

## **Mayor's State of the Borough Address**

**Presented to Borough Council, January 11, 2012**

This is the start of our Borough's 89<sup>th</sup> year. We are more than 900 strong and growing. On behalf of all my predecessors and myself, I am pleased to present to you my annual State of the Borough Address. Rose Valley is unique in many ways. It includes many caring people who value neighborly interaction in our small residential community, treasure our natural environment and perpetuate the traditions of our unique arts-and-crafts heritage. We have been blessed with many volunteers who, individually and collectively, have brought a wealth of talents and a spirit of public service to our Borough.

We have made remarkable progress toward achieving the goals we set for ourselves at the beginning of 2011. Highlights of the outstanding work of Borough Council, under the able leadership of President Lynn Kelley and Vice President Bill Hale are as follows:

### **Environment and Environmental Advisory Council** (Dave Firm, Chair; Roger Latham EAC Chair):

- **Deer Control:** In 2011, the Borough continued to implement its long-range plan to reduce and stabilize the burgeoning deer population in the Borough's parklands. During October and November, the parklands were opened to limited bow hunting by more than twenty experienced hunters. The bow hunt was a limited success with five does and one buck taken, which reduced the Borough's goal for a following deer cull to 21. The funds not spent on the cull may permit the construction of a small fenced enclosure in the parklands that would allow the Borough's Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) to better monitor our parklands return to health.
- **Invasive Plants.** Volunteers under the supervision of the EAC continued to remove numerous invasive plants from our parklands and replace them with native species.
- **Stream Bank Erosion.** A grant is being sought from PECO to implement a stream bank erosion plan prepared by an engineering design contractor under the supervision of the Chester Ridley Crum (CRC) Watershed Association.
- **A Joint Resolution dealing with Greenhouse Gas Emission reductions** was passed by Council along with Nether Providence Township and Swarthmore and Rutledge Boroughs.
- **Recycling:** Solid Waste Services/Mascaro was the successful bidder for the 2012-2013 recycling contract that will provide "single stream" collections of co-

mingled newspapers, magazines, office paper, cardboard, glass, aluminum and bimetal cans, and plastics grades 1 through 7.

- **Rose Valley Bird List**, prepared by resident Dr. John Smith, Ornithologist, is available at the Borough Website.

**Planning, Land Acquisition and Preservation** (Bill Hale, Chair):

- Subdivision of the Stopford property recommended by the Planning Commission was approved by the Borough Council. The Rose Valley Folk subsequently purchased a one acre lot adjacent to the Old Mill property along Vernon Run and Ridley Creek.
- An easement was obtained for resident use of a path from the Borough Green along Vernon Run across the remaining Stopford property that connects Old Mill Lane to the Borough Green.
- The Belson Property became integrated into the Traymore Planned Residential Development (PRD).

**Public Safety** (Bob Giorgianni, Chair):

- **Town Watch.** The Rose Valley Town Watch Organization continued to provide an effective deterrent to criminal mischief and to patrol with an eye out for matters that require attention. Three patrols are conducted within the Borough each day. The use of cell phones by patrollers is being phased in as an alternate means of communication and will eventually replace radios. Walking patrols wearing safety vests have been introduced. Town Watch Appreciation Night was attended by more than 60 residents.
- **Traffic Calming.** The speed sign that alerts drivers of their vehicle speed compared to the posted speed limit continues to have a calming effect on Rose Valley Road. The speed sign is also being placed on Todmorden Drive on a test basis.
- **Fire Protection** continues to be provided by Nether Providence and Middletown Volunteer Fire companies.
- **Police.** The Pennsylvania State Police remains the Borough's first responder police force.
- **Emergency Alert System.** About one third of our residents participated in an emergency alert system by providing their email address to the Borough. From time to time, the system was utilized to inform residents about matters relating to public safety.

**Highways** (Al Meyer, Chair):

- During 2011 a number of potholes were patched on an "as needed" basis. New PA Transportation Department approval procedures limited the Borough to performing a modest paving project on Rabbit Run during the Fourth Quarter.
- Due to the small size of our Borough, Senator Pileggi and Representative Killion were contacted for assistance in obtaining an exclusion from the Prevailing Wage Act. The Act increases the cost of Borough repaving projects that cost more than \$25,000 by as much as 40%.
- Sucher Paving was the successful bidder for road repair projects during 2012.

- R. C. Marland was the successful bidder for 2012 snow plowing.

**Finances** (Mike Josbena, Chair; Cheryl Haze Luehrs, Controller; Jennifer Rimerman, Treasurer):

- 2011 was the second year of the Borough's three-year plan to balance the budget, preserve capital reserves, and minimize long-term tax increases. This plan was devised to eliminate our ongoing reliance on capital reserves as a source of income—an approach that is untenable for long-term financial solvency.
- Since 2009, cost-saving efforts have been initiated across 30 expenditure categories, leading to a decrease in expenditures over the first two years of the budget-balancing process.
- In 2011, revenues were approximately \$5,000 lower than projected, primarily due to decreases in real estate transfer taxes. However, ongoing scrutiny of expenses resulted in expenditures that were approximately \$8,000 lower than expected, despite higher than projected fees for snow plowing.

**Rose Valley Gardeners** (Susan Audley, Chair):

- The sixty some member Gardeners of Rose Valley marked their 15th anniversary by earning their *second* Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Community Greening Award for the redesign of the Borough's Pew Park located diagonally from the train station. This drive-by garden now sports five beds of seasonal, low maintenance plantings plus numerous memorial trees, a new irrigation system, a re-vitalized lawn and the promise of hundreds of bulbs in the coming spring. Of 80 gardens nominated throughout Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey, 60 were selected with only three honored in Delaware County. Of special note is that Rose Valley is the only Borough to have been honored with two PHS Community Greening Awards. The first award was given for the Moylan-Rose Valley Train Station lower garden in 2001 (the second year of this award).
- Twenty six May baskets were presented to selected residents on May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Holiday swags prepared by 20 volunteers were placed on street signs and historic pillars throughout the Borough.

**Historic District** (Paula Healy and Tim Plummer, Co-Chairs):

- **Walking Tour:** 30 residents participated in a guided tour of Rose Valley's Historic District.
- **Historic Plaques:** The owners of more than 40 homes and buildings within our District have purchased plaques that state that their property has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the US Department of Interior.
- **Old Mill Lane:** The historic nature of Old Mill Lane has been preserved as a result of The Rose Valley Folk's purchase of a lot adjacent to the Old Mill along Vernon Run and Ridley Creek from the Stopford's. The ownership of the lot by the Folk will prevent a new building from being erected on Old Mill Lane.

**Fourteenth Annual Fourth of July Celebration** (Tim Plummer, Chair): New parade route down Rabbit Run was a big success. The band, Boy Scout flag raising ceremony,

pool decorations, picnic, DJ and pool games were enjoyed by over 275 persons. Over 30 volunteers helped make it a memorable patriotic celebration.

**New Ordinance** enacted that complies with new DELCORA sewer requirements.

**Personnel:**

- Cheryl Haze Luehrs was appointed Controller to replace Don Boyd who resigned.
- Leonard Busby was appointed to the EAC to replace Don Detterline who resigned.
- Don Detterline was re-appointed to the EAC to replace Jim Audley who resigned

**GOALS FOR 2012**

**Environment and Environmental Advisory Council:** Continue to implement the long-range plan for deer control. The EAC is in discussions with the Pennsylvania Game Commission and Eccologix Biodiversity Consulting Group, a professional deer management organization, in an effort to receive approval for a deer cull during 2012.

**Planning, Land Acquisition and Preservation:** Incorporate the Stopford lot purchased by the Rose Valley Folk, and the two smaller parcels obtained by the Folk as part of the Traymore subdivision, into the Old Mill property by implementing a reverse subdivision, and rezoning the Stopford lot as “institutional district” to match the existing zoning of the Old Mill property.

**Emergency Alert System:** It is planned that a new telephonic alert system will be implemented during 2012. The system will have a customized mapping capability that will be designed to provide rapid notification of residents concerning Public Safety and related matters.

**Highways:**

- The Borough Manager, Borough Engineer, and the Highway Chair plan to perform an inspection of all Borough roads and outline a paving and road repair program for approval by the Borough Council. It is contemplated that the Borough will have to undertake substantial and expensive paving work during in the years ahead.
- We will submit our request for 2012 work for approval to PA DOT and plan to secure necessary approvals during the summer.
- Continue to press for exclusion from the Prevailing Wage Act.

**Finance:**

- We plan to attain a balanced budget by the end of 2012 without relying on a yearly appropriation of funds from capital reserves. We are also developing long-term plans for expenditures that are often unpredictable, including road paving and repairs, snow removal, and fire company support.
- The 2012 Budget includes a 9% tax increase. A typical bill will increase approximately \$40, from \$447 to \$487. The increase is the third stage of our

three-year plan dealing with the shortfall that resulted from the 2009 sale of the Borough-owned waste-water system to DELCORA.

**Historic District**

- Conduct a guided tour of the famous Minquas Indian Trail located within the Long Point Wildlife Preserve.
- Increase the number of Historic Plaques purchased by home owners within the Historic District.

**New Ordinance**: Enact an ordinance that complies with additional new DELCORA requirements relating to sewer lateral inspections.

Sincerely,

Tim Plummer  
Mayor