

FALL NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2008



2090 Ferry Road, Sugar Creek Township, Ohio 45305

# Fall Newsletter

## OPEN HOUSE OCTOBER 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2008

It is with great pride that we announce the completion of our new Township Administrative and Services Offices! In 2007, we began planning an addition to our facility located at 2090 Ferry Road that would serve our need for a meeting facility and include necessary office space for our Administrative and Services offices. Previously, we had been holding trustee and various board and committee meetings at the Bellbrook Middle School. We are very thankful and appreciate the Sugar Creek Local School District's willingness to accommodate us over the course of the last three years while we planned this much needed expansion.

Imperative to the design of our new facility was the inclusion of a Community Meeting Room that could be utilized by Township organizations and individuals in need of a place to hold meetings and events. Plans were drawn, redrawn and approved and we set forth to construct what would become our Township's future home.

We broke ground in March of 2008 on a 3,500 SF addition. The addition includes offices for our Township Administrator, Administrative Assistant, Secretary, Information Technology Specialist, Roads and Services Director, Trustees, Zoning and Fiscal Offices. The addition was completed in August with final touches like landscaping and signage remaining to be finished, which we hope to have completed in time for our OPEN HOUSE.

Perhaps best stated by Dr. Joan Gallagher, longtime Sugar Creek Township resident and Board of Zoning Commission member, "The completion of the addition has ushered the Township squarely

into the twenty-first century."

Please plan to attend our OPEN HOUSE on Monday, October 6, 2008 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. Those in attendance are invited to stay for our Trustee Meeting at 7:30 pm.

Refreshments will be served and tours designed to familiarize Township residents, businesses and friends with our new facility will be provided.

We look forward to seeing you on October 6<sup>th</sup> and welcoming you to our new home!



TRUSTEES MIKE PITTMAN, NADINE DAUGHERTY, AND DICK KING STAND ON THE PORCH OF OUR NEW BUILDING ADDITION. YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND OUR OPEN HOUSE ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 6TH, 2008 FROM 6:30 TO 7:30 P.M. AT 2090 FERRY ROAD!

Your Trustees,

Michael Pittman, Chairperson

Nadine Daugherty, Vice-Chairperson

Dick King, Trustee

ARE YOU ELDERLY, ILL, OR HANDICAPPED AND PERHAPS NOT ABLE TO COMPLETE NECESSARY PROJECTS AROUND YOUR HOME? THE TOWNSHIP IS IN THE PROCESS OF WORKING WITH LOCAL CHURCHES TO ESTABLISH AN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR OUR RESIDENTS. PLEASE CONTACT US AT (937) 848-8426 IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE, KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS, OR IF YOU HAVE A DESIRE TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY!

## TOWNSHIP HONORS LOCAL TEENS

On May 16, 2008, the Sugarcreek Township Police Department received assistance from three local teenagers, who attend Center-ville High School. Their quick actions lead to the arrest of two adult males for theft. The teenagers had just finished a tour of the Montgomery County Jail and were having lunch at McDonalds on Wilmington Pike when they observed two men steal a power tool from the back of a truck. The three teens obtained the license plate from the suspect's vehicle and reported the theft to the Sugarcreek Township Police Department. The suspects were arrested within



**SUGARCREEK TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND SGT. JAMES DEATON PRESENT COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS TO DANIELLE RUST, JESSICA SANDERS, AND DYLAN MANZO FOR THEIR HELP IN A RECENT THEFT INVESTIGATION ON AUGUST 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2008.**

the hour while still having the power tool in their possession. Sergeant Deaton stated that the business district has seen a number of thefts just like this incident. These teenagers acted quickly and safely, demonstrating the importance of the community's involvement in reducing crime.

The Police Department is only an extension of the community. It is the desire of the Township that the awards given to these teenagers mark the beginning of a larger community service award program in Sugarcreek Township.

-Sgt. James Deaton

## ROADS AND SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATE

This has been a very busy year in the Roads and Services Department. One of our major non-road related projects this year included assisting with the construction of the new addition to the Township Administrative Offices at 2090 Ferry Road. By completing some of the work on the building addition in-house, the Township was able to keep costs down.

We also assisted the Greene County Department of Sanitary Engineering with the relocation of the yard waste recycling site to its new location at the northwest corner of Waynesville and Ferry Roads. We are happy to report that the new site opened on August 4, 2008, much to the delight of many of our residents who had been anxiously awaiting the opening.

The 2008 Asphalt Program is almost complete. We have some additional berm work and signs that need to be replaced, but for the most part

all work in this program has been completed. Streets included in the 2008 Asphalt Program were: Cedar Ridge Drive, North Point Court, Marshfield Road, Berryhill Road, Springland Circle, and Rising Spring Court. For the second year in a row, we came in under budget on the asphalt program. The money saved this year will be rolled over into next year's program. We will be identifying these roads in the coming weeks. We thank all of the citizens inconvenienced by the 2008 Asphalt Program for your cooperation and patience while we completed the work.

This past March, Mother Nature reminded us just how powerful she is by blanketing the Township in over a foot of snow. We are pleased to inform you that in working cooperatively with the Greene County Emergency Management Association and other agencies, a

Snow Emergency was declared. This declaration enabled us to recover approximately \$15,000 from the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA), a good portion of our operating costs (overtime, salt, etc.) spent managing the Snow Emergency. Through diligent planning and carefully watching expenses, we have been able to fund the purchase of two additional trucks, which we hope to have in service before winter this year, when Mother Nature will almost certainly strike again.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. We are here for you and it is a pleasure to serve the community. We can be reached at (937) 848-2330.



-Tracey Messer, Director

## BELLBROOK-SUGARCREEK PARK DISTRICT LEVY ON BALLOT

The Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Park District will have an issue on the November 4, 2008 ballot to replace the 0.4 mill operating levy that was approved by voters in 2003. The replacement levy will be 0.7 mills and will provide funding for park operations for a 5-year period. Residents of Sugarcreek Township and the City of Bellbrook would pay \$21.44 per year for each \$100,000 of their home's value for this levy. This overview is intended only to provide information about the upcoming park levy.

The 2008 levy will provide funding to current

and future park facilities such as:

- Maintain facilities – playgrounds, Community Center, hiking trails and paths, shelters and athletic fields.
- Target and acquire land to preserve as open space and park land.
- Plan and develop new parks and trail systems.
- Provide administrative services, volunteer opportunities, and publications.

- Develop and conduct year-round programs.

Learn more about what the Park District has to offer! For the latest programming information and general information about the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Township Park District go to [www.bellbrook-sugarcreekparks.org](http://www.bellbrook-sugarcreekparks.org).



## BEGGAR'S NIGHT SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30<sup>TH</sup> FROM 6:00-8:00 P.M.

Please remind your little ghosts and goblins to:

- Walk, slither, or sneak on sidewalks, not in the street and look both ways before crossing to check for cars, trucks, and low-flying brooms!
- Cross the street only at corners and don't hide or cross the street between parked cars.
- Wear light-colored or reflective-type clothing so you are more visible. Put reflective

on bikes, skateboards, and brooms.

- Plan your route and share it with your family. Adults are strongly encouraged to walk with their children and carry a flash-light to light the way.
- Visit homes that have the porch light on. Accept treats at the door and NEVER go into a stranger's house.
- Use face paint rather than masks or things that might impair vision.

- Be cautious of animals and strangers.
- Have a grown-up inspect your treats before eating. Do NOT eat candy if the package is already opened.
- **Have fun!**



## FACES OF SUGARCREEK: ROADS AND SERVICES DEPARTMENT

*WE HAVE A DEDICATED GROUP OF EMPLOYEES HERE TO SERVE YOU. THE TOWNSHIP IS DIVIDED INTO FIVE DEPARTMENTS: ADMINISTRATION, POLICE, FIRE, ROADS AND SERVICES AND THE FISCAL OFFICE. IT SERVICES AND ZONING FALL UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF ADMINISTRATION, WHILE COMMUNICATIONS (DISPATCH) IS A DIVISION WITHIN THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS.*

This issue's features your Roads and Services Department. The Roads and Services Department serves the infrastructure needs of the Township. These hardworking men of the Roads and Services Department oversee the daily operations and maintenance of our roads, buildings, and facilities. Tracey Messer is the Director of Roads and Services. Tracey is assisted by Tony Lamb, Supervisor. Bill Harphant, Rick Cipriano, and Dale Owens comprise the ranks of the Service Workers. In the winter months and periodically throughout the year, the Department is supported by temporary workers assisting with snow and ice removal and special projects as assigned. You may not recognize their faces, but you are sure to recognize their trucks and equipment as they work throughout the Township.

The Roads and Services Department does a wide variety of tasks including:

- Inspecting and repairing roadways and street signage.
- Performing routine inspections and preventative maintenance on equipment.
- Driving trucks used in loading and hauling of materials for road repairs and snow and ice removal.
- Driving tractors and mowers to cut grass in Township road rights-of-way and on Township owned properties.
- Picking up trash and trimming weeds and

brush along Township road rights-of-way and on Township owned properties.

- Operating a variety of construction and maintenance equipment used in road maintenance and repairs.
- Performing required labor involved in construction and maintenance projects including pavement cutting, ditch digging, catch basin cleaning, and trenching.
- Responding to service requests from residents and businesses.
- Assisting other Township Departments with projects and service requests as needed.

The Roads and Services Department is located at 2090 Ferry Road. Hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with overtime hours as required. The Roads and Services Department may be reached at 848-2330.



Tony Lamb, Service Supervisor, has been with the Township since 1987. Tony also served the Township in the capacity of Volunteer Firefighter with the Sugarcreek Township Fire Department from 1988 to 1994 and has served as interim Roads and Services Director when required. Tony and his wife Sally live in Kettering with their son, 11-year-old Zachary, and their daughter, 10-year-old Shelby. Tony has two grown sons, Tony Jr. of Spring Valley and Jeremy of Piqua, three grandsons and one granddaughter. Tony has a big heart, having recently adopted an older dog destined for the pound, after learning that a local family could no longer keep it due to a pending foreclosure.

Bill Harphant, Service Worker 3, has been with



Sugarcreek Township since 1988. He and his wife, Jennifer, live in Xenia with their son, Justin, age 2. Bill has an Associates Degree in Business from Clark State. Prior to coming to Sugarcreek Township, Bill worked in the field of computer programming. He enjoys playing golf, softball, and spending time with his family.

Dale Owens, Service Worker 2, has been with the Township since 1998. He is a longtime Bellbrook resident, having attended Sugarcreek Local Schools. Dale is an electrician by trade and was a union electrician prior to his employment with Sugarcreek Township. Dale lives in Bellbrook, with his son Matt, a senior in high school and his daughter, Rachael, who graduated from high school just last year. Dale enjoys playing golf in his free time.



Rick Cipriano, Service Worker 1, has been with the Township since 2002. Rick worked in construction for two years, prior to coming to Sugarcreek Township. He also worked as a produce manager for 15 years. Rick lives in Jamestown with his wife Julie, and their two daughters, seventeen-year-old Valyn and fifteen-year-old Reanna. Rick enjoys gardening and has taken an interest in whittling, the art of carving shapes out of raw wood with a knife.



# NOW OFFERING...



Nothing can be more frustrating for you and the members of Sugarcreek Township Fire Department than not being able to find your house when there is an emergency call. We know you are waiting for us and seconds do count. Time lost trying to find you can and does make a difference. Green reflective address signs are available for a small fee and you can order one or more for your home by contacting the Sugarcreek Township Administrative Offices at (937) 848-8426. Help us find you when an

emergency strikes.

We extend an invitation to everyone to stop by and visit your Fire Department. You are guaranteed to have a rewarding and informative visit. We offer CPR and First Aid classes. We also have readily available information on many topics from smoke detectors to emergency preparedness. Our members are here to help you. Do you need a fire extinguisher class? We have that. Need information about Carbon Monoxide detectors? You can find out about that too. Would you like a member to walk through your home with you and point out fire safety hazards?

You might be surprised to see how we can help.

Are you having a Block Party or special event? The Community Outreach Trailer, staffed with Sugarcreek Township Police and Fire personnel, is here to bring interactive, educational and fun activities to your Block Party or special event. Feel free to call Linda Lotspaih at (937) 848-3479 to schedule us at your next event.

-Captain Joann Zimmerman, Public Education Bureau



## TOWNSHIP TO UPDATE ZONING RESOLUTION

At the end of 2007 the Township Trustees approved a series of updates to the Sugarcreek Township Comprehensive Development Plan as recommended by the ad hoc advisory group and consulting firm, McBride Dale Clarion, tasked with reviewing the documents guiding development in the Township. With the approval of the updated Comprehensive Development Plan, the Township saw the completion of step one of a larger two-step process. Step two, which began shortly after the adoption of the updates to the Comprehensive Development Plan, includes a complete review of our existing Zoning Resolution.

A Comprehensive Development Plan allows a community to plan for the future and address the impacts of growth as they occur. It presents the community's long-range statement for the future and serves as a guide for the public and decision-making bodies of Sugarcreek Township. Zoning, on the other hand, is more specific in nature and is one of several legal devices for implementing the goals and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Development Plan. Zoning is the most basic of all planning tools used by Sugarcreek Township. Proposed revisions to the Zoning Resolution look to accomplish the following:

- Promote economic development by concentrating commercial and industrial properties in particular areas of the Township. By concentrating uses such as commercial businesses together, zoning can help guide these developments into areas of the Township best suited for them because of adequate public facilities and infrastructure.
- Encourage compact development with higher densities in areas served by infrastructure while discouraging development in areas with limited services.

- Promote conservation development that clusters housing lots, housing units, and roadways so as to set aside a substantial amount of otherwise buildable property as permanently protected, quality greenspace thereby maintaining the scenic character of Sugarcreek, protecting habitat value, and contributing to the quality of life for residents of the entire Township.
- Create overlay districts to protect special areas or add more standards to an area where there are multiple underlying zoning districts. For example, the Township can add standards to require special setbacks to protect the minor streams in the Township feeding into the Little Miami River, already protected by way of an existing overlay district.
- Protect existing residential neighborhoods by controlling densities and restricting the conversion of single-family homes into multi-family units or nonresidential businesses where such conversions are not desired.
- Require appropriate analyses for large public and institutional uses proposing to locate within residential neighborhoods so as to mitigate traffic, light, noise, and other impacts.
- Require landscaping, signage, lighting, and adequate parking that will help improve the visual appearance of the Township.
- Provide for small wind energy conversion systems and solar panels, allowing Township residents the opportunity to offset their carbon footprint, while at the same time ensuring appropriate standards are in place governing their location and height.

- Ensure that standards for accessory uses and structures are fair and adequate to allow residents the opportunity to construct and establish them, while at the same time ensuring that these uses and structures are in keeping with the character of our neighborhoods.

The ad hoc advisory group has been meeting over the course of the last nine months with representatives from McBride Dale Clarion and staff reviewing the different sections and standards found in the Zoning Resolution. The section-by-section review of the Zoning Resolution has been completed. The proposed revisions to the Zoning Resolution have been submitted to the Greene County Planning and Coordinating Commission and the Greene County Prosecutor's Office for their review. Their reviews, comments and recommendations will be submitted to the Sugarcreek Township Board of Zoning Commission. The Board of Zoning Commission will consider these comments and recommendations and provide a recommendation to the Township Trustees. The Township Trustees will then consider adoption of the revised text.

Interested in learning more? Please visit our website, [www.sugarcreekTownship.com](http://www.sugarcreekTownship.com). Click on the LEGAL NOTICES tab to find out when the Township will be holding public hearings on the proposed revisions. The hearings will be open to the public and all are encouraged to participate!

-Cara KillKelley, Zoning Compliance Officer



## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL: TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN

Thirty years ago, 60% of children living within a 2-mile radius of a school walked or bicycled to school. Today, that number has dropped to less than 15%. And back then, 5% of children between the ages of 6 and 11 were considered to be overweight or obese. Today, that number has climbed to 20%. Safe Routes to School programs are intended to reverse these trends by funding projects that improve safety and efforts that promote walking and bicycling within a collaborative community framework. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs use a comprehensive approach to make school routes safe for children to walk and bicycle. A successful Safe Routes to School program is a sustained effort that involves bringing the right mix of people together, identifying the issues and finding ways to improve walking and bicycling conditions.

Safe Routes to School programs work to...

- assess the safety of school travel routes;
- encourage more walking and bicycling to school through fun promotions and events;
- make engineering changes such as building sidewalks, improving street crossings and training crossing guards;
- educate students, parents and drivers about safe travel; and
- promote safe walking and bicycling throughout the community.

Federal legislation and funding currently exist to support SRTS efforts. Federal funds are administered through the Ohio Department of

Transportation (ODOT). In the first SRTS funding round, ODOT awarded over \$4 million in funding to 107 Ohio communities interested in creating and encouraging a Safe Route to School in their communities.

Understanding that our children locally face obstacles in walking and bicycling to school, Sugarcreek Township officials, along with representatives from the City of Bellbrook, the Sugarcreek Local School District, the Sugarcreek Township Open Space Advisory Committee, the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Park District, together with students and parents have formed a committee to create a School Travel Plan (STP). A School Travel Plan, a required component for applying for SRTS funding through ODOT, is created through a team-based approach that identifies the barriers children face in walking and bicycling to school and formulates a set of solutions and countermeasures. These will encompass numerous components including engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation-the five E's of SRTS. Creating a School Travel Plan will support the Township's already established goal of creating a more livable community. By involvement with SRTS and encouraging and enabling our children to use active transportation on their journey to school, Sugarcreek Township will move closer to achieving this community goal.

The SRTS Committee held a kick-off meeting on July 17<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was attended by Mr. William Vorst, ODOT's SRTS District 8 Coordinator. Mr. Vorst was able to provide important information for the committee to consider, as it moves forward with completing the STP. It became

apparent to the committee at this meeting that one of the most important steps in creating our STP is the **PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS**. In this step, the committee gathers information and identifies issues regarding the current travel situation as well as barriers that exist for walking and bicycling travel. To this end, a **PARENT SURVEY** for parents with children in grades K-8 has been made available on the school district's website, [www.sugarcreek.k12.oh.us](http://www.sugarcreek.k12.oh.us). K-8 parents can also link to the survey at the Township's website [www.sugarcreektownship.com](http://www.sugarcreektownship.com).

Upcoming meetings of the SRTS Committee will be listed on the Township's Community Calendar (available on our website and on every Trustee Meeting Agenda) and are open to anyone interested in this initiative. For information please contact us at (937) 848-8426 or

[ckillkelley@sugarcreekTownship.com](mailto:ckillkelley@sugarcreekTownship.com).



LACK OF SIDEWALKS AND HEAVILY TRAVELED ROADS ARE EXAMPLES OF BARRIERS TO ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FACED BY CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY.

## FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER OFFERS SERVICES TO OUR RESIDENTS

The Family Resource Center offers referral services to Bellbrook-Sugarcreek residents at no charge, as well as area programming and volunteer opportunities.

What are some services the Family Resource Center can connect you or your family with?

- **Healthy Couples Classes** – FREE and includes childcare & refreshments. Are you ready for your relationship to be defined by power, passion & purpose? Learn how to better support each other, manage stress, solve problems together, and more. For more information or a class schedule, call 376-8526 ext. 44.
- **Child Care, Dental Care, and Immunization Clinics** – Call the Greene County Combined Health District at 374-5600 or 1-866-858-3588.

- **Employment Resources** – Small classes to help you get a job, a better job, or do better at the job you have. Greene Works has classes on computer basics, first aid, communicating skills, sales and stress management, and more. For more information contact 562-6565.
- **Child Support Enforcement** – Call the Greene County Child Support Enforcement Agency at 562-6200 for more information.
- **Nurse Visit for New Moms** – A "Welcome Home" Newborn Visit can be scheduled for first time mothers, teen mothers, and new mothers with newborns up to six weeks of age. Call the Greene County Combined Health District at 374-5600 or 1-866-858-3588, ext. 5625

or Help Me Grow at 1-800-862-5248 for more information

- **Anger Management** – Classes are available through TCN Behavior Health Services; call 562-6162 for more information.
- **Teen Violence** – Voices is a program for teens who have witnessed or experienced domestic violence. It is offered in Xenia on Thursdays from 4:00 – 5:30. For more information contact 376-8526 ext. 19.

And more ...

You are encouraged to call the **Family Resource Center** at 848-3810.



# FIRE LEVY FAQs

**Q: MY HOME IS APPRAISED AT \$200,000—HOW MUCH MORE WILL I PAY IN TAXES IF THE LEVY PASSES?**

A: According to County Auditor formulas, approximately \$114.02 per year; \$9.50 per month.

**Q: ARE WE PAYING FOR FIRE/EMS SERVICE TO THE AREA ANNEXED TO CENTERVILLE?**

A: NO! Fire levy taxes are still being collected by Sugarcreek Township for the area annexed to Centerville. The area is legally designated Centerville/Sugarcreek Township, Greene County, Ohio. Because the tax levies carry through to our Fire Department, we are obligated to provide fire and emergency medical services to that portion of the City of Centerville.

**Q: WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE TOWNSHIP MERGES WITH BELLBROOK?**

A: Should the merger occur, a commission would be set up to determine what the tax rates would be for the new City. This commission would establish the structure of the Fire Department, the funding levels and the type of service to be provided. All current levies would be negated.

**Q: WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THIS LEVY DOES NOT PASS?**

A: If this levy fails, the Fire Department

would have a catastrophic event in terms of staffing, response times and safety to our community and firefighters. We may have to cut 60% of our part-time staff, and 50 % of our full-time staff beginning in 2009.

We may have to close Station 71 in downtown Bellbrook for lack of personnel and funding. This would put our community at great risk for our emergency services.

**Q: WHAT IS THE MAKE UP OF SUGARCREEK TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT?**

A: Sugarcreek Township Fire Department is a Combination Fire Department. A Combination Fire Department is made up of Career Firefighter/Paramedics, Part-time Firefighter/EMS and Volunteer Firefighters/EMS and PALS members. Our current staffing levels are:

|             |    |
|-------------|----|
| Career:     | 12 |
| Part-time:  | 16 |
| Volunteers: | 30 |
| PALS*:      | 6  |
| Total:      | 64 |

Combination Fire Departments are a very efficient and effective way to staff and fund the services provided.

\*PALS: Professional Assistant Liaisons System  
---volunteers specifically trained to respond

only to major incidents within the Township. PALS help with re-hab, traffic and crowd control, accountability, and administrative duties on-scene.

**Q: WHY THE LEVY NOW?**

Sugarcreek Township Fire Department has been facing challenging budget times for the last 3 years. As the growth of our community expanded over the last 5 years, the calls for service have risen (23% in 2007; up 10% over the end of August 2007 so far this year), the cost of fuel, insurance, EMS supplies and firefighting personal protection equipment, as well as operating costs, have increased dramatically.

We have reorganized the Fire Department structure each year to save taxpayers money, cut it to the bare bones and now we are facing cuts that jeopardize the safety and health of all our Citizens and Staff.

**Q: IF THE LEVY PASSES, HOW LONG WILL IT BE BEFORE WE WILL SEE ANOTHER TAX LEVY?**

A: The Master Plan and financial planning shows this will fund the Fire Department at adequate levels for 5 years. It will enable us to continue all areas of operations, staffing, services, education and prevention.



--Randall J. Pavlak, Fire Chief



## SUGARCREEK TOWNSHIP RECEIVES THERMAL IMAGING CAMERA

Through a grant application process instituted by the Fireman's Fund, we are proud to announce that the organization "500 For Life" has awarded the Sugarcreek Township Fire Department with a T-4 Thermal Imager. This is our second Thermal Imager, and it has been added to Engine 72, our first-out

engine for fire calls. The Imager will also be available for mutual-aid to other area jurisdictions. The original Thermal Imager is carried on Battalion 70, the Shift Commander's vehicle, and our first responding vehicle to any scene. Having two Imagers means that if Battalion 70 is on a call when a fire call is re-

ceived, the second Imager will be available for immediate use when Engine 72 arrives on the fire scene.

Members of the public are welcome to stop by at Station 72 for a demonstration of this Imager's capabilities



## NEW BUSINESSES: WELCOME ADDITIONS TO OUR COMMUNITY

We are pleased to welcome these new businesses to Sugarcreek Township:

- **DRY-CLEAN \$3.69**, located at 6048 Wilmington Pike in the Sugarcreek Plaza
- **SPIRIT HALLOWEEN**, located at 6106 Wilmington Pike in the Sugarcreek Plaza
- **DENIM ADDICTION**, located at 6076

Wilmington Pike in the Sugarcreek Plaza

- **BELLBROOK FAMILY PRACTICE**, located at 6438 Wilmington Pike, Suite 100 in the Sugarcreek Health Center
- **KETTERING REHABILITATION**, located at 6438 Wilmington Pike, Suite 230 in the Sugarcreek Health Center
- **TOM'S MULCH** has begun construction on

new 4,000 sq. ft. facility adjacent to their existing facility on Ferry Road. The expansion will allow for a larger retail area and a design center.



# IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT FOR YOU?

Have you ever thought of what other things you wanted to do with your property? Maybe you should consider a Conservation Easement.

## WHAT IS AN EASEMENT?

Ownership of a piece of property may best be described as a "bundle of rights." These rights include the right to occupy, use, lease, sell, and develop the land. An easement involves the exchange of one or more of these rights from the landowner to someone who does not own the land. Easements have been used for years to provide governments, utilities, and extractive industries with certain property rights. An easement permits the holder certain rights regarding the land for specified purposes while the ownership of the land remains with the private property owner.

## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

A conservation easement is designed to exclude certain activities on private land, such as commercial development or residential subdivisions. Its primary purpose is to conserve natural or man-made resources on the land. The easement itself is typically described in terms of the resource it is designed to protect (e.g., agricultural, forest, historic, or open space easements).

The easement is a legally binding covenant that is publicly recorded and runs with the property deed for a specified period of time or in perpetuity. It gives the holder the responsibility to monitor and enforce the property restrictions imposed by the easement for as long as it is designed to run. An easement does not grant ownership, nor does it absolve the property owner from traditional owner responsibilities (i.e. property tax, upkeep, maintenance, or improvements).

## WHAT DOES AN AGRICULTURAL EASEMENT COVER?

An agricultural easement is a specific type of conservation easement, designed to protect land from development and insure that the use of the land will remain conducive to agriculture in the future. Agricultural easements are designed to meet the needs of the property owner. They may include provisions for limited development for buildings such as barns, and housing for children and grandchildren who wish to stay on the farm. They may exclude certain sections of the farm from the easement entirely. As with other types of conservation easements, agricultural easements basically limit or prohibit the land from being developed for residential or industrial purposes regardless of who owns the land in the future.

## WHAT ARE THE TAX IMPLICATIONS OF CONSERVATION EASEMENTS?

If an easement is granted in perpetuity as a charitable gift, some federal income and estate tax advantages usually accrue. These tax savings may be substantial, and are often cited as a major factor in landowners' decisions to donate easements. Contact an attorney knowledgeable about land-use law for specific tax implications.

## WHO HOLDS THE EASEMENT?

A conservation easement is designed to protect a property according to the owner's wishes. Since the easement is generally granted in perpetuity, it is necessary for an outside party to be responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of the easement.

The outside party "holds" the easement and is required to monitor and enforce the adherence of current and future property owners to the terms of the easement. Typically, easements are held by local government agencies, land trusts. Since the monitoring and maintenance of easements requires personnel inputs in perpetuity, easement donors often are required to provide financial support for the easement if it is held by a nonprofit organization. Designating both a government agency and a nonprofit or land trust as co-holders of the easement is an alternative selected in many easements and may be required in certain public programs wherein the easements are purchased by a government preservation program or organization.

## IS LAND UNDER A CONSERVATION EASEMENT CONSIDERED PUBLIC PROPERTY?

The easement can restrict or permit certain public uses of the land. An easement does not have to permit public access at all. The decision to allow public access is left to the individual property owner who places the easement on the property. It is important to emphasize that land covered by a conservation easement is still privately held land, with the only restrictions on land use being those desired by the owner who places the easement on the property. Certain government initiated easement programs may require some public accessibility in order to meet tax requirements so it is necessary to investigate the public access requirements before writing the easement.

## WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EASEMENT HOLDER?

Whether the easement holder is a public or nonprofit organization, the holder has the responsibility to enforce the requirements

stipulated in the easement. This responsibility generally includes:

- Establishing baseline documentation through ensuring that the language of the easement is clear and enforceable, developing maps, property descriptions and baseline documentation of the property's characteristics.
- Monitoring the use of the land on a regular property to ensure that easement restrictions basis. This may require personal visits to the area being upheld.
- Providing information and background data regarding the easement to new or prospective property owners.
- Establishing a review and approval process for land activities stipulated in easement.
- Enforcing the restrictions of the easement through the legal system if necessary.
- Maintaining property/easement related records.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION EASEMENTS?

We have three outstanding organizations in our community that are willing to help you.

They are:

### IF YOUR PROPERTY IS A FARM:

Tecumseh Land Trust

[www.tecumsehlandtrust.org](http://www.tecumsehlandtrust.org)

Contact Krista Magaw, Executive Director, at [krista@tecumsehlandtrust.org](mailto:krista@tecumsehlandtrust.org) or (937) 767-9491.

### IF YOU HAVE PROPERTY ON OR CLOSE TO THE LITTLE MIAMI RIVER:

Little Miami Inc.

[www.littlemiami.org](http://www.littlemiami.org)

Contact Eric Partee, Executive Director, at [partee@littlemiami.com](mailto:partee@littlemiami.com) or (513) 588-9883.

### IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOUR PROPERTY PRESERVED AS A PARK:

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Park District

[www.bellbrook-sugarcreekparks.org](http://www.bellbrook-sugarcreekparks.org)

Contact: Jeff Stewart, Director, at [jstewart@bellbrook-sugarcreekparks.org](mailto:jstewart@bellbrook-sugarcreekparks.org) or (937) 848-3535.

-Howard Ackerman, Sugarcreek Township Open Space Advisory Committee





*An Open Space Community*

**Sugarcreek Township**

2090 Ferry Road

Bellbrook, Ohio 45305

Phone: (937) 848-8426

Fax: (937) 848-7060

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



**TOWNSHIP MEETING SCHEDULE**

- **TRUSTEE MEETINGS** are typically held the first and third Mondays of the month, 7:30 p.m., at the Sugarcreek Township Administration Offices, 2090 Ferry Road.
- **TRUSTEE WORK SESSIONS** are often held Wednesdays before the Trustee Meeting, 5:30 p.m., at the Township Administration Offices.
- **BOARD OF ZONING COMMISSION MEETINGS** are scheduled the second Tuesday of the month, 7:30 p.m., at the Sugarcreek Township Administration Offices.
- **BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MEETINGS** are scheduled the fourth Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m., at the Sugarcreek Township Administration Offices.
- **OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS** are held the third Wednesday of the month, 7:00 p.m., at the City of Bellbrook Administration Building, 15 East Franklin Street, in downtown Bellbrook.
- Changes in meeting dates, as well as cancellations, do occur from time to time. Go to [www.sugarcreektownship.com](http://www.sugarcreektownship.com) and click on our **COMMUNITY CALENDAR** for updates to meeting schedules.