



LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP

A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY THE LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



From the Chairwoman

2015 has been a very productive year! From infrastructure improvements to enhanced services in our community, we highlight some of our initiatives in this Fall issue of the newsletter.

We had a very successful pool season with rebounding membership and attractive new programming including dry land games, movies, music, reduced guest fees, teen nights, Aqua Zumba, family fun nights and much more. Our pool manager, Jeff Brown, and staff did a great job keeping our patrons safe and facility running smoothly. Thank you!!

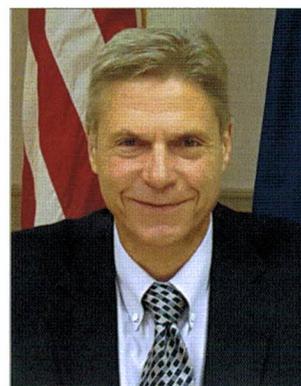
The Township upgraded and improved many other Park and Recreation amenities including our tennis courts, baseball fields, basketball courts and, with the help of a few dedicated LMT residents, introduced both Pickleball and GaGa courts. We

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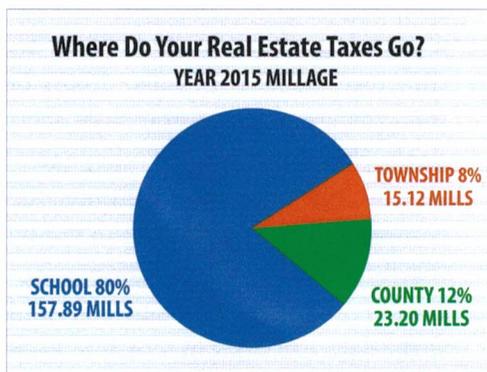
No Tax Increase Planned for 2016 *by Terry Fedorchak*

The preliminary 2016 Township budget will not require an increase in the property tax. The property tax, our single most important revenue source, is proposed to remain at 15.12 mills. This rate has remained unchanged since 2009. Lower Makefield does not levy an earned income tax, one of the few larger Bucks County communities that does not.

Your total property tax bill is 196.21 mills. Of that, less than 8% goes to the Township. The greatest percentage—80%—goes to the School District,



with the remaining 12% going to the County.



How do we do it?

A number of factors have allowed us to keep a stable tax rate for the last seven years. A major contributor has been refinancing our existing debt four times over the last five years, which resulted in significant annual expense savings.

Another contributing factor is that we have seen increases in building permit fees, cable franchise fees, and deed transfer tax revenues as the local economy has picked up.

Finally, we have been able to control personnel expenses. We've reduced administrative staff by over 10% through attrition and early retirement. Defined pension benefit plans for administrative staff have been replaced by defined contribution plans, mirroring the private sector. Existing employees are required to contribute more towards their pension and hospitalization plans, further reducing annual expenses.

Maintaining a balance between keeping taxes low and providing high quality services to our residents is a constant challenge.

look inside

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To Alarm Your Home Is to Arm Your Home against Fire



*Yardley-Makefield Fire Company Firefighters Thomas Campbell and George Daniello
(Photo by Deputy Fire Marshal Jeff Goldberg)*

October is National Fire Prevention Month. While the preventative emphasis is on what we do at home to protect our families from fire, let's first acknowledge how important our Yardley-Makefield Fire Company is to every household, business and institution in the Township. The department's firefighter staff is 100% volunteer, meaning its members take on a second profession—besides their “day job”—and put their lives at risk without pay in the name of service to the community.

Fire Marshal Jeff Goldberg proudly described his team. “We have more than 30 active firefighters. They begin their careers with more than a 100 hours of training. After that, our firefighters train at least twice monthly, to keep up with a job that consistently demands staying up to date with new knowledge, and to build strength, endurance, judgement and resilience. We're on call 365 days a year, 24/7, and we can face some pretty dangerous situations. Our best always has to get better.”

The Yardley-Makefield Fire Company responds to more than 600 calls a year, (e.g., from 9/7 to 9/13 alone, they responded to 14 calls). Many of the calls are due to automobile accidents, chemical spills and other emergencies, but more calls summon the company to extinguish fires in family dwellings and other building structures. Firefighters must stay alert and make wise decisions in a snap to keep from becoming victims themselves.

Sadly, many fire-related injuries and casualties are unnecessary. “Sixty per cent of fire deaths occur because no smoke alarms were present, or they were without batteries,” lamented Jeff.

Key Fire Safety Actions

The main message this year from our fire company and from the National Fire Prevention Association is to:

- **Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level**

of your home, including the basement. Larger homes may need more alarms. Most fires start at night while people are sleeping and won't smell the smoke. Fire in a home spreads fast, and so does the noxious smoke it causes. A smoke alarm will get you up and out of the house in case of fire.

- **Change alarm batteries when you change your clocks for shifts in daylight savings time.** Never take the batteries out of an alarm without replacing them.
- **Call 911 as soon as a fire surfaces.** Even if you use a fire extinguisher, a small fire can still get out of hand.
- **Teach children how to use 911 in response to a fire if an adult is not available or unable to call.**
- **Exit the house when fire is out of control.** Have a plan to meet family members outside at a certain place, like the mailbox. Take a count to ensure everyone's out. Do not rush in to grab valuables or other items. Life safety first!

For more fire prevention strategies, visit the National Fire Prevention Association web site, www.nfpa.org/safety-information/fire-prevention-week.

“I'm proud to say I'm a part of such a dedicated crew,” continued Jeff. “We're a pretty tight fraternity, and that includes Amy Chamberlain, our only female firefighter. She grew up with firsthand knowledge of the job, its challenges and rewards. Her dad Glenn, who has served on the force for decades, is our Fire Chief.”



continue to enhance Memorial Park, which is home to the official State Memorial honoring those lost on September 11th, the Garden of Reflection. A new pavilion has been added to accompany the Secret Garden, an all-inclusive playground, built for the enjoyment of children of all abilities. The Township's top-rated golf course, Makefield Highlands, was a U.S. Open Qualifying course site and is now equipped to cater large events. Stay tuned for the anticipated construction of a Community Center.

Our road resurfacing project is in full swing and we dedicated unprecedented funding levels to this vital infrastructure. We are very close to establishing quiet zones at our railroad crossings and continue to work closely with PECO to improve our electric reliability. A new Community Rating System (CRS) with FEMA is in the works to reduce flood insurance premium rates to residents residing within the newly designated flood plains. Please check the website, *LMT.org*, for additional information on these and other important issues.

I invite you to read the pages ahead to learn some of the many goings-on in LMT. Please check the Township website often for regular updates and follow us on Twitter @LMTGOV and our Police Department @LMTPD. Please visit our helpful and friendly staff at the Township Building for your particular needs.

It is through the dedication of our staff and involvement of citizens that Lower Makefield thrives. We express our sincere thanks to those people who contribute positivity, dedication and vision for the benefit of all. If you would like to join our team of volunteers, please contact the Township Manager at *tfedor@lmt.org*.

LMT Secures New Sewer Billing Service and Enhanced Payment Options

The green, postcard-like sewer bills that have been arriving in LMT mailboxes for the last 40 years will soon be relics of the past. After a competitive bid process, the Board of Supervisors selected Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority (BCWSA) to manage all billing services starting in 2016. This change will benefit residents in several ways.



BCWSA's proposal will provide significant cost savings. Currently, our sewer billing operation costs the Township over \$100,000 annually. By contracting this service to BCWSA, the Township will save \$178,520 over the next six years.

Perhaps as importantly, residents will receive several service enhancements. Starting in 2016, you will have the option to pay by credit or debit card online, over the phone, or automatically with Direct Debit. You will also have the option to receive your bill electronically and to go online to view charges and payment history.

BCWSA was selected based upon its experience, capacity and capability to provide the required billing services in a professional, timely, reliable and secure manner, in accordance with all Township laws and regulations. BCWSA demonstrated a commitment to providing LMT residents with timely, knowledgeable and courteous service, as well as the ability to meet the anticipated project schedule, and to interact with Township staff productively.

So next year, watch your mailbox for a sewer bill with an updated look. In addition, note the series of new payment options you have.

Save the Date!



LMT's Veterans Day Parade
November 8, 2015 at 1:00 pm
Parade Route: Edgewood Road to
Veteran's Square Park

LMT Park and Recreation

This fall, there's still plenty of time to get out outside and enjoy the park and recreation facilities that LMT offers—some with exciting new features!

LMT Builds Covered Pavilion at Memorial Park

Memorial Park is home to the serene Garden of Reflection, the Official Memorial in Pennsylvania to those lost in the 9/11 attack. The Secret Garden, a new inclusive playground, is also nestled in the park. Residents can experience memorable gatherings here at the new pavilion. The 20 x 28 pavilion will be available for resident rental—only \$10 per hour with a \$50 security deposit. Call 267-274-1110 for information regarding rentals or scheduling.

Heacock Meadows Tennis Courts

The tennis courts in Heacock Meadows along Cardinal Drive have received a much-needed facelift and now also double as courts for a new



sport. After LMT resident Bonnie Gannon made her case and submitted a proposal, the Township approved marking the 2 tennis courts for pickleball play. (If you visit the courts,



the markings are the blue rectangles within the tennis court lines.) What's pickleball? Bonnie summarized it as a combination of ping pong and tennis. "It's safer than tennis with a smaller court; and because it's not so hard on the joints, it's great for middle-aged and senior players. Finally, games are often more social events than they are competition," says Bonnie, who has started a league that keeps expanding.

Basketball Court at Heacock Meadows Upgraded

New poles, rims and backboards were installed, and the court was paved and striped. Township resident Dave Kelliher commented, "It's like a brand new court; also, it's especially nice for youngsters to have this great space to play in a safe neighborhood setting."

New Gaga Pit near Kids Kingdom

Steve Weaner, a Life Scout in Boy Scout Troop 46, met with LMT Board of Supervisors Chairman Kristin Tyler to discuss possible projects for his Eagle Scout Badge. Kristin suggested creating a Gaga pit, a new and very popular camp sport. Steve took care of the paperwork, designed the pit with his dad and an engineer from the troop, then worked with his family to raise the needed funds. Steve then spearheaded construction of the pit, building the octagonal cage with help from some of his fellow scouts. "It took us about three hours to assemble the pit," said Steve, "and within 20 minutes, about 15 kids from a birthday party nearby asked if they could start a Gaga game!" Thank you and congratulations to Steve, a Senior at Pennsbury. We'll look for news in the papers about your achieving your Eagle Scout badge.

Department: What's New?

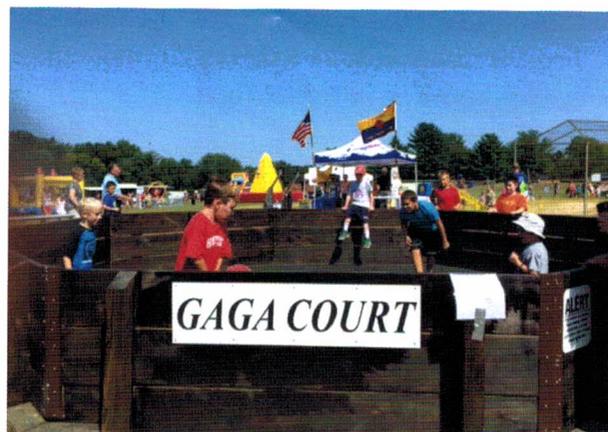
Thanks to our Lower Makefield Sports Organizations

The Park and Recreation Facilities Department would like to recognize the over 4,000 players, their parents, and support staff of our sports leagues: Yardley Makefield Soccer (YMS), Pennsbury Athletic Association Baseball and Softball (PAA), Lower Makefield Football Association (LMFA), and Yardley Makefield Tennis (YM Tennis). These leagues that create athletic opportunities for youngsters are run entirely by volunteers. Families associated with the leagues pay registration fees that support maintenance of the facilities they utilize, and in many instances, the league managers

and parents of players help maintain the spaces themselves, raking, grooming, striping fields and more. No federal, state or county funds support these vital organizations which ultimately contribute between \$125,000 and \$150,000 for upkeep of Township parks and community areas, and who have helped the average household contribution to our park and recreation facilities stay put between \$54 in the year 2000 to \$51 today.

If you would like to learn more about these leagues, visit:

- www.PAABall.com

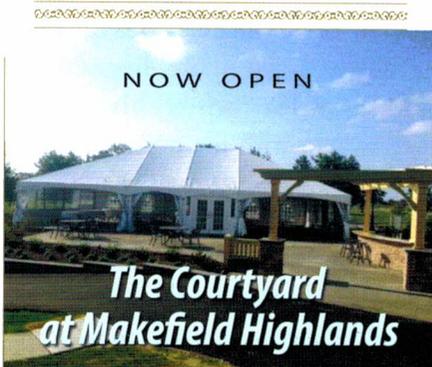


- www.YMSSoccer.net
- www.YMTennis.com
- www.lmfafotball.org

For more info, please visit lmt.org/departments/park-recreation and scroll down to the link for *Lower Makefield Sports and Leisure Opportunities*.

Makefield Highlands Golf Club

Announcing the Opening of The Courtyard at Makefield Highlands Event Facility



- Perfect for any event
*Wedding | Receptions | Bar/Bat Mitzvahs
Birthday Parties | Corporate Events*
- Seats 200
- Patio and Bar for Cocktail Hour

Contact Christine Lopez
for menus and availability
215.321.7000 x 11

Makefield Highlands Golf Club recently completed major capital improvements to the Township's club facilities: the renovation of the kitchen and construction of an exceptional three-season outdoor dining area, aptly named *The Courtyard at Makefield Highlands*. In addition, we have partnered with Bucks Mont Rentals to provide a beautifully appointed structure tent as well as additional equipment and décor to help make your special event unforgettable.

The Courtyard is state of the art, built in the open air and overlooks the golf course. Our facilities surround the 19th century farm and outbuildings the club is set on. Using this idyllic vista, including the original grain silo as its focal point, was part of the Township's vision for the space. The tent, situated between the historical Manor House and the clubhouse, is nearly 5,000 square feet and can accommodate up to 200 people. With its stonework accents and architectural wooden arches, *The Courtyard* patio provides residents and golfers with a great place to enjoy a relaxing outdoor meal or cocktail.

The Courtyard provides a charming Bucks County estate feeling in a country club setting. It offers some of the best views and our culinary team is ready to wow your guests.

Please come visit us this fall at Makefield Highlands to experience *The Courtyard* and all our amenities. Events can be scheduled year round. For photos, menus and more information, please visit our web site: makefieldhighlandsgolf.com.

Keepin' the Beat—with LMT Police Chief Kenneth Coluzzi

ready bucks

Q: Chief, your Police Force is responsible for handling emergency situations in LMT. What's new for the upcoming season?

CC: We're replacing ReadyNotify-PA with Ready Bucks, an upgraded, state-of-the-art notification system. To alert the community about events such as flooding or evacuations, electronic voice messages from officials are sent to every home landline in our area. But for those who are NOT home or have no landline, Ready Bucks is the pri-



mary way for our residents to receive these important notifications. This is a potentially life-saving benefit provided to us by the state and other participating counties surrounding us.

Ready Bucks is more flexible and offers more capabilities than the old service. It notifies subscribers of major emergencies, and delivers types of alerts tailored to each subscriber's selections from weather advisories to road hazards to public transportation updates. Subscribers can receive emergency broadcasts from municipalities they choose on electronic devices—cell phones, tablets, and computers. The list of improvements and choices is too long to present here, but you cannot receive any of these safety benefits without signing up.

To subscribe: Just click on the

Ready Bucks button at the *LMT.org* home page and fill out the information.

twitter

Q: Are emergency news and other alerts also available on the LMT Police Twitter Account?

CC: That's right. Go to our Twitter page—*twitter.com/lmtpd*—to create your account then follow us *@LMT-PD*. Read the tweets on your smart phone or tablet, then click on the links for more information on our web site. We have more than 550 followers, now, and we've had great feedback.

Q: Any success stories thanks to your Twitter Account?

CC: Here's one in particular: An 88-year-old male suffering from dementia went missing from his LMT home. We placed his photo and description

on Twitter. Residents who saw the post were on the lookout for him, and some people actually joined our officers in the search along River Road in a very bad rainstorm. We ultimately found the gentleman and brought him to safety. This was truly a community effort to be proud of.

body cameras

Q: Word on the street has it that your patrol officers will now wear body cameras.

CC: Yes. They're high quality camcorders made by Taser International in Arizona. The enhanced accuracy in documenting interactions protect s both citizens and officers.

Q: How do the cameras work?

CC: They're about two inches square, and sit on the officer's shirt at mid-chest. Each body cam "sees"

and records images just like the officer perceives them in terms of lighting, distance and peripheral view. The camera also "hears" conversation and background sounds similarly.

accreditation

Q: Your department just received the high honor of accreditation from the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Program. Does the program require body cameras?

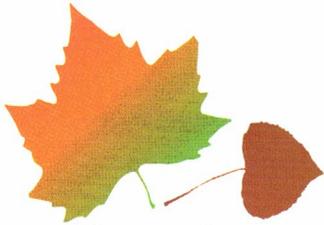
CC: No, but while many police departments in Bucks County have dashboard cameras, we are the first to implement this technology, and several interested departments recently attended a demonstration to learn more about this new strategy.

CTAAC

Q: Speaking of cameras, tell us about your CTAAC initiative.

CC: That stands for *Citizen's Take Aim At Crime*. LMT residents and business owners who have exterior or outdoor surveillance cameras can help cut back on crime in the Township. If a camera owner registers his surveillance system with the police, we will contact him if a crime may have been recorded on that system. With the owner's permission, we will view the video content for useful information, keeping all content confidential except that which may be used in criminal proceedings.

Surveillance cameras have been immeasurably helpful in identifying and ultimately prosecuting criminals caught in the act. If you have such a system in place, please help us by registering it. Go to *CTAAC camera registration form*, download and complete it, then bring it by our offices next to the Township Building or mail it to 1100 Edgewood Road, Yardley, 19067.



After the Fall—Streamlining LMT Leaf Pickup

This year the two-round leaf collection process will start earlier, during the first week of November. It normally starts the Monday just after Veterans' Day, which is November 16 this year, and ends near Christmas. Each day beginning at 7:00 am, the Public Works employees and contractors are in the streets throughout the Township, vacuuming and hauling away leaves.

The Public Works Department posts the schedule on the Township's website, *LMT.org*. The schedule is impacted by bad weather conditions and will be updated regularly. Residents should check the cable TV channels

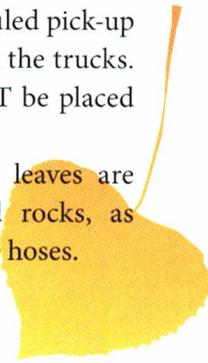
and the *LMT.org* website for changes to the leaf pick up schedule.

The Township is divided into three main sections. Leaf pick-up will begin in the southern section, where trees are most mature, plentiful and first to fall. Then the crews will move to the central section and, finally, the northernmost section where the developments are newer and the trees are less mature.

The leaves are then distributed across public farmland and also next to the Public Works Building where they're ground and left to decompose to fine compost, available for Township residents to pick up and use.

How You Can Help Clear those Leaves

- Please have your leaves at the curb three days in advance of pick-up so you are not delayed by unexpected weather events.
- Keep vehicles and other obstacles off the street on scheduled pick-up days so as not to block the trucks. The leaves should NOT be placed in the road.
- Please make sure the leaves are free of branches and rocks, as these will puncture the hoses.



important updates:

PECO ANNOUNCES \$10 MILLION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

At a meeting on August 20, 2015, PECO provided updates on its \$10MM infrastructure improvement plan targeting Bucks County. PECO provides power to \$1.6 million customers across Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, Delaware, York and Philadelphia counties. PECO spends between \$500MM and \$600MM annually for maintenance and service improvements. The additional \$10MM investment in Bucks County provided funding for the following improvements: PECO:

- ▶ performed a system analysis in response to pressure from municipalities regarding electric reliability. PECO altered its evaluation system to account for "pocket areas" that experienced higher than average power outages.
- ▶ installed tree resistant power lines, employed aggressive tree trimming, provided IntelliRuptors, reclosers and other equipment upgrades.
- ▶ upgraded the outage map so customers can see where outages are happening every 15 minutes.
- ▶ is now mobile friendly with the introduction of PECO Smart Mobile On-the-Go.

PECO presently has a rate increase request pending before the PUC. They have requested a \$190MM "modernization" plan with an additional \$275MM

for weather hardening and substation upgrades. These plans, which would be executed over the next 5 years, would result in an average 4% increase. PECO expects a decision from the PUC at the end of this year. Please visit *LMT.org* for more information on PECO.

FEMA COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM UPDATE

Lower Makefield Township and the Township Engineer's office have been working with FEMA for entrance into the Community Rating System (CRS) for a reduction in Flood Insurance Premium Rates for the Township residents. Applications have been submitted and are being evaluated and processed for CRS Credit Points by the ISO/CRS Specialist and FEMA. Once FEMA confirms the CRS Credit Points, the CRS Rating will be assigned and a recommendation will be made for the entrance of Lower Makefield Township into the CRS Program. The CRS Credit Points and Rating determine the percent discount the Township residents will receive on their Flood Insurance Premiums.

As of May 1, 2015, there are currently 31 Pennsylvania municipalities reported to be in in the CRS Program. There are currently no Bucks County municipalities in the CRS Program. We anticipate that Lower Makefield will be the first Bucks County municipality accepted into the CRS Program.

LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP QUIET ZONES

Progress on the creation of Quiet Zones throughout Lower Makefield Township continues. The Township is working with PennDOT to obtain the necessary Highway Occupancy Permits. Additionally, the Township is finalizing the agreement with the PennDOT Multimodal Grant Department to receive the approved grant monies allocated to subsidize construction of the Quiet Zones. Boucher & James, Inc. has been assembling the required bid documents and plans. Once the Permits and Agreements are in place, the project will go out to bid. The construction of the Quiet Zones is anticipated to begin late fall.

COMMUNITY/SENIOR CENTER

In August 2015, the Board rejected the first \$2.7 million bid, which was \$400,000 more than expected. The architects were then directed to scale the project back, and at their September 2nd public meeting, the Board approved the revised design with a budget not to exceed \$2.3 million.



Lower Makefield Township
1100 Edgewood Road
Yardley, PA 19067

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FALL 2015 NEWSLETTER WHAT'S NEW?

- ▶ *No New Taxes:
2016 Budget Preview*
- ▶ *Yardley-Makefield Fire Dept.
and Police Dept. Update*
- ▶ *New Makefield Highlands
Catering Facility*
- ▶ *New Public Works Fall Leaf
Pickup System*



Photo by Pat O'Leary

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**CHECK THE LMT.ORG WEBSITE TO FIND
OUT WHEN YOUR LEAVES WILL BE
PICKED UP THIS FALL.**

Would you like to receive this newsletter and other important communications from LMT? Please enter your email by clicking on the email request icon located on the homepage of our website, *lmt.org*, located just below the Board of Supervisors meeting videos.

Important Administrative Phone Numbers

A complete listing of Township Departments can be found on www.lmt.org

Administration

267-274-1100, admin@lmt.org

Township Manager

Terry Fedorchak, 267-274-1100, tfedor@lmt.org

Police and Fire Emergency

911

Police Non-Emergency

215-493-4011

Police Records/Administration

215-493-4055

Park and Recreation

267-274-1110

Animal Control

ACO@lmt.org or call Police Headquarters
at 215-493-4055

Planning Zoning and Inspections

267-274-1120 or stevew@lmt.org

Public Works

267-274-1130

Tax Office

215-493-2332 lmntax@lmt.org

LMT Community Pool

267-274-1105 or communitypool@lmt.org