

# AMHERST TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

Winter 2004

Vol. IX No. 4

## Recycling Report

Amherst Township recycled the following quantities through the "Blue Bag" program (3<sup>rd</sup> quarter):

- 1.3 tons of aluminum cans
- 6.6 tons of bi-metal cans
- 12.6 tons of glass
- 3.6 tons of HDPE plastics
- 2.9 tons of PETE plastics
- 28.2 tons of newspapers
- 6.3 tons of scrap metal through the dumpster program in April

For questions concerning the "Blue Bag" program, contact BFI at 458-5191 or David Urig at 988-8256.

## Dumpster Days

Amherst Township has set the following dates for "Dumpster Days" in 2005:

April 7, 8, 9

July 7, 8, 9

October 6, 7, 8

Hours are from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Please note: **NO TIRES WITH RIMS!**  
**NO PROPANE TANKS!**

## Drop-Off Hours for Yard Waste!!

The waste drop-off area is now fenced and gated. **Christmas Trees**, brush, limbs, grass clippings, and leaves may be brought to the rear of the Amherst Township Garage at the following times:

- 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Mon – Fri
- 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Saturday
- Amherst Township Residents only
- I.D. will be checked
- No Commercial

**The garage is located at 7530 Oberlin Road.**

Newspapers, cans, glass, and 1's & 2's plastics can be placed at your curb in blue bags for BFI pick-up. Newspapers should be "blue bagged" separately.

## Compost Available

Free compost is available from the Township. If you are interested, contact John Szefcyk, Road Superintendent, at 988-5833.

**Have a problem?** Complaint forms are available at the Township Hall, inside the white bulletin board, or may be downloaded from the Township's website.

## TRUSTEE MEETINGS:

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of each month at 7:30 p.m.

## Township Hall & Garage

Fax .....988-5877  
Clerk .....988-5894  
Road Superintendent (garage) .....988-5833  
Email: amhersttwproads@comcast.net  
Office (Zoning Inspector) .....988-5866  
Office Hours for Zoning Insp.:  
Mon., Wed., & Sat. – 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.  
Voice Mail is checked daily  
Email: amhersttwpzoning@comcast.net  
Don Gargas, Zoning Inspector

## Trustees

Dennis Abraham .....986-4555  
(Ambulance, Cemetery, Park, Water, Roads, Ditches, Enterprise Zones, County Health Rep.)  
Neil Lynch .....988-7681  
(Sewer, Fire, Land, Equipment, Personnel, LORCO, Senior Services, Zoning)  
David C. Urig.....988-8256  
(Lighting, Buildings, Solid Waste, Phase II Storm Water/ Environmental Strategy, Alternate County Health Rep.)

## Clerk

John Koval .....233-5744

## Road Superintendent

John Szefcyk .....988-7045

## Amherst Twp Senior Services Office

Carol Schmitkons.....988-5822  
Email: amhersttwpSeniors@comcast.net  
Office Hours – Mon thru Fri – 8am to 12 Noon

## Fire Prevention Officer

Wayne Eppley .....324-3921

## Park Coordinator

Tony Ellis.....988-3033  
Email: amherstman620@aol.com

## LifeCare Ambulance, Inc.

Maude or Herb DeLa Porte.....323-6111

Sheriff's Department.....329-3710

Township Website ..... [www.amhersttownship.us](http://www.amhersttownship.us)

Amherst Township Trustee Meetings may be viewed on Amherst Cable Channel 12. They will air for 7 days, running Mon thru Mon, following the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month. Air times are at 9 am, 4 pm, & 11 pm. Zoning Commission meetings will be shown 8 am, 3 pm & at the conclusion of the 11pm Trustee meetings. All airings are subject to change.

# **MARKETING OF STATE ROUTE 58**

Amherst Township Trustees have hired D.B. Hartt to undertake a supplemental planning study for the Route 58 and Route 113 corridors. These areas are identified as key development areas for the Township during the recent process to update the Township's Comprehensive Zoning Plan.

The corridor study will include the area along Route 58 from Ackerman Road (Park Ave) to the southern township line, which is just south of the Deer Track Golf Club. The study will also include the area along SR 113 from the South Amherst city limits to just east of Route 58. The geographic area will specifically encompass an area which includes:

1. North of the Turnpike: from the Amherst city limits to approximately ½ mile east of Rt 58
2. South of the Turnpike: from the South Amherst city limits to approximately ½ mile east of Rt 58

The boundaries may be slightly refined based on the results of the study.

The overall goal of the Route 58 Corridor Study is to provide the Township with more definitive information about the corridor and to assist the Township in developing more detailed strategies for this corridor than what is presently represented in the Township's "1995 Comprehensive Zoning Plan", including the 2004 update. This plan is available for public viewing at the Township Hall.

The objectives of this planning study are to:

1. Estimate the current development potential and implications given the corridor's existing natural and "man-made" characteristics and current zoning requirements.
2. Identify traffic impacts and outline traffic management strategies based on current zoning, compared to two or three alternative development scenarios generally consistent with the comprehensive plan.
3. Provide detailed policies and implementation strategies which could include:
  - Zoning amendments – text and map;
  - Traffic management approaches;
  - Marketing and economic development;
  - Environmental preservation approaches; and
  - Site and building design standards.

The first task was to record the existing conditions of the corridor area. Detailed data was gathered from existing reports and sources about land uses, property owners, natural features, and traffic data. A base map was created using ArcView 3.3 GIS software. This base map shows: existing property lines; ownership; topography; buildings and driveways; natural features (i.e. wooded areas, streams, floodplains, wet areas, etc.); major infrastructure facilities; & zoning districts.

The second task is to estimate the expected development under current zoning, based on the above base information and current market trends. This development will be analyzed with respect to traffic, infrastructure, and environment impact. The development under current zoning will be compared with 2-3 possible development alternatives for the corridor.

The third task is to have two joint public meetings with the Township's Zoning Commission, Board of Trustees, and Board of Zoning Appeals in order to review the analysis and to solicit input on the preferred development approach. The first of these two meetings was held November 2<sup>nd</sup> at the regularly scheduled Zoning Commission meeting. It was taped and should have been aired at the times listed on the front page of this newsletter. The second meeting has yet to be scheduled. When a meeting date is set, it will be posted in the township bulletin board at the township hall on Oberlin Road.

The fourth step is to identify the preferred development scenario and to provide a set of actions needed to achieve the desired development pattern. D.B. Hartt will provide the Township with a conceptual plan that will identify the road network; the general placement of buildings; the location of parking; pedestrian/design amenities; and environmental features to be preserved. An outline of the zoning changes needed to achieve the development strategy will also be provided, as well as other implementation measures that need to be considered.

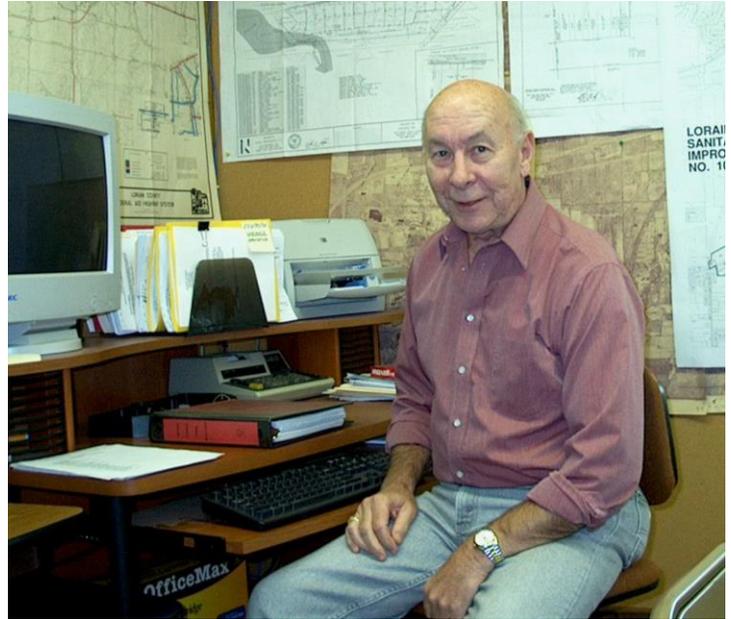
The last step will be to evaluate the updates and consider them to be added as a further addendum to the 2004 Comprehensive Zoning Plan Update.

This study plan is being implemented in order to minimize the traffic impact on our community while optimizing the economic development of future businesses, while minimizing the future tax burden on the residents of the township.

## FEATURED EMPLOYEE

Don Gargas, Zoning Inspector for Amherst Township, is our featured employee. Don started working for the township as a Zoning Committee member from 1997 to 2000. Then in 2000, Don accepted the position of Zoning Inspector. As the Zoning Inspector Don is responsible for writing permits for buildings and structures, enforcing zoning resolutions, accepting applications for Zoning Amendments and Variances, and in general helping people to understand zoning and zoning areas in the township. Don has broadened his job responsibilities by assisting in writing grants, and by assisting the Trustees, the Zoning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals with various projects, as needed. Don also maintains a liaison with the County Prosecutor. Don enjoys his job because of all the different people he gets to meet in the community. He also likes being involved with the leading edge of what is happening in the township and helping people. The hardest thing about his job is having to enforce zoning when people will not conform to the current zoning, especially when the prosecutor needs to get involved. Thankfully this doesn't happen too often.

Don and his wife Cheryl have lived in the township for the past 11 years. They have 2 daughters as well as 2 granddaughters. Don grew up in the Elyria/Lorain area and attended Elyria Catholic as well as LCCC. He graduated from Ohio State with a Business Degree.



Don is a member of the American Legion as well as the Amherst Eagles. He served in the U.S. Army for 2 years. He recently became a board member of the newly formed 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for Amherst Township. Don's favorite pastime is gardening and yard work around his home.

Many thanks to Don for all the work he does maintaining the zoning in our township and for being so involved in our community.



### Christmas Tree Disposal

Amherst Township residents may bring their live Christmas Trees to the rear of the Amherst Township Garage Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Residents may also leave live trees on their lawn near the road. The township road crew will be picking up these trees Dec 26<sup>th</sup> thru Jan 7<sup>th</sup>.

### Lorain County Sheriff's Bike Patrol

We would again like to thank the Lorain County Sheriff's Department for providing their bike patrol during Amherst Township's "Trick-or-Treat" day. This is the third year in a row that the bike patrol has cruised Amherst Township's neighborhoods to ensure the safety of our children participating in this holiday. This year's bike patrol consisted of Deputy J.D. Rico and Deputy Jason Smith.

### DRIVEWAY PERMITS

Effective November 1, 2004, Amherst Township and Lorain County now require permits for all new driveways which are located in the township.

Before constructing a driveway, a permit form must be processed by the Township or by the County, depending on the road location. Driveways located on a township road require a township permit. Driveways located on a county road require a county permit. There will be **no fee** for either permit. For more information, call the Zoning Inspector, Don Gargas, at **988-5866**, or contact the Lorain County Engineer's office at **329-5586**.

# F.A.C.E.

Amherst Township is in the process of creating a new nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Its name is **FACE (Funding Amherst Community Enhancement)**.

Its purpose is to explore and obtain funding and services to enhance the quality of life for all the residents of Amherst Township and the surrounding areas by seeking funds through grants, donations, and volunteer efforts.

What is a nonprofit organization? A common and broad definition would be that it is a tax-exempt organization that serves the public interest. In general, the purpose of this type of organization must be charitable, educational, scientific, religious, or literary. The public expects to be able to make donations to these organizations and deduct these donations from their federal taxes.

A nonprofit organization in Amherst Township will allow for community enhancement of public services and programs through private funding sources, without increasing the tax burden on local residents.

As the FACE board of directors defines community projects, they will be looking for people who are willing to donate their time, talents, services, or financial resources to make Amherst Township a better place to live.

The 7-member FACE board consists of Howard Akin (4yrs), John Eibon (3yrs), Don Gargas (4yrs), Richard Rice (2yrs) and Carol Schmitkons (4yrs). Two open positions remain to be filled. One position is for a 3-year term, the other is for a 2-year term. Carol Schmitkons is the Statutory Agent for the organization.



## OHIO EPA OPEN BURNING LAWS

Ohio EPA regulates outdoor burning in restricted and unrestricted areas. Restricted areas include land within 1,000 feet of a municipality and areas within a mile of communities larger than 10,000 in population. In restricted areas, residents can burn outdoors only for cooking purposes and some occupational needs. Residents outside of the restricted areas can outdoor burn for waste purposes as long as specific requirements are met, including the need to be at least 1,000 feet from all inhabited buildings on neighboring properties.

Ohio EPA regulations also prohibit the burning of some materials anywhere in the state at any time. These include: materials containing rubber, grease, and asphalt or made from petroleum, such as tires, cars, and auto parts, plastics or plastic-coated wire; garbage – any wastes created in the process of handling preparing or consumption of food; and, dead animals.

A copy of Ohio EPA's brochure "Before you Light It: Know Ohio's Open Burning Regulations" is available on the Agency's web site at [www.epa.state.oh.us](http://www.epa.state.oh.us). A copy of Ohio EPA's open burning rules can be found at [www.epa.state.oh.us/dapc/regs/3745-19/3745\\_19.html](http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dapc/regs/3745-19/3745_19.html).

## STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Storm water run-off from our lawns, driveways and streets is discharged untreated into the water bodies we use for swimming, fishing, and drinking water. Contaminants in storm water contribute to the pollution of our water bodies.

You can help reduce storm water pollution in the following ways:

- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly
- When walking your pet, remember to pick up its waste and dispose of it properly
- Inspect your septic system at least every 3 years, and pump your tank as necessary
- Compost or mulch yard waste. Don't leave it in the street or sweep it into storm drains
- Recycle automotive fluids. Do not pour on the ground or in storm drains
- Don't over water your lawn
- Report illegal dumping to local law enforcement officials

By practicing healthy household habits, homeowners can keep common pollutants like pesticides, pet waste, grass clippings, and automotive fluids off the ground and out of storm water.



## **PERMITS REQUIRED**

Residents are reminded that permits are needed for pools, decks, porches, patios, gazebos, fences, ponds, signs, garages, new construction, building additions, and accessory buildings. When a permit is applied for before the start of construction, the fee will be reduced by 50%. Be sure you or your contractor has obtained a permit. **Payments must be made by check only. Cash is not accepted.**

Please contact Don Gargas, Amherst Township Zoning Inspector for these permits. Office hours for the Zoning Inspector are from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. He can be reached at 988-5866. Voice Mail is checked daily.

### **Lots Available**

Cemetery lots are available at Kendeigh Cemetery, located at the intersection of Quarry Road and Middle Ridge Road. Lots may be purchased by contacting the Township Office at 988-5833.

**\$350 – Resident**  
**\$600 – Non-Resident**

## **LIFECARE**

Amherst Township, as a member of the Sandstone Joint Ambulance District, has chosen “LifeCare” to be their ambulance provider. President Maude DeLa Porte and Vice-President Herb DeLa Porte own and operate LifeCare. They can be reached at 323-6111. To learn more about their services, visit their website at **www.lifecareambulance.com**. For more information about LifeCare as well as links to other related websites visit **www.geocities.com/lifecaredispatch**.

### **Contact Sheriff’s Dept.**

If residents know of or experience any adverse road conditions in the township, please contact the Sheriff’s Department at **329-3710** or **323-1212**.

### **Twp. Bulletin Board**

Scheduled meetings and Trustee Work Sessions are regularly posted in the bulletin board at the Township Hall. These are public meetings and residents are welcome to attend.

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Amherst Township  
7530 Oberlin Road  
Elyria, OH 44035  
www.amhersttownship.us

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# Senior GAZETTE

Winter 2004

Carol Schmitkons, Amherst Township Senior Service (ATTSO) Director

## “Thanks”giving 2004

2004 is fast coming to an end. Since Thanksgiving comes near the end of the year, it is also a good time to take the time to thank everyone who has made our program a success. So on behalf of the Trustees and myself, I wish to send special thanks to Kathy Blahay, Jennifer DeWitt, Butch and Linda Dorsey, Jake and Phyllis Nekich, John Pardee and his teens, Scott Rankin, Ray and Dottie Roth, and Keith Rumpler. These volunteers helped with transporting seniors, doing yard work, plowing snow, and delivering meals. They gave me more time to assist seniors with other needs.

I also appreciated the excellent presentations given at our “Senior Activities” this year. Many thanks to Tony Syrowski from the Amherst Fire Department for his presentation on fire safety; to James Basso from the Center for Hearing Care for his presentation on hearing issues; and to Tracy Noll from the Visiting Nurses Association for her presentation on home care alternatives. I just wish more township seniors had come out to learn more about ways they could stay independent longer. Due to low participation in our monthly “Senior Activities”, we will be canceling them until we can come up with other ways to meet your needs. If you have ideas, please call the office at **988-5822**.

## Tasty Meals Available to Seniors

Golden Acres “winter” menu has just come out. The cabbage rolls, Swiss steak, coconut-breaded chicken, homemade lasagna, mousse, cheesecake, pumpkin pie, and German chocolate cake all sound incredibly delicious. Keep in mind that anyone in the township who is sixty years of age or older can take advantage of meals, especially while the weather is bad this winter. Just call the office for details. Remember that the meal costs are reduced for those with low incomes, so don't let the cost deter you.

**WINTER OFFICE HOURS:  
8:00 A.M. – NOON (M-F)**

## More Volunteers Needed!!!

During the winter months, many seniors call looking for people to plow their driveway. If you can help meet this need, or you might be willing to drive occasionally for the meal and transportation programs, please call Carol at **988-5822**.

## Support Services Grant Award

We are pleased to announce that the Amherst Township Senior Service Office has received its first grant. The \$2500 grant for support services for 2005 - 2006 was awarded by the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA), which is our area's coordinating agency for the Ohio Department of Aging. The money will be used to hire township resident, Jennifer DeWitt, a licensed social worker with eight years of experience, to provide support services for township seniors.

Jennifer's job will consist of assessing client's needs and then providing them with information about benefits or services available to them. This may also include helping them to complete forms, or providing them with referrals or linkages to appropriate resources. She can link them to these resources by:

- Notifying an agency that a client will be calling them for service;
- Scheduling an appointments for clients;
- Assisting or participating with a client at a scheduled appointment;
- Contacting a client and/or the agency to determine the outcome of a referral/linkage; or
- Providing follow up as needed.

If you would like to use any of these services, please call the office at **988-5822** to schedule an appointment with Jennifer DeWitt. You can meet with her at the office or in your home.



**HAVE A SAFE HOLIDAY &  
A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!!!**



## Medicare Updates

### Discount Prescription Drug Cards:

- Those with monthly incomes of less than \$1048 (single) or \$1405 (married) who have no health insurance coverage for prescription drugs and who have not yet signed up for a card this year are now eligible for the full 2004 additional \$600 transitional assistance for their medications, plus the full benefit for 2005. However, you must sign up for a card before December 31<sup>st</sup>. If you wait until next year to sign up, you will lose 25 % of the \$600 for each quarter you delay.
- There are some decent cards available, and several of the area pharmacies already discount their drugs even before the drug cards are applied. Further good news is that several of the “drug” companies have teamed up with some of the “drug card” companies to offer additional discounts to those with low incomes that have used up their \$600 transitional assistance. At a Cuyahoga County Conference on Aging, a panel speaking about Medicare stated that Ohio’s “Medicare-Approved” Golden Buckeye Drug Discount Card offers one of the best plans in the state, especially for those with low incomes. It offers aid beyond the \$600 transitional assistance mentioned above.
- Remember that if you are covered by Medicare, you can only have one (1) “Medicare-Approved” prescription discount card. This card will have the “Medicare” logo printed on the card. However, you may have an unlimited number of “non-Medicare Approved” cards. These “non-Medicare Approved”

cards are usually sponsored by the state of Ohio or by a pharmacy company. An example would be the gold-colored Golden Buckeye Card, which is a “non-Medicare Approved” card and does not contain the Medicare logo. Ohioans using this card in addition to their “Medicare-Approved” drug card can save an average of 24% on prescriptions at participating pharmacies.

- As of November 2004, a new choice for Ohioans is Ohio’s Best Rx. It is designed to help people 60 years of age and older, whose monthly income is less than \$1940(single) or \$2602(married). There is no enrollment fee and the card has an optional mail order delivery feature.

### 2006 Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug Coverage):

- Cost will be \$35 per month.
- Enrolling after the initial open enrollment period will carry a penalty of 1% per month in addition to the \$35 premium.
- Most people will end up paying \$4100 of their first \$5100 prescription costs before the Medicare will begin covering 95% of the cost. Low-income people will still see reductions in their costs.

To get help choosing the prescription drug card that best meets your medications needs, as well as help with downloading and filling out the appropriate application forms, please call Carol at **988-5822**.

## Notes from the Ohio Consumer’s Counsel (OCC)

Expect higher gas prices this winter due to high world oil and natural gas prices. Winter temperatures will also play a significant role in whether prices rise this winter and by how much.

Utility customers have several options for managing their natural gas bills. The OCC offers the following free resources to help reduce their heating costs:

**Energy Efficiency** – The OCC offers a “room by room” energy efficiency guide that provides “no-cost” and “low-cost” tips for lowering your winter heating bills.

**Budget Billing** – This program spreads consumers’ natural gas expenses evenly through out the year.

**Financial Assistance Programs** – Several programs are available to help keep Ohioans warm this winter. For example, low-income consumers can apply for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP).

Publications about these and other programs can be found on the OCC’s website at:

**[www.pickocc.org](http://www.pickocc.org)**

or by calling 1-877-742-5622, toll free.

**E-Mail Address:** [amhersttwpseniors@comcast.net](mailto:amhersttwpseniors@comcast.net)