

Spring 2022

Baldwin Township Newsletter

info@baldwintownship.com

412-341-9597

Upcoming Improvements in Armstrong Park

Exciting things are coming to Armstrong Park this Summer. Baldwin Township Public Works will begin working on several new projects this spring.

Pickleball Court

A pickleball court will be replacing the old basketball courts.

Volleyball Court/Walking Trails

The Township is currently in the process of creating a sand volleyball court in the park that will double as a bio cell/stormwater retention area. The new area will feature a regulation-sized court, enhanced lighting and ADA compliant benches. The court will be located in the upper portion of the park, which is currently unused.

In conjunction with the reconfiguration of the walkways throughout the park, we will be identifying and labeling local vegetation. Aside from the volleyball court retention area, the upper park area consists mainly of green space. This allows for educational and joint activities between the Township and local groups (i.e., Scouts, schools).

Pavilion Restoration

The pavilion at Armstrong Park will also be getting a much-needed makeover.

Hello, neighbors! Baldwin Township is now using Nextdoor's free government platform to partner with you and your neighbors to build community, improve quality of life, and keep you informed. As a member of Nextdoor that lives in Baldwin Township, you'll automatically get our messages. While we appreciate feedback from our residents, this platform will only be used for informative purposes in cases of emergencies.

If you would like to utilize this service, you will first need to create a free Nextdoor account. You can even choose to receive SMS alerts and would not need to download the app.

Follow to the steps below to start receiving text messages from Nextdoor:

- 1) Go to Nextdoor.com
- 2) Create a free account
- 3) Go to your profile at the top right of the screen
- 4) Settings
- 5) SMS Alerts on the left side of the screen
- 6) Add mobile phone number
- 7) Nextdoor will send your phone a confirmation code
- 8) Input code



nextdoor

A Message from your Baldwin Township Building Inspector

With Spring right around the corner many residents will begin thinking about home improvements!

Keep in mind certain home improvement jobs require a building inspector.

YOU DO NOT NEED A BUILDING PERMIT TO:

- Reshingle or patch a roof
- Replace siding with new siding
- Repave driveway (no change in size)
- Replace windows (no change in size)
- Replace entry door (no change in size)
- Landscape your yard (no more than 25 cubic yards dirt)
- Make minor interior repairs (i.e., kitchen/family room)
- Replace a furnace or water heater
- Install a dish antenna under 12 inches
- Plant trees (not permitted on a sewer right of way)

YOU MUST HAVE A BUILDING PERMIT TO:

- Add a room, dormer, second floor,
- Build or replace a new porch or deck
- Change the size of a driveway or parking pad
- Add a new driveway or parking pad
- Add or replace a fence
- Build an in-ground swimming pool
- Build an above-ground swimming pool – 1 ft or deeper
- Build or replace a shed or lawn building – max 100 sq ft
- Make any structural alterations to your home
- Excavate or add till to your property

If you're still unsure when you need a permit call the township office 412-341-9597

A Message from our Parks and Recreation Board Commissioner Jamie McCabe regarding feral cats

Feral cats, stray cats, house cats, oh my! As a lot of you may have noticed, in some areas of the township we have some feral cat colonies. Feral cats are different from stray cats (stray cats are cats that were once pets or had relationships with humankind at one point before running away or being abandoned) and much different than our lovely companions we know as house cats or pets. Feral cats are cats that are born in the wild and have had very little to no experience in the human contact department. Feral cats don't want that contact with humans either. They are very much wild animals just in the way that racoons, opossums, foxes, rabbits and all our PA Wildlife creatures are!

It is important to make sure colonies do not get out of hand with overpopulation. Whenever feral cats form large colonies, it can create unwanted scenarios, such as increased breeding, spreading sickness and disease, over-taking shelters, and potentially personal property damage. Just like you should not feed local wildlife you should not feed feral cats. Feeding these animals attracts more and more cats to the area, creating these large colonies. Another very effective way to help control the cat population is (TNR) Trap, Neuter, Release. This is where, as you might imagine, the animals are caught in a trap (humanely of course), then they are taken to a vet or an organization that performs spaying/neutering surgeries. While these wild cats are under anesthesia, a very small part of their ear is 'tipped'. Tipping is done so that whenever the cats are released back into their environment, they can be recognized as already 'fixed'. Getting these cats 'fixed' really helps with population control.

In the six years that I have been a part of the Township, I've worked with three very sickly baby kittens that were a part of a colony. The first baby I found a couple years ago. She was very, very sickly. I found her lying in the street meowing for help. I took her to the vet and did absolutely everything in my power to help her. She felt love but unfortunately did not pull through. This past October our amazing Borough Manager reached out to me about two (very young four-week-old) feral babies that one of our caring residents found and took in. They were in very rough shape quite like my first little friend. Thankfully these two little fighters pulled through, survived and landed the most perfect home. Sometimes when babies are found so young, there is hope for them becoming 'pets'. But not always. The sickness they had was extremely serious and life threatening. I imagine a lot of newborn kittens and cats alike do not survive and suffer with illness. We need to stop the spread of large colonies from happening to make it a healthier and safer place to live for our wildlife and residents alike.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding feral cats in our neighborhood.

Commissioner Jamie McCabe (Wishbone's Animal Sanctuary INC) 412-339-8447.

An Introduction to the new Castle Shannon Fire Department Chief, Bill Reffner Jr.

William C Reffner (Nickname: Junior)

Born December 1968 (53 years old)

I was born and raised on Lyndell Street in Castle Shannon

I reside on Vallevista Avenue in Castle Shannon (since fall of 1997)

I am a Graduate of Bethel Park HS Class of 1987

Associate Degree in Specialized Business, Everest College, Pittsburgh, PA - March 1989

Career: I have been with NOVA Chemicals for 21 years where I work in Supply Chain.



How long have you been with the CSVFD? I joined the Castle Shannon Fire Department in January 1999. Since that time, I have held numerous positions within the department including Firefighter, Engine Operator, Truck Operator, Lieutenant, Captain, Assistant Chief, and now Fire Chief. In addition, I have held many administrative positions within our organization including Treasurer, Board of Director, and President of the Relief Association.

What are the various responsibilities of a fire chief? The primary responsibility of the Fire Chief is to prevent the loss of life and property through rescue, fire suppression, training, and public education. This is achieved by overseeing and directing a safe, rapid, and effective response to all emergencies in the fire district; deliver the highest quality of trained, skilled, and caring professionals to each incident; maintain the latest in vehicles, equipment, and firefighting techniques; promote fire prevention and safety through outreach and educational programming; and proactively reduce the risk from fire through the application and enforcement of Fire Codes and Investigations.

In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges all VFDs face today? The biggest challenge we face is the recruitment and retention of members. Throughout the country, the volunteer fire service has seen a steady decline in membership in the past fifty years. In Pennsylvania alone, the fire service has gone from 300,000 members strong in the 70's, to only 38,000 members today. Without a steady stream of new members, who's going to answer the call when your fire department is needed most? So, I ask residents, come be a part of a dynamic organization and give back to your community. Our needs are great – from needing active firefighters, to those willing to help raise much-needed funds, to those willing to support our administrative tasks – but the rewards are many. Call today, join YOUR fire department, and make a meaningful difference for your family, your neighbors, and your community.

What is your favorite part of the position, thus far? Overall, this is an exciting time to be in a leadership role in the fire department. As we celebrate our 100th Anniversary with an Open House on May 22nd from 12 pm – 4 pm, the organization just accepted our new strategic plan with a renewed focus on recruitment of new members, enhanced firefighter training, and the purchase of a new Engine that when delivered in late 2023 will serve our community for the next quarter century.

Personally, I look forward to following in my father's footsteps. After fifty years of faithful service, my dad just retired as Fire Chief and there was no greater honor than at his retirement ceremony, he presented me with his Chief's badge. I will wear it with pride and continue his legacy of serving this department – and this community – with integrity, empathy, and humility.

Help for Residents with PENNSYLVANIA 211

Residents can dial 2-1-1 for assistance with everything from paying utility bills to health care, substance abuse and job placement. This one-stop health and human services resource can assist you with everyday needs and in crisis situations. Dial 211 or 1-888-553-5778 or text your zip code to 898-211 for immediate assistance day and night.



**Baldwin Township
10 Community Park Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15234**

USEFUL CONTACTS AND PHONE NUMBERS

Non-Emergency Phone Numbers:

Baldwin Twp. Police	(412) 341-5937
Overnight Parking Request	(412) 341-5937
Castle Shannon VFD	(412) 884-7913
MRTSA	(412) 343-5111
Baldwin Twp. Office	(412) 341-9597
Jordan Tax Service	(412) 835-5243
Waste Management	(800) 866-4460

State Officials:

Sen. Wayne D. Fontana	(412) 344-2551
Rep. Dan Miller	(412) 343-3870

Federal Officials:

Sen. Robert Casey	(412) 803-7370
Sen. Pat Toomey	(412) 803-3501

TOWNSHIP OFFICE HOURS:

8:30 AM – 4:00 PM M-F

Building permits and code enforcement issues are handled by the Building Inspector on Thursdays 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM