East Brandywine Fire Company will celebrate fifty years of volunteer service to the community in 2005. Realizing the need for township fire protection, a small group of residents met in 1955 to organize the East Brandywine Fire Company. In 1956, a Chevrolet chassis with a 500-gallon booster tank and 500 gallons-per-minute pump was purchased. The pumper was housed in Ed Russell's Garage, an old machine shop that still remains in the village of Guthriesville, now Gary's Auto Body. It served as our headquarters until October 20, 1962. As the population within the township grew, so did the need for the services of the Fire Company. Having outgrown its facilities, the Fire Company constructed a new building on Bondsville Road, which was dedicated in 1962.

The East Brandywine Fire Company provides fire and emergency medical services to the residents of East Brandywine, West Brandywine and Upper Uwchlan Townships. Our first-due response area is approximately 27 square miles, with a population of more than 15,000 residents. The Company apparatus fleet has grown to eight vehicles, responding to over 2,100 emergencies over the past three years. The members of the East Brandywine Fire Company are volunteers who take pride in protecting our community. The Fire Company continues to serve the community, with considerable support of township residents, including an active auxiliary, by raising money through chicken barbecues, Christmas tree sales, banquets, and an annual fund drive.

Any residents who have East Brandywine Fire Company memorabilia they wish to share, please contact Kevin Shaffer at the Station at (610) 269-2625, or stop by the firehouse any Wednesday night.

The East Brandywine Fire Company members thank you for your continued support. Watch for information on upcoming events to help celebrate this milestone.



Ed Russell's garage, first home of the fire company.



The Bondsville Road firehouse, dedicated in 1962.



The Fire Company relies on the community for most of its support. Barbecues and banquets help bring in needed cash.

# Reality Check For ATV And Snowmobile Rules

Brandywine Regional Police are getting more complaints about the operation of ATV's and snowmobiles on private or state-owned property. To make sure residents know what's acceptable, Police Chief Mark Kocsi details some of the rules and regulations in state law—to be found in Title 75, The Vehicle Laws of Pennsylvania. Monetary penalties vary but range from \$200 to \$2,000; persons cited can lose their driving privileges for six months. Penalties apply to the vehicle owners and/or, in most cases, parents.

**Section 3717 makes it illegal to knowingly operate an ATV or snowmobile on private or real property without the consent of the owner.**

East Brandywine and Wallace Townships have very few areas where the owners give permission to ride. Most of the violations occur on private property or real property such as the PECO lines, etc. Subsections to 3717 list the violations for doing damage to property or land as a result of the illegal activity.

**Property owners are not required to post the property with “No Trespassing” signs.**

Section 7724 explains that a person operating a motor vehicle in violation of section 3717 must stop and identify him or herself to the property owner or a duly authorized representative (namely, police officer) when requested. Failure to do so can result in fines and suspension of the person's Pennsylvania driver's license. If the rider is under 16 years of age, the penalty does not begin until their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Section 7725 outlines the requirements for persons under the age of 16 years. The main point under this section is the youth must have proper training and hold a safety certificate issued by PennDot. Again, the owner of the ATV or snowmobile and/or

the parents can be cited and fined for allowing the violations.

Section 7728 requires accident reports to be filed with the police when there is an incident involving an ATV or snowmobile.

Sections 7729 and 7730 make owners of ATV's or snowmobiles liable for damages, negligence, injuries and deaths attributed to their vehicle. It is also the owner's responsibility to maintain and present proof of insurance for the ATV or snowmobile.

If you have any questions you can access the Pa. Vehicle Code through a link on the township Website, [www.ebrandywine.org](http://www.ebrandywine.org). Choose the Brandywine Regional Police link from the drop down box and once in our Website you will see a link to PennDot.

*Chief Kocsi's final word:  
Remember to wear safety equipment  
when riding motorized vehicles!*

## Don't Like A Speed Limit? Give A Call To PennDot

Over the past year, some residents have contacted the township to question speed limits posted on their roadways and asked to change them. But, contrary to what most residents believe, neither township officials nor police has any control over posted speed limits. Regulation rests with PennDot under criteria spelled out in 67PA Code, Chapter 201.

Townships must follow these criteria when they post a speed-limit sign. To decide on a reasonable speed on township roads, either PennDot, a police officer or engineer certified by the state conducts a traffic study. Mark Kocsi, Chief of the Brandywine Regional Police, says his force is fortunate to have Sgt. Larry Pence as a certified traffic analyst. He and his traffic analysis unit record the day, time, speed and number of vehicles traveling the roadway for three to five days to generate a report.

PennDot requires that speed limits be posted within 5 miles per hour of the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed recorded by the unit—namely the speed at which 85% of drivers are at or below. For example, if the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed is registered at 32 mph, then the speed limit must be posted at 30

or 35 mph. The township is not permitted to deviate from the requirements.

“If you feel that there is a speeding problem on your roadway please contact us and allow us to review the situation,” says Chief Kocsi. “One problem we've run into is that some residents have demanded a study in an effort to reduce the posted speed and then find out the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile has actually risen. Once the study is completed the speed limit must be adopted.”

Some other things to keep in mind, says Chief Kocsi, are that “speed limits are very rarely posted below 25 mph unless it's on private property. We have no speed limit jurisdiction on private property, state or county highways.”

Any questions or comments, contact Chief Kocsi or Sgt. Larry Pence at 610-269-4300 or [brpd@comcast.net](mailto:brpd@comcast.net).

## Golf Outing Raises \$7,000 For Parks

The East Brandywine Park & Rec Board held its annual golf outing at the Honey Brook Golf Club on May 26. “We had 70 golfers who had a great day of golf finished off with a meal of steak, salmon and tuna prepared by the Stadium Grill,” James N. Worrell Jr., Park & Rec Board Chairman, reported. There were 25 hole sponsors:

**Bronze**—Imler Equipment, Jane's Flower Patch, Norstone Inc., Wusinich, Brogan & Stanzione Law Firm.

**Silver**—Austill's Rehabilitation Services, AIS, Fulton Bank, Heisey Mechanical, Mackey & Kirkner CPA, Meanix Construction, Patriot Advisors, PECO, Tri-State Technical Sales.

**Gold**—A.N. Lynch Co., Parke, Barnes, Spangler & Bortner PC

**Platinum**—Schoor DePalma Inc.

**Corporate**—Guthriesville Pharmacy, Johnson Mathey, Southdown Homes, Uhrig Construction, Yerkes Associates.

**Hole-in-One**—Brandywine Machine, Robert A McCue Inc., Larry Smedley DDS, Beverage Cart-Krapf Bus Companies.

“As far as we could tell everyone had a great time and we were able to make close to \$7,000 for our township parks,” said Mr. Worrell. “Thank you to everyone who played, sponsored and helped.”

# Score One For Skateboarders

With a \$2,000 assist from East Brandywine, a skatepark that's been six months in the planning opened at the West Brandywine YMCA in late July. The community park uses an existing tennis court that was underutilized and in need of repair.

East Brandywine's Park and Recreation Board wanted to create a facility like this in the township but, according to Township Manager Scott Piersol, "struggled with how to open a skatepark and operate it safely without continual staffing, a significant issue for us."

On the other hand, the Brandywine Y, close by on Hurley Road in West Brandywine Township, will staff the skatepark during operating hours. The park will be open to the community at large for a nominal daily fee, unlike other Y facilities which are open only to members. "We hope our residents, particularly the children who enjoy skateboarding and in-line skating, will take advantage of this new and wonderful facility, which I expect will expand as its use grows," said Mr. Piersol.

# Village Sewer Plan Inching Forward

Creation of the Guthriesville sewer district, designed to serve the new Hopewell subdivision and homes on Kristin Circle as well as rid homes in the center of Guthriesville of their on-going disposal problems, is slowly moving toward completion. Among the issues under discussion are operation of the pumping station on Bondsville Road and the overall operation and maintenance of the entire system.

Recently, a new issue surfaced: members of the public using the sewer right-of-way as a shortcut from Kristin Circle to the Sunoco convenience store. Township Manager Scott Piersol stresses that the right-of-way is on private property and residents should avoid using it.

# Sticker Shock On The Home Front

East Brandywine now has a rare regional distinction – home prices in the township have risen more explosively here in the past five years than almost anywhere else in the four-county Pennsylvania area bordering Philadelphia. Only two other suburban communities, Pocopson in Chester County and Haycock in Bucks County, had a similar 78% surge.

In East Brandywine, according to records compiled by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the median home price shot up from \$162,759 in 1998 to \$289,665 last year.

The local jump in home prices is far greater than that for all of Chester County, where the median increased only 21% over the five years only 21%—from \$188,576 in 1998 to \$240,000 in 2003.

Some figures from neighboring municipalities (with East Brandywine included for comparison):

	Median Price		% Change
	1998	2003	
Caln .....	\$117,860	\$159,450	+35%
Coatesville .....	70,155	90,450	29
Downingtown .....	113,089	147,990	31
E. Brandywine .....	162,759	289,665	78
East Caln .....	154,621	210,000	36
Honey Brook Br .....	121,788	161,950	33
Honey Brook Tp .....	159,672	242,000	52
Parkesburg .....	123,472	125,000	1
S. Coatesville .....	95,410	62,750	-34
Upper Uwchlan .....	226,403	341,000	51
Uwchlan .....	211,025	299,900	42
Wallace .....	262,932	343,000	30
W. Brandywine .....	176,228	249,000	41

# On The Move

The latest figures on real estate transactions in East Brandywine, covering the period from early April to mid July, illustrate clearly the trend toward higher home prices in the township. More than a quarter of the homes sold for more than \$500,000. The list includes properties recorded in multiple listings.

115 Aspen Drive	\$535,000
1541 North Bailey Rd.	\$430,500
37 Blakely Rd.	\$290,000
113 Brookhaven Ln., Lot 21	\$418,281
104 Cherrygrove Lane	\$415,000
405 Corner Ketch Rd.	\$151,000
455 Corner Ketch Rd.	\$196,000
430 Creek Rd.	\$219,900
Lot 32 Cumberland Ridge	\$600,000
Lot 39 Cumberland Ridge	\$750,000
Lot 43 Cumberland Ridge	\$537,900
Lot 44 Cumberland Ridge	\$885,533

Lot 51 Cumberland Ridge	\$620,220
19 Gloucester Drive	\$240,000
108 Governors Circle	\$280,000
130 Governors Circle	\$294,000
23 Grovehill Court, Lot 8	\$370,071
27 Hastings Court	\$118,800
210 Heritage Court	\$489,900
234 Jeffries Rd.	\$512,905
176 Little Washington Rd.	\$405,000
102 Locust Knoll Rd.	\$242,000
531 Old Horseshoe Pike	\$326,000
1160 Osborne Rd.	\$319,900
648 Pancoast Lane	\$349,900
560 Reeds Rd.	\$400,000
Lot 2 Rock Raymond Rd.	\$663,900
5 Summerhill Drive	\$510,000
44 Tarrytown Lane, Lot 85	\$434,979
46 Tarrytown Lane, Lot 84	\$430,000
105 Waring Drive	\$356,900
27 Windemere Court	\$164,000
17 Wyndham Court	\$169,900

Source: Weichert Realtors, West Chester

# Is A Hike In Earned Income Tax On The Way For East Brandywine?

There was a lot of excitement in Harrisburg when the legislature and Governor Rendell produced a plan for property tax relief. Questions remain, however, about how the plan's going to be financed.

The anticipated flood of cash from slot machines authorized in a companion plan (a figure of \$3 billion a year was used widely) was touted as the savior. But to qualify for any gambling payout, school districts must levy an earned income tax if they don't already have one or increase the take if they already do. Downingtown School District currently levies an 0.5% earned income tax (locally, it's part of the 1.125% tax collected by East Brandywine; another 0.5% goes to the municipality and 0.125 to the township Open Space program). Under the new legislation, the district's share would increase by 0.1% (or \$50 on earned income of \$50,000), giving a new East Brandywine tax of 1.225%.

Further, school districts must agree to this first step in the event they may want to increase the tax at some future date. Two other facts: one, in place of an earned income tax school districts may propose a local personal income tax (using the same base as the state income tax) and, two, before the school district can impose or increase the tax it must present the proposal to district residents in a referendum.

Any new funds that flow to school districts as part of this program must be allocated to property tax reduction.

School districts must pass a resolution indicating that the district will accept the state funding for property tax reduction by May 30, 2005. The Nov. 8, 2005, election will be the first opportunity for districts to place a referendum on the ballot asking residents if they will agree to a new or increased earned income or personal income tax in return for a reduction in property taxes. Two messages by *The Milemarker* to the Downingtown School District asking for comment on the new tax deals went unanswered.

State Rep. Curt Schroder, whose district includes East Brandywine, told *The Milemarker* that if the Downingtown district qualifies to receive a payout from the new slot machines by enactment of a higher earned income tax, the amount of money received will depend on the total dollar volume generated by the gambling.

Typically a local homeowner would get property tax relief ranging from \$289 to \$442, depending on the total amount of money raised by the slot machine gambling. Mr. Schroder said the real benefit to homeowners will come, not from the gambling cash, but from the higher earned income or personal income taxes that the school district will use to cut property taxes.



**The East Brandywine  
Milemarker**  
East Brandywine Township  
1214 Horseshoe Pike  
Downingtown, PA 19335

Postmaster: Deliver to current occupant

# Municipal Complex

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they have little incentive to submit competitive low bids just to get a job.

Matt VanLew, the township's roadmaster who with Township Manager Scott Piersol, has worked closely with UAI, disputed a more than 30% increase in building costs since January. Mr. VanLew's research shows a figure closer to 7.5%. "UAI has dropped the ball on this throughout the whole process," he said. UAI's proposed fee for construction management is \$319,640.

The township now will consider various options. Among them:

- Scale back the existing design.
- Construct the building as designed but leave unneeded space (to accommodate later expansion) until need arises.
- Build in two phases.

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