

# Bainbridge Township NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2

OCTOBER 1989

ISSUE 3

Prohibition, bootlegging and racketeering in the roaring twenties had long-lasting effects in Bainbridge. Three locations figure prominently in the illegal activities. Another was not quite so prominent in the gambling scene.

While the old Bainbridge store was by no means a front for a gambling joint, it is said that plenty of action with the galloping dominoes was available in the back room. Allegedly, not only cash, but farm produce and wagonloads of goods from Cleveland changed hands at the dice table. However, this was a comparatively small, strictly amateur operation conducted for the fun of gambling. The professional establishments came later.

According to county records the property at the northwest corner of Route 306 and Chagrin Road has had a rather checkered and somewhat mystifying history. It was acquired by Grace Wright late in 1916 and transferred to Grace Thompson early in 1925. The records also indicate a deed from Grace Wright to George Himmelstein dated July 7, 1927, but a search failed to reveal a deed from him to any other owner. How the deeds from Grace Wright could exist at the same time is part of the mystery.

There is no mystery about Himmelstein's activities. He transformed the house and large barn into a "social and recreational club" which was called The Maple Leaf Country Club, but it was more commonly known as Himmelstein's club. He also brought the first commercial electricity into the Township by paying for a line from Chagrin Falls to the club.

## GAMBLING . . . A PART OF BAINBRIDGE HISTORY



The present site of the "Grandview Racetrack"

Almost everybody, no doubt including the sheriff, knew what was going on in the club. The wide-open gambling, easily available bootleg liquor and other "social activities" brought the gambling fraternity from Cleveland and other areas. Dressed in evening clothes, the gamblers and their ladies arrived in large, expensive cars and lost their money to Himmelstein. Under great pressure the sheriff finally closed the club.

Somehow Grace Thompson must have re-established her ownership because she sold the property to Nora Gaylord. Subsequent owners were Myrtle Larsen, Blanch Rothkopf, Louis Rothkopf and, since October 1957, the Valley Presbyterian Church. The 1957 transfer offers a study in extreme contrasts.

Louis Rothkopf, who was also known as Lou Rhodie, was believed to be active in Cleveland racket circles. He is said to have spent thousands upon thousands of dollars in again remodeling the former Larsen barn into a plush gambling club with game rooms, gymnasium, steam bath, sauna, private rooms, bar, kitchen and dining facilities. Again the big cars appeared, but not nearly as many as had come to Himmelstein's. It was rumored that "Lou's place" was a private sanctuary for the big time gamblers and high rollers who played for large stakes.

Blanch Rothkopf, in whose name the deed was recorded in July 1948, died in 1957. Not too many months later Louis Rothkopf was found dead in his car with the motor running - an apparent suicide.

(continued) No autopsy was ever performed, but questions arose as to whether his death was really suicide. The questions have never been answered.

The 36-acre property was acquired by the Valley Presbyterian Church in October 1957. By another metamorphosis the buildings were changed from a gambling joint to a House of God. Some of the land was sold to home builders and commercial enterprises and a number of additions were added to the church buildings. Cecil, the Larsen's big black bull and Wee Willie Winkie, their donkey with the loudest voice in Bainbridge, would never recognize their old home.

Between the Himmelstein and Rothkopf periods the Arrow Club operated for about ten years beginning in 1939. The club was built in the woods where Sea World is now located by Bill Kuhlman of Geauga Lake Park. It is believed that he leased the property to the club operators. The gambling operation was moved later to a new location on Pettibone Road and the old building was dismantled. The original building was rebuilt as a dance pavilion at the park.

The new building, renamed the Pettibone Club, had an unusual design. The large central casino was surrounded by a narrow corridor and smaller rooms on the outer side. Peepholes in the corridor walls permitted observation of both the casino and the smaller rooms. Operations were ended by order of Governor O'Neill. The building burned down in 1963. It would be interesting to know what Josiah Pettibone, who settled here in 1832, would think of having his good name applied to a gambling club.

After the spectacular fire destroyed the club building the land was purchased by Post 1863 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. A handsome new building was constructed on the site.

Preceding the Arrow Club by about twelve years, the Bainbridge Race Track on the south side of Pettibone Road was the scene of both horse and dog racing. The turn into the home stretch was across the line in Cuyahoga County and its sheriff tried a number of times to stop the racing, but the illegal betting was done in Geauga County and his efforts were unsuccessful. The track's popularity waned when the state legalized betting in 1939. Taken over later by the Grandview Race Association, it operated until 1956 when another spectacular fire burned the grandstand to the ground.

During their existence the gambling club and race track operators were soft touches for charity drives, ads in school annuals and, probably, under-the-table payoffs to law enforcement agencies in office at the time. They were generous to their help and to charity organizations with turkeys at Thanksgiving and gifts at Christmas. It is said that they paid the bill for the first Bainbridge fire truck. It is also believed that both the county and the Township shared, on a percentage basis, in the admission receipts of the gamblers. The gamblers could well afford their contributions.

Source: Bicentennial- Year History of Bainbridge Township in Geauga County, Ohio



Grandview Racetrack....then

## LEVY RESOLUTION

On August 14, 1989, the following resolution was adopted unanimously by the Bainbridge Township Board of Trustees:

WHEREAS, the amount of taxes which may be raised within the ten mill limitation will be insufficient to provide an adequate amount for the necessary requirements of said Bainbridge Township, Geauga County Ohio;

THEREFORE be it resolved, by the Board of Trustees of the Township of Bainbridge, Geauga County, Ohio, two-thirds of all members elected thereto concurring, that it is necessary to levy a tax in excess of the ten mill limitation for the benefit of Bainbridge Township for the purpose of , for the general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing and repair of streets, roads, and bridges in the township, at a rate not exceeding one mill (1) for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to ten cents (\$.10) for each one hundred dollars of valuation for five years and which levy is a renewal levy.

RESOLVED that the question of levying additional taxes be submitted to the electors of said Bainbridge Township at the regular election to be held at the usual voting places within the Township on the 7th day of November 1989; and be it further

RESOLVED, that said levy be placed upon the tax list of the current year succeeding the election if a majority of the electors voting thereon vote in favor thereof;

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of this Board of Trustees be and he is hereby directed to certify a copy of this Resolution to the Board of Elections, Geauga County Ohio, Bainbridge Township and notify said Board of Elections on the question of levying said tax to be given as required by law.

## A MESSAGE FROM ALAN HALKO, HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Since a renewal road levy will be on the ballot this November, I would like to take this opportunity to explain to Bainbridge residents where their township Road and Bridge Tax dollars come from and how they are spent.

About 95% of Bainbridge Township road maintenance money comes from local property taxes, the other 5% comes from the state motor vehicle license tax and the state gasoline tax. Of each dollar of local property tax paid, Bainbridge Township gets only 22c (the rest goes to Geauga County and local schools). Of the 22c the township receives from each property tax dollar paid, only 7.6c goes for road maintenance. Or said in another way, for every \$1000 of property tax a Bainbridge homeowner pays, only \$76 goes to Bainbridge road maintenance.

In 1989, road maintenance cost will be approximately \$850,000. About \$389,000 of this will go for operating expenses, such as wages, benefits, insurance, utilities, fuel, equipment repair and maintenance, and supplies, with the remainder (\$461,000) going into major road repair projects for the 66 miles of township roads (and their 120 miles of ditches) and equipment purchases.

The following is a summary of the major projects and equipment expenditures made to date in 1989 or projected to year end:

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| *Sealing and chipping 22.75 miles of road                   | \$102,093 |
| *Oiling 2.82 miles of gravel road for dust control          | 11,550    |
| *Road base repair with 2200 tons of asphalt                 | 45,000    |
| *Materials (slag, limestone, sand, cold mix, etc.).         | 60,000    |
| *Drainage improvement                                       | 18,000    |
| *Crack sealing 5.5 miles of road surface .                  | 4,849     |
| *Roadside mowing  | 4,400     |
| *Miscellaneous road maintenance and repair projects         | 18,000    |
| *Salt and cinders for snow and ice control (projected)      | 45,000    |
| *Purchase of front end loader and communication equipment   | 63,000    |
| *Building maintenance, new fuel tanks and pumps (projected) | 23,000    |
| *Equipment rentals  | 6,000     |
| TOTAL   | \$400,892 |

Sealing and chipping is a favored maintenance procedure for township roads because it gives a durable surface that in many respects stands up to the rugged Northern Ohio winters better than does paving and it is considerably less costly than paving. To pave only 1.25 miles of road would have cost as much as it did to seal and chip 22.75 miles this summer.

For the 1989-1990 winter season, Bainbridge Township will be running seven snow plow routes to control snow and ice on the 66 miles of township roads. Bainbridge Township will also be under contract from Geauga County to control snow and ice on the County roads in the township (Chagrin Road, Bainbridge-Solon Road, and Bainbridge-Auburn Rd.)

Support from the residents of Bainbridge Township has made it possible to carry out an aggressive road maintenance program which has, over the last nine years, significantly increased the quality of township roads. Such support is appreciated by the members of the road department and me.

**Alan Halko, Highway Superintendent**

### NOTE OF THANKS

On July 15, 1989, the Township Trustees acknowledged receipt of the resignation of Susan R. Davis from the Bainbridge Township Zoning Commission effective August 1, 1989 and expressed their gratitude to her for all the years of service to Bainbridge Township.

Sue volunteered on the Township Zoning Commission for approximately ten years, two of those years as secretary and the past 8 years to an appointed position on the Board (the last two years as Chairman). Thanks again, for a "job well done".

### "TRICK OR TREAT"



This year HALLOWEEN "Trick or Treat" activities will be conducted between the hours of 5:30PM and 8:30PM on Tuesday October 31st.

HAVE LOTS OF FUN! AND BE VERRRRRY, VERRRRY CAREFUL!!!!!!



HAPPY



MERRY



HAPPY NEW YEAR!!





# HOW YOUR TAX DOLLARS WORK

In July of each year, a township budget for the next year is prepared by the township Board of Trustees and the Township Clerk. After a public hearing is held on this proposed budget, the budget is then submitted to the Geauga County Budget Commission for review and approval (the Budget Commission has three members: the county Treasurer, the county Auditor, and the county Prosecutor). The Budget Commission will normally approve the proposed budget after determining that the budget is consistent with projected income for the township for the next year.

At the beginning of each year, the Board of Township Trustees passes a Temporary Appropriation Resolution which allows the Board to expend funds to meet the Township's financial obligations (pay the salaries and wages of township employees and pay the bills) until the Annual Appropriation Resolution can be passed. The Annual Appropriation Resolution which designates how much money will be available for expenditure in each Township fund (organized by fund and category, i.e; Police District Fund: Salaries, Supplies, etc.) is prepared and passed after the Township Board of Trustees receives an Official certificate of Estimated Resources for the current year from the County Budget commission. The Official Certificate of Estimated Resources indicates the maximum amount of money that may be appropriated for expenditure in the various funds and categories during the current year. The table below shows the 1989 Appropriation and the 1990 budget for Bainbridge Township; these totaled \$2,919,362 and \$2,454,410 respectively.

**TABLE 1**

| <u>TYPE OF EXPENDITURE</u> | <u>1989 APPROPRIATION</u> |               | <u>1990 BUDGET</u> |               |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| ROAD & BRIDGE              | \$888,315                 | 30.4%         | \$833,932          | 34.0%         |
| POLICE DEPARTMENT          | 796,314                   | 27.3%         | 688,636            | 28.1%         |
| FIRE PROTECTION            | 589,354                   | 20.2%         | 485,292            | 19.8%         |
| BUILDINGS & GROUNDS        | 178,749                   | 6.1%          | 178,000            | 7.2%          |
| ADMINISTRATION             | 236,448                   | 8.1%          | 107,220            | 4.4%          |
| BOND RETIREMENT            | 81,296                    | 2.8%          | 32,480             | 1.3%          |
| LIGHTING                   | 36,423                    | 1.3%          | 39,100             | 1.6%          |
| ZONING                     | 50,000                    | 1.7%          | 35,000             | 1.4%          |
| PARKS & RECREATION         | 43,600                    | 1.5%          | 43,600             | 1.8%          |
| CEMETERIES                 | 18,962                    | 0.6%          | 11,250             | 0.4%          |
| <b>TOTALS</b>              | <b>\$2,919,362</b>        | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>\$2,454,410</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |

The total dollar amount of an Appropriation for a given year usually will be higher than the Budget prepared for that year because budgets are normally prepared assuming that all the money appropriated for expenditures in the year prior to the budget year will be spent and none will be left over to carry over into the new year to be part of the appropriation for the new year. However, the fact of the matter is that some money must be carried over into the new year so the Township can operate until tax collection receipts and other sources of income can generate operating funds for the new year (usually sometime in March). For example, the 1988 Bainbridge Township Budget (prepared in July of 1987) totaled \$2,078,024 and the 1988 Appropriation (prepared in March of 1988) totaled \$2,919,362. The actual expenditures in 1988 totaled \$1,964,454 which allowed enough money to be carried over into 1989 to allow the township to meet its financial obligations in the first part of 1989 until receipts from tax collection and other sources of revenue could be obtained. Most of Bainbridge Township's revenue (income) comes from property taxes. Approximately 92% of the 1989 income will come from property taxes. The rest of the revenues come from sources such as the State Motor Vehicle License Tax, the State Gasoline Tax, various fees (zoning permits, zoning application fees, townhall rental fees, etc.) and fines (traffic violation fines, zoning violation fines, etc.). Relatively little revenue comes from fees and fines. Under Ohio State Law, Townships have no authority to collect income tax or an amusement tax.

While Bainbridge Township gets approximately 92% of its operating revenues from property taxes, Bainbridge Township receives only about 22% or less of the property taxes paid by Bainbridge; the other 78% goes to Geauga County and the schools. After tax credits and rollbacks mandated by state law, a home owner in Bainbridge Township in 1989 paid \$52.03 per \$1000 of value (for tax purposes--this is approximately 35% of market value) his property in the Kenston Local School District (in the Chagrin Falls Local School District it was more). Of this amount, Bainbridge Township received only \$11.59 (22%); \$34.21 (65%) was received by the schools and \$7.23 (14%) was received by Geauga County as illustrated by the graph in Figure 1. (see next page).

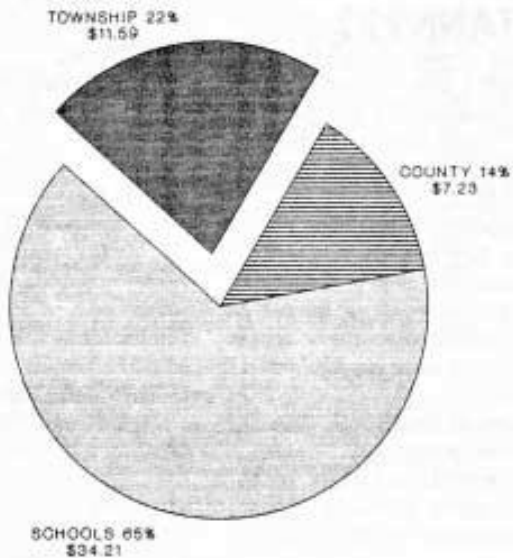


FIGURE 1

GRAND TOTAL: \$52.03 (FOR BAINBRIDGE TWP., KENSTON L.S.D.)  
 AMOUNTS SHOWN REFLECT PROPERTY TAX CREDITS AND ROLLSBACKS

IN DOLLARS FOR EACH \$1000 OF VALUATION

Turning our attention back to the 1990 Bainbridge Township Budget outlined in Table 1 above, it is interesting to note that over 80% of the budgeted dollars are for essential rescue and fire protection, law enforcement, and road maintenance services for the 8,200 plus residents who live in the 25 square miles that make up Bainbridge Township (Bainbridge Township has over 65 miles of township roads to maintain). Only about 4% of the budget is for administrative expenses and only about 1% is for debt retirement. This is illustrated in the pie chart in Figure 2.

**BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP 1990 BUDGET**  
**TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES: \$2,454,410**

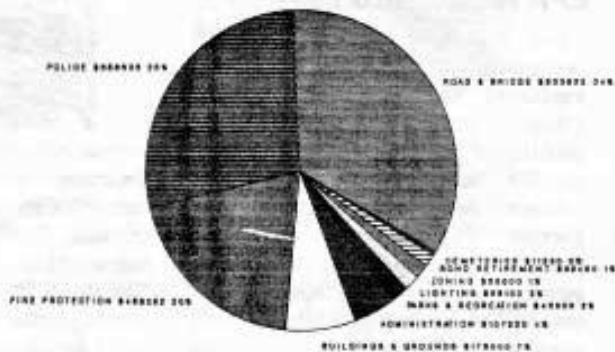


FIGURE 2

## IS THE GRASS GREENER OVER YOUR SEPTIC TANK???

Residents of Bainbridge, with the exception of those living in a few areas, have individual septic systems. A home septic tank system requires very little maintenance. The major maintenance necessary is the periodic removal of the sludge and scum which accumulate in the tank. If the tank is not cleaned when needed, the entire sewage disposal system may fail and the result will be a costly repair or replacement bill.

How often a septic tank needs to be cleaned depends on how many people live in the home, the capacity of the septic tank, the type of wastes that enter the system, and the family's habits. Some tanks may need to be cleaned every one to two years, while others may go ten years or more. An average family with a properly installed system should need their septic tank pumped about every three to five years. The only sure way to know if the tank needs to be pumped is to inspect it annually.

Information obtained from the Geauga County Health Department suggests the following Do's and Don'ts of living with a home septic tank system:

**DON'T** put coffee grounds, disposable diapers, cigarette and cigar butts, wet strength towels, facial tissues, feminine hygiene products, bones, cooking fats, and other materials that will not decompose easily into your septic system.

**DON'T** use a septic tank additive to aid bacteria action. The tank doesn't need it and it may harm the system.

**DON'T** use a garbage disposal unit with a septic tank system. It adds unnecessary solids to the system.

**DO** use water in the home sparingly because all of the water used in the home must be treated by the home sewage system. The system has a limited capacity and can be overloaded.

**DO** inspect the tank annually to check for scum and sludge buildup.

**DO** use normal amounts of detergents, bleaches, drain cleaners, and other household chemicals since they will not hurt the septic system.

Wet spots in the lawn or any unusual plant growth near the sewage system, temporary backing up of water at fixtures, especially floor drains, and any unusual odors are the warning signs that your system may not be working properly. Check the system at once, find out the problem and have it corrected. What seems like a minor problem in a home sewage treatment system can soon blossom into a major failure in the system. Catch problems early before your system fails. When it is time to pump, call a reputable septic tank pumper in the area.

## EPA REQUIRES PERMITS

Now that Fall is here, the Fire Department would like to remind residents that **ALL** open burning (this includes leaves) is prohibited without first obtaining an EPA burning permit. Please contact the Fire Department for further information and the procedure for acquiring the proper permit. Remember, those leaves make wonderful humus/mulch for your gardens and flower beds. The Fire Department non-emergency number is 543-9873. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## POW/MIA RECOGNITION



At a recent meeting, the Board of Trustees moved and seconded a motion to proclaim Thursday, October 5, 1989 to be POW/MIA Recognition Day in Bainbridge Township, a day dedicated to all former prisoners of war, to those still missing and their families. (October 5th was a special day of recognition, but POW's and MIA's should be remembered everyday).

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editors:

In reference to your article on recycling, your readers might be interested in a large volume plastic recycling operation in Bainbridge.

Our company located in Knowles Industrial Park recycles plastic scrap supplied in regrind form by scrap dealers into pellets suitable for molding and extrusion. Up to 400,000 pounds per month are sent by ship container to Nigeria.

Custom-Pac Extrusions is an affiliate of Custom Materials, Inc.

Sincerely,  
Louis F. Fow,  
V.P. General Manager  
Custom-Pac Extrusions, Inc.

**Editors note:** The plastic pellets are used in commercial injection mold processes.

## EMPLOYEE NEWS

Congratulations to the following Bainbridge Township employees on their recent promotions:

- 8/7 - Donna Harrell to Records Clerk/Dispatcher
- 8/26 - Christina Stellato to Fire Department Clerical Help grade "B"
- 9/9 - Ptl. Jon Bokovitz to Ptl. grade "A"

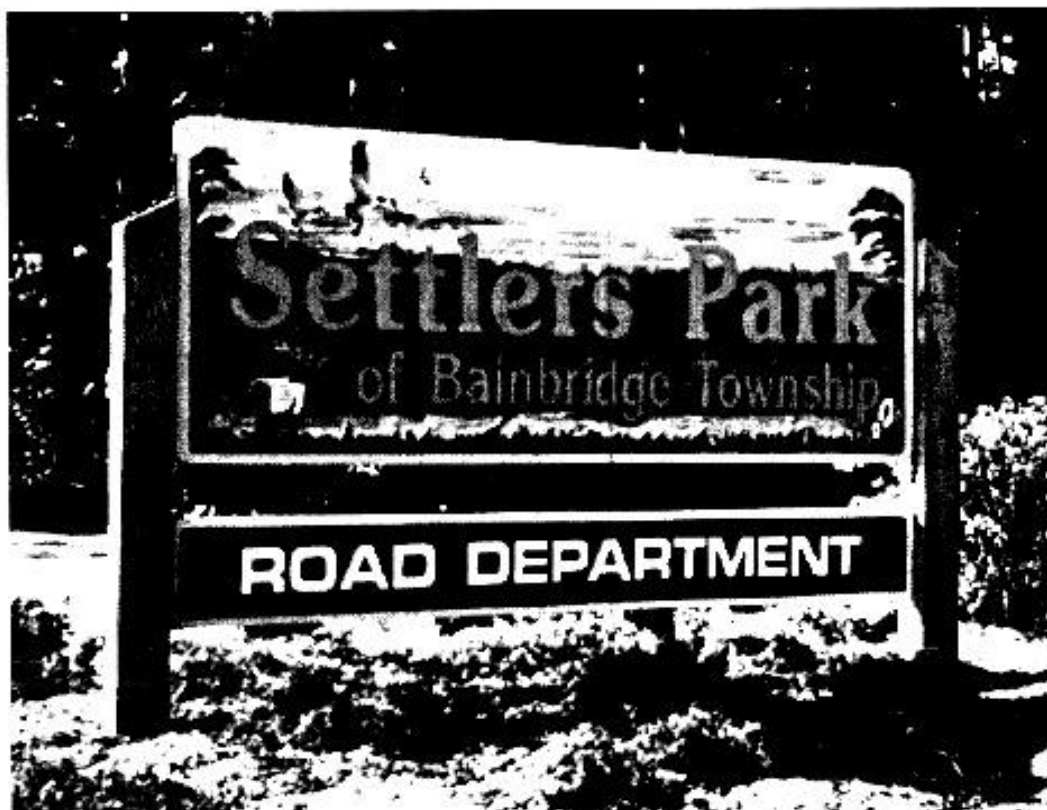
Welcome to the following new Bainbridge Township employees:

- 8/7 - Mary Ecker-Giles, Leslie Phillips-Lentsch and Danya Morgan, Probationary Dispatchers grade "E"
- 8/26 - Betty Heikkila, Clerical/Receptionist/Dispatcher

## AUCTION NOTICE

On November 18, 1989 at 11:00 a.m. the Township Trustees will conduct an auction at the Township Road Garage, 17800 Haskins Road. For further details watch the Geauga Times Leader or call the Town Hall.

## SETTLERS PARK OFFICIALLY OPEN



**SETTLERS PARK** is now officially open! Soccer fields are ready for light play. The softball/football fields will be planted in the fall of 1990. The park is open for all community activities from walks in the woods, picnics, volleyball games, to touch football etc. on the grassy areas.

Much volunteer labor has gone into the park and the township trustees have given the project financial support. Continued support by the community is needed.

To help finance the shelters, bricks are being sold upon which a family or business name can be engraved. These bricks will be used to construct the floor of the shelters. A January 1990 deadline has been set for the brick sale, in order that construction of the shelters can begin in the spring. The cost of one brick is \$25.00 (businesses \$50.00) and would make an unusual and lasting gift for a friend or loved one. See order form.

Any organization, business or family that would like to contribute towards benches, picnic tables, play equipment etc., can do so by obtaining a form at the townhall and designating the item they would like to purchase. A plaque with the contributor's name will be displayed on the item donated. The park committee has assembled a catalog from which contributors can select the items they choose to donate. In this way continuity, quality and aesthetics can be maintained.

Park committee members are available to give presentations about **SETTLERS PARK**. Contact the townhall at 543-9871 for further information.

NAME TO BE PUT ON BRICK  
PRINT ONE LETTER PER SPACE LEAVING A BLANK  
SPACE BETWEEN NAMES

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

EXAMPLE: FAMILY BRICK-\$25.00-2 LINES

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| J | O | H | N | S | M | I | T | H |  |  |  |
|   | F | A | M | I | L | Y |   |   |  |  |  |

EXAMPLE: BUSINESS BRICK-\$50.00-3 LINES

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| J | O | H | N | S | M | I | T | H |   |  |  |
| L | A | N | O | C | A | P | I | R | E |  |  |
|   | C | O | M | P | A | N | Y |   |   |  |  |

MAKE CHECK OUT TO BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP  
PARK AND RETURN THIS FORM AND CHECK TO  
BAINBRIDGE TOWNHALL, 17626 CHELLOCOTER  
ROAD, CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO 44022

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_