Summer 2022

The Gander The Newsletter of Thornbury Township, Chester County

Chairman's Update

Welcome to the latest edition of The Gander!

I wanted to take a moment and thank the many volunteers who are serve on the Township Commissions. Thank you so much for the immeasurably valuable work you do for Thornbury Township. The Board of Supervisors want you to know that your dedication is essential to the Township. We cannot do it without you. You individually bring ideas and positive energy to the Township's achievements and success.

In addition, Thornbury Township is always looking for interested residents to get involved. There are many committees in the Township from land development, history, parks, events, and zoning. Consider joining a commission and send an email of interest to Judy Lizza at jlizza@thornburytwp.com What a great way to meet your neighbors and be a part of your community.

If you haven't been by the new Township Building, please come over and say hi. Teresa and Judy would be happy to show you around.

As summer season here this also means that road maintenance and paving projects are underway. Work zone safety is imperative to workers as well as drivers. From time to time, there may be closures. These will be communicated through our email blast. Make sure you sign up on the Township webpage (www.thornburytwp.com) in order to get notices to help in planning your route.

Consider coming out to a meeting or work session and get involved with the township. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. We are looking forward to a great summer!

Best regards,

Jim Benoit, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

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Historic Preservation Commission

"The British are coming…" to your community!

You know about Paul Revere's infamous role in the American Revolution... but did you know just as important of an event occurred here? The largest single day land battle of the entire American Revolution, Battle of Brandywine, took place locally. Approximately 30,000 Crown Forces and American troops were engaged in combat; more than the population of today's West Chester Borough. Brandywine Battlefield, including areas of troop movements, encampments, skirmishes, and combat, covers a very large area, spanning parts of Chester and Delaware Counties.

This year marks 245 years since the Battle. In commemoration, the weekend of Sept 24 and 25 will feature a two-day re-enactment event at Sandy Hollow Heritage Park, Birmingham Township with troops movements following the original path on Thornbury Farm- Thornbury Township. "Brandywine 2022, will be a major historical event in this region having over 1,000 re-enactor soldiers and camp followers" said Randell Spackman- Chair of Brandywine 2022. " In 2017 we had visitors from 27 states and 4 countries come see the Battle"

Sandy Hollow Heritage Park and Thornbury Farm is one site within the large Brandywine Battlefield where significant combat took place. It is not often that a Rev War re-enactment occurs on the same land where its battle occurred. The event strives to make community and national history come alive, allowing people 245 years later to witness firsthand parts of this major Battle that occurred on Sept 11, 1777. This will be an engaging event to make history accessible to the community.

This will be an immersive historical experience and offer a rare opportunity to walk back in time.. In addition to battle re-enactments, camps of both armies will be open for inspection by the public. Historical interpreters portraying George Washington, Marquis de Lafayette, and Alexander Hamilton will be conversing with visitors. Sutlers will be selling time-appropriate goods. Colonial games for children will be played. There will also be a performance element, including singers from area schools and organizations.

Artists and authors will also be taking part. Artist, Adrian Martinez, creates paintings with historical themes and has just completed a painting of Lafayette. Authors Gene Pisasale and Bruce Mowday have both written on local history. Mowday wrote a book the Battle of Brandywine and most recently released the book 'Lafayette at Brandywine: The Making of an American Hero'.

This is the third re-enactment at Sandy Hollow Heritage Park; the first two in 2014 and 2017 were both successful and well attended. Brandywine 2022 is volunteer based. There is an organizing committee that meets regularly. Volunteers and sponsors are needed – Contact the Brandywine 2022 event chair, Randell Spackman, through the Brandywine 2022 Facebook page or email communications manager Bruce Mowday at mowday@mowday.com to find out how you can help this historical event.

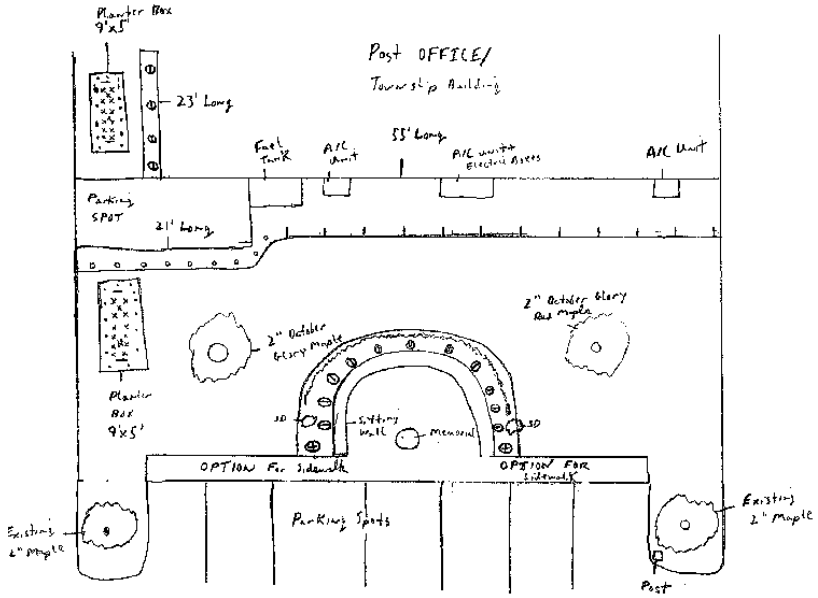
Officials of both Birmingham and Thornbury Townships are supporting the event, along with the Chadds Ford Historical Society and Thornbury Farm CSA. The schedule for the event is still being completed. Check the Brandywine 2022 Facebook page for more information and the final schedule.

Parks and Recreation

While the past two years saw several of our Park and Recreational Committee events cancelled and the temporary closing of our townships parks and playgrounds, the end of 2021 and start of 2022 saw a return to the reopening of our facilities. This past December we were able to host our annual Santa Train Ride after a two-year hiatus. Our Goose Creek Park playground equipment was replaced and expanded to give the park a new look.

In the spirit of reopening, the committee has begun the process of planning and designing of a Veteran's Memorial Park located directly across form our newly established Township Building. The focus of this park will be the branches of our armed forces and the sacrifice and service those members have given to our nation and community. The committee is also working in conjunction with the Chester County historical social for their input into the project striving to include aspects from the local community.

The Park and Recreational Committee has also undertaken the task of reviewing our current parks and examining the status of existing plantings and determining the vitality of those species. Some of the specific steps will include replacing some of the tress and shrubs that have been lost due to the construction of our new township building. We are looking to enhance the property with plants native to our area and as well as replacing those lost to disease these past few seasons.



Our committee meets the first Thursday of each month, excluding July and August, at the Township building at 1pm. We invite any residents who are interested in our work to attend and consider joining the board. We are always open to the input of our fellow resident and neighbors.

Zoning Hearing Board

Development and operations within Thornbury Township are regulated by township zoning ordinances. The township is divided into six classes of districts, each with its own set of ordinances. The districts include Residential/Agricultural, Residential, Country Club Residential, Planned Residential, Business and Multipurpose.

On occasion a landowner may need a variance from an ordinance in order to install new construction or to change operations. At that point they will need to file a request with Thornbury Township Zoning Hearing Board for variance of a specific ordinance (s).

Thornbury Township Zoning Hearing Board is a quasi legal board established to judge the merits of a variance request. The board's decisions are governed by five basic provisions which include the need for (1) testimony that physical conditions are a hardship and a basis for the variance and (2) that the variance will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood; to list two of the five primary provisions.

Applications for a variance should be filed and processed with Thornbury Township office, who will help guide you thru the process.

Tom Jaagus
Chairman of Zoning Hearing Board

What we do as Commissions:

Planning Commission:

Meets the second Monday of each month at 7 PM.

Prepares, recommends and administers subdivision and land development. Makes recommendations to the governing body concerning the adoption or amendment to the zoning ordinance, subdivision and land development ordinance, official map, provisions for planned residential development, and such other ordinances and regulations governing the development of land amendments.

Parks and Recreation Commission:

Meets the first Thursday of each month at 1 PM.

Plan, supervise and conduct a comprehensive and coordinated program of cultural and physical recreation; plan and implement programs of park-related activities for all of the present and future parks; and cooperate in developing plans for parks, recreation areas and for the preservation of open space within the township.

Historic Preservation Commission

Meets quarterly, the third Wednesday of the month at 7 PM.

The Commission encourages preservation of the historical character of the Township; advises the Supervisors and the Planning Commission in matters involving historically and/or architecturally significant resources, including the review of zoning, subdivision and land development proposals and building/demolition permit applications to determine the impacts to historic and/or architectural resources.

Summer Garden Tips

Be waterwise

Mulch beds with organic matter to suppress weeds and help retain moisture. Use drip irrigation when possible, and water early or late in the day—particularly when using sprinklers or watering wands—to minimize evaporation.

Keep cool

Think of ways to cool off your yard. Plants are nature's own air conditioner; areas under trees can be up to 20 degrees cooler than adjacent sunny spots. Plant a tree to shade the patio or deck, and locate benches and chairs underneath existing trees. Place a fountain, pool or small portable water feature near your patio for a cooling evaporation effect, and the soothing sound of moving water. Build an arbor and plant quick-growing vines at the base, or install a shade cloth

Add colorful containers

Keep annual containers looking their best with regular watering, fertilizing and deadheading. In mid-summer, cut back trailing annuals such as petunias and million bells by half and give regular feedings of water-soluble bloom booster fertilizer for a new flush of color. Replace tired-looking plants with new ones for an updated look. Move containers into mixed borders where there are holes or gaps for an element of surprise.

Mix it up

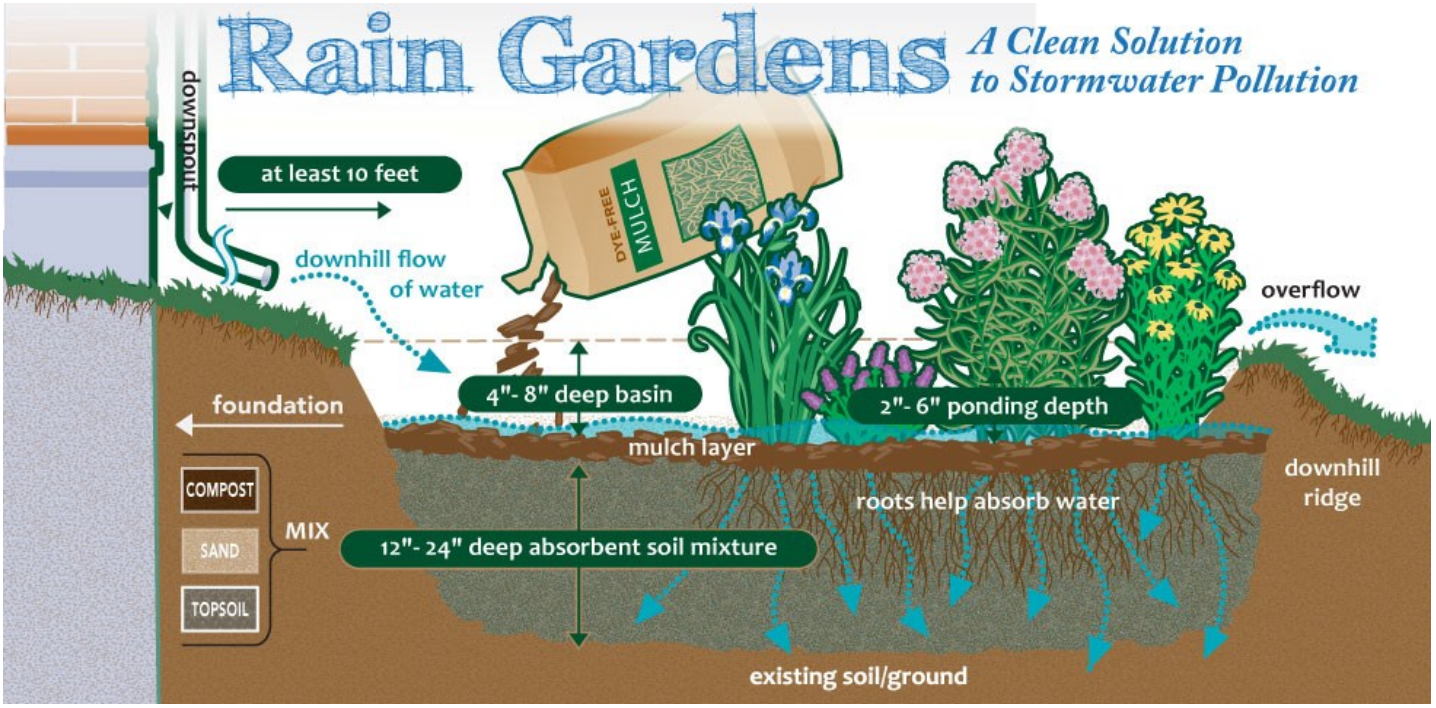
Don't be afraid to combine edibles with ornamentals. Different colored lettuces make attractive edging along a pathway. Dinosaur ('Lacinato') kale, with its pale blue leaves, can be planted in containers and combined with annuals for a showy look. Nasturtiums, with edible flowers that liven up green salads, can be used as container accents, in raised beds, or climbing up a trellis.

Keep pollinators happy

Insects and hummingbirds are crucial for pollination of edibles and other plants. Include a selection of native plants that will bloom over the growing season to attract a diversity of wildlife. Check with your local extension service or nursery to find out which varieties are most suitable to your area. Annual sunflowers and zinnias, or specialty wildflower mixes, are quick-growing options for new gardens or edible beds.

Take note

Now's the time to assess the garden. Make a list of what needs to be divided or replaced, and take a few snapshots on your phone as a visual reminder. Note if a plant is too big or small for a particular spot, and when you see varieties that might work better together. Fall and spring are the best times to move plants around, when the weather is cooler.



1. Pick The Right Location And Size

The best locations are in natural depressions or low lying areas where water flows naturally from a down-spout, driveway, patio or sidewalk. Avoid steep slopes and areas near septic systems or drinking water wells. You must be able to move water from the hard surface (roof, etc.) to the garden location, either by directing a downspout with an extended tube towards it, or simply by following contours and capturing water that is naturally flowing downhill

2. Create A Design And Select Plants

Once you have a location and size for your garden, sketch it out on paper. Determine the mix of species you would like to use, including flowers, grasses, and shrubs that are drought tolerant but can withstand wet conditions. Native plants are adapted to local conditions, easy to maintain and attract birds and butterflies. Fill in your sketch with your selected plants.

3. Construct And Plant Your Garden

Spray paint or otherwise mark on the ground the exact shape of your rain garden. Excavate to a depth of 4-8 inches, creating a berm on the downslope side of your garden using the removed sod. Amend your soil as needed to improve drainage. Try to keep the bottom of the basin as flat as possible to increase the area that will come in contact with water regularly. Add plants following your design, placing species that need the most water in the lowest lying areas or in the most direct path from the downspout.

4. Rain Garden Plants

By using native plants in your rain garden you are giving your plants the best chance to survive the wide range of weather conditions they will experience, from long droughts to large storms. Native plants also support the largest number of wildlife species, including birds, butterflies, and bees.

For more info visit Chester Creek Watershed at www.crcwatersheds.org

Stormwater Tips

Thornbury Township would like to remind you of the importance of preventing stormwater pollution while you make the most of the spring weather

When it comes to fertilizer, remember that a little goes a long way. While a 20-pound bag of lawn fertilizer may seem small, do note that it will typically cover up to 4,000 square-feet of space (bigger than a tennis court). When spreading the fertilizer, use it sparingly to assure the excess does not overflow into runoff when rain comes. Choosing an organic fertilizer will also be less detrimental to the environment.

If you plan to wash your car at home, find an outdoor surface such as gravel, stone or grass to wash it on. Soapy water and grime will have an easier time neutralizing if it is filtered out before it reaches our streams and creeks. Try using a non-toxic or biodegradable soap as well to allow fewer chemicals to get into the water. An even safer alternative would be heading over to your local car wash where they will have a sys-

There are new businesses for you to enjoy in the Commons at Thornbury!

Taco Maya

Walnut Street Cabinets

Trixie's Seasonal Reminders:

Let your Garden Grow with Care

Pet parents, take care—fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides keep our plants and lawns healthy and green, but their ingredients may be dangerous if your pet ingests them. Always store these products in out-of-the-way places and follow label instructions carefully. Many popular springtime plants—including rhododendron and azaleas—are also highly toxic to pets and can prove fatal if eaten.

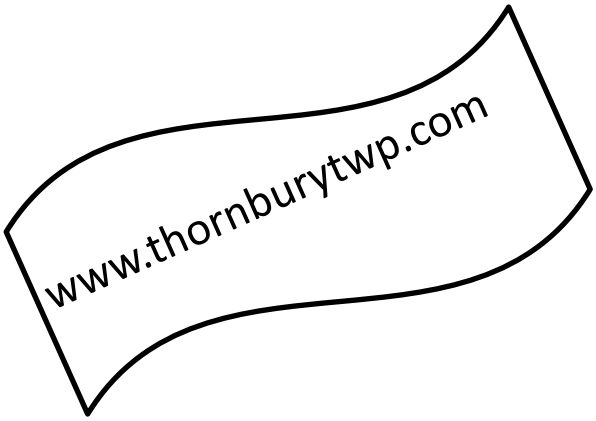
Ah-Ah-Achoo!

Like us, pets can be allergic to foods, dust, plants and pollens. Allergic reactions in dogs and cats can cause itching, minor sniffling and sneezing, or life-threatening anaphylactic shock to insect bites and stings. If you suspect your pet has a springtime allergy, please visit your veterinarian as soon as possible.

Pesky Little Critters

April showers bring May flowers—and an onslaught of bugs! Make sure your pet is on year-round heartworm preventive medication, as well as a flea and tick control program. Ask your doctor to recommend a plan designed specifically for your pet.

Thornbury Township, Chester County
800 Street Road,
West Chester, PA 19382
Phone: (610) 399-1425
Fax: (610) 399-6714
Office Hours:
8 am—3 pm, M—F



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Sign up for email blasts from the webpage at www.thornburytwp.com

If you have any comments, questions or ideas regarding this newsletter, please take a minute to contact me at 610-399-1425 or you can email me at jnichols@thornburytwp.com

Consider joining a commission! Send an email, your resume and what interest you have!

The Gander