

franc talk



Spring 2021

Take a Moment to Travel Safely

By Chief Michael L. Martin

Franconia Township is an amazingly friendly and vibrant community with a rich heritage, deeply rooted in country charm. Aside from being, "The Garden Spot of Montgomery County," it is also one of the best kept secrets. But as word gets out and the Indian Valley continues to flourish, more families and businesses want to become part of all we have to offer.

We are all very fortunate to be part of this community and as such, we all bear the responsibility of looking out for one another. One positive side effect of 2020 quarantines and restrictions has been the added time we spend at home. Many of us have taken these opportunities to start, continue and/or finish projects around the house. As we worked on (or ignored) our project lists, many of us found an appreciation for our surroundings, which includes the day-to-day movement of people and vehicles in our neighborhoods.

The issues of speeding and distracted driving are not unique to Franconia Township. Almost every police department receives complaints about speeding in the

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Preserving Open Space Makes Good Cents

Or is it sense? Or is it both?

Montgomery County recently celebrated the preservation of over 10,000 acres of preserved farmland, representing 177 farms throughout the county. The Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Program partners with the state and local municipalities to purchase easements to ensure the land is farmed in perpetuity. Statewide, there are 5,813 preserved farms in 59 participating counties, representing 591,819 total acres. For comparison's sake, Franconia Township has over 1,000 acres of open space and preserved farmland.'

Those who follow farmland preservation in the county are aware that Franconia is a regional leader in farmland preservation with preserved farms located throughout the township. The "preserved farm" signs are everywhere and hopefully there will be many more preserved farms in the years to come.

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FRANCONIA TOWNSHIP

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A Message from Police Chief Michael L. Martin (cont.)

neighborhoods and on main arteries throughout their jurisdictions. The callers typically say, "They are flying down the street." In most cases, the offenders live nearby and are, in fact, the neighbors of the callers. Therefore, "they" really means "us." The increased numbers of people staying at home with adjusted schedules, combined with a comfortable familiarity with local streets, makes "routine" driving in your neighborhood especially dangerous.

As a police department we are certainly receptive to these concerns and make concerted efforts to enforce the laws and calm traffic. Last year, we purchased two electronic speed signs as well as an electronic traffic classifier to record vehicle speed and volume data. The collected data is used to determine the best days and times of the week to conduct enforcement details. We are also in the process of purchasing additional signs for added coverage. Our goal is to visibly demonstrate to motorists how fast they are travelling so they may change their driving habits, thereby producing safer drivers.

We always encourage residents, business owners and visitors to report traffic concerns, suspicious activity, and crimes. All reports will be investigated, and we strive to address all quality-of-life concerns in a timely manner. Please remember to take a moment each day to slow down, look around and really enjoy our incredible township. Together we can make our roads and neighborhoods safer, one conscious moment at a time.

Police Promotions and Hiring

During the month of February, the Franconia Township Police Department held swearing in ceremonies for several promotions and one new hire. Each oath of office was administered by District Justice Albert J. Augustine.

On February 3, 2021 three officers were sworn-in to advanced positions within the Police Department. Steven Cronin was promoted from Corporal to Sergeant of police. Sgt. Cronin will be assigned as the Administrative Sergeant, responsible for procedural functions, assistance with accreditation and direct oversight of the department corporals and administrative assistant. David Klepfer was promoted to Corporal of police. Cpl. Klepfer gained significant experience in police-community relations during his past assignment as the department's School Resource Officer. Cpl. Klepfer is assigned as a patrol supervisor.

Glenn Kranich was appointed to the position of Detective. He has previously served as a detective with our department and as a patrol officer has been assisting Det. Sgt. Moyer with investigations. Detective Kranich is responsible for investigating both juvenile and adult crimes.

On February 8, 2021 Ryan Geist was sworn-in as a full time police officer, replacing the retiring Det. Sgt. George Moyer. Officer Geist is assigned to field training in the patrol division. He comes to Franconia PD with prior experience as a part time officer in both Alburdis and Rockledge boroughs.

Preserving Open Space Makes Good Cents (cont.)

Farmland preservation, open space and a robust trail network creates a high quality of life that attracts tax-paying businesses and residents to communities like Franconia – and even increases property values and helps keep taxes low. Study after study has shown the economic and quality of life benefits of preserving open space, as we can all attest to.

Of like-sized communities, Franconia is regularly recognized as one of the safest communities in Pennsylvania and maintains a real estate tax rate significantly lower than many other communities in our region. Although we cannot contribute everything to open space preservation, there is no doubt if our residents and the township did not aggressively work to preserve open space, there would be significantly more traffic, quality of life issues, and more demand for services.

For over two hundred years, the Franconia farming community has been the backbone of the Indian Valley, driving the economy, creating jobs, and providing fresh food to our dinner tables and restaurants. Now more than ever, it is so important that we continue to support our local farming community and recognize not only their commitment to farming, but also in keeping our community such a desirable place to live.



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The Police Department Gets a New Look

By Chief Michael L. Martin

The change is subtle but meaningful. A little more than a year ago, the Police Department began the process of redefining the symbolism of our patch. We wanted something that better represented our values and identity. The former patch was simple in design and very pragmatic. The word "Police" is prominently displayed above a circular American Flag backdrop on which a bald eagle is depicted in flight. The circle is completed with "Franconia Township" beneath the eagle. Lastly, "Est. 1731" fills the bottom of the patch, signifying the year in which the Township was founded.

We all liked the look of our patch, so we did not want to go through a complete re-branding of the Department. However, after reaffirming the core values of our organization, we wanted our patch to better represent our community. Therefore, "Franconia Township" was placed in larger font at the very top of the patch. "Montgomery County, Pennsylvania" was added to further identify our greater community, while "police" still maintains a prominent presence. The year 1962 completes the patch in recognition of and homage to the Police Department's formation.

The redesign was a Department-wide project wherein all members contributed and voted on several options. The final product was reached by unanimous decision. We felt that it was very important for all members to have a voice in how they are represented, as well as the message we are conveying to the people we serve. We take our oath seriously and place our community in high esteem. We truly believe that our new patch reflects our values, maintains our brand integrity, and will stand the test of time.



New Police Patch



Original Police Patch

Happy Retirement To Detective Sergeant George H. Moyer, III

The Police Department and the Franconia Township Family bid a fond farewell in March to Det. Sgt. George H. Moyer, III after 32 years of faithful service. "Sarge", as he is affectionately known, always came to work with a smile on his face and a desire to serve the residents of Franconia with more than 100% effort every day.

Hired by then Chief Paul Hunsberger in 1989, George served as a Patrol Officer, where he spent several years gaining the knowledge and experience needed to become a Field Training Officer and later a Juvenile Aid Officer. George became a member of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Officer's Association (PJOA), serving as 3rd Vice President before advancing to President from 2012-2014. He received numerous awards and commendations throughout his career and continued to better himself through trainings such as the Community Leadership Institute, FBI-LEEDS (Law Enforcement Development Seminar) and FBI-LEEDA (Law Enforcement Education Development Association). He was promoted to Detective Sergeant in 2013, proving himself to be a sound leader and stabilizing force within the

department. "Sarge" was a member of the North Penn Area DUI Task Force, Montgomery County Drug Task Force, and a pillar in many community groups.

We are saying happy trails to a cop's cop, community servant, true friend and one heck of an infectious laugh! We are all very happy to wish Sarge and his wife, Sandra well as they enjoy their next chapter in sunny Florida.



Pictured is Chief Skelton of Limerick Township, Sandra Moyer and George Moyer



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CHIEF PAUL R. HUNSBERGER FRANCONIA TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT | 1965 – 1997

Retired Police Chief Paul R. Hunsberger died on Sunday, January 24, 2021 at the age of 94.

In 1965, Paul R. Hunsberger was appointed Chief of Police in Franconia Township. Chief Hunsberger served with the Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department for six years prior to his arrival in Franconia. The Chief's family was dedicated to police service. During a time in Chief Hunsberger's career, his father was the Chief of Police in Souderton Borough, and his half-brother, John Kayser, served as Chief of Police in Upper Dublin Township.

For 32 years Chief Hunsberger oversaw the growth of the Franconia Township Police Department. He was instrumental in developing many partnerships with the community, especially the schools. In 1976, Chief Hunsberger supervised the Police Department's move to the current Township Building on Allentown Road. Chief Hunsberger faithfully served the Franconia residents until his retirement in 1997.

Due to COVID 19 restrictions, a private burial took place, which was attended by Chief Martin and Det. Sgt. Moyer.



On-Lot Sewer Disposal Inspections Suspended

The Township has suspended its inspection of on-lot disposal systems (OLDS) for the time being. OLDS inspections are one part of the Township's Sewer Management Program (SMP). Even though the inspections have been suspended, proper care and maintenance of your OLDS should continue. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends pumping out your OLDS every three years to keep it healthy. Of course, some on-lot systems may require less frequent pumping; many require more frequent pumping due to heavy use or failing health. Since we are not doing inspections, you do not have to coordinate your OLDS pump-out with us.

Morwood Phase 2 Public Sewers Moving Ahead

Morwood Phase 2 sewer construction will begin this summer. Following the success of Morwood Phase 1, completed in 2020, Franconia Sewer Authority has decided to move forward with completion of the Morwood project. Working with State Representative Steve Malagari and State Senator Maria Collett, the Franconia Sewer Authority was able to secure some grant money to help reduce the cost of the overall Morwood Project (both Phases 1 and 2). The terms of the grant require completion of the project in a timely manner.

The construction method will be similar to Phase 1. Instead of trenching in the middle of the road, sewer lines will be directionally drilled along the road right-of-way, thereby reducing traffic interruptions and yard restorations. Phase 2 includes the following roads: Eisenhower and Gerhart Lanes, Keller Creamery Road from the Indian Creek to Hunsicker Road, and Hunsicker Road around the intersection of Keller Creamery Road. Residents affected by the proposed sewer installation will be receiving more detailed information in the mail.



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Not All Types of Recycling Were Created Equal (But They Are All Important)

Many people wonder what happens to the materials that they place in their recycling bin. There are three main types of recycling that post-consumer materials can undergo. Each has specific advantages and end products.

Primary recycling, often referred to as “closed loop recycling”, is when recyclable materials are mechanically processed to create a product that serves a similar function. For example, a post-consumer plastic bottle can be mechanically processed to create a new plastic bottle. This bottle has similar strength and performance characteristics as the original bottle. Some materials, such as aluminum and glass, can be recycled in this closed loop system an infinite amount of times. No matter how many times these materials are recycled; their material quality will not decrease. A glass bottle made with glass that has been recycled 20 times will perform just as well as a bottle made of new glass.

The quality of other materials, such as paper and plastic, decreases each time they are recycled. The strength of paper comes from the tangling of pulp fibers. Each time a paper product is recycled, these fibers become shorter, until they become so short they are unable to be used to create new paper. The EPA estimates that paper can be recycled a maximum of five to seven times. Plastic recycling fares worse. The polymers that make up plastics also are shortened each time the material is recycled, and it is estimated that plastic can only be recycled one to two times before the quality of the material is diminished.

This is where secondary recycling comes in. Secondary recycling is still a mechanical recycling process, but it uses recycled materials to make a new product. This new product typically does not have the same physical demands as the original product and is often less recyclable. Despite the decrease in recyclability, this is an important process to minimize the use of virgin resources and to help divert less recyclable materials such as plastic from landfills. An example of secondary recycling is plastic bottles being turned into polyester.

The third type of recycling is tertiary recycling. In tertiary recycling, recycled materials are used as a feedstock in a process to create chemicals and fuels. These chemicals can then be used to create new materials. This type of recycling typically uses the most energy, costs more, and can have the same negative environmental impacts of producing brand new materials. The benefits are reducing waste that is landfilled and minimizing new resources that are used to create chemicals. An example of tertiary recycling is the glycolysis of PET plastic into diols and dimethyl terephthalate to make virgin PET plastic.

Municipal and state regulations require that residents, commercial establishments and non-residential establishments recycle all recyclable materials. Commonly recycled materials include paper, plastic, glass and metal. You should check with your hauler for a complete list of acceptable recyclable materials.

Summer Is Busy Season For Public Works Department

Franconia Township Public Works is looking forward to the upcoming spring & summer of 2021. We always enjoy the burst of spring and new life and are anxious to continue keeping Franconia Township a well-maintained place to live and work.

Being a community having approximately 900 acres of preserved open space and having acres of designated park areas, our park maintenance crew spends a lot of time keeping those areas manicured for public use. We need to mow over 100 acres every week throughout our park system and having to work around suitable weather conditions can be a challenge at times.

Preventative maintenance of our massive infrastructure has become a high priority for our maintenance crew. Proper drainage is a key factor in producing safer roadways; therefore, a lot of effort is put into controlling and directing storm water into our grassy swales and storm drainage

structures. The importance of doing this is to keep the water away from our sub-base which affects the integrity of our highway system and also reduces icing and potholes throughout the winter season.

Pavement preservation is another priority in Franconia so we use various types of surface treatments to control oxidation and keep water from penetrating the surface which leads to rapid deterioration of our driving surfaces. Crack sealing along with chip sealing are the most cost effective types of preservation on the market, but we have found alternatives that can help us lengthen the life of our pavements. We are currently using a fog seal on top of our chip seal in more densely populated areas along with a cape seal in others.

We have been using another newer seal coat process on high volume roadways. This method is an ultra-thin overlay that seal coats the road surface with liquid asphalt and then applies a pave layered single stone hot mix on top of the

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Park Improvements Coming

Enos B. Godshall Park is one of our township's hidden gems. Located at the intersection of Godshall and Lower Roads, this park remains in a natural wooded state and is perfectly suited for walking, picnicking, or simply enjoying the natural surroundings. The park has a walking trail situated on 11 acres with a small pond and stream and is available for use from sunrise to sunset.

The pond was originally constructed as a man-made water source to fight fires at nearby farms, should it ever be needed. Fire ponds were fairly common in the area prior to modern fire equipment, public water sources and fire hydrants. Because of its construction, each year, there is a large buildup of algae on the pond and the area becomes rife with mosquitos.

Recognizing the natural beauty, the Township has been working closely with the State Department of Environmental Protection as part of its MS4 plan to improve this area by removing the overgrowth surrounding the pond, removing the sedimentation build up within the pond, and converting the area to a bio-retention area where natural habitat can flourish, eliminating the algae and making the entire area even more desirable, including the expansion of the picnic grove. Many of the trees in the area fell victim to the Emerald Ash Borer, and will need to come down.

Stormwater Management: What The Township Is Required To Do

If you've been following along with the stormwater articles in Franc Talk, you should have a basic understanding of what stormwater is and the regulators' concerns, in general. In this article, we'll look at some of the specific issues regarding stormwater. The Federal Government (Environmental Protection Agency or EPA) began regulating stormwater a few years ago. It started with large urban areas and now have regulatory requirements on virtually all municipalities. Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) carries out and enforces the EPA's regulations. These agencies refer to stormwater conveyance as Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System or MS4.

Franconia Township, along with other municipalities, is required to address stormwater issues, including rapid runoff (which causes flooding), sediment reduction, and nutrient removal (nitrogen and phosphorus). PADEP has approved Franconia's initial five-year plan (as required by EPA) to begin work on addressing MS4 issues. Included in this plan is stream bank stabilization and development of "rain gardens" to slow the flow of rainwater.

Land Development Update

Approved or Under Construction

- *The Pizza Box* – Morwood Road and Allentown Road
- *Medical Office Building* – County Line Road and Township Line Road
- *Hillstone* – WB Homes, 51 Mixed Residential Homes, Cowpath Road
- *Peter Becker Community* – 30 Cottages at Pondview
- *Amplifier Research* – Building addition, 160 Schoolhouse Road

Preliminary Approval

- *Bayard Estates* – WB Homes, 22 Single Family Homes, Indian Creek Road
- *Belton Manor Estates* – 9 Single Family Homes, Godshall Road
- *DLAP LLC* – Lot Line Adjustment, Township Line Road and Leidy Road
- *Allebach Tract* – 10 Single Family Homes Cowpath Road and Forest Road

Residential Projects

Just a reminder that Franconia requires a permit for all sheds, fences, decks, patios, pools, plumbing, electrical work, solar panels, and demolition work as well as any new construction or additions. A permit is not required for siding, replacement windows or roof shingles. Franconia Township does not require a Use and Occupancy permit for residential resale.

Permit applications are available on the Township website www.franconiatownship.org on the Building and Zoning page, as well as the Township Office building.

Summer Is Busy Season For Public Works Department (cont.)

asphalt as a driving surface. All of the products mentioned above will be used on various roads throughout the Township this summer.

PennDOT will be milling and paving Cowpath Road from Route 113 all the way to County Line Road, and our highway crew will be milling and paving Ridge View Drive and Springshire Drive along with a section of Township Line Road this year.

We ask that you respect all notices of work that are planned in your area and avoid road closures so we can leave you with a better finished product.

You will also see some activity with the Pear Tree Village area of our Township where we will begin the process of removing and replacing the handicap access onto our sidewalk system by bringing the ramps up to the new ADA standards.

Beware Of COVID-19 Scams

It's hard to believe COVID-19 has been a part of our lives for over a year now. It has been at the forefront of every aspect of our day-to-day lives. This has created fear and chaos for many people.

Unfortunately, there are some out there who see this as an opportunity for nefarious activity and are taking advantage of these virus-related fears. Scammers are using phone, email, postal mail, text and social media to contact people in an attempt to obtain personal information, money or both. Here are some common COVID-19 scams on their website that we should be aware of.

- 1) **Vaccination photos posted on social media:** Identity theft can occur when scammers see and steal personal information such as your name and birthdate.
- 2) **COVID-19 testing, vaccine and treatment plans:** Do not trust offers to get early access into the approved vaccine. Scammers are especially targeting Medicare recipients. They are offering COVID-19 testing in exchange for personal information. Be aware that legitimate contact tracers will not ask for a Medicare number, financial information, or set up a test and collect payment.
- 3) **Charity Scams:** Scammers are creating fake charities as well as impersonating legitimate organizations. You can investigate by visiting the Federal Trade Commission's page on charity scams at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0074-giving-charity>.
- 4) **Checks from the Government:** Scammers will say they are from the IRS or other government agency such as Social Security. Imposters will seek payment or personal information regarding stimulus checks, overdue payments, filing extensions and other tax related topics. Social Security warns that any call, text or letter offering to "maintain regular benefit payments" if you make a payment is fake.
- 5) **FDIC and banking:** Scammers will say that your bank account or ability to get cash is in danger and will ask for your personal information.
- 6) **Grandparent and military service member:** These people will request money for a relative or service member in a desperate situation and in urgent need of medical or travel expenses.

You can familiarize yourself with recordings of sample phone messages from scammers at <http://www.usa.gov/COVID-scams>.

If you believe you are a victim of fraud or a scam, report the crime to your local police department. Also visit <https://www.usa.gov/stop-scams-frauds> for a listing of where to report different types of fraud or scams.

The Federal Communications Commission listed on their website helpful tips to avoid these scam artists.

- Do not respond to calls or texts from unknown numbers or any others that appear suspicious.
- Never share your personal or financial information via email, text message, or over the phone.
- Be cautious if you're being pressured to share any information or make a payment immediately.
- Scammers often "spoof" phone numbers to trick you into answering or responding. This will make the call appear to be from a local number, or from a company or government agency you already know and trust.
- Remember that government agencies will never call you to ask for personal information or money.
- Do not click any links in a text message or email. If you receive a message from a friend with a suspicious link that seems out of character, call them to be sure they were not hacked.

Familiarize yourself with the threats that are out there and stay vigilant. If you are unsure about a call, email, letter, text or website, don't be afraid to ask a family member or someone you trust to be sure it is legitimate. If something sounds suspect or too good to be true, it very well may be.





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Event Calendar

Concert in the Park

The Franconia Park & Recreation Board is pleased to announce that they will be sponsoring a summer concert this year featuring The Mighty Manatees. They will be performing your favorite Reggae, Roots and Rock hits. Grab your lawn chair and join us on the lawn of Franconia Community Park to enjoy this night of music and family fun!

WHEN: Sunday, August 15, 2021
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

WHERE: Franconia Community Park



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