

# Crossroads

The Newsletter of Benner Township

Summer 2008

VOL. 50 Issue 2008-2

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## 2009 Gypsy Moth Program

Centre County will be participating in the 2009 PA DCNR Gypsy Moth Suppression Program. Homeowners living in rural areas must request participation in the spray program in order to be considered for gypsy moth spraying. County residents may request spraying on their properties until SEPTEMBER 15th. After that date, it will not be possible to sign up for the spray program. The homeowner cost-share will be \$21/acre. The state program is a forested residential program spraying a 500 ft area around residences and cabins. It is NOT a program to spray uninhabited landowners' forest stands. Centre County must evaluate all spray requests using DCNR's rules, which may result in your request being turned down. To sign up to have your property sprayed, just click on "Request Spraying in 2009" on the Centre County Gypsy Moth website at: [www.co.centre.pa.us/gypsymoth](http://www.co.centre.pa.us/gypsymoth) and follow the instructions. If your property qualifies for spraying, you will have until November 20, 2008 to remit your payment for spraying. Otherwise, your spray block will be cancelled.

## Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan Study

The Spring Creek Canyon Master Planning process is underway. The purpose of this Plan is to identify a coordinated strategy for the design, use, and conservation of the Spring Creek Canyon Park and its surrounding uplands. The Spring Creek Canyon area is located within a system of 6,000+ acres of riparian and lowland forests, agricultural and other undeveloped land owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission within the Township. The study area includes 1,800 acres surrounding Spring Creek. With a mixture of fields and forests, the site contains large, contiguous blocks of deciduous and coniferous trees. Small floodplain areas border the narrow Spring Creek. Steep slopes typify the Canyon's corridor boundary. The Creek, listed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection as a high quality stream, is fed in part by a notable natural spring (Benner Spring), located at the western edge of the property. Varied habitats are home to unique plant communities in the canyon – many of which are found nowhere else in the Commonwealth. Using an extensive public planning process, and with the goal of protecting the landscape's unique natural resources, this master planning process will: Establish the appropriate use for the Spring Creek Canyon and buffer lands; Determine the appropriate opportunities for public access; and Define a consensus-driven and sustainable management strategy that ensures the long term stewardship of the land. For up-to-date information on this study visit the study's website at:

[www.canyonplanning.com](http://www.canyonplanning.com)

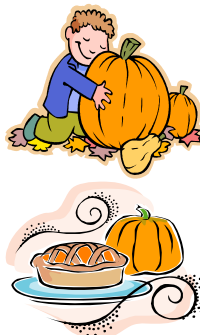
## *10th Annual Fall Festival & Pumpkin Celebration* *September 13th (9 to 4) Buffalo Run Community Park*

The Benner Township Fall Festival is scheduled for Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Rain or Shine. Pumpkins will be our theme again this year. Our festival will include: best pumpkin recipe, most unusual pumpkin, and the largest pumpkin with cash prizes to be awarded. We will also have a pumpkin piling contest, pumpkin decorating, and a pumpkin boat float. The Festival will still have everyone's favorite **CRAFT, RETAIL** and **FOOD VENDORS** along with children's games and entertainment.

We will have 95.3 3WZ do a live action broadcast at the Festival in the morning and in the afternoon, come and listen to the Blue Grass musicians Laura Orshaw & George Wood with Special Guest Cory Kodish. Laura Orshaw, fiddle and singer, has been traveling the Northeast festival and concert circuit for 7 years. Bluegrass Unlimited magazine quoted: "Laura Orshaw has firmly established herself as a significant emerging artist in the arena of traditional American music." Her respect for the fiddle-banjo tradition in America music compelled her to collaborate with George Wood, another talented young musician with an appreciation of Bluegrass and Old Time music. Wood is a self-taught musician that has been playing music professionally for four years. His traditional Scruggs-style banjo playing greatly augments the duo's musical style. This performance will feature special guest, Cory Kodish. Kodish is one of the finest guitar flat pickers in the area and his recent work with State College based Bluegrass band, Sweetwater, has brought him to the forefront of the Pennsylvania Bluegrass music scene. For more information about the group please visit: [www.lauraorshaw.com](http://www.lauraorshaw.com).

**Bring your biggest and most unusual pumpkin the day of the festival.**

**Judging will begin at noon! Cash prizes to be awarded.**



### \*Pumpkin Recipe Contest\*

**Bring us any kind of homemade dessert, muffins, cookies, etc. containing pumpkin as an ingredient. Judging will also begin at noon with cash prizes to be awarded. (Don't forget a copy of your recipe!) We will be auctioning off the goodies at 2:00 p.m.**

## *Things to Note*

**Garbage Collection:** Benner Township Supervisors are considering adopting a mandatory trash collection ordinance. Benner would join with Spring and Walker Townships to bid trash collection services out to achieve a lower cost for all of our residents. More information will follow in upcoming issues of *Crossroads*.

**EMT Tax to increase:** Beginning in January 2009, the EMT Tax (that was previously known as the Occupational Privilege Tax) will be increasing from \$10 to \$52. This increase will effect those who work at businesses located in the Township. Benner Township is one of the last municipalities to enact this increase. This increase is necessary to generate revenue needed for anticipated record high fire protection bills.

## *Crossroads*

The purpose of *Crossroads* is to keep you informed about the issues facing Benner Township during this critical *Crossroads* in our development. We hope to inspire you to get involved in the Township that surrounds you.

Benner Township Municipal Building  
1224 Buffalo Run Road  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
(814) 355-1419  
(814) 355-1448 (Zoning)  
(814) 355-0719 (FAX)  
[www.centreconnect.org](http://www.centreconnect.org)  
*Proud of our past, focusing on our future.*

**Planning Commission Vacancy:** Interested in the future of Benner Township? The Planning Commission currently has one vacancy on its board. Whether you are a farmer, homemaker, professional or business person you could provide valuable input to our diverse board. Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month at 7:00 p.m. Give us a call if you would like to learn more about this important voluntary position.

**Abandoned, Neglected pets:** Over the last year, the Township has been notified of un-responsible pet owners who have either abandoned or neglected their pets. These domestic animals cannot survive on their own. We urge pet owners moving away to do the responsible thing and find replacement homes for their animals. Please spay and neuter your pet. You will be reducing unwanted animal populations.



## *Zoning Ordinance—Close to Completion*

The Township's new zoning ordinance is almost ready to go to Supervisors for final approval and adoption. For the last several years, the Benner Township Planning Commission and consultant, Harry Roth of *RothPlan*, have been working diligently to create the new ordinance which puts forth the future vision of Benner Township, as originally outlined in the Nittany Valley Region Comprehensive Plan. The Township's zoning ordinance has not been updated since 1997.

*“Our Zoning Ordinance is not a rigid, inflexible document. As Benner Township grows and changes, so does our zoning ordinance. It is not perfect, it will never be perfect but a continuing work-in-progress.”* says Robert Fugate, Chairman of the Benner Township Planning Commission.

Eleven new zones will be created under the new ordinance, as briefly outlined below:

**Conservation (C) Zone** protects sensitive environmental and recreational features on Purdue Mountain and along Spring Creek. Selected uses encourage conservation and recreation activities that avoid defoliation, deforestation, erosion and destruction of groundcover. Developments can be created upon compact sites amid undisturbed open spaces.

**Agricultural (A) Zone** promotes continued preservation of agriculture by allowing farms to remain economically viable by eliminating uses incompatible with farming. Residential uses will be limited. Proposed residential developments are encouraged to be clustered.

**Suburban Residential (R-1) Zone** accommodates low to medium residential uses in areas with sufficient infrastructure.

**Manufactured Home Park Residential (MHP) Zone** establishes performance standards for manufactured communities to ensure interdependency and compatibility with utilities and surrounding land uses.

**Traditional Neighborhood Design Overlay (TND) Overlay Zone** provides optional design standards to create a “village-type setting” for development.

**Regional Commercial (RC) Zone** creates a premier retail business and cultural activity center around the interchange of Shiloh Road.

**Light Industrial (I-1) Zone** provides key locations for a mix of light industries to diversify the region's economy and offer valuable employment opportunities.

**Campus Industrial (I-2) Zone** creates employment, research, academic and corporate destination within a spacious and campus-like setting around the Rishel Hill interchange.

**Airport Industrial (I-3) Zone** acknowledges the influence of the University Park Airport, while protecting the Alexander well-field that provides drinking water to the region.

**Quarry (Q) Zone** is designated for areas where mining activities have ceased or are proposed.

**Airport Overlay Zone** regulates airport hazard zones at the Township's airports.

In addition to creating new zoning criteria for the Township, a new sign regulation section allows greater flexibility for signage. Other significant changes include new parking, lighting, and landscaping requirements. The Environmental Protection section sets forth riparian buffering standards consistent with other regional municipalities, as well as providing for natural and cultural feature preservation.

It is expected the final draft ordinance will be ready for public review by late September. The Supervisors then will schedule a public hearing later this Fall. This public hearing will be advertised in the Centre Daily Times, as well as, posted on our website at <http://benner.centreconnect.org> for the dates and times. If you have any questions on how this new zoning ordinance will impact you, please contact the municipal office at 355-1419.

# *Spring-Benner-Walker Joint Authority Update*

*Warren Miller, Executive Director*

We can almost see the finish line. Mazzuca Enterprises has been working hard to complete our sewer project within the Seibert Road/Willow Bend/Buffalo Run Road/Raymond's Lane area and, in fact, has close to 75% of the pipe installed. We understand the traffic issues that have occurred as a result of this work and would like to thank everyone for all of your patience and understanding.

Our contractor has scheduled the paving restoration work to begin by the end of August, so we hope to have the road in better shape for the start of school. Additionally, they are planning to have the project "substantially complete" by the end of September, so it appears at this time we will be asking the residents to connect to our new system this Fall (October/November).

Please realize these plans may change due to unforeseen circumstances; however, our contractor has proven to be very reliable and has worked cooperatively with a number of residents. Thanks again for your patience while we complete our work, so your neighborhood can be protected from potential health hazards.

If there are any questions regarding the project, please contact our Authority office at 355-4778 between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.



Benner Township  
1224 Buffalo Run Road  
Bellefonte, PA 16823

*Crossroads*

