



# Churchill Borough Local Government Newsletter

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Summer 2023

## Churchill Borough’s Determination to Promote Financial Health



The Local Government Academy (LGA), a 501(c)(3) public charity established in 1983, is an independent, non-partisan organization that promotes excellence in local government. The LGA’s Financial Health Assessment (FHA) is designed to modernize municipal financial documentation and management practices for municipalities that do not need a complete departmental analysis and financial report. The FHA provides a third-party technical expert to develop custom recommendations individualized to the municipality. The scope of work varies and addresses the Borough’s individual needs.

Valerie Reinthaler, Council Finance Committee Chair, stated that she is “excited that the Borough is participating in the Financial Health Assessment offered by the LGA. Think of it like a yearly physical an individual might do for themselves—but this is for our finances. As always, the Borough strives to be transparent with the residents and the FHA will allow us to continue on that path of transparency.”

## And ... what about the deer?



Diane Law

Churchill Borough Council’s ad hoc Deer Committee was created in 2023 in response to citizens’ concerns about damage to property and potential health and safety concerns. The committee consists of Council Members Diane Law and Matt Castiglia. The committee’s charge is to fully investigate the current state of research and expert opinion regarding control of the expanding deer population and to engage with other municipalities to determine what, if any, joint action could be taken to address the problem regionally.

A public forum was held on April 20 at the Blackridge Civic Association, which gave a chance for residents to express their opinions on the subject. The committee is grateful to the BCA for offering its facility to be used by the ad hoc committee. The consensus at the forum was that the deer damage residential trees and plants, and may be detrimental to the health and safety of the public. Most of the speakers acknowledged that finding solutions would be challenging. Churchill Borough will schedule more forums in the future as the committee’s work evolves.



Matt Castiglia

In the meantime, it would be helpful to share methods that Churchill residents have found effective in stopping deer damage to their **own** properties. **Please send a message to the Churchill Borough office describing what has, and has not, worked for YOU!** The results will be published for the benefit of all. Thank you!

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## Westinghouse Churchill Landscape: Once in Full Bloom

The former Westinghouse Research and Development Center, situated on 150 acres in Churchill Borough, holds a noteworthy place in the history of architecture, design, industry and science. The modernist corporate campus and landscape was designed throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, and is exemplary of midcentury suburban R&D facilities with an expanse of natural and curated, park-like surroundings.



Proximity to the cultural offerings of the city of Pittsburgh was certainly emphasized to employees by Westinghouse Corp., enticing leading experts from around the globe, hailing from over 30 countries, to join their efforts at the Churchill R&D — but so, too, was the lush landscape immediately surrounding the buildings on site, designed by the world renowned Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

**Tour Highlights**

All of the landscaping problems normally encountered in Allegheny County are represented at the Westinghouse R&D Center.

**PERENNIALS & ANNUALS (Tour No. 1)**

- The annuals in the formal gardens in front of Building 401 provide colorful blooms throughout the summer season.
- Rock plants and dwarf evergreens beautify the rocky area in back of Building 401.

**FLOWERING SHRUBS & TREES (Tour No. 2)**

- The naturalistic garden in back of Building 302 brings the woods right up to the building with such typical woodland plants as dogwoods, rhododendrons, birches and Austrian pines.

**SHADE TREES (Tour No. 3)**

- The trees at the R&D Center are selected to suit the soil conditions: maples, poplars, crabapples, Chinese pagodas, etc. for the limestone soil; oaks, evergreens and flowering trees for the acid soil.

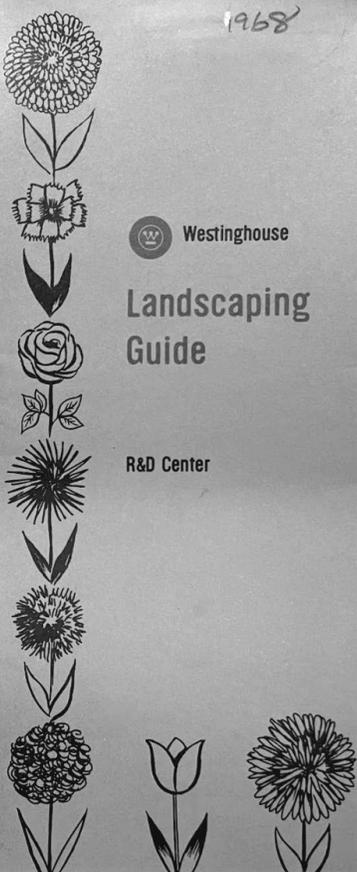
**FLOWERING TREES (Tour No. 4)**

- The Plaza and the areas in back of Buildings 501 and 601 make maximum use of deciduous flowering trees, which are most resistant to the wind and the acid soil in those areas.
- The planting of crown vetch has solved the erosion problem on the banks of the road in back of the R&D Center.

Tailoring to the site is the prime landscaping goal.

 Westinghouse Research Laboratories  
Beulah Rd., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15235

1968



 Westinghouse

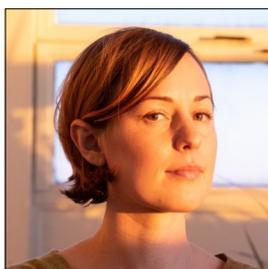
**Landscaping Guide**

R&D Center

The official Westinghouse Churchill Landscape Guide, printed in 1968, suggested four self-guided tours, each beginning at the plaza with the requisite water feature. Themes included *Perennials & Annuals*, covering colorful blooms and dwarf evergreens; *Flowering Shrubs & Trees*, such as Western Pennsylvania's beloved rhododendron; *Shade Trees*, from maples to poplars; and *Flowering Trees*.

Nearly 400 Western Pennsylvanian native species were thoughtfully integrated to enhance the setting for employees, executives and guests, with the tour encouraging the exploration of walking paths, open fields, wooded areas and a reservoir-lake containing wildlife. Between buildings 401 and 801 was nestled a Japanese Memorial Garden—presented to Westinghouse by the Mitsubishi Electric Corp. in 1973-74 on the 50th anniversary of their association. The garden, designed by three scientists at the facility, contained a stone lantern, evergreen pines, bright azaleas, a commemorative marker, a small pond with wooden bridge and a wooden wall structure.

And for the greatest landscaping gesture of all: the next time you fly into Pittsburgh on the rare occasion of a clear day, look toward the land as you approach the international airport from the east and see if you can spot—among the lush greenery or snowy treetops—the old familiar shape of a steam locomotive, celebrating the innovation achieved at Westinghouse from a bird’s eye view.



*Submitted by Brittany Reilly,  
Pittsburgh Modern Committee  
of Preservation Pittsburgh*

## Churchill Garden Club

The Churchill Garden Club was organized in 1949 “to promote an interest in horticulture, an appreciation of artistic design and an awareness of ecology and the environment.”

Monthly meetings and programs are held August through December and March through June. We strive to offer diverse topics to interest both beginning and seasoned veteran gardeners. Our 2022-23 programs included backyard pollinators, a walk/tour of Frick Environmental Center and grounds, plant propagation, perennials in the garden and a tour of an award-winning garden.

Our ongoing beautification projects include maintaining the community garden at the corner of Beulah and Churchill roads, and cleaning our local roads of litter through an adopt-a-highway-program. The clean-up group meets the third Wednesday of each month at 9 a.m. at the Churchill Borough Building, 2300 William Penn Highway. Volunteers are always welcome.

Membership is open to men and women interested in pursuing the goals of the Club. You need not be a Churchill resident to join. We welcome new members and would be delighted to have you attend a meeting. If interested, contact membership chair Eileen Kisloff at [emtkisloff@gmail.com](mailto:emtkisloff@gmail.com).

We hope you’ll stop by to say “hello” at our Garden Club table on Churchill Community Day, Aug. 12 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Pace School on Greensburg Pike.

*Submitted by Ilona Tassone, President*



*Some members of the Churchill Garden Club clean-up group.  
For more information, contact Paul Gamrat at  
[gamratpaul@gmail.com](mailto:gamratpaul@gmail.com).*

## Borough Council Action Items Update

This update provides a snapshot of recent ordinances, resolutions, and simple motions passed by the Borough Council. Details about ordinances and resolutions can be found on the Churchill Borough document eCode360 online repository. <https://ecode360.com/CH1558>

### Monday, March 13, 2023



Andrea Ditillo

- Adopted Resolution 4560 appointing Andrea Ditillo to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Adam McDowell from Churchill Borough Council.
- Adopted Resolution 4561 declaring the Borough's intent to follow the schedules and procedures for the disposition of records as outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipal Records Manual approved on December 16, 2008, as amended and the guidance for the Form of Permanent Recordation for Municipalities approved on March 28, 2019, as amended.
- Adopted Resolution 4562 to participate in the Local Government Academy Technical Assistance Program "Community Financial Health Assessment."
- Awarded the Churchill Borough 2023 Sewer Repair **Contract A – Sanitary and Storm Sewer Point Repairs** to the low bidder, **Soli Construction, Inc.**, in the amount of \$167,880.
- Awarded the Churchill Borough 2023 Sewer Repair Contract B – Sanitary and Storm Sewer MH to MH Lining Contract to the low bidder, Jet Jack, Inc., for \$158,200.

### Monday, April 10, 2023

- Adopted Ordinance 768 codifying the regulating of Short-Term Rentals in the Borough.
- Adopted Ordinance 769 codifying the regulation of Wireless Communications Facilities.
- Adopted Resolution 4563 to apply to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Municipal Assistance Program (MAP) program for funding assistance to update the Borough of Churchill Zoning Code.
- Adopted Resolution 4564 appointing Brooke Burchette-Williams as Delegate and Valerie Reinthaler as Alternate to the Allegheny County Southeast Tax Collection Committee (ACSTCC). The [ACSTCC](#) oversees the appointment and management of the Earned Income Tax Collector per Act 32 of 2008. Act 32 reduced Pennsylvania's 560 Earned Income Tax (EIT) collection entities to 69 Tax Collection Districts.
- Hired Pashek Associates to assist the Borough in updating the Borough Zoning Ordinance. [Pashek + MTR](#) is a small business and woman-owned business based in Pittsburgh. Pashek and Churchill Borough have a long history of working together. They were the planning consultants for the 2018 Churchill-Monroeville-Wilkins Multi-Municipal Plan and the Churchill Borough C-1 Vision project.
- Awarded the Churchill Borough 2023 Paving Program Base Bid and Ad Alternates, 1, 2, and 3, to A Liberoni, Inc. for the bid amount of \$487, 454. Funds to cover the costs for the 2023 paving program come from the Borough General Fund (local taxes) and the Pennsylvania Municipal Liquid Fuels Program (gas tax) administered by PennDOT. Staff will transfer the general and liquid fuels funds (highway funds) to the Borough capital reserve fund to cover the total estimated paving program costs.

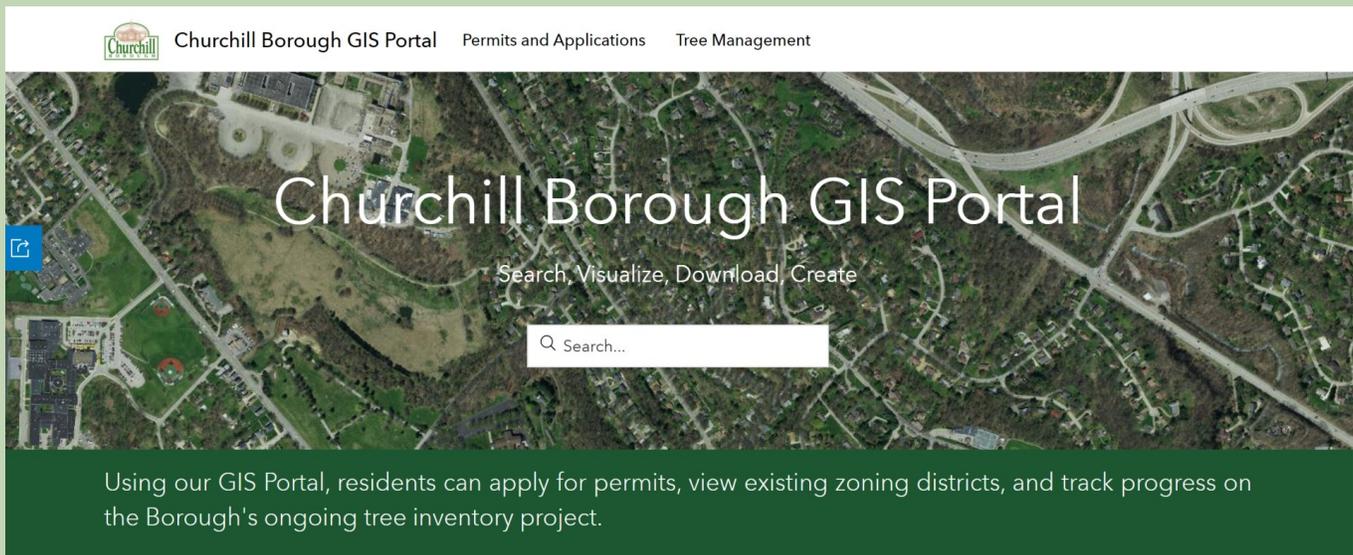
### Monday May 8, 2023

- Adopted Resolution 4565 to recognize National Police Week 2023 and to honor the service and sacrifice of those law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty while protecting our communities and safeguarding our democracy.
- Adopted Resolution 4566 to recognize National Public Works Week May 21–27, 2023, "Connecting the World Through Public Works."
- Directed the Borough Manager to advertise the draft "Lateral Ordinance" amending Chapter 246 ("sewers") of the Borough Code to include requirements for sanitary sewer lateral inspections. Inflow and infiltration from groundwater and surface water into the publicly owned sanitary sewer system can create excessive sanitary sewer flows, which will adversely impact the health, safety, and welfare of Borough residents and increase the costs for treatment and maintenance of the sanitary sewer system. To address this issue, Coun-

cil drafted an ordinance with the assistance of the Borough Solicitor and Engineer. The Draft Ordinance is contemplated to further the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the Borough, and the publicly owned sanitary sewer system, to amend Article X of Chapter 246 of the Code of the Borough of Churchill (“Faulty Connections; Certificate Required for Transfer of Real Property”) to include additional requirements and standards for the inspection of lateral sanitary sewer lines in connection with the sale of real property in the Borough.

### GIS Offers Information for Property Owners

Did you know that Churchill Borough’s website has a GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Portal? At the Borough’s GIS Portal, residents can apply for permits, view existing zoning districts, and track progress on the Borough’s ongoing tree inventory project. Check it out at <https://churchill-borough-gis-portal-chillboro.hub.arcgis.com/>



### Don't Risk Lyme Disease, Beware of Ticks

The risk of getting Lyme disease is high in this area, according to the Allegheny County Health Department. Generally, a tick must be attached for 24 to 36 hours or more before the bacteria that causes Lyme disease is transmitted. **Be proactive: use a repellent that contains at least 20% DEET; wear light-colored clothing; walk in the center of trails and avoid wooded areas or areas with brush, high grass and leaves; conduct full-body tick checks on yourself, children and your pets after spending time outside; take a bath or shower within two hours of coming inside.**

If you detect a red bulls-eye shape rash or develop a fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches or swollen lymph nodes, notify your primary care provider. Residents should watch for symptoms and notify their primary care provider immediately.

**GET OUTDOORS PA**  
Ticks shouldn't keep you from enjoying nature!

**Commonly Found Ticks in Pa.**

Black-legged "deer" tick	American dog tick	Groundhog tick	Lone star tick
 0 ¼ ½ This tick, a well-known carrier of Lyme disease, can feed on humans during any stage of its development. Adults tend to feed on deer, thus the name.	 0 ¼ ½ Feeding on most mammals, this tick is the most commonly found tick in Pa. and is a major carrier of Rocky Mountain spotted fever.	 0 ¼ ½ This tick tends to feed on groundhogs but occasionally is found on birds small animals or humans. Not likely to carry Lyme disease.	 0 ¼ ½ Although this tick is found on various animals, including humans, it is not likely to transmit Lyme disease. It is a carrier of Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

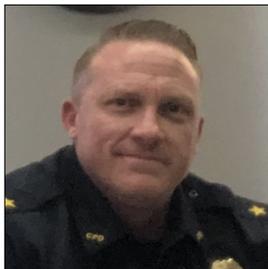
**Source: Penn State Cooperative Extension**

## An Opportunity for Solar Energy Discounts for Your Home



Churchill Borough is partnering with Solar United Neighbors (SUN) on the Allegheny County Solar and EV Charger Co-op! This is a free, zero-obligation program to help you go solar and feel confident through the process. A co-op is a large group of homeowners who go solar all at the same time, which helps you save money on solar. The nonprofit SUN has a team of technical experts who answer all your questions, guide you through the process and advocate on your behalf. SUN has already educated over 480 Allegheny County residents and helped over 80 of those go solar. Solar energy is the wave of the future and in the long run can save you hundreds and thousands of dollars. Find more information at the co-op website at [solarunitedneighbors.org/Allegheny](http://solarunitedneighbors.org/Allegheny) or email SUN [pateam@solarunitedneighbors.org](mailto:pateam@solarunitedneighbors.org).

## Report from the Police Chief



Chief Akerley

As the weather gets warmer, we inevitably see an influx of walkers, joggers, dog walkers and cyclists on many of our local streets and roadways. Because of this, officers significantly ramp up their efforts to conduct moving violation traffic enforcement, particularly regarding speeding infractions. Distracted

driving habits such as smartphone usage also pose a significant threat to pedestrians and other motorists, and officers diligently look for these infractions as well.



There were two fatal vehicle accidents in the Borough during April and speed played a factor in both incidents.

In the coming months, Churchill Police will be utilizing a new tool to help significantly deter these dangerous violations, as we recently took delivery of two **SpeedAlert 18** speed enforcement signs. The Borough purchased these highly accurate electronic speed enforcement signs thanks to grant money acquired with the help of State Senator Jay Costa and support from our Council.

These sophisticated devices are stand-alone, solar-powered units equipped with radar for capturing a motorist's speed and then boldly displaying it via LED signage. For vehicles traveling significantly faster than the posted speed limit, red-and-blue LED warning strobes also then illuminate. Pre-programmed messages can also be displayed. In addition to speed capture, these devices can also monitor and retain other pertinent information via TraffiCloud® software, such as real-time traffic data, average speed volume reports, high speeds alerts and violator vehicle photography—all of which can be accessed remotely and on-demand via WiFi and Bluetooth connectivity.

I recently met with our engineering partners from Gateway Engineers at the proposed locations for placement of the devices:

- 1400 block Beulah Rd (southbound)
- 2500 block Greensburg Pike (southbound).

Upon completion of their site analysis, the signs can then be erected. We are waiting for sign permits to be issued by the state for Beulah Road and the county for Greensburg Pike, since these are not borough-maintained roads. Though the new signage should certainly help to reduce speeding violations, the best and most efficient means of curbing these issues is for simply for motorists to always be cognizant of their speeds, and to be always alert and responsible behind the wheel.

Let us all do our part to make Churchill Borough the safest place we can, for our own loved ones, our neighbors and our visitors alike!

*Submitted by Chief of Police Ronald M. Akerley*

## Pennsylvania's Texting-While-Driving Ban



In 2018, there were 14,202 distracted driver crashes in Pennsylvania, resulting in 65 fatalities. Numerous studies indicate that texting drivers typically divert their eyes from the road longer than any other distraction.

Pennsylvania law prohibits as a primary offense any driver from using an Interactive Wireless Communication Device (IWCD) to send, read or write a text-based communication while his or her vehicle is in motion.

Banning drivers from using any IWCD for text-based communications while operating a motor vehicle will help to ensure that their full attention is on the task of driving.

- ✓ Defines an IWCD as a wireless phone, personal digital assistant, smartphone, portable or mobile computer or similar devices that can be used for texting, instant messaging, emailing or browsing the Internet.
- ✓ Defines a text-based communication as a text message, instant message, email or other written communication composed or received on an IWCD.
- ✓ Institutes a \$50 fine for convictions under this section.
- ✓ Makes clear that this law supersedes and preempts any local ordinances restricting the use of interactive wireless devices by drivers.
- ✓ The penalty is a summary offense with a \$50 fine, plus court costs and other fees. The violation carries no points as a penalty and will not be recorded on the driver record for non-commercial drivers. It will be recorded on commercial drivers' records as a non-sanction violation.
- ✓ The texting ban does NOT include the use of a GPS device, a system or device that is physically or electronically integrated into the vehicle, or a communications device that is affixed to a mass transit vehicle, bus or school bus. The law does not authorize the seizure of an IWCD.

## News from Tax Collector Danielle Weaver



Unpaid Churchill real estate taxes must be postmarked by Dec. 31, 2023 at the penalty amount shown on your tax bill. On Jan. 1, 2024, unpaid taxes will be turned over to Jordan Tax Service for collection and additional fees will be added.

### Woodland Hills School District

School taxes will be mailed at the beginning of July. Aug. 31 is the end of the 2% discount period. If you are making installment payments for your Woodland Hills school taxes, the first installment payments must be postmarked by October 31, 2023. To make a payment in person and get a stamped receipt, I will be in the Yagle room at the

Churchill Borough Building on the following dates: Thursdays and Fridays, Aug. 17, 18, 24 and 25 from 6 to 7 p.m.; Saturdays, Aug. 19 and 26, from 10 to 11 a.m.

### Online Bill Pay

I'm encouraging everyone to use online bill pay. The account number is your Lot/Block number. Pay to is my name and address located on your bill. Please put your phone number in the memo. If you are already using your online bill pay through your bank, please change the tax office mailing address. We moved this year and the new address is: 3710 Henley Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.

*Submitted by Tax Collector Danielle Weaver*

## A Message from the Mayor



Thank you to the homeowners who have made their house numbers more visible. House numbers should be big and bold. According to the International Building Code, each number must be a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) in height with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inches (12.7mm). If your home is not visible from the street due to distance or vegetation, the house numbers should be mounted near the street on a post or fence. House numbers should be placed near the front door within a radius of the porch light and above eye level. This is extremely important for emergency situations, especially at night. Having difficulty finding an address delays critical response time.

**Speeding:** As we move into the warmer weather and more people are outside, please be mindful of the speed limits and signage not only in the Borough but everywhere you drive. Have a safe and happy summer!

**New Police Vehicle:** Chief Ron Akerley finally received the new 2022 Ford Interceptor SUV. The cruiser has been striped with decals and fitted for police work. It is equipped with the latest computer systems and light systems, which will make it more visible to motorists.

**Public Safety Committee:** Within the Borough Council, there is a Public Safety Committee chaired by Diane Law with members Jay Dworin and Deb Casini-Klein. This Committee oversees the police department and volunteer fire company. This committee also addresses any other public safety issues in the Borough, examines ideas and concepts to improve public safety and health, and works in conjunction with the Fire Chief, Chief of Police and Mayor to assure the Police Department, Fire company and Emergency Management work in an efficient manner. The committee recommends draft resolutions, ordinances and motions for consideration by Borough Council. The committee also reviews and comments on budget items related to public safety. This Committee works in cooperation with the Mayor, who has authority over the Police Department, as delegated under the Borough Code. If you have any concerns, there is a Public Safety Committee Contact Form that can be found on the Borough webpage.

**Emergency Management:** In response to the disastrous train derailment in Palestine, Ohio, Churchill Borough officials have set up courses for elected officials to be aware of a strategic plan if something similar would happen in our area. The goal is to support the professionalization of emergency management. Several members of council and I have gone through the training. Additional sessions will be held again this summer and our hope is to have all the council on board. The National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) association dedicated to enhancing public safety by improving the nation's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from all emergencies, disasters, and threats to our nation's security. NEMA is the professional association of and for emergency management directors from all 50 states, eight U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia.

*Submitted by Mayor Paul Gamrat*



Chief Akerley and Mayor Gamrat with new police vehicle.

## Beware the Lanternfly!

# SPOTTED LANTERNFLY



ACTUAL SIZE: 1"  
Adult (wings closed) can be found in July–December



ACTUAL SIZE: 1/8–1/4"  
Nymph (early stage) can be found late April–July



ACTUAL SIZE: 4.5"  
Egg mass (fresh) can be found September–June



ACTUAL SIZE: 1.5"  
Adult (wings open) can be found July–December



ACTUAL SIZE: 1/2"  
Nymph (late stage) can be found July–September



ACTUAL SIZE: 1.5"  
Egg mass (older) can be found September–June

<https://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly>

The Spotted Lanternfly is a planthopper indigenous to parts of China and Vietnam. It has spread invasively to Japan, South Korea, and the United States. If not contained, the insect could potentially drain Pennsylvania's economy of at least \$324 million annually, according to a study carried out by economists at Penn State.

The Spotted Lanternfly is not harmful to humans. They do not sting or bite, but they can be very destructive. If you find any life stage of Spotted Lanternfly, **you should try to destroy it**. This insect is considered a threat to some crops and many people are working to try to prevent it from spreading. If you find Spotted Lanternfly egg masses, smash them and give yourself a pat on the back—you just prevented up to 50 Lanternflies from hatching! Egg masses can be smashed with a stick, hand or scraper card.

It is important for landowners to avoid spreading the Spotted Lanternfly. If you spot an outbreak, please call 1-888-422-3359. Agencies are working to contain this pest and we need to do our part.

## Welcome to Pennsylvania's Yellow Dot Program!

This program was created to assist citizens in the "golden hour" of emergency care following a traffic accident when they may not be able to communicate their needs themselves. Placing a yellow dot in your vehicle's rear window alerts first responders to check your glove compartment for vital information to ensure you receive the medical attention you need.

The program is a cooperative effort of the Pennsylvania Departments of Transportation, Health and Aging; the Pennsylvania State Police; the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission; and First Responders and local law enforcement. Citizens can complete a participation form online at <https://tinyurl.com/zncyw7ex> to have PennDOT mail them a Yellow Dot kit.

Upon receipt, participants should complete the information section, which includes emergency contact information, medical history, medications, allergies, and doctors. A photo (showing only the head and shoulders) is then taped to the appropriate location inside the booklet. The kit should then be placed in the vehicle's glove compartment. The Yellow Dot decal is placed in the lower left corner of the participant's rear windshield, no higher than 3 inches from the bottom.



## Woodland Hills Students Make Churchill (and Wilkins) Greener

The Churchill Borough Tree Committee continues to engage in the Woodland Hills School District Climate Initiative that involved four tree planting events this spring at three school sites and the Churchill Valley Greenway to address air quality concerns and CO<sub>2</sub> absorption. The largest event was held on Friday, April 14, 2023, when more than 80 students, teachers, staff, and parents planted 150 trees on a large slope in the Churchill Valley Greenway below Saybrook Drive. The Allegheny Land Trust hosted the event in collaboration with Tree Pittsburgh, which provided all the trees as part of their *One Tree Per Child* Program with support of an Allegheny County Health Department grant. Other partners included Communitopia, who serves as climate change education advisors for the school district, Churchill Mayor Paul Gamrat, Borough Staff, the Tree Committee, and several residents.

Special appreciation goes to Woodland Hills teachers Jodi Blasi, Margeaux Everhart, and Cathie Pearson, who



coordinated the transportation and participation of 60 students from the Woodland Hills Senior High School and more than 20 students from Turtle Creek Elementary STEAM Academy. This tree planting effort is part of a reforestation effort by the Allegheny Land Trust with plans underway to plant 500 trees in fall 2023.

Another major tree planting event was held at the Woodland Hills Senior High School campus on Wednesday, May 3, 2023, in cool, damp windy conditions. High school students planted more than 30 large trees with support and guidance of Tree Pittsburgh arborist Jake Milofsky and *One Tree Per Child* Program Coordinator Clara Kitongo. These trees were provided via partnership of the Pittsburgh Penguins with Davey Tree Expert Company to create the *Score for the Trees* Program where one tree is planted in the Pittsburgh region for every goal scored during the 2022-2023 season. Thanks to the team's efforts, there are 142 large new trees being planted in the Pittsburgh region, including Woodland Hills, helping to restore and protect the urban forest. U.S. Steel also provided an equal number of large trees via The Arbor Day Foundation to create a more green and sustainable community. Representatives from Davey and U.S. Steel joined members from *Tree Pittsburgh*, Communitopia, and the Churchill Tree Committee to help the students plant the large trees. Eighteen new large spruce trees now line Greensburg Pike, and several large flowering crabapple trees now line the entrance to the high school (See photo). Large trees were also planted near the high school building. Finally, three large chinkapin oak trees were planted on the grassy, sloping hillside below Pace School that will even-

tually become towering, massive trees that can survive high winds. The oldest tree in the state is a chinkapin oak tree that is more than 500 years old in Oley, Pennsylvania. Similar tree planting events were also held at Dickson Preparatory STEAM Academy and Wilkins Elementary STEAM Academy, where several large flowering trees were planted near Edgewood Country Club.

While the planting of about 250 trees by the Woodland Hills students, is admirable, this effort falls short of offsetting the removal of scores of large trees across Churchill Borough by the power company and by individual residents. The Tree Committee will be meeting with the Borough Council Climate Action Committee to determine ways to save our precious tree canopy.



*Submitted by Ken Balkey,  
Chair, Churchill Borough  
Tree Committee*

## Pitt Engineering Students Develop Concept for New Public Works Building



University of Pittsburgh students Khalil Abdullah, Mary Casamassa, Jack Gurbacki, Brandon Taylor, and Nehemiah Vargas completed their Senior Design, Spring 2023 semester project by performing a Churchill Borough Public Works Building feasibility study. Under their team name, “STEEL CITY DESIGN-BUILD,” these undergraduate engineering students at the University of Pittsburgh completed the project to fulfill the academic requirements of their Senior Design course.

Churchill Borough staff and Council’s Infrastructure Committee worked with the students to complete the project. The Borough’s current public services garage is on the old Westinghouse site. This site was almost developed as an Amazon distribution center in 2022, and the Borough wants to be prepared when another buyer comes along and forces them to vacate the site. Steel City Design-Build provided the site design and structural design for the new public services building, proposed to be located next to the Borough Municipal Building along William Penn Highway. More information can be found online at [https://ecode360.com/CH1558/documents/Comprehensive\\_Plans](https://ecode360.com/CH1558/documents/Comprehensive_Plans).

The student project represents a concept plan, and at this point, Borough Council has not taken any next steps to determine the feasibility of the plan further, nor has it developed any other alternative plans.

## Ensuring—and Insuring—a Good Summer

For many, summertime means easy-living—swimming, traveling or fun at home with family and friends. The Pennsylvania Insurance Department reminds consumers to keep insurance needs in mind when vacationing, entertaining or enjoying other warm-weather activities.

### *For your home and property:*

- Installing a pool, or already have one? Pools increase your liability risk so you will need to bring your homeowners policy up-to-date. Consider increasing your coverage amount to at least \$300,000 to \$500,000.
- Having a yard sale? Your homeowners and renters insurance policies may provide liability protection to cover you against lawsuits if someone is injured or items are damaged during that time.
- Taking an extended vacation? Insurance companies may consider unoccupied homes as high risk. Check with your insurance company before you leave for a long trip.
- Hosting a party? Consumers should look into a social host liability policy. Policies can be purchased for limits **ranging** from \$50,000 to \$2 million.

### *For your means of travel:*

- Renting a car? Consider buying the rental car insurance coverage offered by the agency.
- Do you own a jet ski? Consider buying insurance coverage that includes bodily injury, property damage, liability and theft.

### *For your health and belongings:*

Some insurance coverage does travel. Look into your health and homeowners policy.

## Prevent Pollution When Washing Your Car

Oil, grease, salt, soap and sediment are just a few of the pollutants that you wash off from your car. These pollutants typically drain into the sewer system and are untreated when entering waterways. Fish and other aquatic life are harmed by hard detergent chemicals, soap phosphates can cause excess algae to grow. One way to help protect water life is to minimize or eliminate pollution caused by washing your car. Here are some tips:

- ✓ Use a self-serve or machine car wash as the water drains to the sanitary sewers, where it will be treated. These methods use up to 60% less water compared to washing at home.
- ✓ If washing at home, use a gravel or grassy area where the water can infiltrate into the ground instead of the storm sewer system.
- ✓ Before washing, clean the driveway of any debris that might be carried into a storm sewer drain.
- ✓ Use phosphate-free or biodegradable soap.
- ✓ Use a pressure washer instead of soaps.
- ✓ If you are conducting a charity car wash, use non-polluting soaps, use a spray nozzle, see if water can be diverted to a grassy area to protect inlets or ask owners of self-serve car washes about donating their space for the fundraiser.

*Submitted by Gateway Engineers*



## Borough Offices Closed September 4 for Labor Day

Labor Day is a day to honor and recognize the American labor movement and the works and contributions of laborers to the development and achievements of the United States.

## Waste Management Upgrades Recycling Facility



Waste Management, Churchill's waste contractor, is excited to announce its recycling facility in Pittsburgh will soon begin significant equipment upgrades. The facility, which sits on Neville Island, processes about 250 tons per day or 5,000 per month. The upgrades are scheduled to take place at the beginning of summer and should be complete by the first quarter of 2024.

Upgrades to the plant include increased capacity and an expanded roster of acceptable material. Sorting equipment will now be able to process more plastic grades, like plastic #5, along with high-grade commercial paper. Even with the new upgrades, residents should continue to look at the shape of their plastic containers. Only plastic bottles, jars, jugs and tubs should be placed in recycling carts. In addition, more automated sorting equipment will be installed in the pre-sort area, in the cardboard sorting screens and in our aluminum recovery.

With the new, advanced equipment, the facility will be able to process 25 tons of material per hour. Across the country, WM is investing roughly \$880 million in recycling to help create a more sustainable tomorrow and continue to drive sustainability efforts. To learn more about WM and how it works for a sustainable to-

### RECYCLING TIPS

There are three basic rules of recycling. Knowing these rules and putting them into practice will help you recycle more efficiently. And it will help to ensure everything that makes it into your bin finds a second life.



RULE 1

**Recycle bottles, cans, paper and cardboard.**



RULE 2

**Keep food and liquid out of your recycling.**



RULE 3

**No loose plastic bags and no bagged recyclables.**

**This is what is accepted in your bin:** Plastic bottles and containers, beverage cans (rinsed out), flattened cardboard and papers. Food cardboard pizza delivery boxes without leftovers or liners should be recycled; leftover crusts, cheese and other food should not.

**This is what is NOT accepted:** bagged recyclables, plastic bags, plastic wrap, film, cups with wax or plastic coatings, Styrofoam, dangling things (jewelry,) dirty diapers, medical waste, household items, garage waste, aerosol cans.

For more specific information, go to the Waste Management website: [www.wm.com](http://www.wm.com)

## Too Much for Trash Can? Not Enough for a Dumpster?



The Bagster is the cost-effective, on-demand solution for your projects that generate unwanted debris. It is the portable dumpster that can be purchased through the Borough or at your local lumberyard, home improvement store, hardware store, etc. The Bagster bag has the capacity to hold up to 3 cubic yards/3,300 pounds of debris. Other acceptable items are concrete (1 cubic yard), construction materials, plaster, asphalt pavement, roofing shingles, carpet, etc. For more information about the Bagster, visit [www.thebagster.com](http://www.thebagster.com).

## Is a Playpark in Churchill's Future?



Churchill Borough Council voted on May 8 to apply to the Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP) for funds to design and construct a fully accessible play park with soccer fields. Council President Jay Dworin provided some background about the idea for an accessible playpark and soccer fields. It started when his daughter requested a playground for her friends with disabilities and her to play. Soccer fields are needed to meet the growing demand.

Discussions to create an inclusive playpark and soccer fields also involved the Allegheny Land Trusts' efforts to acquire the former Churchill Valley Country Club and create the Churchill Valley Greenway. As a result, the park and soccer fields may end up on the Greenway property, Bullock Pens Park or possibly another location. The project has secured \$1 million from the COVID-19 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Pandemic Response grant. Pennsylvania State Sen. Jay Costa was instrumental in securing the ARPA grant.

The next steps include building a coalition of willing partners to help support this new regional asset and completing preliminary planning and design. The coalition would include Allegheny County, regional and local government partners, and public and private funding sources. The total cost of the entire undertaking could be \$3.5 million or higher.



**Churchill**  
B O R O U G H

**COMMUNITY DAY**

**Saturday, August 12, 2023 • 11AM-4PM**

**RAIN**  
OR  
*Shine*

## **Pace School**

***2432 Greensburg Pike, Churchill 15221***

- Food Trucks
- Music
- Games
- Basket Raffle
- Kids Games
- Face Painting
- Balloon Animals
- 50/50 Raffle
- *And more!*



**Churchill Borough**  
**2300 William Penn Highway**  
**Pittsburgh, PA 15235**

**Churchill Borough Elected Officials:**

**Mayor:** Paul Gamrat

**Borough Council:**

**President:** Jay Dworin

**Vice President:** Diane Law

Brooke Burchette-Williams

Deb Casini Klein

Matthew Castiglia

Andrea Ditillo

Valerie Reinthaler

**Tax Collector:** Danielle Weaver

**Churchill Borough Government Newsletter:**

**Content Editor:** Zandy Dudiak

**Layout Editor:** Leanne Longwill

**Find us on social media:**



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**Contact the Borough, Keep Informed**

Any resident who has questions or concerns about Churchill Borough matters is encouraged to call, text, or email Borough Manager Alex Graziani at 412-758-8818 or [alex@churchillborough.com](mailto:alex@churchillborough.com). The Borough website is a one-stop source of information about Churchill, such as the Borough Code online, meeting agendas and minutes, past newsletters, community calendar and recreation programs. Visit [www.churchillborough.com](http://www.churchillborough.com).

**Savvy Citizen Simple. Convenient. Free.**



It's simple, really... the Borough's easy way to communicate in ways that are convenient to you. You decide what information you want. You decide how you want to receive it.

When Churchill Borough has useful information to share, we'll notify you. Sign up at [www.savvycitizenapp.com](http://www.savvycitizenapp.com).

**New Resident Packets**



Are you a new resident? Or have a new neighbor? Check out the new resident packet! It includes helpful information such as trash pick up schedule, tax information, and so much more. Click the QR code to view or go to

<https://ecode360.com/documents/CH1558/public/714954525.pdf>