

THE Milemarker

East Brandywine Township Newsletter

SPRING 2014

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Area Bridges Weakening?

Two local structures show signs of wear and tear



Upper and lower views of the Dorlans Mill Bridge which was temporarily closed last fall after failing inspection.



TWO KEY BRIDGES LINKING EAST BRANDYWINE to neighboring townships will be getting upgrades, as their condition is not adequate for current usage.

The bridge linking Route 282 (Creek Road) with Dorlans Mill Road (Upper Uwchlan Township) was closed last fall as inspectors found “severe deterioration of four steel beams on the *outside* of the bridge.” This bridge was built in 1931. It is 92 feet long and 20 feet wide, and carried approximately 3200 vehicles a day prior to its closure.

After being closed for about 2 months, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) reopened the Dorlans Mill Road bridge. PennDOT crews created a single travel lane in the *center* of the bridge by installing delineators, painting traffic lines and adding additional traffic control signs. This temporary fix allows traffic to pass, taking turns on the one-way bridge. So far, there is no approved plan or funding for a permanent solution.

On the other side of the Township, the Osborne Road bridge over Beaver Creek is a heavily trafficked roadway between East

Brandywine and Caln Townships. This bridge was closed three separate times during the winter when tractor-trailers struck and caused some damage to the bridge. The current weight limit is posted at 5 tons, though these trucks significantly exceeded that limit (one was more than 3 times the limit).

While the damage was minor, and authorities were able to repair and re-open the bridge each time – it is a long-term problem. Most GPS systems guide traffic from 322 eastbound down Osborne Road to destinations in Caln Township and westward. The heavy trucks often do not see or heed the posted weight limitation until it is too late. It is then nearly impossible to maneuver a large truck across this bridge without hitting the guard rails and/or walls. The trucking companies, when caught, receive substantial fines, plus pay all costs to repair any damage created by their actions. East Brandywine Township officials are working with PennDOT to improve the signage on Route 322 to increase awareness of the weight limitations BEFORE a driver turns onto Osborne Road.

(continued on page 2)



PARKS AND RECREATION OUTING

East Brandywine Night at the Reading Phillies

Thursday, June 12 at
7:05pm. Tickets are
\$8 each. It is also Jim
Bunning Hall of Fame
Night at the Park –
with free Jim Bunning
Autographs and a Jim
Bunning Bobblehead
(first 2,500 adults).
We have Super Seats
in the Red Reserved,
Section 7.

Buy Tickets

To purchase tickets,
e-mail [parkandrec@
ebrandywine.org](mailto:parkandrec@ebrandywine.org) or
call (484) 678-9939.

**Reservations due by
May 1, but call anyway
after May 1st, as some
tickets may still be
available.**

Join your friends and
neighbors to help sup-
port East Brandywine
Parks and Recreation!

WHO, WHEN
& WHERE



Township Board of Supervisors

CHAIRMAN Hudson L. Voltz, Esq.
VICE CHAIRMAN Jay G. Fischer, Esq.
MEMBER Arnold Krings

Township Public Meetings

MEETINGS HELD AT TOWNSHIP BUILDING

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

First Thursday at 8:00 a.m.
Third Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

PLANNING COMMISSION

First Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Second Tuesday at 7:30 a.m.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Second Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Second Monday at 7:30 p.m.

ORDINANCE TASK FORCE

Third Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

First Monday at 7:30 p.m.

Fire/Ambulance/Police

Fire and Ambulance 911
Police (emergency) 911
Police (non-emerg) ... (610) 383-7000
Police Admin (610) 269-4300
Police Website www.ebtpd.org

Recreation

EBYA www.ebya.org
DARC www.darcinfo.com
PARK AND RECREATION BOARD EMAIL
parkandrec@ebrandywine.org

Township Staff Directory

Hours: M-F, 9 a.m. to noon; 1-5 p.m.
Dial (610) 269-8230.

Press the appropriate extension.

200 Norann King,
Building Department
201 Mary Beth Smedley,
Secretary/Treasurer
203 Scott Piersol, Township Mgr./
EMC and Fire Marshal
204 Matthew VanLew, Roadmaster
100 Police Administration

TAX COLLECTOR Dennis Mulhern
(610) 269-8230, x210

Tax Information

County Taxes (610) 344-6361
Tax Claim Office (610) 344-6360
Assessment Office (610) 344-6105
EIT & LST (610) 269-4402
School Taxes 1 (866) 300-1714

Who Are Our State and Federal Officials?



**State House Representative
Becky Corbin
155th District**
315 Gordon Drive
Exton, Pa. 19341
(610) 524-5595



**State Senate
John C. Rafferty, Jr.
44th District**
The Shoppes at Pughtown
2325 Pottstown Pike
Pottstown, Pa. 19465
(610) 469-8390
*Office hours at EB Twp. Office
3rd Friday each month
1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.*



**U.S. Congressman
James Gerlach – 6th District**
111 E. Uwchlan Avenue, 2nd
Floor Exton, Pa. 19341
(510) 594-1415



**U.S. Senator
Patrick Toomey**
600 Arch Street Suite 9400
Philadelphia, Pa. 19106
(215) 597-7200



**U.S. Senator Senator
Bob Casey**
200 Market Street, Floor 18
Philadelphia, Pa. 19103
(202) 228-0604

Area Bridges

(continued from page 1)

Authorities from Caln Township, with financial support from East Brandywine Township, do have approval and funding to replace this bridge, with construction expected to be complete in 2015. Many residents will recall that the bridge was closed in April 2011 for replacement of deteriorated steel beams. Caln Township is also considering a study to upgrade the roadway approaching the bridge – as it is not adequate to support the heavy truck traffic that often travels this direction.

The Pennsylvania legislature has recognized the deterioration of roads in the Commonwealth. The legislature recently passed Act 89 of 2014, a comprehensive transportation funding law. The bill provides for a 68% increase in East Brandywine Township's funding over 5 years through the Municipal Liquid Fuels Program. This will help our Township fund the growing priorities for repair and maintenance of local roads.

On the Move

**Recent Sold Homes in
East Brandywine Township**

501 Dilworth Rd (4/7/14).....	\$530,000
109 Evergreen Dr (3/31/14).....	\$379,000
1501 Caln Meetinghouse Rd (3/28/14)....	\$332,600
41 Colleen Cir (3/25/14).....	\$485,995
398 Corner Ketch Rd (3/24/14).....	\$225,000
34 Kristin Cir (3/20/14).....	\$300,000
125 Governors Cir (3/19/14).....	\$285,000
1173 Hopewell Rd (3/10/14).....	\$290,000
276 N Caldwell Cir (3/4/14).....	\$330,000
17 Spring Meadow Dr (2/25/14).....	\$526,500
660 Empire Dr (2/18/14).....	\$404,000
133 Brookfield Ct (2/12/14).....	\$232,500
280 Hadfield Rd (2/11/14).....	\$460,000
679 Hopewell Rd (2/10/14).....	\$303,000
315 N Caldwell Cir (1/23/14).....	\$394,500
1 Longwood Dr (1/17/14).....	\$390,000
35 Cambridge Ct (1/6/14).....	\$229,900

Source: Zillow.com

Local Trails – Ready for Spring

Several wonderful options close to home

EAST BRANDYWINE residents are blessed with a variety of public trails, available for walking, jogging and biking. Many are open year-round, but all are ready for the rush of spring visitors!

Multi-use trails circle the playing fields at our own 64-acre **East Brandywine Township Community Park**, www.ebrandywine.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/East-Brandywine-Township-Community-Park-3. It's a great way to walk and meet other local residents!

Another longtime local favorite is the **Struble Trail**, running from Downingtown Borough along Route 282 to Dorlans Mill Road, pa-chestercounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=1750. This 5.2 mile roundtrip trail follows the scenic Brandywine Creek and con-

nects to short side-trails along the way. The trail is well maintained year-round (see pictures).

Chester Valley Trail, pa-chestercounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=1239, announced in January the opening of the second portion of the trail. It brings the total length of the trail to 9.8 miles between Ship Road in Exton and Old Eagle School Road in Tredyffrin.

East Branch Brandywine Trail, www.eastbradford.org/publicinfo/recreation/parks.asp, is a 2.4 mile multi-use trail along Route 322. It starts at a parking area just south of the Downingtown Trestle Bridge and continues to Skelp Level Road in West Chester.

Schuylkill River Trail, www.schuylkill-rivertrail.com, includes a 26 mile stretch of multi-use trail along the Schuylkill River from Phoenixville to Center City Philadelphia.

Valley Forge National Historical Park, www.nps.gov/vafo/index.htm, was the site of the 1777-78 winter encampment of the Continental Army. It includes many multi-use trails.



The Struble Trail has something to offer during every season. The trail is well maintained even in winter (top, left), Views of the trail during spring (bottom, left) and fall (above).

SAVE THE DATE

East Brandywine Night at the Reading Phillies
Thursday, June 12,
7:05pm. For more information, see page 1 or contact parkandrec@ebrandywine.org.

Chester County Household Hazardous Waste Disposal
Friday, June 20 at Coatesville 9th-10th Grade Center (1425 East Lincoln Highway). For more information, visit www.chestercountyswa.org.

2014 East Brandywine Police & Fire Services Golf Outing
Monday, June 30. For more information, see back cover or contact Linda.Bowers@TalamoreFamily.com.

WINTER WEATHER TAKES TOLL ON BLOOD DONATIONS

BECAUSE OF RECENT STORMS, blood donations have dropped to dangerously low levels. Please consider donating blood at West Chester American Red Cross Blood Donation Center, Gay Street Plaza, West Chester, PA (1-800-RED CROSS) or the Miller-Keystone Blood Center, 128 Eagleview Blvd., Lionville, PA).



Is it Spring Yet?

DID THIS WINTER SEEM A BIT HARSHER than normal? This winter brought the 3rd highest seasonal area snowfall in the last 100 years (www.chescowx.com). While our area averages about 37" of snow per winter season, as of March 15, we have seen about 77.5 inches. Higher snowfall was recorded in 1995-96 (81.9 inches) and 2009-10 (86.6 inches – 62.8 inches in February alone!).

Interestingly, our area saw similar high snowfall around the turn of the prior century, just a little *over* a hundred years ago – 79.7 inches in 1904-05 and 95.0 inches in 1898-99. Residents may be glad to hear that The Farmer's Almanac, which had predicted heavy snowfall for the past winter, is predicting a warmer than usual summer for this year, though they predict the possibility of a hurricane hitting the region in early fall.

A major snow and ice storm in early February knocked out power to over 80 percent of Chester County, with some customers seeing outages of over a week long. PECO reported a total of 715,000 customer outages, the second highest in the company's history (just behind 800,000 outages for Hurricane Sandy). Even residents with generators found difficulty finding additional fuel as impassable roads during the recovery effort continued for many days.

East Brandywine Township declared a state of emergency as teams of responders worked to open roads blocked by downed trees, to restore power and to assist drivers caught on treacherous roadways. The Red Cross set up a shelter at West Chester University for those without electricity, housing hundreds of residents during the long recovery from this storm. East Brandywine Township preliminary esti-

mates show over \$50,000 of incremental spending to restore and maintain public infrastructure. The Township reports that it has been able to absorb these costs with contingency funds in the budget.

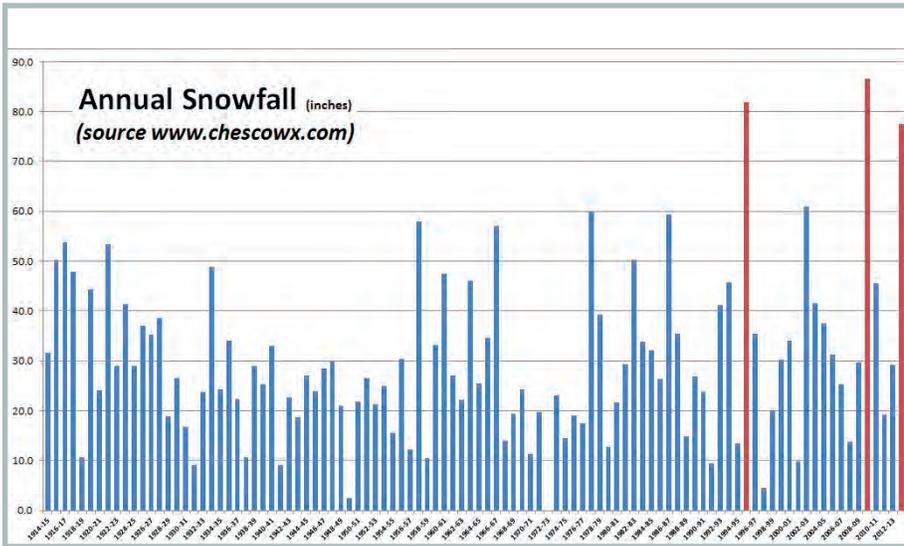
Ed Atkins, Chester County Director of the Department of Emergency Services told the Daily Local News, "It wasn't just a one-two punch. It was a one, two, three, four, five punch. That is taxing over the long haul." But county residents did pull together to help each other, and thankfully, there were no reported weather-related deaths during February.

Downingtown Area School District, like many others in the region, is struggling to schedule the legally- required 180 days of school without keeping the kids into July. According to a release from the PA Department of Education, "severe weather is not considered an emergency for granting a waiver to the 180-day



DOWNED BRANCHES EVERYWHERE? TOWNSHIP CAN HELP!

AS A SERVICE TO ITS RESIDENTS, EAST BRANDYWINE TOWNSHIP will dispatch a crew and equipment to chip downed branches up to 4 inches in diameter. Normally, the Township provides 15 free minutes of chipping to any resident, with additional time billed to the resident at \$25.00 per 15-minute increment. As a result of the heavy winter storm damage, the Township has increased the free chipping to 30 minutes. This allowance is only valid once per calendar year. Residents should call the Township (610) 269-8230 to schedule a crew, and have all branches in an easily accessible spot on their property for the crew to access. If the materials are not properly put out, the free visit will be forfeited. The Township reserves the right to limit the total amount of chipping available due to demand.



Opposite page: Roads in the region were hard hit (top, left – photo credit, Samantha Gallagher Book). Downed power lines added to the danger (top, right – photo credit, Samantha Gallagher Book). Emergency responders had their hands full (bottom, right). **This page:** The above graph shows annual snowfall from 1914 to the present. Heavy snow fall years (1995-1996, 2009-2010 and 2013-2014) are highlighted in red. Below, tire-eating potholes litter area roads.

requirement.” Downingtown Schools have closed nine days during this winter. School parents were grateful for the district’s efforts to keep them informed as Superintendent Lawrence Mussoline made more than a dozen, increasingly frustrated calls to inform parents and students of closings and delays related to the weather. The district was able to make up 2 snow days with the snow days built into the academic calendar; the remainder will be added in May and June.

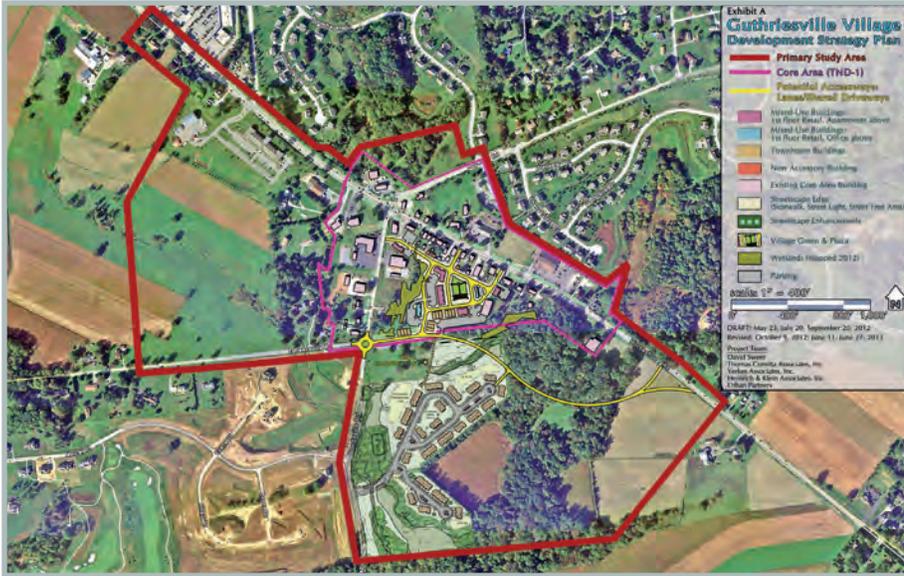
Even with the snow melted, the roads are still hazardous due to the higher-than-usual number of severe potholes. One auto dealer reported tire sales over 25% higher than last year. The deep and unavoidable number of potholes can also put cars out of alignment, bend rims and damage suspension – all adding to the cost burden of this winter.

In early March, PennDOT estimated its maintenance crews were spending 95% of their time patching potholes (that is, when they were not plowing snow or salting!). And those repairs are



only temporary fixes. Recent passage of a \$2.3 billion Transportation Funding Bill in Pennsylvania will help the state and municipalities as they regroup to rebuild. Potholes can be reported to PennDOT at 1-800-FIX-ROAD.

Village of Guthriesville Vision Plan



The Development Plan Overview (above) helps illustrate the Guthriesville Vision Plan and Development Strategy. A sample from the design manual is pictured above, right.

Pedestrian Amenities

Guthriesville Village Manual of Written & Graphic Design Guidelines
East Brandywine Township, Chester County, PA



Civic Green with park, benches and fountain form a pedestrian gathering area.

Single Green around which stores and shops are clustered.

residents who may be attracted to a small village atmosphere. This Vision Plan was developed with funds from the Township, along with significant funding provided by Chester County.

The Vision Plan can serve as a starting point for discussions with any developers interested in undertaking such a project. It also assures that the Zoning Ordinances allow for the type of development that the Township considers desirable.

Should a developer step forward, they will certainly benefit from the work creating the Vision Plan, but would submit their own plans for development of the area, within the confines of the updated Zoning Ordinance.

Residents did provide the Township with continued input into the planning process, expressing a variety of concerns. Many raised questions about the possible roundabout near the intersection of Bondsville and East Reeceville Roads. Others questioned the suitability of certain areas of the planning zone for intended use, citing examples of wetlands that exist in part of the area. There were also concerns about where or how multi-story buildings might be allowed, and that existing owners have grandfathered rights for current usage.

The Task Force is working towards completing these work products, and gaining necessary approvals from the County. They hope to be able to advertise and hold a final required public hearing by the third quarter of 2014.

A copy of the draft materials is available on the Township Web Site at www.ebrandywine.org.

A MEETING WAS HELD AT THE EAST BRANDYWINE TOWNSHIP BUILDING on February 20, 2014 to review progress from the Task Force charged with the Village of Guthriesville Vision Plan and Development Strategy. This was the latest public meeting in a series of gatherings that started in 2012.

At this meeting, the Township reviewed 3 major deliverables that the Task Force has been focused on:

Development Plan Overview. There was a lively discussion using the graphical Development Strategy Plan (shown above) to describe the vision. Main features include (a) a higher-density “village-style” residential community to be constructed behind the current buildings along Route 322 in the area outlined in purple (Core Area/TND-1), (b) a new road starting with a roundabout near the current intersection of East Reeceville Road and Bondsville Road which would pass behind the proposed village and connect with Route

322 eastbound – allowing traffic from Bondsville, East Reeceville, and the proposed village to bypass the intersection of Hopewell Road and Route 322, and (c) updated Zoning Ordinances and Design Guidelines as described below.

Updated Zoning Ordinance regarding the Guthriesville Village. A current draft of the proposed ordinance was available for residents to review.

Guthriesville Village Manual of Written & Graphic Design Guidelines. A current draft of this proposed document was available for residents to review.

The Supervisors stressed to concerned residents that no developers have yet submitted a proposal to implement the Vision Plan. The Township has decided to be proactive in creating a vision for what type of development would be desirable to remain compatible with the current landscape and enhance the experience available for current and new

Bluebirds in Your Backyard

“The bluebird carries the sky on his back.” – Henry David Thoreau

by Kirsten Werner, Natural Lands Trust

IT'S HARD NOT TO SMILE when you see a Bluebird. With their beauty, cheerful song, and spring-time activity, they have come to symbolize love, happiness, and renewal. While Bluebird populations have been increasing over the last few decades, their numbers are still low. Read on to learn more about this charming native bird and how you can help make your yard—or community—more Bluebird friendly!

Bluebird Basics

The Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) is a member of the thrush family. About the size of a sparrow, the showy male Bluebird is a bright blue with a reddish breast and throat. The female is a lighter blue with a more subdued orange-brown breast and throat and a grey head.

Bluebirds generally prefer grassy, open areas with a few scattered trees that the birds use for perching and nesting. This type of meadow habitat offers a great source of insects—such as caterpillars, earthworms, beetles, crickets, grasshoppers, sow bugs, snails, and spiders—which make up the majority of their warm-weather diet. Bluebirds are often spotted swooping to the ground to snatch a juicy critter, then fluttering to a nearby perch to consume it.

Bluebirds are secondary cavity-nesters; their beaks are not strong enough to excavate their own nests so they re-use cavities created by other birds like woodpeckers or use human-made nest boxes. The male entices the female to join him by bringing nest material to the cavity and showing off with a flutter of his wings. Then the female takes over, building the remainder of the grass-and-moss nest and incubating a clutch of two to seven eggs by herself.

Human Impact

Like many grassland bird species, Bluebird population levels are directly affected by human activity and land use. **In fact, with only one exception (weather), historical changes in Bluebird populations have been directly correlated with the results of human activities.**

Bluebird populations grew steadily in the latter part of the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries as enterprising settlers cleared the forest and planted crops. During the height of their population, Bluebirds were as common as American Robins are today. But their numbers declined dramatically in the middle of the last century with the loss of open space to development, changes in farming practices, increased reliance on pesticides, and the introduction of invasive bird species like the House Sparrow and the European Starling that compete with Bluebirds for nesting sites.

Lend a Helping Hand

Bluebird populations have rebounded in the last 30 years, due in large part to awareness about their decline and efforts to support them. Consider the following “dos and don’ts” so you can help Bluebirds in your community:

DO: Add wooden nest boxes to your property or contact local officials to encourage nest box installation on Township property (local parks or sports fields can be ideal locations).

DO: Place nest boxes in open areas away from woodlands (though the birds prefer to have scattered trees within 50 feet of the nest boxes) about 100 yards apart at density of about one per acre. (Simple nest box plans can be found at: www.sialis.org/plans.) Install boxes by March 1 as Bluebirds begin nesting in early April.

DO: Monitor nest boxes and clean out old nests after baby birds have fledged to encourage a second brood.

DO: Consider converting a portion of your property from lawn to native meadow grasses, which offer ideal feeding grounds for hungry Bluebirds.

DO: Plant native trees and shrubs (such as dogwoods, viburnums, winter-berry holly, bayberry, hackberry, blueberries, chokeberries, shadbush, and red cedar) that will provide fall/winter food and shelter for Bluebirds.

DON'T: Don't install nest boxes in wooded areas or too close to shrubbery, which invites attacks by House Wrens.

DON'T: Don't mount boxes on trees or fence posts; both provide easy access for predators like raccoons and snakes.

DON'T: Don't use pesticides or herbicides in your garden or lawn, if you can avoid it.

DON'T: Don't get discouraged if Bluebirds don't nest in your box the first year as it can take some time for them to find the cozy home you've installed for them.

About Natural Lands Trust:

Celebrating its 60th year, Natural Lands Trust is the region's foremost land conservation organization and is dedicated to protecting the forests, fields, streams, and wetlands that are essential to the sustainability of life in eastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. Since its founding, Natural Lands Trust has preserved more than 100,000 acres, including 42 nature preserves totaling nearly 22,000 acres and another 22,000 acres on which it holds conservation easements. For more information, visit www.natlands.org.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW TOWNSHIP WEBSITE

The Township has a brand new website. Visit the revamped site at www.ebrandywine.org.



The Milemarker
1214 Horseshoe Pike
Downingtown, PA 19335-1153

PRESORTED STANDARD
US POSTAGE PAID
SOUTHEASTERN, PA 19399
PERMIT #50

Milemarker SPRING 2014

EBT POLICE & FIRE SERVICES GOLF OUTING

JOIN US ON MONDAY, JUNE 30TH AS GUESTS OF APPLCROSS COUNTRY CLUB. Our police and firefighters are people that we count on, but don't think of often. We sometimes take them for granted, until we need them to help us. Applecross Country Club is organizing this event to give back to these fine men and women. For information on attending or sponsorship opportunities, contact Linda Bowers at linda.bowers@talamorefamily.com or (610) 888-4730.

Thanks to Our Local Police and Fire Departments!

DURING 2013, EAST BRANDYWINE POLICE patrolled over 16,800 hours. The police handled 51 criminal arrests, 50 summary arrests, and 10 juvenile petitions. Officers stopped 2,369 vehicles, resulting in 1,772 traffic citations and 250 warnings. Police fielded 1,680 complaints and investigated 117 accidents.

The East Brandywine Fire Company responded to a total of 817 emergencies. 366 were related to fire and rescue, while 461 were for emergency medical services. Our Fire Department responded to 166 incidents to provide mutual aid to other surrounding communities.

Both Police and Fire worked round the clock during many of our worst winter storms this year. Many thanks to these dedicated public servants for keeping our community safe and for helping our residents during times of trouble!

