

# Worcester Erier



VOLUME 13, NUMBER 1

WINTER 2008

## Happy Birthday, Worcester

*2008 Marks the 275th Anniversary of Worcester Township*

*“Which said tract of land formerly called New Bristol is now by this court erected into a Township and called by the name of Worcester.”*

In 2008, Worcester Township turns 275 years old. In 1733, 22 local landowners, who together owned over 8,000 acres, petitioned the Court of Quarter Sessions for Philadelphia County for permission to form a new township. The quote above is from the Court’s formal response, and upon the declaration of these words, Worcester was born. The name was taken from the English city and county of the same name. The geographic boundaries of our township, which pre-dates the founding of both the United States and Montgomery County, have remained unchanged for 275 years. The area was originally part of the Pennsylvania land grant given by King Charles II of England to William Penn in 1681.

Prior to the formation of the township, certain areas of Worcester were known by different names. The area south of Water Street and Township Line Roads was called “Providence,” as it bordered the former township of the same name. “Upper Bristol” or “New Bristol” referred to the territory north of Water Street and west of Valley Forge Roads. Land east of Valley Forge Road and north of Township Line Road was considered part of Whippain Township. In 1733, Worcester was still mostly wooded wilderness, but farming would quickly transform the landscape and become an integral part of our local heritage that continues today. When Worcester became a township, it had only two main roads, Germantown Pike and Skipack Pike, both of which allowed residents of the up-country “frontier” to reach Philadelphia and its bustling markets.

Here are a few interesting facts about Worcester at its birth in 1733:

The Methacton Oak (where Mill Road meets the bend in Quarry Hall Road) was already 99 years old. There are several other pre-1733 trees in Worcester that stand today.

Worcester was part of Philadelphia County, which encompassed a huge territory from the Delaware River northwest to the Blue Mountain Range in present-day western Berks County.

Three significant groups of German immigrants seeking religious freedom began to settle in Worcester at this time—the Schwenkfelders, the Mennonites, and the German Reformed (later Wentz’s United Church of Christ).

There are at least eight structures standing today which were here when Worcester was founded in 1733: a pioneer house off North Wales Road with a mysterious datestone of 1650; a brick farmhouse down a long lane off Bean Road, 1700; the John Penn (son of William) hunting lodge off Potshop Road, 1701; the Anthony Morris House on Stump Hall Road, 1717; a brick farmhouse on Cold Spring Farm off North Wales Road, 1720; a large plastered stone farmhouse on Germantown Pike, 1724; the Detweiler House on Hollow Road, 1730; and a house on the Adam van Fossen tract off Mill Road, 1730.

Since its inception 275 years ago, Worcester has played its part in the history and culture of our region and our nation. During the Revolutionary War, General Washington and his troops marched through the township several times, encamped at Peter Wentz Farmstead, and buried casualties in the cemetery across the road from Bethel Hill Church. The village of Center Point became not only the great central crossroads of Montgomery County but also a hub of county politics in the 19th century. The productive farms and industrious mills of Worcester helped make our community a vital breadbasket of Norristown and Philadelphia, “the Workshop of the World.”

At the turn of the 20th century, the Worcester Farmers Union was helping to improve and innovate the practice of agriculture across the region. In the 1950s, Worcester was involuntarily thrown into the Cold War when a Nike missile site was built on the ridge crossing the eastern part of the township. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)



**INCORPORATED AS A TOWNSHIP  
1733**

**BOARD OF  
SUPERVISORS**  
\*\*\*\*\*

John R. Harris, Chairman

Stephen C. Quigley,

Vice Chairman

Arthur C. Bustard, Secretary

John V. Cornell

*Township Manager*

\*\*\*

Administration Building

(610) 584-1410

[www.worcestertwp.com](http://www.worcestertwp.com)

## UK Elite Petite 2008 Spring Soccer

**Tuesdays (April 8-May 13, 2008)**

**Rain Date May 20**

**10am-11am or 11am-12pm**

**(minimum 8 children in each group)**

- A FUN introduction to the game of soccer for ages 3-5
- Exciting Soccer games in a safe environment
- Motor skill and coordination development
- Social skill and confidence building



The camp runs each Tuesday for six weeks (April 8—May 13) from 10am-11am or 11am-12pm with a rain

date of May 20th. Each child receives instruction in a small-group setting from one of the professional UK Elite Soccer Coaches. The camp is designed to allow each child the chance for maximum development and enjoyment. A typical curriculum includes: individual ball skills; running with the ball; passing the ball; controlling the ball; shooting and scoring concluding with a graduation and demonstration of the new skills learned. Each child should wear/bring: sneakers or cleats, t-shirt, sweatshirt, shin guards, water bottle and plenty to drink.

Only \$75 per child.

Call Worcester Township at 610-584-1410 to enroll.

A minimum of 8 children in each session is required to proceed with the camp. Please register early if you are interested to avoid cancellation!

### What's New on Our Web Site [www.worcestertwp.com](http://www.worcestertwp.com)

New features and changes are coming to the official township web site.

While we periodically post important announcements on the main page of our web site, interested parties may now sign up to receive email notifications of issues of specific importance to them. From any page on our site, please click the button labeled "JOIN OUR MAILING LIST." From there you will have the option of selecting your specific areas of interest, from bus trips to public meeting agendas, and others in between.

In addition, we as your municipality want to know how we are doing. On the main page of our web site, we have a new "Resident Survey."

While we always encourage our residents to let us know how we can better serve, please feel free to use this new online feature. We look forward to hearing from you and keeping you better informed with township-related activities and news.



### Atlantic City's Tropicana Casino 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Show & Coin Package

*Sunday, March 30, 2008 BUS TRIP*

Departure: 9:30 am

(from Worcester Township AREA)

Depart Atlantic City approximately 5:00 pm

Cost: \$35

(includes bus and ticket to the 3:30pm show of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street at The Tropicana)

Bonus package of \$10 in Coin

*Call 610-584-1410 to register ~ Space is limited*

### The Great PA Cleanup!



Worcester will be participating in a statewide event to clean up Pennsylvania. This is an affiliate of the national Keep America Beautiful. Worcester will be joining hundreds of volunteers across Pennsylvania to pick up on Saturday, April 19, 2008.

You can volunteer by yourself, or be a leader and organize your own team. We encourage scouts, Local Civic Clubs, High-School Environmental and Service Clubs, Church Youth Groups, and sports teams to get involved. We will provide you with vests, gloves, and bags. If you are interested in participating, please contact the Township Office for more information. Our Township Road Crew will be picking up the bags after the event, so we will need to know which portions of the Township you will be cleaning up. Let's join the effort to Keep American Beautiful!

# Full Line Up of Camps and Clinics this Summer

All Camps are open to Girls and Boys - All Camps held in Heebner Park, 1721 Valley Forge Road, Worcester

## UK ELITE SOCCER

**July 14-18**

**Ages 3-5, 9-10:30am**

**OR**

**10:45-12:15 pm, \$105**

**Ages 5-14, 9am-12:00pm, \$145**

- A FUN introduction to the game of soccer
- Exciting soccer games in a safe environment
- Motor skill & coordination development
- Social skill & confidence building

Each child receives instruction in a small-group setting from one of the professional UK Elite Soccer Coaches. The camp is designed to allow each child the chance for maximum development and enjoyment. A typical curriculum includes: individual ball skills; running with the ball; passing the ball; controlling the ball; shooting and scoring concluding with a graduation and demonstration of the new skills learned. Each child should wear/bring: sneakers or cleats, t-shirt, sweat-shirt, shin guards, water bottle and plenty to drink. Each child will receive a t-shirt and soccer ball. A minimum of 8 children in each session is required to proceed with the camp. Please register early if you are interested to avoid cancellation!

## US SPORTS INSTITUTE

### MULTI-SPORT CAMP

**July 21-25**

**Ages 5-7 (Half-Day 9am-1pm) \$160**

**Ages 7-14 (Full-Day 9am-3pm) \$180**

*(All Camps end at 1pm on July 25)*

Here's a camp created to meet the needs of the youngster who is interested in all kinds of sports. There are no arts or crafts, just a total emphasis on sport and fun activities. Every child takes part. There's no sideline sitting!

The Half Day Multi Sport Camp gives our younger participants (ages 5-7) the opportunity to experience over 10 sports in a week. Campers will receive technical instruction in each sport and will then experience the sport in a realistic game situation. After lunch (typically 11:30am-Noon) all campers will participate in the USSI Olympic Games and World Cup Competitions.

The Full Day Camp offers older campers the chance to experience some of

the selected sports in more depth plus many other sports and daily challenges in addition to the entire sports line up of the Half Day Camp. Typical sports include: Badminton, Baseball, Basketball, Bocce, Cricket, Field Hockey, Flag Football, Floor Hockey, Hand Ball, Lacrosse, Net Ball, Olympic Games, Parachute, Pillo Polo, Softball, Tennis, Volleyball and World Cup. Each child receives a t-shirt and completion certificate. USSI provides all sport equipment.

## PONYSHARE'S GROOMING,

### RIDING & HORSEMANSHIP

#### PROGRAM

**July 7-11, 4:30-6pm or**

**August 4-8, 4:30-6pm**



**Ages 4-14, \$195**

This popular program provides an exciting and inexpensive introduction to the world of equines, in a fun-filled atmosphere. PonyShare uses ponies and cobs, smaller and easier to handle than their larger equine counterparts. Small groups of 4-5 children are formed according to age and prior experience, if any. After reviewing safety rules, previously-covered materials and new subject matter, children are assigned their size-related pony or cob and each small group works under the tutelage of a qualified instructor.

Topics to be covered include: safety on and around horses, basic anatomy, equine senses and body language, grooming, the tack and harness, driving the miniature horse, English and Western styles, barn management and career opportunities with horses. Participants also get to ride or drive their charges 3-4 times per session.

This program enhances teamwork, self-esteem and camaraderie while helping develop a genuine appreciation

and deep respect for the animals. Course materials are provided. We recommend each youngster bring strong hiking shoes, jeans/sweat pants, a bicycle helmet, fluids and a carrot!

A minimum of 6 children is required for each session to proceed with camp. Register early to avoid cancellation.

## US SPORTS INSTITUTE

### SPORTS SQUIRTS CAMP

**July 21-25**

**Ages 3-5, 4:00pm-5:30pm, \$90**

The Sports Squirts Camp has been designed to introduce young children to a variety of sports in a safe, structured environment. All games and activities encompass hand/eye coordination, balance, agility and movement - all key factors to the early development of children in sport.

In addition to having a great time playing the different sports, children will develop social interaction and communication skills. All sports are developed through a series of games and activities designed to ensure learning and most importantly: fun, fun, fun!

## US SPORTS INSTITUTE

### BEGINNERS LACROSSE CLINIC



**July 28-August 1, 5-7pm**

**Ages 7-14 (Co-Ed), \$110**

Have great fun learning this exhilarating game. Fast paced and full of action, Lacrosse is a unique combination of skill, speed, agility and finesse. The USSI Lacrosse camp is open to players of all ability and no previous Lacrosse experience is necessary. Experience stick handling, passing, scooping, dodging, shooting and many more fundamental techniques and skills. This camp offers an ideal introduction for all levels to this great game. Each child receives a t-shirt and completion certificate. USSI provides suitable equipment for all participants.

## Eight legislative ordinances passed in 2007

During the year 2007, nine ordinances were considered and eight adopted. An ordinance is a legislative action by the Board of Supervisors which becomes the local law or regulation once enacted.

Ordinance #213 amended the existing stop sign ordinance provisions adding three-way stop signs at the intersection of Weber and Curtis Roads.

Ordinance #215 amended the Zoning Ordinance language “so that the height of a detached garage is measured consistently with the definition of Building Height.”

Ordinance #216 amended the Zoning Ordinance deleting the requirement for a 15-foot wide drainage easement along all side and rear property lines.

Ordinance #217 was an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance repealing the requirement for a Use and Occupancy Permit at the time of resale for a property.

Ordinance #218 amended Chapter 54 of the Code of Ordinances deleting a requirement for an 8-inch thick masonry wall in favor of the firewall provisions of the Uniform Construction Code.

Ordinance #219 amended Chapter 135 of the Code of Ordinances establishing a set interest rate for circumstances when realty transfer tax is not paid when due.

Ordinance #220 amended and revised the sign regulations within the Zoning Ordinance.

In compliance with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources requirements, Ordinance #221 amended Chapter 116 of the Code of Ordinances implementing a leaf waste collection program.



### Private Vehicle Sales Ordinance adopted

In an effort to insure the commercial sale of vehicles only takes place at appropriately zoned locations in the township, the Board of Supervisors recently adopted an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance governing the sale of private vehicles. In a similar fashion to the existing yard sale regulations, the provisions require the registration (at no cost) of the intended sale of a personally privately owned vehicle (truck, boat, car, recreational) by the land owner. At the time of registration, verification of private ownership is to be provided. Displaying the vehicle for sale is limited to 30 days at a time, no more than two times a year and 60 days between the displays for sale. The sale display sign is limited to 18X24 inches in size and registration is to take place at least 2 days but not more than 10 days prior to the commencement of the display. A full copy of the newly adopted ordinance and registration form are available at the township office and on the web at [www.worcestertwp.com](http://www.worcestertwp.com).



### D.E.P. MANDATED LEAF COLLECTION IMPLEMENTED

Because Worcester Township’s population exceeds 5,000 residents, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires that Worcester make available the collection of curbside recycling and leaf waste. Historically the DEP had not enforced the leaf waste provisions, however within the past year the Department has seen fit to threaten withholding recycling grant monies for municipalities that are in non-compliance for leaf waste collection. In response the township has amended the recycling ordinance requiring trash hauling companies to offer a collection program. The program requires haulers to offer Worcester residents leaf waste collection and have the haulers provide the township verification the waste is deposited at an approved DEP facility.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY, WORCESTER

Worcester natives, Richard Schweiker and Drew Lewis, served in Washington during the 70s and 80s—the former as a U.S. Senator and both as Cabinet members. In 1976, the newly formed Worcester Historical Society was an integral part of the Bicentennial Celebration, welcoming wagon trains from all over the U.S. as they headed for Valley Forge.

In the 1970s and 1980s, when most of central Montgomery County was becoming increasingly suburbanized by housing developments and strip malls, Worcester was able to retain its rural character and became known as a much-desired place to live. Today, our township can boast an oasis of farmland and open fields—one of the last remaining municipalities within a 40-mile radius of Philadelphia that is still “green.” Worcester Township claims one of the oldest family-owned dairy farms in the county as well as Montgomery County’s first certified organic fruit and vegetable farm. Worcester’s emblem is a plow—a testament to our agricultural roots and to the farming that continues here today.

Much more insight into Worcester’s past, from ancient to modern times, can be found in *A History of Worcester Township*, published by the Worcester Historical Society. This article is mostly based on details contained in that book. More information is available at [www.worcesterhistorical.org](http://www.worcesterhistorical.org).

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

## REPORT FROM SUPERVISOR, ARTHUR BUSTARD

In the past two years my focus has been on improving the productivity and efficiency in the township office, as my area of responsibility. During that time the Supervisors, in conjunction with the staff, have implemented several changes designed to accomplish that goal. We have updated our software and computer system at the township building to better handle the increasing volume of information provided and requested. A secure back-up system has been put in place to make sure we have access to information should something unforeseen happen to the township computer system.

As part of the information upgrade we purchased new software to handle the land planning and building inspection functions of the township. Chairman Harris made mention of this in his column last fall. We are now able to download new information from the county database directly to our computer system. This has significantly lowered data entry time and increased efficiency while cutting down the chances of mistakes during data entry. In addition, the new system enables us to correlate phone messages with parcel numbers so that an inquiry called in one month can be associated with the specific parcel and documented, enabling us to check back and verify information several months later simply by typing in the parcel number or location.

The township hired Keystone Municipal Services, Inc. in 2006 to take over the role of Building Inspector. The outsourcing of this function has allowed us to call on experts in both commercial and residential building. It has provided us with inspectors that are fully accredited, are available when we need them, and has provided us coverage at all times, without having to worry about vacation days, service training days and similar issues.

Continuing to look for ways to increase productivity and have faster access to information, the township hired an intern last summer to correlate and link archived paper files to ensure efficiency in locating all pertinent information. Township staff has been evaluating the process of scanning current information into our databases this winter. One of the problems in government offices today is the sheer volume of paper that is necessary to document and verify municipal activity. In discussing the costs of printing, storage, and copying this information, it has become apparent that even for a small township office like ours the possible savings in digitizing the documents should be significant. We intend to begin this process in the spring and believe that the results will be substantial.

In looking at the infrastructure of the township there have been several improvements to the facilities. The township

replaced the inefficient furnace at the Community Hall in Fairview Village in 2006 to cut down on fuel consumption and make sure that meetings were held in reasonable comfort. We are currently looking into placing carpet under the chairs to cut down on the noise level and make the audio system more effective. We are also doing an energy audit of the Township Building in Center Point to determine the reason for the drafts and heating problems.

The Township Supervisors recognize that traffic is becoming an increasingly difficult issue and it is hoped that PennDot will allow us to place a light at Water Street and Rte 363, sometime in 2008. As part of our effort to limit traffic impact on local residential roads the township purchased a portable speed monitoring device that is being placed on township roads. The device tends to make motorists slow their speed as they see the flashing sign. As part of our attempt to increase efficiency and cut long term expenses this past year, the township began the process of converting the light bulbs in our traffic signals to LED's. A cost benefit analysis indicated a significant savings to the township from the decreased power consumption, the longer lifespan of the lights and the decreased labor from infrequency of replacement.

For the past several months the township has been doing an evaluation of the health insurance policy provided to the employees of the township. We hope to update the policy to reflect current conditions and trends, including a health maintenance account, which more accurately reflect the needs of the employees. Another reason to update the plan is that we will be able to save significant dollars by revamping the program and increase coverage in certain areas.

On March 3<sup>rd</sup> the supervisors directed Township Manager John Cornell to look into implementing a reverse 911 emergency notification system similar to that used by Lower Providence. This followed the demonstration at the MCATO Seminar on February 29, by Lower Providence of their new system. Further details will be presented in future newsletters.

It has been an interesting two years and I appreciate the willingness of the other supervisors to let me focus in on some of these areas. It is not one Supervisor, but all together, that are responsible for these improvements. The Supervisors working as a team with the township employees have been able to move forward in implementing these improvements. I want to thank them and the people of Worcester for allowing me to be part of it.

### **Worcester Volunteer Fire Department Building Completed**

Construction on the new Worcester Volunteer fire house is now complete

The Worcester Volunteer Fire Department will hold a Community Open House on Saturday May 10, 2008

10:00am—2:00pm

Ribbon-cutting ceremony at 12:00 noon

1725 Valley Forge Road, Worcester

Township of Worcester  
1721 Valley Forge Road  
P.O. Box 767  
Worcester, PA 19490-0767

THIRD CLASS BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
WORCESTER, PA 19490-0767  
PERMIT NO. 23

We are on the web!  
[www.worcestertwp.com](http://www.worcestertwp.com)

**TOWNSHIP MONTHLY MEETING TIMES**

**Board of Supervisors**

3rd Wednesday at 7:30pm  
\*\*\*

**BOS Work Sessions**

1st Monday at 8:00am  
\*\*\*

**Planning Commission**

4th Thursday at 7:30pm  
\*\*\*

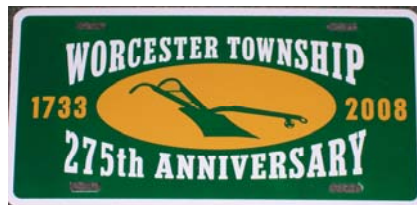
**Planning Commission Work Sessions**

2nd Thursday at 7:30pm  
\*\*\*

**Zoning Hearing Board**

4th Tuesday at 6:30pm  
\*\*\*

*All Public Meetings are held in the  
Worcester Township Community Hall  
1031 Valley Forge Road*



This license plate commemorating Worcester's 275th anniversary can be purchased at the township office or from the Worcester Historical Society at [www.worcesterhistorical.org](http://www.worcesterhistorical.org)

**SAVE THE DATE**

Saturday, July 12, 2008  
Jay Moyer Community Day  
Heebner Park  
Worcester's 275th Birthday

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Plymouth Community Ambulance has established a satellite location in Worcester Township at Germantown Pike and Trooper Road.



**Pitchfork Bench Donated to Township**

Worcester resident Brad Smith has been producing Ax Handle Stools and Pitchfork Chairs as part of his furniture line at Bradford Woodworking since 1980. He recently donated one of his pitchfork benches to the Township Administration Building. Constructed of contoured cherry ash and ash ax handle legs, the back is made of real pitchforks and cherry wood.