



# Aston Township

Established 1688

FREE!!!

## Township Times Pride in our Community

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**Minnie Mouse couldn't pass up an opportunity to get a picture with Township Manager Richard Lehr**

### Aston Sees No Tax Increase

At the December 19<sup>th</sup> Board of Commissioners Meeting, Finance Chairman and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward Commissioner, Mark Osborn, was pleased to present a balanced Township Budget which included no increase in the millage rate for homeowners. The tax rate remains at 4.00 mills for the second year in a row. The make-up of this year's tax has appropriations of 3.39 mills for general purposes, 0.47 mills for debt purposes, 0.10 mills for Fire Protection, and 0.04 mills for Library Services. *Continued on Page 2*



**Aston Business Association President Evan Jackson and 2012 Business Person of the Year John Howe - Pretzel Boys**

**Business Person of the Year Named Pretzels anyone?** At the annual Aston Business Association Holiday Dinner, held on Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup> John Howe, owner of Pretzel Boys, was named the 2012 Business Person of the Year. John was recognized for all his hard work and support of local events and non-profit organizations. Since its inception you would be hard pressed to attend a function that doesn't have at least a few pretzels provided by John. The Annual Business Association Holiday Party was held at Hennessey's and was well attended by local business people and politicians. *Continued on Page 3*



**Santa and Mrs. Claus making a special appearance at the Holiday Fun Festival**

### Oh Christmas Tree

As you drive down Concord Road I'm sure you have noticed the Tree standing tall and full of lights out front of the Community Center. The tree was first lit in 2012 at the Annual Christmas Tree Lighting and Holiday Fun Festival organized and hosted by the members of the Aston Township Recreation Committee on Friday December 7<sup>th</sup>. Chairperson and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward Commissioner, Carol Graham,

started the night out with a speech in which she thanked her committee, all the community volunteers, township employees, township officials, and especially the residents for coming together to make this event an overwhelming success for the second year in a row. Just as her speech ended the Tree outside the Community Center was lit for the first time of the season and the sounds of the Aston and Pennell Elementary schools choruses filled the air. *Continued on Page 2*

### Aston Gets To Recycling

For the first time in the history of Single Stream Recycling in Aston the Residents have produced over 100 TONS of recycled material in the month of November. This number is significant since the Board of Commissioners have recently decided to continue the pilot project of weekly collection through the end of 2013. The November number was nearly 30 tons better year over year and represents an increase in approx. 35 tons over the 2012 average. These increased numbers not only help in controlling expenses in the Township they also signify a move towards a more sustainable lifestyle being led by the residents. Recycling is not a thing of the future any more it is a reality of the now.



**Public Works Recycles**

### **Aston Sees No Tax Increase *cont.***

This year Aston Township is expected to spend \$913,000.00 in General Government, \$6,266,000. in Public Safety, \$27,500.00 in General Health Services, \$1,070,000.00 in Sanitation Services, \$1,467,000.00 in Highway expenses, \$168,000 00 in Parks and Recreation, \$37,000.00 in General Library Expenses, \$276,000.00 in Community Center Expenses, \$3,200.00 in Repairs to the Old School House, \$667,550.00 in Debt Service, \$72,749.00 in Other Expenses, and \$236,000.00 in Fiduciary Expense for a total of \$11,164,000.00 in expenses. The budget was balanced through the hard work of Township Manager Richard Lehr, Township Finance Manager, Maureen Schmitt, and members of the Finance Committee. In a statement read at the December Board of Commissioners Meeting, Finance Committee Chairman and 3rd Ward Commissioner Mark Osborn highlighted some aspects of the budget including the allocation of funds for capital equipment lease purchases of a much needed Crew Cab Pickup and Chipper for the Public Works Department. He also expressed his gratitude to all the individuals involved who work together to ensure the millage rate did not increase in 2013.

### **Oh Christmas Tree *cont.***

Inside the line to get a picture with Santa was growing by the minute. Parents and volunteers helped the children work on numerous crafts including the ever so popular letters to Santa Table. By now all the children who penned letters should have received a response as Township Manager Dick Lehr delivered them himself after he stopped for the photo op with Disney Character Minnie Mouse. Minnie and Mickey did their best to steal the show from Santa in the Disney themed event but the big guy and the hot chocolate were clearly the children's favorites. On the other

side of the building the Aston Library helped make the event special with two appearances by Mr. Malcolm in which he read the Polar Express. Over all, the entire event was a huge success and the perfect way to get into the Holiday Spirit.

### **Small Business Community**

At the December Board of Commissioners Meeting 7th Ward Commissioner Mike Higgins urged the residents of Aston to patronize local businesses. He noted that recently Commercial Landowners on Concord and Pennell Roads have been making great strides in beautifying their properties. The rejuvenation of these two corridors has been a priority of the Board and with the overwhelming response of private investment this priority is becoming a reality. He mentioned that in the near future Aston Township will have two new eateries, the Aston Diner located at 5 Points and the Slowdown Pub to be located in the Broadway Plaza Shopping Center. Commissioner Higgins also mentioned the transformation taking place at the property most of Aston knows as the Venuti building.

### **Historical Society turns 20**

2013 marks the 20th year of operation for the Aston Historical Society. This group, forged out of a dream of founder and current member Paul Dougherty, is tasked with the preservation of Aston Township's History. The group operates the Society out of a room at the Community Center which is filled with treasures. There is no better place to learn about the History of the Township which was incorporated in 1688. The Society is looking to highlight the achievements of Aston residents who are helping mold history throughout the year. The Society will also be working to secure grant money for further work on the one room school house located on Old Pennell Road.

### **Public Meetings and Special Events**

**January 1, 2013 (Tuesday)**

**Township Offices Closed  
No Trash or Recycling Collected  
Happy New Year!**

**January 3, 2013 (Thursday)**

**7pm in the Municipal Building  
Recreation Committee Meeting**

**January 7 – 11, 2013 (Mon-Fri)**

**Bulk Trash and Appliance Pick-ups**

**January 7, 2013 (Monday)**

**3pm in the Municipal Building  
Police Committee Meeting**

**January 7, 2013 (Monday)**

**6:30pm in the Municipal Building  
Public Works Committee Meeting**

**January 7, 2013 (Monday)**

**7:30pm in the Municipal Building  
New Construction Committee  
Meeting**

**January 8, 2013 (Tuesday)**

**6:30pm in the Municipal Building  
Executive Committee Meeting**

**January 15, 2013 (Tuesday)**

**7:00pm in the Community Center  
Library Board Meeting**

**January 16, 2013 (Wednesday)**

**7:00pm in the Municipal Building  
Board of Commissioners Meeting**

**January 21, 2013 (Monday)**

**Martin Luther King's Birthday  
Township Offices are Open**

**January 22, 2013 (Tuesday)**

**6:30pm in the Municipal Building  
Ordinance Committee Meeting**

**January 22, 2013 (Tuesday)**

**7:00pm in the Municipal Building  
Zoning Hearing Board Meeting**

**January 31, 2013 (Thursday)**

**7:00pm in the Municipal Building  
Fire Committee Meeting**

## **Business Person of the Year Named cont.**

The Association recognized members of the organization including a special tribute to outgoing President Eileen Nelson, longtime resident and Engineer with Stantec Consulting. After the awards of appreciation were done incoming President, Evan Jackson, brought out the big checks. The Association made donations to the Police Department, Aston Beechwood and Green Ridge Fire Departments, The Fire Police, The Aston Public Library and individuals from Neumann University and Penn Delco School District for their participation in Community Day. All in all it was a great event. If you are a business owner or professional and would like to get involved with the association contact Drew Kramer at akadrw411@comcast.net or call 215-593-7014.

## **Snow Removal Could be in the Forecast**

The Aston Township Public Works Department would like to remind everyone that when a winter storm comes, the most important thing any individual can do is be prepared. The most important thing that a community can do is work together. The first line of defense here in Aston Township is our Public Works Department. While most residents are still sleeping, these individuals are out treating and clearing our streets and public areas. The Public Works Department would like to thank the residents for all the cooperation and assistance they receive during winter storms. The next time a storm hits, they ask that you pay attention to these helpful tips:

\*Please check on and help out your neighbors, especially the elderly and disabled.

\*Please have all sidewalks cleared within 30 hours of the storm.

\*Please utilize off street parking if you have it available to you. This is especially important in areas with

steep inclines, declines, and areas where there is minimal room for the plows to maneuver, such as cul-de-sacs.

\*Do not blow or shovel snow out into streets.

\*Stay off of the roads, if at all possible.

\*Remember that snow removal is not an easy job, and that you should take frequent breaks and stretch.

## **Star Hill Coming Soon?**

At the December Board of Commissioners meeting the Board voted to conditionally approve the request to place a complex with 235 age restricted apartments on the property known as "Star Hill" located on Pennell Road. This complex is expected to have approx 15,000 sq ft of recreational space for residents along with a mix of one bedroom and two bedroom age restricted apartments. The Board of Commissioners did set forth conditions they expect the owner, Grace Real Estate Investment to comply with including the request of an updated traffic study to assess the volume of traffic and its effect on the immediate area.

## **Increase in Service Fee for 2013**

The Aston Township Board of Commissioners voted to approve a resolution setting the service fee for residential trash collection to \$230.00 for 2013. This is an increase of \$10.00 over last year and about a \$0.84 per month increase for the almost 4500 homes in the Township who have trash and recycling picked up by the Public Works Department. The Board of Commissioners has been working very hard with Township Administration and the Public Works Department to find creative ways to combat rising costs in collecting trash. The bulk of this added expense this year came from an increase in dumping fees by Delaware County Solid Waste. The township would like to urge all residents to recycle as much

as possible and please mulch leaves and grass clippings. Grass clippings and leaves are completely organic materials which are made up mostly of water. As long as they are mulched they will decompose back into the soil in no time.

## **Taking a Walk?**

If you're a passive recreation enthusiast and you're looking for a nice trail with beautiful scenery look no further than the gem of the 2nd Ward Lewis H. Fisher Park located on Mount Road near Maple Avenue. Starting at the entrance of the park is a trail that leads walkers back and then along the bank of the Chester Creek. This trail is surrounded with beautiful scenery and provides opportunities for enthusiasts of photography, bird watching, walking, nature, and the list goes on. So next time you are looking for somewhere to go on a crisp Saturday morning. Take a trip over to the Lewis H. Fisher Park. You won't be disappointed.

## **News from the Aston Public Library**

The Library is holding its annual Bookmark Design Contest for kids in grade K-8. An entry form can be picked up at the library. The Deadline is February 11th.

Infant Storytime is returning in January! The popular "lapsit" storytime for babies up to 2 years old will be on Mondays at 10AM. You can register at [www.astonlibrary.org](http://www.astonlibrary.org).

Free Chair Yoga classes will be returning to the library in January 2013, with classes on Wednesday nights and Saturday mornings. Go to [www.astonlibrary.org](http://www.astonlibrary.org) for more details. Free Chair Yoga is sponsored by the Friends of the Aston Public Library.

The Library will host free Federal and State Income Tax preparation services again from PathwaysPA on Wednesday February 13th. Families

or single persons with income below \$50,000 per year are eligible for the free assistance and e-filing. Fast refunds are available through direct deposit to bank or prepaid debit card accounts. **APPOINTMENTS ARE REQUIRED.** Call [610-494-5877](tel:610-494-5877) to make an appointment.

Are you on Facebook? Follow the Aston Library there! Go to <http://www.facebook.com/astonlibrary> to become a "fan"!

### Neighbors Helping Neighbors

If you have run into Board of Commissioners President, James Stigale over the past few months you have probably heard about the Neighbors Helping Neighbors Program. Jim and his loyal volunteers made it a personal mission to make sure that residents in Aston who have fallen on hard times were taken care of this Holiday Season. Stigale helped round up donations of food, funds, toys, and gift cards to give out to these families to help get them through the Holidays. "I think it is important that we do this, as a business owner, a Commissioner, a resident, and most importantly as a neighbor, I feel it is my responsibility to make sure people aren't going hungry or without. That's one of the things I love about Aston, Everyone here cares." I just hope that these families had a Happy Holiday and would like to thank all the volunteers, people, and businesses who support this program." Stigale stated.

### St. Francis de Sales Students Do More Than Give Thanks

As "the heart of the community," St. Francis de Sales students and families have shown numerous ways of giving back to their community. "If there is a need in the community, St. Francis de Sales Parish is involved" says Sister Mary Farrell, principal of the parish school for 20 years. In honor of Veterans' Day, the student government hosted a breakfast for

members of the Bonaventure Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #6613. Student representatives expressed their appreciation for the brave service that these veterans – and all veterans – have done to support our nation. What made this event extra special was that many of those in attendance were graduates of St. Francis de Sales School! The Thanksgiving Community Food Drive, under the guidance of Parish Services Director, Sister Betty Kirk, was a joint effort with students from both the parish school and the parish CCD programs. As usual, the response was successful benefiting many local families in need. Finally, as a school community, students shared in a Thanksgiving Lunch. Traditionally served "with all the fixins" the Friday before Thanksgiving, students consider this a practice meal. This year, parent volunteers prepared turkeys, mashed potatoes, veggies, rolls, stuffing and homemade pumpkin bars. This lunch, as well as the other community service activities students participate in, encourages gratitude and appreciation for their community.



**Veterans' Breakfast Left to Right:  
Matt Saviski, Bernie Montecchio,  
Dominic Pilla**

### Aston-Chichester AARP

The Aston Chichester AARP Chapter, will hold its next General Meeting on Monday January 28, 2013 at 10:45am. Their monthly meetings are held at the Saint James Episcopal Church, located on Concord Road. Area seniors are welcome to stop in as a guest or to join. For more info please call President, Ruth Brusstar at 610-494-1534.

### Seasonal Tips - Yard Care

In January it is important that you use safe de-icers and avoid lawn compaction. It is recommended that you avoid or minimize using rock salt as a de-icer on walkways and driveways. These products can create polluted runoff from snow and ice melt. Instead residents should shovel snow and spread sand. You can substitute or mix in calcium magnesium acetate, magnesium chloride, or nonchloride de-icing products, which are less harmful to streams and lawns. When possible make sure you stay off of your lawn when it is covered with ice or snow to avoid compaction of grass plants.



**Outgoing Aston Business Association President Eileen Nelson accepts token of appreciation from Incoming President Evan Jackson.**



**Ms. Joanne's Read for the Record Storytime (Book - Ladybug Girl and the Bug Squad) with Ms. Dana (left) and Ms. Cathy (right).**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**