

THE Declaration OF INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP

Washington County · Avella, Pennsylvania

FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 11 • ISSUE 3



Highlighting Our

FALL BEAUTY • POSITIVE FINANCES • NEW & THRIVING BUSINESSES

This and more inside! 

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FALL 2024



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INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP

34 Campbell Street · PO Box E · Avella, PA 15312

Ph: 724-587-3518 | Fax: 724-587-5988

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www.independence.patownship.org



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Board of Supervisors

THOMAS JENNINGS
Chairman

JOYCE MCKENZIE
Vice-Chairman

THOMAS COWDEN
Supervisor

Secretary / Treasurer

MELISSA ANSELL

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Public Meetings:

3rd Friday of the Month: 10:00 AM

*The Declaration of Independence Township
is published four times per year
by the Board of Supervisors.*

FEEDBACK & NEWS TIPS WELCOME!
katiee12@hotmail.com



Message from the Supervisors

LOOKING GOOD INDEPENDENCE!

Exactly what is looking good this season?



🍁 OUR NATURAL BEAUTY 🍁 OUR NEW BUSINESSES/GROWTH 🍁 OUR POSITIVE FINANCIAL REPORT

With the start of fall here in Independence Township, we take a moment to reflect on how we've grown or changed since the last season started. As with our individual lives, there are always ups and downs, but in this season, we have seen some exciting things happening; new businesses opening, new activities and opportunities, maybe just maybe a willingness to have more of a community camaraderie, and certainly a very favorable auditor's report. In the last couple of weeks autumn has started to bring Independence Township those beautiful bursts of color in our natural surroundings that our region is known for and that people travel here to see. We believe we've got the best of the best right here, so take time to step outside or take a drive around and checkout our gorgeous farm and forest landscapes this time of year! Take a walk on one of the trails in our Independence Township Community Park, and you'll get to soak up some fall feels. Take a look through our newsletter to see some of the exciting new business and community news and events happening here.

At our September meeting, Steven Cypher, assisted by Song Wang of Cypher and Cypher presented a positive report on their audit of Independence Township's 2023 fiscal year. Cypher and Cypher is a large, reputable accounting firm who performs audits for dozens of municipalities, as well as a variety of other industries, so they can use and compare current trends and data to help provide really detailed and valuable insight for how we are doing with our money and planning our future in Independence. They pointed out that:

- Independence Township's budget is sound.
- The audit of 2023 shows that the financial state of the Township has been improving since 2015, and is now in its best shape yet.
- We don't have as much impact money coming in anymore, and need to plan and budget accordingly.
- It's very important for a township of our size to keep our General Fund high, and not to spend all of the money. We need to keep a sizable amount in the General Fund. There are always unexpected things that happen that require funds, and this is often where smaller townships such as



ours will find their funding when such needs arise.

- Praised the efficiency of current staff.
- Independence Township has done well with budgeting what we had to work with.
- We have gotten along well and haven't had to raise taxes for many years. NOBODY wants to raise taxes. Cypher & Cypher noted that moving forward, due to recent rising costs and inflation, there may be a NEED to raise taxes in the future, in order to keep our township in good working order. Also, they noted that it would be a mistake to wait too long to do this, because doing that could result in financial devastation for the township. There will be budget and planning meetings happening to discuss this and a rise in taxes will only be done if absolutely necessary.

If you are an Independence Township resident and you have input or a question, we encourage you to come to a meeting. We hold our meetings when the majority of our professionals are able to attend. If you are unable to make a meeting, call us at the office. We'll do our best to personally take your call and tend to your question/concern.

Sincerely Yours,

Thomas Jennings, Chairman
Joyce McKenzie, Vice Chairman
Thomas Cowden, Supervisor



Community Calendar



October

- 12** **Saturday: 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm**
Little A Town Flea Market
- 13** **Sunday: 11:30 am**
AVFD Super Bingo
- 13** **Sunday: 12:00 pm**
Avella Sportsmen's Club
Meat Shoot
- 14** **Monday**
Columbus Day
- 16** **Wednesday: 9:00 am - 11:00 am**
Food Bank Avella Distribution
- 18** **Friday: 10:00 am**
Independence Township Meeting
- 19** **Saturday: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm**
Meadowcroft - Archaeology Day
- 21** **Monday: 6:00 pm**
ICCJSA Meeting at Cross Creek
Township Building
- 21** **Monday: 6:00 pm**
AACA Meeting at Independence
Township Community Center
- 26** **Saturday:**
6th Annual Shades of Death
10 Miler Walk/Run
- 26** **Saturday: 10:00 am**
Meadowcroft - Taffy Pull
and Fall Celebration
- 31** **Thursday:**
Halloween
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Independence Township's
Recommended Time for
TRICK OR TREAT!

November

- 5** **Tuesday**
Election Day
- 10** **Sunday: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm**
A.D. White's Avella's
Groundhog Day Event at AVFD
- 11** **Monday**
Veterans Day
- 15** **Friday: 10:00 am**
Independence Township Meeting
- 18** **Monday: 6:00 pm**
ICCJSA Meeting at Cross Creek
Township Building
- 18** **Monday: 6:00 pm**
AACA Meeting at Independence
Township Community Center
- 20** **Wednesday: 9:00 am - 11:00 am**
Food Bank Avella Distribution
- 27** **Wednesday: 5:00 pm**
Eagles Nest Recovery
Thanksgiving Dinner
- 28** **Thursday**
Thanksgiving
- 30** **Saturday**
Rifle season for deer hunting begins.
Safety First, Independence Township!



WEEKLY KIDS EVENT @ SEED 2 FLOWER

December

- 15** **Sunday**
AVFD Breakfast with Santa
- 16** **Monday: 6:00 pm**
ICCJSA Meeting at Cross Creek
Township Building
- 16** **Monday: 6:00 pm**
AACA Meeting at Independence
Township Community Center
- 28** **Wednesday: 9:00 am - 11:00 am**
Food Bank Avella Distribution
- 20** **Friday: 10:00 am**
Independence Township Meeting
- 21** **Saturday:**
Winter Begins
- 25** **Wednesday:**
Christmas
- 26** **Thursday:**
1st Day of Hanukkah
- 31** **Tuesday:**
New Years Eve



Independence United Methodist Church
(Service Times for churches on page 23)

- WEEKLY EVENTS -

- Seed 2 Flower **Imagination Blooms** Kids Creative page 6
- Church Services page 23
- Eagles Nest Recovery page 19



INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP Community Center



11 School Court, Avella, PA 15312

Call for Reservations: 724-507-6448

email: indtwpcc@hky.com

VERY AFFORDABLE RATES! • EASY TO BOOK!

Newly Renovated Spaces • Clean • Plenty of Parking
Special Rates for Independence Residents & Part-Day Rentals
Temperature Controlled • Security Features • ADA Accessible

the perfect space for **YOUR EVENT!**



The gorgeous event room is perfect for any party or event, accommodating up to around 40 guests comfortably. Complete with tables, chairs, a bar with electrical outlets, and even a mini fridge for drinks. The adjacent gym is perfect for recreation for your young party guests.

VERY AFFORDABLE RATES



- Birthday Parties
- Anniversaries
- Small Business Events
- Family Events
- Baby/Bridal Showers
- Graduation Parties
- Confirmation Celebrations
- Private Fundraising Events
- Funeral Repasts
- Meeting/Training Space
- Networking Events

There is AVAILABILITY for the FALL season!
Call today to book your event!



Let's Play! **PICKLEBALL**

or basketball, volleyball, or other gym activities

Pickleball is sweeping our nation, and here in Independence Township it is no different! Some call it a cross between tennis and table tennis, and we have many residents who absolutely LOVE the sport, so we've equipped our gym perfectly for it. For a small fee of \$2/person until 4pm or \$5/person after 4pm, you and your group can come play! If pickleball isn't for you, schedule to use the gym for whatever activity you'd like! Our minimal fees help to pay for utilities, maintenance and staff for the services provided.

Open to the public and available by appointment.
Call to schedule your gym time today!



BY **Katie Leeper,**
Independence Township

Seed 2 Flower re-opened the doors of Avella's hometown flower & gift shop at 24 Campbell Street on September 7th with all new, incredibly thoughtful and well-stocked inventory. New owner Meig Carter is an inspiring, hard-working, and a talented florist, artist, and mom of two little ones who grew up in Independence Township and graduated from Avella. She moved away for a while, but her roots and love for her hometown brought her back. Meig talked to us about how Avella and country living has helped shape her.

Carter has been in the floristry business for years, and has had a lifelong love of flowers. She worked as the manager of a flower shop in Weirton, then launched her own floral business out of her home/family garage, all while dreaming of opening her own shop one day. Meig is pas-

"To me flowers are more than just flowers. Spiritually, flowers & nature speak emotion. When you send a gift from my shop you are sending the emotion that you hope that person feels when receiving it. I try to capture that emotion in the gift."
-Meig

sionate about her work, and she told us that she makes suggestions to customers to help create gifts with intention and purpose, so the flowers, live plant, gift basket (or whatever the gift may be) isn't just something pretty to look at, but something that will give the recipient a longterm feeling, such as the ability to soothe or lift spirits during a difficult time. If you look around Seed 2 Flower, you'll see the thoughtfulness put into each and every one of the items in the shop's inventory. These are items Meig has carefully selected over time that groups of people, in our community specifically, will have a soft spot in their hearts for - and find use for!

As Meig gave us a tour of the new shop, it became evident that she was dedicated to not only her art and floristry, but also community and family. While her love of flowers and community may have created a desire to start her own business, it is her two young children, Amelia (5) and Brixton (3), who are now the catalyst of her ambition and the true driving force behind opening the doors of Seed 2 Flower's new shop. The endeavour has been a family & community effort, and she hopes Seed 2 Flower will have a positive impact on everyone, most of all, her two young children. Her kids have been helping her in the shop and learning and watching their Mom start a new business. Meig's love for children can be seen in the large children's section that is stocked with the coolest kid's toys, books, and gift



WELCOMING NEW BUSINESS SEED - 2 - FLOWER

IMAGINATION
BLOOMS
KIDS
CREATIVE OUTLET

WEDNESDAYS
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

- \$3 donation/child requested
No one is turned away. Everyone will participate with or without a donation.
- Free Snack & Juice Box
- Monthly Raffle for participants
- Inspirational & self love talk, what kindness means, talks about bullying and how to stand up against it, weekly kid talks as a little group while we do a creative activity.
- Some activities we'll do: pumpkin decorating (painting, jack o lantern contest), mini canvas painting, how to draw classes, read & draw (we read a seasonal stories and they draw a picture about it).

Looking for Donations & Volunteers!
Donation of any supplies: in need of paint brushes, egg cartons & small pumpkins. Please call/text if you can donate or volunteer an hour of your time or if you'd like to teach a class.

All ages, all are welcome
Parents welcome to participate



RSVP: Text 304-374-9841
(walk-ins are welcome, but RSVP if possible so we have enough supplies!)

continued on page 7

continued from page 6



Seed 2 Flower owner, Meig Carter, and her children Amelia & Brixton show us the children's gift section of the new shop

items that are all really useful and unique. When asked what their favorite part of the shop was, Amelia and Brixton took us directly to this section!

Seed 2 Flower is interested in bringing people together and putting goodness into our community in different ways. Meig tells us her interest in having seasonal events like BBQs & holiday events. They have already started a weekly kid's event called "Imagination Blooms," that she has scheduled specifically on a night when children in the community may benefit from it the most (see ad on previous page).

Seed 2 Flower sources as many of its flowers, crafted items, paintings and raw materials from local farmers, craftsmen and local business as much as possible. They use flowers and items from local farmer Dean Casciola, local honey and beeswax from Bedillion's, wine from Raccoon Creek, paintings and crochet items from local artists, lavender and other plants and aromatics from Orion Organics. Seed 2 Flower also propagates their own plants in a family greenhouse right here in Independence Township.

Seed 2 Flower is NOT YOUR TYPICAL FLOWER SHOP, and in here there is something for everyone, so come check it out for yourself. The intention is to package gift items with a flower or plant item to give the full effect, but everything in the shop is for sale!



A Note from SEED-2-FLOWER

"A big thank you to Jackie Mays & Joyce's Crochet Creations for sharing in crochet designs for the store and to the many helping hands I've had along the way. Also to Ryan Scott for the countless hours of hands on help and support to get the flower shop operational. I wouldn't have been able to achieve any of this without the love & support from my customers & the community. I'm really looking forward to creating a supportive, loving space for people in the community to be able to come together & support one another. We are all special and unique. And it takes all of us to make a community work efficiently & productively as a whole. I hope to be a staple in the new age of this process."

-Meig Carter



COME IN WE'RE
OPEN

24 Campbell Street | Avella, PA 15312

Call **304-374-9841** to order

Free Delivery to Avella • Local Tristate Delivery

www.avellaflowershop.com •

Keep an eye out for
monthly classes on
Facebook



PUBLIC WORKS



Leaves & Temps are Falling as Independence Township Public Works Finishes a Huge Lineup of Summer Projects and Shifts Gears for the New Season



School Court Paving Project Completed



Joe & Donnie completing patch work all over the Township Roads on a hot day in August



The multi-township cooperative effort of Tar & Chip was done in August. This annual job helps keep our many miles of township roads operational on our small rural township budget.

Here's a look at just some of what we've been working on to close-out the summer season, move into fall, and what we're looking at for the months ahead!

▶ SCHOOL COURT PAVED

This large-scale, necessary infrastructure maintenance project had been in planning and engineering for many months, and in August it was completed. It resulted in various improvements for our residents, as well as an all-around makeover to the School Court area, which sits aside the Independence Township Community Center. We repaved the road because the surface was destroyed beyond simple repairs. We widened the road to allow sufficient access for emergency vehicles, as well as for much more efficient snow removal. We added depth to the side of the road that gets heavier traffic for dumpster use and for our equipment traveling to and from the buildings at the end of School Court, so the roadway will last

longer. Now the roadway will function great, and it all looks fantastic up there too!

▶ POTHOLE PATCHING

While the asphalt was coming in hot up at School Court, our crews took loads of asphalt around and patched up roads where needed, all over the township. We patch where needed, whenever possible, and as the budget allows, as it is a cost-effective way to protect the road surface and foundation. By repairing potholes, we get an instant improvement in look and safety, and it also prevents further damage and erosion in that area. We save a bucket-load of money by repairing over repaving, both short-term and long-term.

▶ SEAL COATINGS

Both the Independence Township Community Center and Independence Township Municipal Building had their parking lots seal coated.

▶ TRIMMING BY THE TRACKS

We've weedwacked along the train-tracks downtown, and there's also been trees trimmed along the tracks, making things safer and looking better.



TAR & CHIPPED APPROX 19 MILES OF ROAD

In the annual effort, with help from our friends from Mt. Pleasant, Hopewell, and Smith Township, we got the big job of Tar & Chip done in Independence Township, and Roadmaster Bob was happy to report that around 19 miles of road was chipped, with some of those really in need of it getting double-chipped. Tar & chip is NECESSARY here and in most municipalities, and it cost around \$28,000 per mile. In contrast, resurfacing and repaving can cost \$220,000 per mile. Simply put, we do not have the funds to repave many miles of roads, yet we do have many miles of road to maintain, including keeping funds in the bank for the never ceasing developments caused by mother nature, extremely heavy traffic, or other events. The great relationships we have with other neighboring townships are also vital, and it's the way we've gotten big jobs like this done for years (we help them and they help us to get big jobs done economically). In the weeks that followed tar and chip week, our crew has continued to go out and clean-up spots of chip that need it.

*Some folks have expressed a desire to have have their roads paved over patched or chipped. We'd like our residents to know that **IF WE COULD** pave or repave everyone's road and if it was a responsible, sound economical decision for our township to do so, **OF COURSE WE WOULD!***

REALITY CHECK: paving is extremely expensive and we have to be smart by planning and using maintenance techniques to preserve our country roads and stretch our dollars to keep all 34 miles of our roads and infrastructure working for ALL of our residents. These roads include bridges, drainage, signage and other factors.



LATE NIGHT STORM CLEANUP w/ SUPERVISOR COWDEN

Anyone remember the night of bad storms we had in August? We had a lot of trees down, and Public Works had a late night out on the roads clearing trees and making roads safe and passable for morning. It was a lot of work for our small crew, so Supervisor Tom Cowden joined the crew that evening to help out and ensure roads were safe for travel the next day.



CO-OP PROJECT WITH MT. PLEASANT

We assisted Mt. Pleasant with their paving project in August.



NEW EXHAUST/FANS INSTALLED

At the Public Works Building we had much needed exhaust fans installed to update the building, along with fresh weather stripping.



EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

It's been a season of working on equipment upkeep and repair as of late. A lot of the batteries are 8, 10 or even 15 years old, so we've been working to replace wiring and update everything to keep it in good working order, so the machines are ready to work when needed!

FUTURE PLANNING

The Township Supervisors & Roadmaster Bob always have a stack of future public works projects that are in their sights for the weeks, months and even years ahead, in effort to make Independence Township better and better for our future generations. These are just a couple of those projects that are in the planning phase. The Sugar Run Bridge/Culvert Repair is cur-

rently in engineering. Bob recently ordered some PennDot road studies that should result in new signage and help on traffic issues in our township on State Road 844. We received a donation of 2A Stone from Range that is in storage, and Bob has big plans for that. He'd like to use this stone to start tying in chipped sections of road, little by little, as materials and budget allows. They are also planning on doing more grading of the roads (a gravel road preservation technique), which is dependent on weather/precipitation.



NEW BUSINESS DOWNTOWN

We see a lot of positive movement in Independence Township, and here's one exciting example that you'll find right in the heart of the downtown area, on Campbell Street. Avella now has these brand new, really beautiful, contemporary style, fully remodeled office spaces. There are a few already occupied with businesses, and two private office spaces still available for lease! Call today to come check them out!



- NEW OFFICE SPACES AVAILABLE FOR LEASE -

26 Campbell Street | Avella, PA 15312

2 OFFICES AVAILABLE:

13 ft. x 30 ft.
or 13 ft. x 20 ft.

- Fully Remodeled •
- Contemporary Modern Design •
- Relaxing Atmosphere •

- Flexible Lease Options •
- Kitchen/Break Room •
- Restrooms, Internet •



Visit these
businesses, located in
the newly renovated
office suites...

Gailey
ENVIRONMENTAL LLC

☎ 412-770-4698

www.gaileyenvironmental.com



**Spray
Tanning**

☎ 724.344.7959

AND OTHER
SALON SERVICES



Contact Jason

for more info or to come take a look at the new offices!

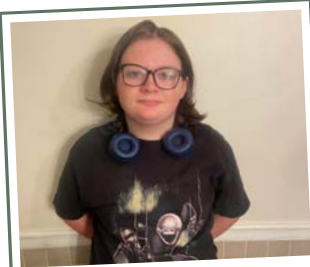


724 - 344 - 7959





School is back in session! To all school students, parents, teachers, aides, staff, drivers, volunteers, homeschoolers, and all who are involved in seeing our children educated, we wish you a happy, healthy and productive school year! Here are photos submitted by parents from in and around Independence Township of some of the bright smiles on their first day of school!



Brianna (7th Grade)



Jordan (9th Grade)



Layla (Pre-K)



Stella (K)



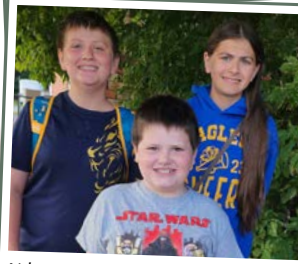
Logan (7th Grade)



Wyatt (8th Grade)



Brody (5th Grade)



Aiden (7th), Alex (4th), Aubrey (9th)



Noelle (3rd), Adalyn (6th), Andrew (1st)



Cage (5th Grade)



Alex (9th Grade)



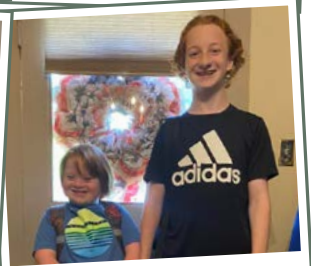
Briella (K), Alaysia (6th)



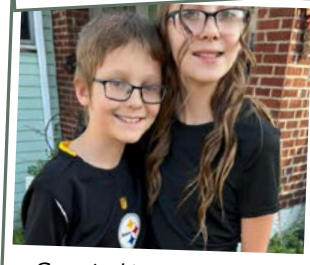
Jason Stough (Senior)



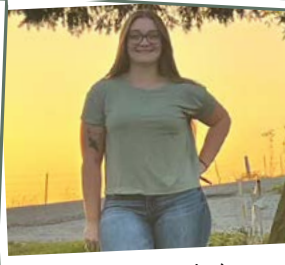
Payton (8th Grade)



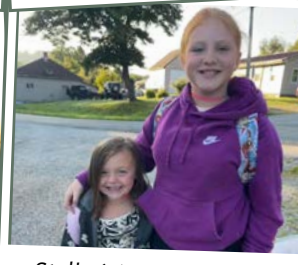
Killian (2nd), Kayson (6th)



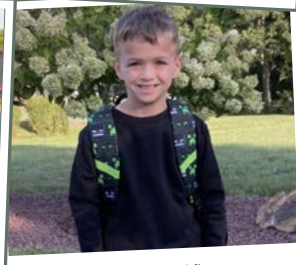
Gary (4th), Destiny (6th)



Emma (Senior)



Stella (K), Virginia (6th)



Hakon (K)



Lain



Korbin



Tallen (K)



Fiona (5th Grade)



Eliana (Pre-K)

Heaven Sent Farms



Where **FARM** meets Wedding Venue

BY **Katie Leeper,**
Independence Township

At Heaven Sent Farms in Independence Township they are not just a pretty face, they're a real working farm. And from the early morning hours of everyday until the sun goes down over the beautiful farmland at 243 Washington Pike, you'll find the family busy completing a wide range of day-to-day responsibilities, including crop and livestock management, financial planning, overall farm maintenance, management of their gorgeous, unique wedding venue, caring for one another, and raising the next generation of children. Although it is a lot of hard work, it is the joy of their hearts to wake up every morning to take care of God's creations.

This is the story of Heaven Sent Farms, their challenges, their faith, and their perseverance.

The 242 acre farm has been a part of the Liggett family since 1872. John Liggett (wife Carmen) is 5th generation, and the children, Luke (wife Tara) and Sunnie (husband Walter) are 6th generation. John and Carmen have 5 beautiful grandchildren, ages 1, 2, 3, 4 & 7, and the little ones are 7th generation on the farm.



The goods and services offered at Heaven Sent Farms include weddings at their beautiful barn venue, grass fed beef, and organic grains.

On our visit to the farm in late August, we met Carmen Liggett and her son-in-law, Walter Kopko, whom Carmen described, along with his wife Sunnie, as the "current workhorses of the farm." Sunnie and Walter were Avella high school sweethearts who grew up just down the road from one another. Sunnie is a plant science major and manages the plant rotation on the farm, and she also holds a minor in agronomy. Walter shared some really interesting information about crops with us, some of which flew right over our heads! But we learned that this family is educated and passionate about what they do, and they use their in-depth knowledge and experience to produce the very best, natural, non GMO products! One of the big commodities they produce is certified organic grain, and a big consumer of their corn is Wigle Whiskey distillery in Pittsburgh.

[Walter & Sunnie]

"the current,
workhorses of
the farm."

Another high quality product you'll find on Heaven Sent Farms is their grass-fed & grass finished, no growth hormones, and humanely raised beef. John oversees the sales of the beef, and Walter oversees the animals. Walter runs many of the farm operations, including taking care of the livestock. He told us "farming is fun." Then, on second thought, added "farming is hard."... Prior to our arrival, Walter said he had just finished playing tag with four animals for an hour.. and lost! Those livestock are the grass fed beef that can be purchased in

continued on page 13



» continued from page 12

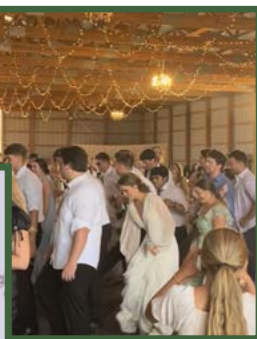
"It is the joy of our hearts to wake up every morning to take care of God's creations. We are proud to provide our consumers with quality products and services. Our growing family loves and embraces the farm lifestyle, and we hope to share some of it with you."

quarters, half or whole. Check out the website or call John for more info or to order grass fed beef.

The other leg of the family business, the wedding venue, was the brainchild of daughter-in-law Tara, who is son Luke Liggett's wife. Luke is a U.S. Navy veteran. He grew up working on the farm, and in 2014 married Tara. As a couple they played a role in farm operations for years. In 2020 Luke was diagnosed with ALS, and the last four years have been a challenge for the entire family. Luke's help is greatly missed on the family farm, but Carmen says their faith in God has helped strengthen them and they are praying and believing for his complete healing. Although Luke is not able to physically contribute to farm operations at this time, he is still a big part of the family business planning.

The wedding venue side of their business proved to be a fantastic idea. The location couldn't be more perfect, and the breathtaking views of the rolling hills of our magnificent country land and cattle appeals to just about everyone. The venture quickly took off, and recently it was voted in the top 5 barn venues in the area ("best of best"). The venue is booked nearly every weekend this early fall, and it is best to book one year in advance. Each week, Heaven Sent Farms turns the large working farm barn into an amazingly elegant space for their wedding guests. Brides love the rustic charm and the open feel of the large barn filled with stringed lights and chandeliers. Online you'll find many glowing reviews from guests who talk about how stunning the venue is, how perfect the wedding day goes, and how helpful the owners and staff are for creating a Heaven Sent wedding day! This large venue has room for 300 guests, and when you book, YOU will be the ONLY one booked for the whole weekend, so you can relax and setup the day before and cleanup Monday. Call them today or checkout the website and schedule a time to tour the farm to take a look at this wonderful venue for your big day!

Heaven Sent Farms
was recently voted in the
TOP 5
Barn Venues
in our area!



"The large flowy white curtains & barn doors help us create a unique, dramatic grand entrance for the bride during the processional."

Grass Fed Beef · Wedding Venue · Organic Crops

243 Washington Pike, Avella, PA 15312

heavensentfarmspa@gmail.com

Call for Weddings: 724-470-3022 | Call for Beef: 724-470-3023

www.heavensentfarms.com



Avella Public Library

The Avella Public Library hosted it's annual Summer Reading Program in June. The three day event is always free and open to all ages of children in the community, with costs and activities covered by the Avella Public Library, volunteers, grants and donors.

This year's theme was "Adventure Begins at Your Library," and the 3 day event was a success, with a nice turnout of kids and lots of fun, crafts, stories, snacks and activities each day. Special guest visitor, Haberman Magic kicked things off on day one with a fantastic magic show that delighted the children and adults in the room and caused lots of giggling. The leader of the program was beloved pre-k teacher, Miss Amanda Ansell, who led the children each day in their adventures, along with helper Miss Madeline Ansell.

Special thanks to all who contributed to help make this year's summer reading program a success and so much fun for the kids.



Meet our New Librarians!

Sue Bertovich and Kedrick Seiler, pictured here, are the newest friendly faces you'll see at the Library. In the past months, they've joined forces with director Melissa Ansell and librarian Sandy Pirillo to start bringing more available operating hours, and even more organization and help to our wonderful library. Both Sue and Kedrick are from Avella.



**Thank you for supporting
Avella Area Public Library**



**SEPTEMBER 19
2024**

Thank you to all who supported the Avella Area Public Library during this year's WCCF Gives Day, and to those who support the Library throughout the year. WCCF Gives Day results can be seen at www.wccfgives.org.

Address: 11 School Court, Avella, PA 15312

Phone: 724-587-5688

Follow Us on Facebook!

Regular Hours:

Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs.

10 am - 5 pm



What is Municipal Code Enforcement?

BY **Jarrold D'Amico**,
Director of Codes & Zoning, Harshman CE Group, LLC

The Second Class Township Code is the Pennsylvania State Law that provides guidance for the governance of our Township and allows municipalities to adopt and enforce their own local ordinances. Some communities employ an individual to administer the codes; in some municipalities the police may handle ordinance complaints and compliance; and others, like Independence, contract with a professional firm to handle code enforcement matters.

Harshman Civil Engineering in Washington, PA is the firm appointed by the Township Supervisors to administer the codes adopted by Independence Township. Harshman is reactive and investigates any complaints received by the Township.

Complaints are submitted in writing, either in person to the Township Secretary, or via email. These are reviewed and forwarded to Brandy and Jarrod at Harshman to investigate.

They inspect properties and determine if there is a violation. If one is found, a letter (referred to as a "Notice of Violation" or NOV) is sent to the property owner, and in some cases the tenant of the property, depending on the violation found. These letters include the violations noted at the property,

the section of the code that is being violated, and often a copy of the ordinance referenced.

If the owner and/or tenant do not remediate the issue or contact Brandy and Jarrod with a reasonable extension request, a citation is filed with Magisterial District Judge John Bruner. The court will send a notice for the owner and/or tenant to enter a plea. A not-guilty plea will cause a hearing to be scheduled.

The Harshman Team is most interested in compliance with the codes. They go out of their way to work with residents and often agree to reasonable extensions of time for compliance to be reached.

If you see an issue and believe it may be a code violation, please complete a complaint form and submit it to the Township.



COMMON CODE ENFORCEMENT ITEMS INCLUDE:



◀ high grass ▶

◀ junk cars ▶

◀ trash
on properties ▶

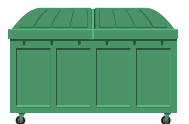
◀ property and
structure
maintenance ▶

◀ building
without
permits ▶



LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO KEEP INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP BEAUTIFUL AND SAFE!

We encourage Independence Township Residents to utilize the bulk item clean-up dumpsters to keep your property clean and tidy!



This is why we provide dumpsters. We all want a beautiful, clean, safe township! See page 19 for dumpster info & hours.



INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP

TRICK-OR-TREAT

2024

Questions/Comments?
First read the full post on
Independence Township's
fb page! Thank you!

NEW RECOMMENDED TIME

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31ST • 5:00PM - 7:00PM

THE AMERICAN LEGION

AVELLA POST 643



MILITARY TRIBUTE

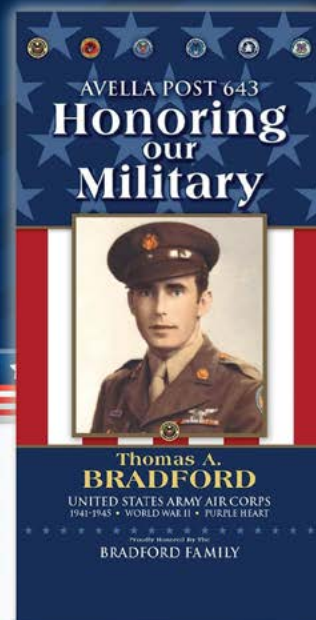
BANNERS

The American Legion Avella Post 643 is honoring veterans and active-duty service members with military tribute banners that will be proudly displayed on the utility poles in Avella throughout the year. Independence Township loves seeing our local military heroes honored!

*The next campaign will run from November thru mid January
(this is the timeframe you have to purchase your banner)*

Tribute banners cost \$175 each.

**If you are interested in purchasing or sponsoring a banner, please contact:
Joan McEachern: 724-263-3399**





Independence Township Dumpsters Bulk Item Clean-up



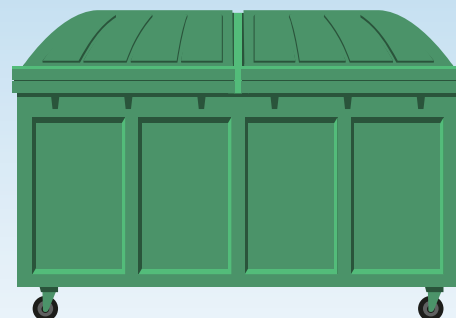
Independence Township has dumpsters available for
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS ONLY

Saturdays Only:

April - October: 8 am - 5 pm | November - March: 9 am - 4 pm

CLOSED ON MAJOR HOLIDAYS

Please NO: tires, electronic devices, computers, refrigerators, garbage, building materials, paint or petroleum products.



DUMPSTER UPDATE!

In our last two newsletters, we were forced to post a notice warning some folks to stop dumping personal food/kitchen garbage in the dumpsters, because it was becoming a real problem (creating a disgusting odor and attracting animals and pests). We also reminded everyone that the dumpsters are available for Independence Township Residents/Taxpayers only and for Bulk Item Clean-Up only. We've had security posted at the dumpsters recently, and this has cut down on problems tremendously. This is a necessary measure so we can keep the dumpsters without additional costs to our taxpayers. We want to encourage our Independence Township Residents/Taxpayers to keep benefiting from the proper use of these bulk cleanup dumpsters and discourage improper use that creates costly problems for our Township and Taxpayers.

Address: 11 School Court, Avella, PA 15312 (behind the Independence Township Community Center)

INDEPENDENCE - CROSS CREEK JOINT SEWER AUTHORITY

OFFICE NOW LOCATED

at 28 Clark Ave
for in-person payments



ONLINE BILL PAY
www.goh2o.net/iccjsa



We remind you **DO NOT FLUSH WIPES OR GREASE OR ANYTHING ASIDE FROM Toilet Paper, Pee, or Poo**, because anything else will increase our monthly expenses and cause damage to our pumps/motors and pipes. **Flushing things you aren't supposed to flush WILL BE costly to us and eventually COSTLY TO YOU and your neighbors.**

Mailing Address: PO Box 156 · Avella, PA 15312
Ph: 724-507-6464

Office Hours:
Closed Tues. | Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri.: 9 AM - 4 PM



MEADOWCROFT

ROCKSHELTER AND
HISTORIC VILLAGE

FALL 2024

upcoming events

**Archaeology
Day****Saturday, October 19**

Ever wonder how archaeologists learn about everyday life for prehistoric people? Do you have a suspected artifact you want professionally identified? As part of Pennsylvania Archaeology Month, archaeologists from

the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology will present lectures and identify your artifacts, accompanied by demonstrations of prehistoric technology. Special hours: 10 am – 5 pm.

**Meadowcroft's
Taffy Pull & Fall Celebration****Saturday, October 26**

Join us in one of our historic log houses to learn about historic confections while you make an old-fashioned sweet treat to take home. Limited space available. Advance reservations recommended. Contact us for more info or to reserve your spot today!

(Call: 724-587-3412 | Email: meadowcroftinfo@heinzhistorycenter.org)

Kids aged 17 and under will receive **FREE** admission to these events, thanks to support from Alex E. Paris Contracting



ALEX E. PARIS
CONTRACTING COMPANY INC.
Our Greatest Assets, Our Employees

Special programs are included with regular Meadowcroft admission. Additional fee applies for taffy pulling participation.

Located at: 401 Meadowcroft Road | Avella, PA 15312 · Phone: 724-587-3412

Visit the website for more info, to register and purchase admission: www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft

A.D. White Research Society, Ltd.

AVELLA'S GROUNDHOG DAY

November 10th, 2024**10:00 am - 4:00 pm**

Avella Volunteer Fire Department Firehall
(1560 Avella Rd, Avella, PA 15312)

For decades the A. D. White Research Society has collected and preserved the history of the Avella area and we'd like to bring it to you! During this family-friendly event, local historians, organizations, and vendors will set-up displays and demonstrations for you to explore the major historic events and eras that created the community we live in today.

Please join us Sunday, 11/10/24, to celebrate the 130th birthday of our organization's namesake and the 69th anniversary of the groundhog's discovery at the Meadowcroft Rockshelter that put our local history on the international stage!

If you're unfamiliar with the story of Avella's own "Groundhog Day"...

The short version is: On 11/12/1955, Albert Miller noticed several 'curious objects' in a groundhog's burrow located at the Rockshelter on their family farm. Albert realized these objects were from a Native American campsite, and the Meadowcroft Rockshelter became the site for the longest cultural sequence in the Americas, changing our understanding of the entire history of people in the New World. Come to Avella's Groundhog Day to learn all about it!





Eagles Nest Recovery
5TH ANNIVERSARY
THANKSGIVING DINNER

Fun Food Fellowship

WED, NOVEMBER 27
DOORS OPEN @ 5:00 PM
DINNER SERVED @ 6:00 PM
SPEAKERS (male & female) BEGIN @ 7:00 PM
Avella Church: 25 Campbell Street, Avella, PA

Eagles Nest Recovery hosted it's first Speaker Jam on Sept. 15th, and it was a big success, with some widely popular and very inspirational recovery speakers (one Pulitzer Prize nominee, one with an online following of 715K) and over 100 attendees throughout the day from all over the tri-state area. We're grateful to see community come together in an area where it's needed, the positive impact this group has, and the recovery that is happening in individuals' lives.



MEETING EVERY
WEDNESDAY · 7:30 PM
for help with
ADDICTION

Avella Church
 25 Campbell Street
 Avella, PA 15312

*All are welcome.
 Your anonymity will
 be protected.
 What is said here,
 stays here.
 No cell phone use
 in meeting.*



Send Us Your Photos!

Have any fun or interesting photos from around Independence Township that we can feature in an upcoming newsletter or on our Township Facebook page?

Email: katiee12@hotmail.com

or
 Call: 724-587-3518

Newsletter Sign-Up

Can we add you to our
 Newsletter Email list?

Submit your email address to:
indtwpwashco@hky.com

Please share sign-up info with your
 neighbors so everyone in the township
 can be in on the news!

STAY UP TO DATE!



Avella Sportsmen's Club



MEAT SHOOT October 13, 2024



Meat Shoot at 1:00 pm • BB Gun Shoot at 12:00 pm

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Join us for target shooting and try to win some freezer meat!

\$3.00 per shot • Guns and shells will be provided.

Concessions • 50/50

1501 Avella Road, Avella, PA 15312



SUPER

BINGO

Avella Volunteer Fire Department

Sunday, October 13, 2024

DOORS OPEN: 11:30 AM

EARLY BIRDS START: 12:45 PM

Info/Tickets: 724-587-5870

Cyndi: 412-576-2937 • Linda: 724-255-5462

Must be 16 to play & accompanied by an adult (No Babies Please!)

Food & Beverages Available

Tickets

Purchased Before October 13th: \$40

At the Door: \$50

Extra Packs: \$5 • Extra Early Birds: \$2

Prizes

Door Prizes • 50/50

Early Birds: \$150 • Regular Games: \$200

Specials: \$500

Jackpot: \$1500



Avella Athletics

Basketball Signups and Wrestling Registration

join the
Avella Athletics
group on facebook
for more information



AVELLA EAGLES BOYS & GIRLS YOUTH WRESTLING

WHY WRESTLE?

- **WRESTLING DEVELOPS ATHLETICISM**
 - You will increase your balance, strength, and coordination
- **WRESTLING PROMOTES PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**
 - As an individual sport, YOU are responsible for your success
 - What you put in is what you get out!
- **WRESTLING DEVELOPS MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE**
 - You will learn to overcome losses and setbacks
- **WRESTLING DEVELOPS LEADERSHIP SKILLS**
 - You and your teammates will learn to push each other, teach each other, and support one another
- **WRESTLING TEACHES DISCIPLINE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**
 - You will learn that you CAN do hard things
- **WRESTLING IS FUN**
 - You will meet and make friends at every event

MEETS AND TOURNAMENTS

- **WARZONE EVENTS**
 - Three events, lasting about 2 hours each
 - Tentative dates 12/15, 1/11, 2/9
- **DUAL MEETS**
 - One meet where 3-4 schools compete
 - Tentative date 1/26
- **TOURNAMENTS**
 - Optional, yet fantastic way to get extra mat time

In-person sign-ups:
Sunday 9/22
during all youth
football games

SIGN UP ONLINE:



SCAN ME

DID YOU KNOW?

- Wrestling is the fastest growing sport in the United States, especially for girls



DO YOU HAVE

a special **TALENT, IDEAS** or just a
DESIRE TO HELP our community?

We'd like to use your time and talents in the areas that interest you! Some areas that we focus our efforts toward are:

- Beautification & Clean-Up
- Historical Preservation
- Programs, Speakers, Workshops
- Fundraising
- Publicity
- Special Events



MEETINGS:

3rd Monday of every month at 6:00 PM
Independence Township Community Center
PLEASE JOIN US!

Call 724-507-6448 with questions.

The Avella Area Community Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. It costs \$20 to become a voting member. We welcome everyone to join a meeting and to volunteer for a project.



★ LITTLE A TOWN ARENA ★

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Our 12 acre facility sits atop "Italy Hill," overlooks Downtown Avella, has been a part of the Avella landscape since 2007, and just this year was newly renovated. We are a non-profit organization and we host a variety of outdoor events in the interest of bringing big events to our little town and raising funds for local charities. This season we held a very successful rodeo and truck/tractor pull, and we've hosted some Flea Markets.

Some future fundraising events in planning include: Concerts, Big Top Circus, Truck & Tractor Pulls, Hippie Fest, as well as many other festivals and gatherings. In addition to our fundraising initiative, we also offer a wide array of options for hosting private events.

Please contact us if you are interested in hosting your own private, corporate, or non-profit event. Family reunions, graduation parties, and weddings are some of the options available for private events. The Little A Town Arena is a nonprofit organization. All proceeds from all events (including fundraising and private events) go to various charities. Check us out online or get in touch for more info!

www.littleatownarena.com

Email: info@littleatownarena.com | Text or Call: 412-618-8115

Physical Address: 44 Campbell Drive, Avella, PA 15312



The 6th Annual Shades of Death 10 Miler Run/Walk will take place on 10/26/24. It was started in 2019 by Joey Gonzalez and has grown from just 13 participants in it's first year to now hundreds of participants and lots of sponsors and volunteers. It is a challenging, hilly, 10 mile loop backroad run/hike that starts and finishes at the Polar Star Club. It takes runners on back roads including Shades of Death Road, with scenic views of farms and forests. Near the end, runners pass by Meadowcroft Rockshelter. All donations and profits this year will benefit area Volunteer Fire Departments. Racers are always invited to stick around afterward for a meal, drinks, and live music!

To register or learn more, visit: www.shadesofdeathrun.com

Any questions contact: **MANDY GAILEY:** mandy@gaileyenvironmental.com

Reach out if you are interested in becoming a sponsor of the event!

**THANK YOU TO ALL
OF OUR SPONSORS
AND VOLUNTEERS!**



Greater Washington County
FOOD BANK
A division of Food Helpers

No income or
residency
requirements,
preregistration
requested,
walk-ups always
welcomed!

**TRUCK
TO
TRUNK**

Drive-Thru Model by Greater Washington County Food Bank

Community Outreach Program Monthly Distribution in Avella

DATES: Every 3rd Wed.

★ Oct. 16 ★ Nov. 20 ★ Dec. 18

TIME: 9:00 am - 11:00 am

LOCATION: Avella Vol. Fire Dept.

LOCATION DETAILS & BOX RESERVATIONS:

724-632-2190 X 124 OR:
www.foodhelpers.org

Visit www.foodhelpers.org to learn about
other programs available to those who qualify,
like SNAP and PA Senior Box Program

WEEKLY CHURCH SERVICES

If you don't attend already, take some time to visit one of our wonderful churches for Sunday service, or check them out online to find info on their special events. Our churches are such an important part of our community. It's where many of us can come together and be honest, care for one another. To seek and find peace, hope, faith and love - beyond all understanding.



Independence United Methodist Church
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP
9:45 AM

187 Washington Pike, Avella, PA
Pastor Craig Blankenship

Visit our facebook page, where you can follow
our daily devotions and current happenings:
**Harmony Charge-Castleman's Run,
Independence, Kadesh Chapel UMC**



Avella Church
& Lower Buffalo Church

AVELLA	LOWER BUFFALO
SUNDAY SVC.	SUNDAY SVC.
9:45 AM	11:15 AM

25 Campbell St. Avella, PA	335 Campground Rd Avella, PA
-------------------------------	---------------------------------

Pastor Rich Narus



St. Isidore the Farmer
at St. Michael Church

SUNDAY MASS	WEDNESDAY MASS
11:00 AM	8:00 AM

97 Highland Avenue, Avella, PA

Grace Bible Church
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP
11:00 AM
4592 Jefferson Ave., Avella, PA
Visit our website to see other worship, study,
prayer meeting & youth group times:
www.gracebiblechurchwmt.org

St. John The Baptist
Byzantine Catholic Church
DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY:
8:45 AM MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION
8:00-8:30 AM
SUNDAY & BY APPT.
176 Cross Creek Road, Avella, PA

**THE
FOUNDRY
CHURCH**
SUNDAY MORNINGS
10:30 AM
1340 Washington Pike, Wellsburg, WV
www.thefoundry.church



Connect with INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP



★ Important Contact Information ★

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Chairman Thomas Jennings
Vice-Chairman Joyce McKenzie
Supervisor Thomas Cowden

STAFF & DEPARTMENTS

Secretary/Treasurer Melissa Ansell

Solicitor Sweat Law Offices
Engineer Harshman CE Group, LLC
Zoning/Building Permits Harshman CE Group, LLC
Code Enforcement Harshman CE Group, LLC
Emergency Management Ed Powers, Jr.
Accountants Cypher & Cypher

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP OFFICE

34 Campbell Street · PO Box E · Avella, PA 15312

Ph: 724-587-3518 | Fax: 724-587-5988

Email: indtwpwashco@hky.com

www.independence.patownship.org



Hours:

Monday-Friday: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Public Meetings:

3rd Friday of the Month: 10:00 AM

PLANNING COMMISSION

Thomas Jennings
Nicholas Cecchini
Dale Tudor
Marc Cecchini
John Hudock

ZONING BOARD

Nigel Tudor
Ed Seiger
Larry Graham

ELECTED TAX COLLECTOR

Judy Magon

ELECTED AUDITORS

Hope Thomas
Michael Dzurko
Melinda Latynski

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Public Works Department 724-587-3518
Planning Commission 724-587-3518
Zoning Board 724-587-3518
Independence Township Community Center 724-507-6448
Donegal Police Department 724-587-3518
Code Enforcement & Zoning/Building Permits
(Harshman CE Group, LLC) 724-993-4505
Township Engineer (Harshman CE Group, LLC) 724-993-4505
Elected Tax Collector (Judy Magon) 724-554-6866
Wage Tax Collector (Keystone Collections) 724-987-0300
Independence Cross Creek Joint Sewer Authority 724-507-6464
Emergency Management Coordinator (Ed Powers, Jr.) 724-587-3518
Township Newsletter (Katie Leeper) 724-587-3518
katiee12@hotmail.com

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY 911
Avella Volunteer Fire Department 724-587-5870
Pennsylvania State Police 724-223-5200
Avella Post Office 724-587-3700
Avella Area Public Library 724-587-5688
American Legion Post #643 724-587-5875
Avella Area Community Association 724-507-6448
Avella Athletics (Jim Gatewood) 724-288-7144
Avella Sportsmen Club 724-587-5709
Cross Creek Senior Citizens 724-587-5755
Avella Area School District 724-356-2216