



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FAMILY, COMMUNITY AT THE HEART OF MILL RUN**

**Uniontown, PA** – People often recognize the small mountain community of Mill Run as the home of Fallingwater, or perhaps a quaint stop along Route 381 on the way to Ohiopyle. But to the people who live in the town, it's so much more than that.

In fact, some are quick to point out that despite its mailing address, Frank Lloyd Wright's famous house on a waterfall is actually located in Stewart Township. Mill Run is a part of Springfield Township.

Mill Run is home to a number of extended families with close ties to each other and to their neighbors. A case in point is the Orndorffs, who have made the community their home for decades. Ray "Bugs" Orndorff Sr. moved there in 1965; his wife, Sharon, is a native of the town, and their three sons – Ray Jr., Rob and Richie – all have raised their families there.

"Being as it's a small town, probably the biggest thing is everyone knows everyone," Ray said, noting that if someone in the community needs help, their friends and neighbors are quick to come to their aid. "Everyone pitches in and helps whoever needs it."

Exactly when and how the unincorporated community in Springfield Township got its start is a matter for some debate. It's known that the first permanent settlement was named Bigamtown, with Bigam still a common family name in the area. A town history published in 1970 by the Mill Run Socialite Club notes the Turkeyfoot Path and Catawba Trail, both Native American walking trails, wound through the area.

Bigamtown eventually became known as Mill Run thanks to several gristmills that were built there. The Kooser Gristmill operated until it was destroyed in a fire in 1965. More recently, the town garnered some attention with the installation of about 10 windmills nearby.

But largely, Mill Run is about family and community. Ray Orndorff, who serves as chief of the Springfield Township Volunteer Hose Company, said the churches and the fire department are town hubs.

"The churches in the community play a big part," he said.

Local churches often are the site of events such as fairs and community meals. The fire department holds a monthly buckwheat pancake breakfast from October through April each year that Ray Orndorff said draws several hundred people from within the community as well as quite a distance away.

“And we have the ball field and Yogi Bear,” Ray said, referring to Yogi Bear’s Jellystone Park, a popular campground.

Bugs also mentioned Camp Christian as a popular spot.

And for the Orndorffs, there is baseball.

Tucked behind the fire station and next to Mill Run Community Church is the community ball field, where Bugs and all three of his sons, along with a few grandchildren, have spent a great deal of time over the years. Bugs was the longtime manager of Mill Run’s team in the Fayette County Baseball League, a post that Ray took over several years ago.

Originally from Ohiopyle, where he played ball for that town, Bugs switched teams when he and Sharon began dating.

“Mill Run and Ohiopyle were rivals in the ‘50s and ‘60s,” he said. “I played for Ohiopyle, and I didn’t know anybody in Mill Run. After I got going with my wife out here, I started playing ball in Mill Run, and I played against Ohiopyle.”

While it was likely not a popular decision among Bugs’ Ohiopyle teammates, it doesn’t seem to be a choice he or his family regrets. The Orndorffs said Mill Run is a good place to raise a family.

“It’s been enjoyable to live and grow up in Mill Run,” Ray said.

To learn more about the Springfield Township Volunteer Hose Company, follow their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/stvhc](http://www.facebook.com/stvhc).

To learn more about Fayette County, visit [www.fayettecountypa.org](http://www.fayettecountypa.org).

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For more information, contact Kristi Kassimer Harper, Public Relations Specialist, at 724-437-4571, [kkassimer@fayettecountypa.info](mailto:kkassimer@fayettecountypa.info) or Jamie Rankin, Journalist, at 724-437-4571, [jamierankin13@gmail.com](mailto:jamierankin13@gmail.com).