



# Churchill Borough Local Government Newsletter

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Spring 2024

## Meet the Borough Administration

Everything is new with Churchill Borough’s administration in 2024. Council has a new president and two Borough officials have moved up to new jobs.



Valerie Reinthaler  
and family



Michelle McAndrew  
and family



Ashley Brown  
and her twins

### Valerie Reinthaler - President of Council

Valerie has been with Borough Council since October 2020. In 2024, she was appointed as Churchill Borough Council President and appointed Diane Law as Council Vice President. With a background in social work, nonprofit management and a master’s degree in public health, Valerie has always given back to the communities in which she has lived. Born in Barranquilla, Colombia, she grew up in Florida and attended Florida State University before moving to Pittsburgh.

Joining Council has provided her with the perfect opportunity to use the skills gained throughout her career to give back to the community. Valerie has chaired the Communication and Finance Committee and currently chairs the Management and Government Committee. Valerie is married to her high school sweetheart and is mother to two children. She thinks it’s important to attract young families to the Borough. Valerie loves cooking and golfing, and you might bump into her at Edgewood Country Club or another local course. She works for the Allegheny County Treasurer Office as the Director of Team Transportation.

### Michelle McAndrew - Borough Manager

Michelle joined the Borough in 2022 as the Assistant Borough Manager/Finance Officer and, in 2024, Council appointed her as Borough Manager. She is honored and excited to serve the residents of Churchill Borough.

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Michelle holds two master's degrees, one from Carlow University in Secondary Education and the other from the University of Pittsburgh in Public Policy Management. She has been happily married to her husband, Joe, for almost seven years, and together they have three daughters, all of whom are under the age of three.

### **Ashley Brown - Assistant Borough Manager/ Finance Officer**

Ashley officially joined the Borough Administration in February 2023 as the Resident Service Specialist after working with the Borough since Fall 2022. She was born and raised in New York with her three older sisters. Joining the Borough Administration has provided Ashley an opportunity to understand the true importance and value of local government. Ashley is mother to identical twin boys, to whom she is dedicated to spending most of her time. She also enjoys outdoor activities, playing sports and cooking.

## **Stonebraker Serves as New Property Safety Specialist**



Scott Stonebraker and wife Erika

Scott Stonebraker has begun working as the Borough's first Property Safety Specialist. He assumed the newly created position in February after being appointed by Borough Council. Scott is part of a team with Borough Manager Michelle McAndrew and the department heads that supports the Borough codes and policies and provides excellent public service. "I grew up here," he says. "I'm glad to be helping the borough."

Prior to Scott joining the team, the Borough relied on a third-party company to enforce the codes and conduct occupancy inspections on a weekly basis. The biggest difference with having Scott on board is that he will be focusing daily on consistent enforcement.

### **Why Ordinances Are So Important**

"Ordinances are critical in maintaining the overall well-being, safety, and beauty of our borough," Scott says.

Churchill's mission is to protect people and property; and to make the community a safe, attractive, and healthy borough that is appealing to families and individuals. Ordinances are crucial in establishing rules and regulations that help guide various aspects of our community life.

While there are many ordinances pertaining to a variety of regulations, Scott says the main ordinances that need our most attention deal with **trash cans**, **overgrown grass** and **weeds**, and **dumpsters**. For example, according to our ordinance, trash cans may not be left at the curb for more than 24 hours and must be stored away from view when not at the curb.

Scott's new position will help ensure that residents adhere to these ordinances, which benefits everyone as far as safety is concerned and maintaining property value.

In April, Scott expects to finish a course for certification to issue occupancy permits, including lateral inspections and dye tests of the sanitary sewer system. "Once I get certified, I will actually be doing it myself," he says.

The list of Churchill's ordinances can be found on the Borough website: [www.churchillborough.com](http://www.churchillborough.com).

### **Fire Safety**

A member of the Churchill Volunteer Fire Company since August 2013, Scott will continue to run daylight fire calls with Fire Chief Ralph Zatlin as part of his official duties. He also reminds residents that Churchill VFC, like most other fire companies, is in desperate need of volunteers.

Under the Borough Code, homeowners are required to place a smoke detector inside each bedroom. Also, one smoke and carbon dioxide detector must be installed on each floor. Churchill VFC recommends changing batteries in the devices when the switch to and from Daylight Savings Time occurs.

"It used to be detectors were required just in the hallway," Scott says, noting that because many people sleep with their bedroom doors closed, they might sleep through an alarm sounding in another location.

Scott can be reached at 412-241-7113, ext. 204 to answer questions or concerns. If he is out of the office, please leave a message.

**Did You Know?**



Allegheny County is expected to pay more than **\$1.6 billion in the next 15 years** to keep our community safe from the impacts of climate change, like heavy rain and high heat.

How do you think Churchill should prepare? Scan the QR code to fill out our survey.



**What is Active Transportation?**

Active Transportation means any human-powered way of getting around and includes biking, walking or rolling. Active transportation planning also includes addressing access to public transportation. This is because many people will use a human-powered way to get to a bus stop.

**Why Is Active Transportation Important?**

The ability to walk, bike or wheel somewhere lowers fuel consumption and costs; reduces congestion, vehicle emissions and air pollution; and facilitates opportunities to exercise and socialize! Walking, biking and other forms of human-powered mobility improve overall health, well-being and quality of life in the Borough, and can help contribute to and spur the local economy.

**How does an Active Transportation Plan help the Borough?**

It helps us identify projects and policies that will improve our infrastructure and make walking, biking and wheeling through the Borough safer and more convenient. We'll also identify where public transportation services are needed most and how we can work with our regional partners to improve access to public and shared transportation services. An adopted ATP will identify and prioritize projects to improve connectivity and outline strategies to fund infrastructure improvements. It will also make the Borough more competitive when applying for grants! For more information, visit:

[www.churchillborough.com/government/active-transportation-plan](http://www.churchillborough.com/government/active-transportation-plan).

**CHURCHILL'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**  
**JUNE 7, 2024**  
 Residents are invited for cake and ice cream from 3-7:30 pm in the Yagle Room  
 2300 William Penn Highway  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15235

**EV Charger Reminder**

There are three EV Chargers in the Churchill Borough parking lot that are available 24/7 for your electric vehicle charging needs.

**Black Gold Mulch**

For any new residents, Black Gold is the result of all the leaves that were collected and composted in Fall 2023. Leaf compost is a nutrient-rich garden soil addition that can be used as organic mulch.

This year, the compost will be ready for distribution on June 1 and 8, 7:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Delivery is available at a set cost of \$10/bucket of mulch (2 buckets = 4 cubic yards) plus \$35 for delivery. **All delivery orders must be paid in advance at the borough office.**

The benefits of leaf compost are numerous, including

- Increasing the porosity of the soil
- Raising the fertility of the soil
- Diminishing the strain on landfills
- Creating a living "blanket" over your plants
- Reducing rainfall runoff.

**From this . . .**



**. . . to this!**



## News from Tax Collector Danielle Weaver



### Churchill Borough

The Churchill Borough tax statements were mailed March 1, 2024. If paid by April 31, 2024, you will receive a 2% discount. Face amount must be paid by June 30, 2024 to avoid a 10% penalty. The details will be included with your tax bill.

Tax Collector Danielle Weaver will be at the Borough Building’s Yagle room to accept your tax payments on the following dates:

Thursday and Friday, April 18 and 19 from 6-7 p.m.

Saturday, April 20 from 10-11 a.m.

Thursday and Friday, April 25 and 26 from 6-7 p.m.

Saturday, April 27 from 10-11 a.m.

**PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR PHONE NUMBER ON YOUR CHECK.** This will not be shared with anyone. It is for my use only. Many checks were returned in 2023 because of errors and a few resulted in additional charges.

### Mortgages

If you pay off your mortgage, refinance your mortgage or it was sold to another company, I need your new mortgage company’s “Tax Bill Mailing Address.” Please call me, Danielle Weaver, at 412-241-0815 so I can update my records.

### Homestead Act

New homeowners: Note for next year, you must apply before March 1 for the Homestead Act discount. Information can be found on the Allegheny County website.

**IF YOU ARE HAVING FINANCIAL ISSUES AND FIND IT DIFFICULT TO PAY YOUR TAXES IN FULL, PLEASE CONTACT ME.**



The garden, at the corner of Beulah and Churchill Roads, is maintained by the Churchill Garden Club. See page 12 for details.



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Churchill Community Day!**  
**Saturday, August 10**  
**11 a.m. to 4 p.m.**  
**Pace School**  
**2432 Greensburg Pike**  
**Featuring food trucks,**  
**live entertainment,**  
**games for the kids**  
**and so much more.**

## Primary Election Date Set for April 23

**Next election is:**  
**April 23**  
 2024 PA Primary

The Spring Primary will be held on Tuesday, April 23. Polls are open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. If you recently moved to Churchill or you don't know your district, you can access your Polling District location at:

[www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/PollingPlaceInfo.aspx](http://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/PollingPlaceInfo.aspx).

Residents can apply for an absentee or mail-in ballot by clicking on this link: [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com) or calling 1-877-VotesPA (Option 3). You may also contact the Borough Office.

Pennsylvania is a closed primary state. Therefore, if you are registered as "Independent" or "Unaffiliated" you CANNOT

vote for any party candidates. There is still time to change your voter registration, affiliate with a party of your choice, and become completely enfranchised.

On your ballot will be candidates running for the following offices:

### Federal

Office of the President of the United States

U.S. Senator

U.S. Representative - District 17

Delegate and Alternate Delegate to the National Party Conventions by Congressional District

### State

Attorney General

Auditor General

State Treasurer

Senator in the General Assembly - District 43

Representative in the General Assembly - PA House District 34

### Important Dates:

Last day to register before the Primary Election: **April 8**

Last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot: **April 16**

Last day for County Board of Elections to receive mail-in or absentee ballots: **April 23 (must be received by 8 p.m.)**.

**PRIMARY ELECTION: Tuesday, April 23 (7 a.m.-8 p.m.)**

### Helpful web resources for Churchill residents:

Churchill polling locations: [www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/PollingPlaceInfo.aspx](http://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/PollingPlaceInfo.aspx)

PA voting information: [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com)

League of Women Voters voting information: [www.lwvpg.org](http://www.lwvpg.org)

Vote 411: [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org)

Allegheny County sample ballots: <https://apps.alleghenycounty.us/website/ElectPollPlace.aspx>

### Helpful Phone Numbers:

Churchill Borough Office: 412-241-7113

Allegheny County Elections Division: 412-350-4500

## Message from the Mayor



### News from the Police Side

The Police Department consists of Chief Ronald Akerley, and eight officers. We maintain a fleet of five vehicles. The oldest is a 2013 Ford Taurus sedan and our newest is the 2022 Dodge Durango SUV. The Chief is responsible for planning, overseeing and directing the activities, operations, department personnel and for a multitude of additional responsibilities. Our officers are highly qualified and experienced in current police policies. I receive many compliments from residents and nonresidents on the treatment they receive from our officers.

Officer Chris Lewandowski was instrumental in breaking up a ring of counterfeiters who were fraudulently purchasing items with counterfeit bills. It was through his observations and a current BOLO (Be on the Look-out) that he was able to effect a traffic stop resulting in the arrest of three individuals. Officer Lewandowski also received thanks for assisting a retired city firefighter during an emergency after finding him unconscious behind the wheel of his vehicle after it drifted down a hill. He had to break the window in order to render aid until the EMS arrived and transported the man to the hospital.

After an investigation by Officer Jeff Henzler, a resident was successful in obtaining a deposit of nearly \$18,000 from a contractor who committed fraud for renovations.

We are fortunate to have such an outstanding group of men and women. They continue to protect and serve us every day.

### Beulah Road Update



By now, you may have noticed that the right shoulder on Beulah Road between Fenwick and Lewin Lane has been marked off. This single-lane restriction actually begins at the light at Churchill Road. This was done to reduce the number of accidents at Lewin and Beulah. Traffic statistics have shown that there has not been one accident reported in that area since this was implemented.

Another benefit is that the speed of vehicles has been reduced. As a reminder, a solid white line designated the edge of a road and should never be crossed. The white line exists as a boundary for your safety, meaning there are no turns allowed from the shoulder. There is no passing allowed on that southbound lane heading toward Turtle Creek. I have personally experienced motorists passing me on the right from the shoulder. Please check your speed when traveling on Beulah, which is posted at 35 mph. Those residents should be able to safely enter and exit their driveways without fear of speeding vehicles.

It has been reported to me from both the Chief and Public Works that the number of vehicle/deer collisions has decreased over the months. Why is this? Hard to say. There is still a healthy herd that roams our Borough. Are motorists driving more carefully when traveling? Are the deer looking both ways before they cross the road?

### House Numbers

I still see homes in our Borough with hard-to-read or missing house numbers. This is a matter of public safety. Seconds count in an emergency for our police, fire and EMS. Please be sure that your house numbers are clearly and readily visible.



### Walking Tips

We have a number of residents who are out walking our roadways. As we walk pets, exercise or go to work or school, we should be exercising caution. Some tips to remember:

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- Always walk facing traffic
- Wear light-colored clothing
- Adding anything reflective is suggested
- When walking at night, carry some kind of light. It is hard to see anyone walking in the dark, especially when it is raining.

*Submitted by Mayor Paul Gamrat*

## National Police Week



National Police Week occurs every May. In 1962, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which it falls as National Police Week. Established by a joint resolution of Congress in 1962, National Police Week pays special recognition to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others. We appreciate the daily efforts of our Borough police force in keeping residents and property safe.

## Greetings from your Chief of Police!

There are many reasons why Churchill has become one of the premier suburb locations to call home. From our beautiful tree-lined streets and quiet, tranquil and safe neighborhoods to our dedicated and friendly Borough staff who embrace an unwavering commitment to providing our residents with the best service possible.

Recently and in an effort to not only continue but enhance the level of service our residents have come to expect, the Borough added a new position to the ranks, the “Property Safety Specialist.” This position is not in a law enforcement capacity but as a civilian Borough employee. After an extensive vetting process, council selected Scott Stonebraker to fill this position. Scott is very well-suited for this position and has also been an active member of our fire department for several years.

Scott’s primary function will be focused on preserving the safety and protection of our residents through ensured compliance with Borough codes and ordinances, primarily as it relates to property maintenance and occupancy. Our officers will work hand-in-hand with Scott daily in an effort to attain that goal. We would ask that our residents please be courteous and understanding with Scott should he need to address an issue with their property or dwelling, as his duties are based on the determination to ensure the safety of our residents and visitors and preserving all the many great qualities for which Churchill has become so well known.

As Spring arrives, so do the warmer temperatures. Many of our neighborhood streets become very active with pedestrian traffic, as does the Greensburg Pike corridor. Motorists are reminded to please be mindful of this, always obey the posted speed limits and roadway signage, and never drive distracted.

In the very near future, solar-powered, electronic speed signage will be erected on both Greensburg Pike and Beulah Road in an effort to combat resident complaints of habitually speeding vehicles on these roadways. These signs are rather sophisticated, and in addition to monitoring and warning motorists of excessive speeds, will also maintain a plethora of video and data pertaining to traffic volume, busiest travel times of day, average speeds, fastest speed and much more. This will assist officers in determining when speed enforcement details would be best utilized.

If you haven’t yet visited the Churchill Greenways property, I would strongly urge you to do so! The property is located at the site of the former Churchill Valley Country Club on Beulah Road. It was established in 2021 by the Allegheny County Land Trust and is vast, consisting of 151 acres of natural landscape with more than five miles of forged trails for walking and hiking. Dogs are welcome, but must remain on-leash at all times. The property is open from dawn until dusk with parking and points of access at both the Beulah Road location as well as Bullock Pens Park at the end of McCrady Road.

Details about the property can be found at: [www.alleghenylandtrust.org/green-space/churchill-valley-greenway](http://www.alleghenylandtrust.org/green-space/churchill-valley-greenway).

*Submitted by Chief Ronald Akerley*



The Allegheny Land Trust has been the site of tree plantings over the past few years. Students from the Woodland Hills School District and other groups have participated in these planting. The white tubes in the picture are tree protectors.

We will post opportunities to help on the website under upcoming events.



### National Public Works Week May 18-25, 2024

National Public Works Week, May 15-21, recognizes the importance of public works in an organized society. The week-long observation sheds light on the brave and essential role that the public works employees play in our lives.

We are grateful for our public works director, Ralph Zatlin, and his dedication to the residents of Churchill Borough.

### Borough Logo Created by Resident Jim Trusilo



Jim Trusilo and the logo he designed.

The attractive Churchill Borough logo can be found on the Borough website, newsletter masthead and even the public works truck. What most people don't know is that Churchill resident Jim Trusilo designed it about nine years ago.

"I'm glad it's lasted and become part of the community," Jim says.

A graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, Jim worked for agencies for the first five years of his career before starting his own business as a commercial artist and illustrator from a studio he built in his Blackridge home. Over the years, he's done work for nearly every ad agency in Pittsburgh, as well as the Steelers and Cleveland Indians.

He painted "For All Time," a commemorative piece to celebrate the Pittsburgh Pirates' 100th anniversary, and one of

Roberto Clemente for the Baseball Hall of Fame as a gift for its members. He also created several covers for the annual Hall of Fame yearbook.

Jim's former school classmate, Bonnie Pantlik, was heading an initiative for the Borough and sought him out to help with the effort because of his artistic eye.

"I was asked to join this group to look at different images to create a logo for Churchill Borough," he says. "For some reason, we just never came to any resolution."

It occurred to Jim that everyone identifies Churchill with its Borough Building. He designed the logo with the building as its heart — and the rest is history.

Jim has pretty much retired from commercial projects but the drive to create art hasn't left him.

"I still paint, but only for my own enjoyment," he adds.

## Churchill VFC Needs Your Help!



When you call 911 to report a house fire or car accident, a smell of gas or a brush fire, a child stuck in railing or wires down on the street, Churchill Volunteer Fire Company is here to help you. But you might be surprised to learn that sometimes the Fire Company needs to call you for help.

Maybe you are new to Churchill, or maybe you have lived here a long time, but do you know that the Churchill VFC, and most of the fire companies in Pennsylvania and the Eastern US, are staffed 100% by volunteers? If you moved here from a large city like Pittsburgh or medium-size city like Erie, Morgantown or McKeesport, you could think that all fire departments are staffed 24/7 by paid firefighters and all the fire department operations are funded completely by taxpayers. Churchill, and most of the communities in Allegheny County and western Pennsylvania are different. Here, the fire company relies on you both for funding and as firefighters. Yes, we rely on YOU!

We need your help more than ever in two primary ways.

First, if you are physically able to do so, we need you to volunteer to be a firefighter or vehicle rescue technician. The most important qualifications are very simple: your desire to help your community and your time to participate in training and respond to alarms. All training and equipment are provided by the fire company. Adults of any age and students 16 and older are needed. No prior experience is necessary, but any prior experience as a firefighter, EMT or military personnel gives you a jump start.

Being a volunteer firefighter is about giving back to your community, learning some new skills and making new friends. You will be joining a great team and become a nationally certified firefighter at the end of training. Plus, you can earn a scholarship to CCAC for any associate or bachelor's degree program. Being a volunteer firefighter is not about what you look like, what degree you have or where you come from. Our current volunteers are teachers; building maintenance managers; small business owners; masonry, construction, painting, and landscape contractors; IT engineers; paramedics; and customer service workers.

Volunteering may not be a fit for you personally, but you probably know multiple people who could. Please encourage them to join us.

The second way you can help is by supporting the Fire Company's annual fund drive. Churchill VFC's operations are partially funded by grants and local government, but a large part comes from individual resident donations. Each Spring every household in Churchill receives information in the mail about how to provide support. Last year, only 25% of residents responded with a donation. Participation has been steadily declining for a number of years, but last year was the largest drop in responses that we have ever seen. Help us to reverse the trend.

You can sign up to volunteer or donate here: [www.churchillfire.org](http://www.churchillfire.org)

## Churchill Borough Tree Committee Update



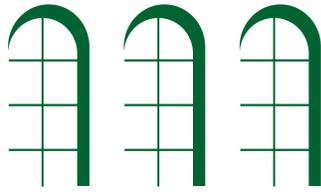
Ken Balkey

The Churchill Borough Tree Committee continues to interface with the Allegheny Land Trust and the Woodland Hills School District Climate Action Committee on supporting another tree planting event at the Churchill Valley Greenway this spring, like the one conducted in 2023. The Committee would also like to file for *Tree City USA* recognition with the Arbor Day Foundation given that most of the required elements for such designation are already in place.

The Committee has also been interfacing with an official from another township who has successfully implemented historic tree designations for old, large trees to raise awareness of the many benefits of having mature trees within their community.

While these are worthy efforts to enhance the tree canopy of Churchill Borough, the Tree Committee asks residents to identify any diseases, pests or threats to trees in public spaces or on their own property as early as possible. Such situations can be either reported to the borough office or to a member of the Tree Committee.

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# C.C. MELLOR MEMORIAL LIBRARY



### Spend Your Spring and Summer with C.C. Mellor!

We have a full slate of programs and events to fill up your summer with fun and community.

**Monster Readers** - Get ready for a Monster Summer with CCM’s kids summer reading program! Read books, come to programs, and stop by the library to earn Monster Trading Cards.

**Summer Book Bingo** - Get rewarded for reading this summer with CCM’s adult summer reading program. Check off the categories that match the books you read and earn raffle tickets for our prize baskets!

Every square you check off = one raffle ticket. Start tracking your reading on June 1. The winners will be chosen on the last day of the program, August 31.

Here are some of our other upcoming programs to get excited about. Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram and visit [www.ccmellorlibrary.org](http://www.ccmellorlibrary.org) for all the latest information and more programs.



**AARP Smart Driver Classes** - Take this class to discover proven driving methods to help keep you and your loved ones safe. **Classes will be held from 1 - 5 p.m. on April 15, 16 and 22 at CCM Edgewood. Call to register.**



**Crafting Circle** - This is the modern version! Bring whatever craft your heart desires and join us for snacks and conversation. **Crafting Circle will be held weekly from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. on Mondays, beginning in May.**



*-continued on pg. 11*

*-Tree Committee continued*

To date, about 50 large trees have been saved within the borough from such situations. Some examples include:



- Removal of hemlock woolly adelgid and invasive vines on 24 large hemlock trees at the entrance to Bullock-Pens Park. A tree company sprayed the trees with a non-toxic soap substance to remove the adelgid and a dozen Churchill Tree Committee & Penn Hills Shade Tree Commission members spent hours removing the invasive vines. A resident used the same hemlock woolly adelgid treatment to save 16 large hemlock trees on their private property.

- Two large Norway Maple trees that were showing signs of decay on two different properties were saved as an arborist tested for a fungus that was able to be treated by a root and bark treatment. Both trees have been restored to full health with one being pruned to rebalance the tree and not have its large limbs threatening the nearby home.
- A large property owner noticed a dying pin oak tree and an arborist was notified so that it could be tested for oak wilt. Once the oak wilt was confirmed, six other surrounding trees had their roots treated so that the oak wilt would not infect and kill the remaining trees.



- A mushroom growth or fungus has been identified at the base of a couple of large pin oak trees along a public right-of-way. One was caught early enough for a root and bark treatment to be applied to save the tree. The fungus on the other tree was discovered too late and the tree must be removed for safety reasons.

If a tree does need to be removed, Tree Committee member Jay Gamze has found local craftworkers who can repurpose the wood from the tree to make small furniture items and works of art. Much of the wood can be crafted into something functional or decorative. Contact the borough office if you would like Jay's guidance.

*Submitted by Ken Balkey, Chair, Churchill Borough Tree Committee with input from Tree Committee member Jay Gamze*

*- C.C. Mellor continued*

**Baby Book Shower** - Attendees will get a bag of baby toys and books, as well as tips for growing your little reader. Books and materials geared for children up to 24 months. Older siblings and expectant parents welcome. **Join the party from 10-11 a.m. June 22 at the Edgewood Club.**



**Connect with Nature this Summer** – The chickens are back at Edgewood, stop by the Children's Programming Room between June 5 and July 10 as we incubate and hatch baby chicks! Later in the summer, at CCM Forest Hills we'll be hatching butterflies.



**Summer Camps at CCM Edgewood and CCM Forest Hills** – CCM is so excited to be offering a wide range of fun summer programs for kids, tweens, and teens. More information will be available on the CCM website as it is announced.



**Block Party** – Come celebrate the end of the school year with CCM at our annual block party. Join us for games, food, and friends to kick off summer programming. Keep an eye out for an announcement of the date, location and activities to look forward to!

**CCM Library will continue with our regular programming** including Family Story time, Makerspace Monday, Tween Club, Baby Talk, Teen Group, Knitting Group, Great Outdoors Book Club, Forest Hills Social Hour, Pajama Storytime, The Wanderers, The Seekers, Music & Movement Story time, 4th Tuesday Book Club, Century Book Club, and Homeschool Book Club throughout the spring. **All children's and teen programming will be taking a break from May 20 - 31 to prepare for our summer fun.**

## Reflections on Churchill's Past: Barbara Ramey



When Barbara Ramey moved her growing family from Penn Hills to Churchill in 1958, the Borough was nearing the end of its transformation from a rural to a suburban community. While the Blackridge and Garden Terrace neighborhoods had already been established, other plans had just emerged or were beginning development when the family chose Churchill as their home.

“We came and looked at it and thought, ‘dirt road, quiet, island.’” Barb recalls.

In her mind, that was a good place for a family that eventually included six children - Debbie, Ronnie, Keith, Cindy, Brian and Karen.

At that time, Homer Drive retained a bit of that rural character. The one-lane, dirt road passed through property that was once the Staub family farm. Barb recalls that drivers had to pull their cars into neighbors’ driveways to let other cars pass by. There was an island at the “Y” intersection where Homer and Edgewood drives meet that her children enjoyed riding their bikes around.

Across the street, the McKay family kept a horse named Dot in a large garage behind their home. “Every now and then, that horse would get out and ... down the street we go,” Barb says.

The older children had to walk down the often-muddy Homer Drive to Beulah Road, where they caught the bus to Gray Elementary School, which was located on Harrison Road in Wilkins Township. Barb said they’d wear boots down to Beulah, where they changed into their school shoes. Homer Drive had no house-to-house mail delivery in those early days, so there was a row of mailboxes on Beulah Road for the residents in the homes up the street. That’s where the children left their boots until getting off the bus and heading back up the hill after school.

Until the early 1960s, the houses on Homer Drive didn’t have sewers. Instead, they relied on septic systems buried on their properties. Barb recalls that a young man died in an accident as the sanitary sewers were being constructed nearby on Margaretta Drive. Jim Miller, a Churchill Road resident, was working on Homer Drive and heard the loud yell, but arrived too late to save the worker.

Barb also learned that a coal mine entrance was once located at the side of her property.

Like many stay-at-home mothers of that era, Barb joined a card club. The group played 500 and bridge as they got to know their neighbors. “I found out that nearly everybody was related,” Barb said. The homes of the Staub and Adamson relatives lined the street.

That connection worked out well for the residents. “Dutch” Staub, who lived in a house at the corner of Homer and Edgewood drives, maintained the roads for Churchill Borough. So when the snow fell, Homer Drive was always clean, she said.

Barb’s children looked forward to Dutch’s leaf parties each fall. He’d let the children rake the multitude of leaves from the numerous trees in his yard into a dump truck. Then they’d hop in back for a ride to his dumping place.

Quite a few volunteer firefighters lived on the street, including one-time Fire Chief Andy Belejchak. The largest fire she remembers happened at Edgewood Country Club on Jan. 30, 1964. The old brick-and-frame clubhouse was in the process of being razed when the blaze occurred. Flames spread to the roof of the new clubhouse, which was about 30-feet away from the old structure. Because only a buffer of trees separated Barb’s property from the country club property, a neighbor had suggested getting the kids out to be safe in case the fire spread.

Though that was a scary night, the golf course provided her children with two “killer hills” for sled riding. They collected stray golf balls for fun. From their back porch, the family also enjoyed the fireworks provided by Edgewood County Club every Independence Day and for the occasional wedding celebration.

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Barb's daughter Debbie remembers that Halloween was fun as most houses had children—and treats. The children also enjoyed roller skating at Beulah Church, which used its gymnasium for skating on Sunday nights. Barb served as a Cub Scout den mother and held meetings at her home, and also was involved in Girl Scouts, which met at Gray School.

Churchill Area School District formed in 1960, just two years after Barb's family moved to Churchill. Prior to that, Churchill was part of the Wilkins Township School District. Gray Elementary School closed after Barb's daughter Cindy finished first grade, so she started second grade at Shaffer Elementary School.

With a baby and other children at home, Barb had to let Cindy walk to school on her own. A white line was painted on the streets leading to the school to create a walking space because there were no sidewalks. Concerned that there was no school crossing guard at the busy intersection of Beulah Road to help children cross the dangerous roadway, Barb approached then-Superintendent C. Paul Clark about the safety concern.

"He hated to see me come in there," Barb recalls.

Her persistence paid off. The district arranged for a bus for the K-2 students. The Churchill Area School District was one of five local school districts that were part of a court-ordered merger to form Woodland Hills School District in 1981. Karen, Barb's youngest child, was a junior that year, the only one of the siblings to experience the new district.

Barb's family is still close, with cars filling her driveway for gatherings. After 66 years, the house on Homer Drive is still "home" to them all.

## Churchill Garden Club

The Churchill Garden Club organizes a group of members and other volunteers to pick up litter from our local roads. The group meets monthly on the third Wednesday at 9 a.m. at the Borough Building parking lot. They concentrate on Parkway Exits 79A and 79B, the entrance to I-376, both eastbound and westbound, McCrady Road and parts of Holland Road.

More can be done with the help of volunteers. Please consider joining the group. Contact Ginger Bauer or Paul Gamrat for more information.

The Churchill Garden Club also maintains the gardens at the corner of Beulah and Churchill roads. You may have seen the members on any Saturday morning doing regular maintenance. Our Mayor, Paul Gamrat, can often be seen working in the gardens on any given summer evening. If you would like to join in and work on this or other projects, please contact Paul Gamrat at [gamratpaul@gmail.com](mailto:gamratpaul@gmail.com) or through the Borough office.



## Churchill-Wilkins Rotary



On hand for the check passing are (l-r) Sylvia Martinelli, President, Wilkins Township Board of Commissioners; Dick Farrell, former Churchill Borough Council President; Norm Johnson, Churchill-Wilkins Rotary President; John Hartman, Rotary District Governor; Johnny Mock, Vet Project Co-Chair; Carol Johnson, President Elect of Churchill Wilkins Rotary; and Paul Gamrat, Churchill Mayor.

Dr. Norm Johnson, President of Churchill-Wilkins Rotary, presented a check for \$9,200 from the local chapter to Rotary District Governor John Hartman and co-chair Johnny Mock to help fund the Veterans Initiative for Medical Service Dogs.

The goal is to raise at least \$100,000 for this Rotary District project to help veterans. If you would like to donate to this wonderful project, please contact Mayor Paul Gamrat.



Don't throw away your gently used sneakers! Drop them off at the Churchill Borough building during regular business hours and help the Churchill-Wilkins Rotary reduce waste and create opportunities for people in need. We do NOT accept non-athletic footwear.

The Churchill-Wilkins Rotary is collecting plastic film for a project to get some outdoor benches for around the Borough Building.

Plastic can be dropped off in the container at the entrance to the borough building. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Gamrat at 412-731-9095.



### NexTrex Recycling Challenge



Trex Bench

#### What can be recycled?

All plastic must be clean, dry, and free of food residue.



Grocery bags



Bread bags



Bubble wrap



Dry cleaning bags



Newspaper sleeves



Ice bags



Plastic shipping envelopes



Ziploc & other reclosable food storage bags



Cereal bags



Case overwrap



Salt bags



Pallet wrap & stretch film



Wood pellet bags



Produce bags

Celebrate with your friends & neighbors

# Churchill's 90th Anniversary!

Sunday, May 19th

Cocktail hour 5:00 pm Dinner 6:00 pm

## DeNunzio's Italian Trattoria

2644 Mosside Blvd,

Monroeville, PA 15146

Cash Bar

or BYOB \$10.00 corkage fee

Cost per person \$40.00

gratuity included.

### Buffet Dinner Includes:

Hot & Cold Appetizers

Crisp Garden Salad

Chicken Marsala

(sautéed with mushrooms & marsala wine)

Salmon Trattoria

(w/ Lemon Caper sauce)

Stuffed Shells

(w/ Marinara Sauce)

Eggplant Rollatini

(Rolled w/ Cheese)

Rosemary Roasted Baby Red Potatoes

Seasonal Fresh Vegetable Medley

Strawberry Cake

Coffee - Tea - Soft Drinks

To make reservations contact Churchill Borough in person, by phone at 412-241-7113, or online at [churchillborough.com](http://churchillborough.com). We accept cash, check, or credit card in person or by phone.

**RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED  
BY FRIDAY, MAY 10TH**



### WILPEX 2024

The Wilkinsburg Stamp Club, which meets in the Yagle Room in the Churchill Borough Building, will host its **74th annual WilkpeX Stamp and Postcard Show** from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, April 12 and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 13 at the Holiday Park Fire Hall, 425 Old Abers Creek Road, Plum Borough (15239).

The show includes exhibits, dealers, souvenir sheets, a Philatelic "Phlea" Market and a youth area. The event is handicap accessible and admission and parking are free. For details, visit [www.wilkinsburgstampclub.com](http://www.wilkinsburgstampclub.com).

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

**Churchill Borough Elected Officials:**

**Mayor:** Paul Gamrat

**Borough Council:**

**President:** Valerie Reinthaler

**Vice President:** Diane Law

Cherylie Blair Fuller

Brooke Burchette-Williams

Deb Casini Klein

Andrea Ditillo

Jay Dworin

**Tax Collector:** Danielle Weaver

**Churchill Borough Government Newsletter:**

**Content Editor:** Zandy Dudiak

**Layout Editor:** Leanne Longwill

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**Contact the Borough, Keep Informed**

Any resident who has questions or concerns about Churchill Borough matters is encouraged to call or email us at 412-241-7113 or [office@churchillborough.com](mailto:office@churchillborough.com).

**Savvy Citizen - Simple. Convenient. Free.** [www.savvycitizenapp.com](http://www.savvycitizenapp.com)