

# Clifford Township Newsletter

Issue 18

October - December 2008

Sponsored by the Clifford Township Community Alliance (CTCA)



CTCA is an open organization. Individuals attend meetings to exchange ideas or to join in activities which promote or improve our township. Meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. of each month at the Township building. Any questions? Call Chris 222-5808 or Cherie 222-4628.

## News from the Township Supervisors

The township supervisors are pleased to announce that plans have been finalized for the Main St. bridge. Officials from PennDot made a presentation at the July meeting. Work will commence April 2009 and take approximately 6 months. It will be constructed with pilings going down to bedrock and with a thinner profile which allows the passage of 33% more water. In the event of another major flood, the new bridge will stand even if the adjacent roadways are destroyed. The combined efforts of the Clifford Main St. Committee and the supervisors has resulted in approval of the requested sidewalk on the bank side of the bridge with street lighting which matches the bank's. This project will be an enormous physical and aesthetic improvement over the prior bridge which was constructed in the 1920s.

The supervisors continue to investigate grants for improving our township building. Inquires are being made in regard to energy efficient replacement windows and a new sidewalk leading to the front entrance. The work and future planning continues.

## Upcoming Township Events

Wed Sept 24	Lunch benefit for F.C. Library
Fri, Sat Oct 10,11	Ethnic Food, Flea Market St John's Church, Dundaff
Wed Oct 15	Methodist Dinner
Sat Oct 25	Harvest Dance, Fire Hall
Tues Nov 4	Methodist Dinner
Sun Nov 9	Veterans Ceremony, 2 PM
Fri Dec 5	Clifford Village X-mas, 7 PM
Sun Dec 7	Christmas Care Breakfast

## A Decade of Memories

It's hard to believe that we, as a community, have been lighting a Christmas tree and sharing our good fortune with our neighbors for ten years. As always, this year's event is scheduled on the first Friday night in December, the 5th, with Santa's arrival and the tree lighting at 7 PM in front of Clifford Supply and Auto.

It's a privilege to welcome this year's special feature, the Endless Mountains Childrens Choir. The children range from 6 to 12 and perform state-wide. Many of you heard them perform at the Clifford Township Historical Society's Chautauqua Weekend in the play "Beacon Fires".

This event takes several weeks of preparation. The first meeting for people interested in participating will be held on Wednesday, October 15, 7 PM, at the township building. We've always had a good time doing this and "the more the merrier". If you need to ask anything, call Chris at 222-5808 or Cherie at 222-4628.

## Veterans Day Remembrance

A formal Veterans Day ceremony will be held at the Clifford Veterans Memorial at the Township Building at 2 PM on Sunday, November 9th. The hour-long ceremony will honor all veterans, past and present, active and retired, with a special remembrance offered posthumously to veteran Jack Tellep. Jack was the primary person responsible for the fund-raising, design and erection of the Veterans' Memorial during Clifford's bicentennial year, 2006. Two inscribed stones honoring Jack Tellep have recently been installed at the base of the memorial, funded through the office of PA Senator Arlen Specter, with the assistance of Clifford resident Helga Hooper.

Have you noticed the new flags lining the roadway in front of the Veterans Memorial? The Harford Lodge, number 445, of Free and Accepted Masons donated these seven new flags. Six flags recognize branches of the armed services: Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard and MIA's from the Vietnam war and the seventh flag recognizes fire fighters. The flags will be interchanged periodically with the set of American flags donated by the Elk Mountain VFW at Lenox, who have made a commitment to hold Memorial Day services there each year. The dusk-to-dawn lighting that shines on the memorial and large American flag, is now fully installed. Thanks again goes to NEP for their contribution to make this lighting possible. Mountain View Garden Club members are responsible for the attractive landscaping surrounding the memorial, and the two stone benches have been provided by the Ladies Auxiliary.

## Fire Company Upcoming Events

The Fire Company's next event is the Gun Raffle. The raffle runs every day for the month of October and the winner is selected by the evening Daily number. The prize is either a gun or cash; the winner selects! Tickets are \$20 each which also entitles the ticket holder to a free barbecue dinner, with beverage, at the Fire Hall on Sept. 27.

continued on page 2

## Fire Company, Continued:

Once again, the Fire Company will sponsor the Christmas Care Breakfast on Sunday, December 7 at 8 AM to benefit local families in need. Children will enjoy seeing Santa later in December at the annual Christmas Party at the Fire Hall. Look for dates posted on the signs at the Fire Hall.

On behalf of the Officers and Members of the Clifford Township Volunteer Fire Company, we wish to extend a huge thank you to all who supported the 2008 Picnic. This event is our main fund raiser each year and a successful Picnic is paramount to our day-to-day operation. It takes over 200 volunteer staff to operate the Picnic each night. With an active roster of approximately 25 members, it's very obvious to see how important your help is - and for that we are extremely thankful! Just as importantly, we would also like to thank the folks who came out and supported the annual event. Anyone wishing to help with next year's event please contact us at [clifst18@nep.net](mailto:clifst18@nep.net) or 570-222-3741. Thanks again to all and we look forward to your support for the 2009 Picnic.



**Tractor pull competition event at this year's Clifford Picnic. Plan to join in the fun next year!**

## Historical Society Update

The Clifford Township Historical Society's Chautauqua Weekend is now part of our township's history! Over six hundred people attended the weekend events. The society would like to thank everyone who helped make our unique Chautauqua experience so successful and memorable. Photographs of the weekend events can be viewed at [cliffordpa.com](http://cliffordpa.com) or [elkmountainarea.com](http://elkmountainarea.com).

Recently Hank Wildenberg cleaned, reglazed and painted eight windows in the Hoover school. Obviously a man of great patience, we thank him so much for tackling this arduous job. Our next goal is to put up a new ceiling, rebuild the foyer and front door and refinish the wainscoting. If you have a few hours to donate to this project please call Mark Wilmot at 679-2723. Many hands do make light work!

Pat Peltz, co-author of the CTHS's bicentennial book is hard at work gathering information for her next book based on the schools and history of Herrick, Thompson, Ararat and Gibson. If you have any old photos or other paper memorabilia you would like to share, please contact Pat at 679-2870 or email at [peltz@nep.net](mailto:peltz@nep.net) to make arrangements to have them copied.

Our 2009 calendar will highlight class pictures from the township's one room schools. We hope you will support all the efforts of the historical society by purchasing our newest calendar. Past calendars, the bicentennial book, a wide selection of historical dvds are on display and available for purchase at Clifford Supply, Main St. Clifford.

## Fund Raiser for Forest City Library

The Novel Woman Book Club is sponsoring the first annual Local Author's Luncheon to benefit the Forest City Library on Wednesday, September 24. The luncheon will feature author and poet Karen Blomain who resides in Wilkes-Barre and Elk Mountain. Karen's publications include two full-length collections and two chapbooks of poetry as well as the novel "A Trick of Light." Ms. Blomain has traveled and taught in numerous venues around the world, including Russia, France, Austria and Ireland.

The luncheon will be held at Stone Bridge Inn at Elk Mountain beginning at 11:30. The cost is \$20. Reservations may be made through the Forest City Library at 785-5590 or JoAnn Hall at 222-3591 by September 20.

## Clippings from the Mt. View Garden Club

The garden club welcomes new members. Other than the obvious benefits of meeting new people and learning about plants, landscaping and "how-to", some of the programs not open to the public include wonderful trips and luncheons. For members who enjoy bus trips, we went to Longwood Gardens in July and Chanticleer in August. We always make the bus ride memorable with shared food and libation. Club members are welcome to bring a friend or family member, too! Cherie Swetter hosted the club on a tour of her beautiful formal gardens followed by a sumptuous brunch on July 18 and David Trachtenberg and Gerry Perlman hosted a tour of their gorgeous Japanese gardens followed by a light lunch on August 2.

### HARVEST DANCE

Music by Terry J. Rockwell  
Keyboard/Vocals/DJ

### CHICKEN BARBECUE

Saturday, October 25, 2008  
Clifford Township Fire Hall

Barbecue from 6:30 til 8:30

Music from 6:30 til 10:30

BYOB

\$20.00 per person

Sponsored by  
Mountain View Garden Club &  
Clifford Township Volunteer Fire Co.

All tickets sold in advance at:  
Clifford Supply, Endless Mountain Pharmacy  
or by calling  
Betsy at 222-9553 or Donna at 281-3335

In September the club will be treated to a wine making demonstration and wine tasting at Nimble Hill Winery in Tunkhannock. Our annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 21 at 7:00 at the Fire Hall and is open to the public. Paul Kochmer will be doing a program called "Landscaping with Stone".

The Mountain View Garden Club and Clifford Township Volunteer Fire Company are co-sponsoring a Harvest Dance & Chicken Barbecue. There will be a wide variety of music and will include a few sets of square dancing. See the ad to the left for more details.

Next year's Plant Exchange & Marketplace will be held in Cherie Swetter's gardens, Main St., Clifford on Sunday, June 7. For more information on our membership or meetings, contact Linda Shuma at 222-3377 or JoAnn Hall at 222-3591. You don't have to have a garden to join!

### **Clifford Twp Geology: Diversity Unearthed**

The CTHS's newest DVD is now available! This DVD explains the glacier markings atop Stillwater Cliffs, the local blue stone formed near the equator, the now famous shale layers under our region, the wonder of Prospect Rock and the reason why Elk Mountain is here today. We hope you will enjoy this and all our other merchandise listed on the website cliffordpa.com and available at Clifford Supply. The price of this DVD and all others have been reduced from \$20 to \$15.

### **Church Dinners and More!**

St. John's Orthodox Church in Dundaff is holding its annual Ethnic Food Sale (takeouts only) on Friday, October 10th and Saturday October 11th, along with a Flea Market, Farmers Market and Chinese Auction. Ethnic foods will include halushki, potato pancakes and pierogies on Friday, and holupki, halushki, pierogies and potato pancakes on Saturday (until sold out). Hours are from 9 AM to 1 PM. For further information call 222-3293.

The Methodist Church, Main St. Clifford will be offering its popular Chicken-n-Biscuit or Ham Dinner on Wednesday, October 15 and Election Day, Tuesday, November 4. Takeouts are available 4 to 4:30 and dinners from 4:30 to 6 PM. The \$7.95 donation includes dinner, dessert and drink.

### **Someone Knows More!**

The mystery of the Dundaff Cemetery will not be settled all at once, it seems. A little background history has been discovered. Local families formed the Dundaff Cemetery Association with no church affiliation sometime in the 1800s. The five acre plot had a metal gate at its entrance. The driveway was shared with the adjacent private property and was used to deliver the caskets. Burials continued sporadically until WW II. After that, there have been only three more - 1948, 1976 and 1985. It is surmised that after WW II, families started relocating, leaving the community in transition. Also, since there was no perpetual care, the families which remained preferred other cemeteries. The cemetery association was never disbanded but was officially reactivated in the 1990s. Over the years, a few descendants have privately paid for or done maintenance around family plots. Here's where it would end if it were

not for flowers still being placed around the monument dated 1985! This person could answer some more questions. Whoever you are, would you please contact Cherie Swetter at 222-4628?

Many thanks to Mark Chambers for his invaluable assistance with this update. His ancestor, Jim Chambers, settled in Dundaff in the 1840s and has a limestone tombstone in the cemetery dated 1860. Jim, and many who followed, originally came from Connecticut. His son, Enoch, had a general store in Dundaff at which he sold quart-size crocks of home-brewed beer, aptly named Crock Beer. Incidentally, Enoch died at age 97 when he was run over by someone on a high-wheeler bike.

### **Township History Book Receive State Award**

The Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations will present an Honorable Mention award to the Clifford Township Historical Society for our bicentennial book, *Clifford Township-Two Hundred Years: 1806-2006*, written by Sally Fischbeck and Patricia Peltz. The review committee was particularly impressed by the collaborative effort and how it brought the people in the community together. Members of the CTHS will attend the October 28 award luncheon in Harrisburg to accept the award.

We were also recently asked by the Senator John Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh, in association with the Smithsonian Institution to donate a copy of the book to be included in their Library and Archives collection. Their Library and Archives are considered an important resource for genealogy and general history of the Commonwealth.

### **Meet Your Neighbor**

Barry Searle, a colonel in the Army National Guard, is recently back from Afghanistan. A life-long resident of Clifford and a graduate of Mountain View high school (class of '69), he met his wife, Marvis, at Keystone College. He enlisted in the Coast Guard for 4 years after which he joined the National Guard while attending the University of Scranton. After graduation, he was employed by a firm manufacturing pressure sensitive medical products (ex: Band-Aids, EKG electrodes, defibrillator pads), eventually becoming the vice-president of Sales and Marketing for a pharmaceutical company. However, the military was his true calling.

Working his way through the ranks from a 2nd lieutenant in the infantry to a battalion executive officer, he eventually commanded the 1st 109th "M" (mechanized) Infantry in charge of armored personnel vehicles. He took that battalion to Bosnia in 2002-2003 on a peace keeping mission; after demobilizing he earned his masters degree in Strategic Studies from the Army War College. He stayed in Washington, D.C., in charge of the National Guard's Emergency Operation's Bureau there. One of his more memorable duties was being involved with President Regan's funeral.

In 2004-2006 he was Team Chief for Medical Evacuation at Andrews Air Force Base. His team was responsible for meeting all the wounded soldiers (200 to 300 per week) from Iraq and Afghanistan and coordinating efforts for meeting soldiers' and their families' financial, emotional and basic physical needs. He was greatly honored to be the Army's representative to coordinate services for Presi-

dent Bush's 2nd inauguration. He and Marvis were fortunate enough to attend one of the nine Inaugural Balls attended by George and Laura Bush.

In 2006, he served the Dept. of Homeland Security as the senior military advisor for the Washington, D.C. region. It was his job to plan for the possible evacuation of the city using all available military assets and coordinating these with governmental and non-governmental organizations, for example the police, fire departments and mayor's office.

In 2007, the Colonel was sent to Afghanistan as the Regional Coalition Advisory Commander for the 207th and 203rd Corps. It was his responsibility to team up with the supervisors of similar Afghan units and act as a senior mentor and trainer. The Afghan Army was uncoordinated, lacking skills and discipline and the Colonel's mission was to bring much needed professionalism.

Of his many honors, two awards mean the most to the colonel. First, he received the Bronze Star; a Presidential citation, for the training of the Afghan 203rd Corps, the only unit to succeed in becoming self-sufficient. Secondly, he received the Combat Infantryman's Badge for action against the enemy.

The Colonel has just recently returned to Clifford on transitional leave. Although he has spent a good deal of time away from our area in recent years, his ancestral ties are strong. His family, on the maternal side, has resided continuously at the same location

on Church Street, Clifford for the last 180 years, dating back to his great-great-grandparents.

He observes that the American public is very supportive of its military, regardless of political opinion. People are very generous in sending supplies (both of the necessary and morale boosting types) and showing appreciation with a hand-shake and pat on the back when seeing soldiers in public. What a welcome change since the Vietnam era! For now, he looks forward to spending time with his friends and family. Thank you, Colonel Searle, and welcome home, neighbor!



**Col. Searle with Afghan children at a local school during humanitarian visit in March of 2008 to deliver clothing, school and medical supplies.**

Clifford Township News  
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