



## SPRING / SUMMER 2011

### PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE ... WE NEED YOUR HELP, BLUE ASH!

Earlier this year, a search process was undertaken to secure a consultant to assist in preparation of a comprehensive Park Master Plan for the future 130-acre park to be located near the airport. After undergoing a competitive process including solicitation of Requests for Proposals, interviews, and presentations from prospective firms, City Council awarded the consulting project to the team of Kinzelman Kline & Gossman (KKG), Sasaki Associates, PROS Consulting, CDS Associates, Front Street Analytics (FSA), and Leasure Vision at its April 14 meeting.

KKG is a local firm that has been integrally involved with the Airport Park project from the beginning, and they bring a wealth of experience and knowledge in park master planning and development. Mark Kline is a principal and founding partner of the firm and Studio Director for planning, design, and development for projects throughout the Midwest. Just a few of his prominent projects include the Scioto Audubon Metro Park in Columbus, Ohio; Ohio State University Tower District; and RiverScape Phase III in Dayton, Ohio. Clete Benken, who will serve as the local Principal in charge for this project, also brings substantial local and regional project experience including the Lexington Cheapside Entertainment District & Pavilion in Lexington, Kentucky.

Sasaki Associates is widely recognized as one of the front runners in the world for their work on park planning, development, and imple-

mentation. Alistair McIntosh will be representing Sasaki, and has worked on prominent park plans throughout the world. Cincinnati Central Riverfront Park; Addison Circle Park in Addison, Texas; and the master plan for Central Indianapolis Riverfront are just a few of the many national projects with which Mr. McIntosh has been associated. He also has worked on numerous international projects in places such as South Korea, Malaysia, Canada, and Kuwait to name a few.

Leon Younger, the principal owner of PROS Consulting, is regarded as one of the premier experts in parks and recreation management in the United States and will work with our team to establish guidelines for budgeting, staffing, and operations of the new park facility. Mr. Younger and his PROS team have consulted on such prominent national projects as Papago Park Master Plan in Phoenix, Arizona; the operations and management plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco, California; and the Lake Parks operation and management plan in San Antonio, Texas.

CDS Associates, FSA, and Leasure Vision also bring a wealth of local, regional, and national stature to this experienced lineup of consultants.

The goal of the park master plan is to provide the City of Blue Ash with a framework for implementation of the 130 acre future park site. The plan will include a comprehensive analysis of market feasibility; a needs assessment that will research regional and national "best" practices for the development of parks facilities, and a site

*(Park Master Plan article continued on Page 2.)*

### MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

The 2011 Blue Ash Memorial Day Parade (co-sponsored by the Blue Ash Civic League) is set for Monday, May 30, 2011 (Memorial Day)! This year's parade marks the 59th annual community event and parade dedicated to recognize contributions by veterans.

The parade will begin at 10:15 AM, and the route will be the same as past years: beginning on Reed Hartman Hwy. near Cooper Rd., traveling east on Cooper to Kenwood, south on Kenwood to Hunt, and east on Hunt to the Vet Memorial, where the ceremonies will be held.

Blue Ash is excited to have **two participating military bands** for this year's parade and ceremonies, including the **338th Army Band**

based in Columbus, Ohio, and the **100th Army Band** based in Ft. Knox, Kentucky. The keynote speaker will be Chief Master Sgt. Shelina Frey who serves as the Command Chief Master Sergeant for the Air Force Materiel Command's Aeronautical Systems Center and the 88th Air Base Wing at Wright-Patterson AFB. Mark your calendar NOW for you and your family to attend this annual Blue Ash tradition! Don't miss it!



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A Newsletter Published by the  
 City of Blue Ash, Ohio  
 4343 Cooper Road  
 Blue Ash, Ohio 45242-5699  
 (513) 745-8510  
 administration@blueash.com  
 Internet: www.blueash.com



inventory and analysis that will look at a broad number of areas including traffic circulation, parking, existing area parks, and functionality of major program elements. There will also be an in-depth study on operational and financial modeling designed to make our new park both culturally and economically sustainable. Finally, the master plan will create a schematic design and development plan based on public and stakeholder interaction through a series of open house forums, surveys, and design charettes to assure opportunities for citizen input and involvement. Work with the project began in April and should be complete this fall. The consultant team will also be asked to consider the following factors when developing the plan:

- The plan should consider the cost of operating and maintaining the amenities which are recommended. One reason the selected team was chosen was because the consulting team had significant experience with this planning dynamic.
- The park should include amenities that appeal to a variety of ages and should include opportunity for activity year-round – not just during the warmer months.
- The park should include amenities that do not require an abundance of City programming efforts or special events.
- The plan should consider portions of the park which may be suitable as a regional attraction that could offer a cost recovery or revenue opportunity.

This major park will be a benchmark project for the City of Blue Ash and the Greater Cincinnati region, and the Park Master Plan is an important first step in developing a “first class” facility.

***WE NEED YOUR HELP, BLUE ASH!*** Several public opportunities are set to gather your direct input, as summarized below (with more to be scheduled later this summer -- watch BlueAsh.com for updates):

- **Wed., June 8, 5:30-7:30PM** - interactive design session scheduled at the Recreation Center (4433 Cooper) - a chance to talk directly with your City Council members and project consultants!
- **Wed., June 29** -- open house sessions this day will be held from **11AM to 1PM** and from **5PM to 7PM**. These sessions will be held in Council Chambers of City Hall (4343 Cooper).

A booth will be set up at selected concerts this summer that will provide more info, including at Friday concerts (Towne Square) on June 17 and 24 and July 1 and 8; and at the June 14 Tuesday concert (Amphitheatre).

Remember too that you don't have to wait as suggestions for the park are welcome at any time simply by calling (745-8510) or by E-mailing [administration@blueash.com](mailto:administration@blueash.com) with your ideas and suggestions. Visit BlueAsh.com regularly for updates as to the many opportunities for citizens and the public to actively participate in this process.



## **4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION (ON JULY 3 THIS YEAR!)**

Don't forget that Blue Ash's "Red, White & Blue Ash" special event will take place this year on **SUNDAY, JULY 3** (not on July 4). This event will remain at its 2010 location at the northwest corner of Glendale-Milford Road and Reed Hartman Highway. The future goal is to host this event on the City's new 130-acre park near the airport, although that will likely not be possible for at least a couple of years. Many thanks to Duke Realty and their tenants,

Huntington Bank, and Buffalo Wild Wings for allowing the City to utilize their properties. The event is being held on Sunday (in lieu of July 4 Monday) so that the adjacent business properties can return to business on Tuesday after the July 4th holiday.

This year's national entertainment for July 4 will feature KENNY LOGGINS. And as is the case with all Blue Ash special events, there is no admission charge or tickets required for

any of the concerts. The event will also feature a fun family area – in addition to the region's best Independence Day fireworks display produced by Rozzi's and simulcast on WARM 98 Radio.

Keep an eye on BlueAshEvents.com for updates to the entertainment schedule as well as other event info and regulations.



## **GOLF COURSE/BANQUET CENTER UPDATE**

As you've seen within other Blue Ash communications, the City is very excited to announce that the new event center and golf clubhouse now under construction has been officially named: **COOPER CREEK EVENT CENTER**.

Cooper Creek is the name of the creek that traverses the course, as well as other portions of Blue Ash and nearby communities.

Construction began in November and is progressing, despite the wet spring, with the new banquet and meeting center slated for completion this fall. Cooper Creek will offer a full-service experience for a wide array of events, including corporate functions, weddings, bar and bat mitzvah celebrations, and other social events. The facility will be able to host events up to approximately 350, but the banquet areas can be divided into smaller areas

to host meetings or events with fewer people. Highlights of the new facility will include a unique, in-house menu with a range of pricing options ... and of course, the beautiful scenic backdrop setting of the Blue Ash Golf Course!

Also related to enhancements at the course is the replacement of the irrigation system, which began last year. Due to the extremely wet winter and spring months, this project is now slated for completion in June. Replacement of the cart paths on the course is planned to go to bid

soon, with work expected to begin this summer and be complete in early fall.

Events are now being scheduled for Cooper Creek beginning in mid October. For more information, contact Ann Wilson, General Manager of Cooper Creek, at 745-8596, and make sure you check out CooperCreekBlueAsh.com for much more information! You can also stop in to see Ann who is now greeting clients within the Rec Center until she can move to the new facility.



*Photos taken in March. Left-most photo shows the cement floor being poured (looking northwest) & right-most photo is a view from hole #18 fairway (looking southwest).*

## BLUE ASH NOTES...

Remember that **City offices** will be closed on **Monday, May 30 (Memorial Day)**, and on **Monday, July 4 (Independence Day)**...

**Best wishes** are extended to **Blue Ash Patrol Officer Jason Asbury** who will be **deployed to Afghanistan** in late summer. He will be deployed for 12 months with his unit, 1-148th Infantry. Jason has been in the Army for 13 years, the first four years on active duty and the remaining years in the Ohio National Guard. Jason has been with the BAPD since 2009. **Be safe, Jason, and thank you for your service to our country!**

Did you know that **four out of five children's car seats** are **installed incorrectly**? **Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center** has partnered with the **Blue Ash Fire Department** to offer a **free car seat safety check** on **Friday, June 24**, from 1:30 to 3:30PM at the **North Fire Station** (10647 Kenwood Road). During this time, parents can have their child's car seat **checked** by a child passenger **safety technician** to make sure it's being used correctly. For more info, contact Cincinnati Children's at 636-7865...



**Recent technology improvements** were completed within the Rec Center which will **benefit our citizens** -- the installation of a **projection system** in the lower level room. This room is available for rent by Blue Ash residents and corporate citizens at reasonable rates (refundable deposit required also). The projection system will enable more professional presentations, such as PowerPoint, etc. If you're interested in renting this room for a meeting or civic gathering, call the Center at 745-8550...

**National entertainment** scheduled thus far for this year's **Taste of Blue Ash** (August 26 – 28) includes **Pat Benatar** and **Neil Giraldo** at 9PM on Friday and **REO Speedwagon** at 9PM on Saturday. (Sunday's national entertainment has not yet been finalized at the writing of this newsletter). Check **BlueAshEvents.com** for updates!



Many **thanks** to Blue Ash's **Fleet Feet** retail store (located at 9525 Kenwood Rd.) who partners with the City for the annual **Lady Distance Classic**, a running/walking event this year scheduled for **Saturday, August 6**. In 2010, this event had 1,700 participants! Check out [www.FleetFeetCincy.com](http://www.FleetFeetCincy.com) to learn about the wide range of training programs and clinics offered -- aimed for your good health! **Kudos** to **Tara Traxler**, daughter of Dave and Brenda Traxler (Brenda works in the Blue Ash Mayor's Court office). Tara is a **Finalist** in the **2011 National Merit Scholarship Program**, a distinction which places her within a group of students representing less than 1% of U.S. high school graduating seniors. **Congrats, Tara!**

The **Parks & Rec Department** relies heavily on its **volunteers** and would like to extend a hearty **THANKS!** In 2010 alone, there were 43 volunteers actively working, with membership now at 48. Over half of the 43 have been volunteers with the City for over 10 years, and their ages range from 10 to 92! In addition to these volunteers, the Department has **partnered** with **Raymond Walters College's** Special Events/Meeting Planning students to offer **internships**. Throughout spring and summer quarters, 18 students will be volunteering a minimum 10-15 hours each. **Thank you, volunteers, for all you do to help make our events and programs a success!**

**BLUE ASH RESIDENTS - please remember that the City's CURBSIDE BRUSH COLLECTION procedures have CHANGED. Collection for LARGE amounts must now be called in to schedule a collection time. See article on back page.**

## NEWS IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARENA ...

Congratulations to the nine Blue Ash companies listed on the *Cincinnati Business Courier's* Fastest 55 companies in the region. A special event hosted by the Courier honoring these companies is set for early to mid June. Congrats to all (listed below), and thank you for your investment in our community!

- 2trg
- Ascendum Solutions
- BioRx
- BSI Engineering
- iSqFt/Construction Software
- Partner Professional Staffing
- RDI Marketing
- Triplefin
- Unity Financial Life Insurance

Congratulations to Blue Ash businesses celebrating special anniversaries in 2011 ... including International Language Plus, celebrating 25 years of language service in 2011; Toyota, celebrating their 30th anniversary in Blue Ash in 2011; and Vortec, celebrating 50 years of doing business in 2011. **Thank you all for being long-time members of the Blue Ash corporate community!**

Kudos are also due to Blue Ash based Global Bio-Chem who celebrated their grand opening for their new offices in early March. This Chinese-owned company, which trades on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, opened its North American headquarters in Blue Ash on Carver Road. According to Jeff Mahaffey, COO for Global Bio-Chem, the company moved to the Cincinnati region to be centrally located to many of the industries Global Bio-Chem supplies. At present the firm has customers in 12 western countries, including the U.S. and Canada. **Welcome to Blue Ash, Global Bio-Chem, and thank you for your commitment to our community!**

*Pictured L to R at the March grand opening of the Blue Ash Global Bio-Chem offices are Mayor Mark Weber, Chief Financial Officer Sara Xu, Chief Executive Officer Mark Ma, & Chief Operating Officer Jeff Mahaffey.*



**Don't forget to sign up for the City's eBlast! electronic newsletters for the latest news about Blue Ash! It's easy! Just click on the related information accessible from the home page of BlueAsh.com & sign up for the eBlast!. Remember too that BlueAsh.com, & other communications from the City (such as this newsletter), are the best source for the most accurate and reliable news about your community.**

# DON'T BE A VICTIM OF HOME SOLICITATION & TRANSIENT VENDOR FRAUD! TIPS FROM YOUR POLICE DEPARTMENT

Spring is here, the snow is gone, trees are budding and flowers are popping up out of the ground. Spring brings with it many things to look forward to. Unfortunately, spring also signals the annual return of transient criminal groups. They are already in our area and are most active from now until late spring.

The groups usually take up residence in local hotels for the period of time they are here, and then move on. These transient criminal groups engage in numerous theft scams from shoplifting to home burglary (usually through unlocked doors), to construction and remodeling scams.

Every year Blue Ash residents are victims of home improvement frauds. Driveway blacktopping and roof repair are the most common of these crimes. These crimes are even

more serious due to the fact that these criminals tend to prey on the elderly. Typically the vendor will indicate they have blacktop left over from a "job down the road," and say they will blacktop your driveway for a reduced price. Another popular scam is the individual who "just happens to be driving down your street and notices you have serious roof or gutter problems." The work is almost always of inferior quality, often unnecessary, and the victim is usually presented with a bill much higher than the original estimate. Victims, particularly the elderly are often intimidated into paying this inflated bill. If you have an elderly neighbor or relative be observant, and help educate them about these crimes.

Transient vendors and home solicitation sales are regulated by both state law and

City of Blue Ash ordinances. These ordinances include bonding of the vendor, and specific requirements for contract language. These laws also provide for a three day right of cancellation, also referred to as a "cooling off period." Violation of these ordinances is a crime. The Blue Ash Police Department recommends residents deal with established contractors with a verifiable local area business address. Be very cautious when dealing with contractors who engage in unsolicited door-to-door sales. If you are approached by a vendor engaging in door to door home improvement sales or suspect a transient vendor is working your neighborhood, call the Blue Ash Police at 745-8555.



## COMMUNITY BULLETINS...

The **BLUE ASH/MONTGOMERY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** will perform on Blue Ash's Towne Square on Memorial Day, Monday, May 30, at 6PM. Bring your lawn chair to enjoy this free concert. Rain location: Sycamore Jr. High. As is traditional with this concert, the Blue Ash Youth Symphony will also perform, and the concert will include the annual Armed Forces Salute played by both orchestras, honoring our many area veterans for their service to our country. Check out [www.BAMSO.org](http://www.BAMSO.org) for more information.



Starting May 26, a farmer's market will be on the **RAYMOND WALTERS COLLEGE** campus in Blue Ash each Thursday from 3 to 7PM -- **THE MARKET AT UC BLUE ASH!** As a kickoff to this new initiative, RWC plans to have a few local restaurants providing some menu options each week. In addition to the fresh produce, gourmet mushrooms, kettle corn, homemade jams and jellies, gelato, gourmet coffee, fresh fruit smoothies, etc., there will also be some form of entertainment, while featuring a different restaurant each week. The Market at UC Blue Ash is Dean Cady Short-Thompson's idea in an effort to promote fresh produce on a weekly basis, promote the advantages of the RWC campus in Blue Ash, and to encourage healthy eating as each of us look at sustainability and the Green movement. The Market

at UC Blue Ash will be in the RWC parking lot close to Plainfield Road, and already has over 30 vendors ... so mark your calendars!

The **BLUE ASH WOMANS CLUB** will host their annual garden tour on Saturday, June 11, from Noon to 4PM beginning at the Gazebo Tea Garden at 10461 Kenwood Road. Cost is \$5 for adults (children are free). For more info, call Bev at 891-4043.

A June Concert Series is set at the **SYCAMORE SENIOR CENTER** (4455 Carver Rd.) on Tuesdays from 10:30-11:30AM. Concerts are free of charge, and performers include:

- June 1: Iran & Connie Gunn (guitar/ vocals)
- June 8: Steve & Irina (patriotic music)
- June 15: Ricky Nye (piano)
- June 22: Jerry Conrad (trumpet and vocals)
- June 29: Jim McBride (one man band)

The **SYCAMORE SENIOR CENTER** also will offer free classes for New Computer Users each Wednesday June through August. Novice and potential computer users are invited to this Workshop Lab program giving individual attention to solving computer questions. Call 984-1234 with questions.

The **BLUE ASH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION** (BABA) is proud to announce their 2011 Scholarship winner: Jason Robke of Blue Ash. Phyllis Bare, President of BABA, presented a \$2,000 renewable college scholarship to Jason at BABA's May meeting. Jason

will graduate from Sycamore High this year and plans to major in Industrial Engineering. *Congratulations, Jason, and thanks to BABA for giving back to your community!*

Below is the latest news from our friends at Blue Ash based **MATTHEW 25: MINISTRIES** (M25M). Please continue to support Matthew 25 with your financial gifts as well as gifts of time and products.

**Help for Japan** - M25M will continue to provide aid to the people of Japan in the aftermath of one of the worst multiple disasters in modern history. For many months to come, support will continue for rescue, relief, and rebuilding efforts with donations of food, water, and other basic necessities.

**Feeding the Hungry** - did you know that M25M's Food Processing Center packages a shelf-stable nutritionally enhanced rice-soy product for distribution in Greater Cincinnati, throughout the U.S. and worldwide? The Center processes approximately 5,000 bags of food per operational day with one day's activity providing food for 35,000 people.

**Grow Right** - M25M staff and volunteers will be returning to Haiti in early June to collect data on their Grow Right Micronutrient Supplement (currently being distributed to 6,000 Haitian children). The team will also conduct medical clinics and distribute clothing to children in orphanages and schools throughout the Port-au-Prince area.

# PROPERTY VALUE REAPPRAISALS IN 2011

Did you know that the State of Ohio requires that all real property be reappraised every six years? Since reappraisals were last performed in 2005 in Hamilton County, reappraisals are scheduled to occur in 2011. Reappraisals are performed or coordinated by the Hamilton County Auditor's Office and involve a County agent or contractual representative physically visiting property to determine its value. (Note that this process differs from re-evaluations, which are performed every three years – essentially a “paper” update based upon inflation, recent sales, etc.) Last update from the Auditor's office indicated that the reappraisal process (i.e., physical visits to properties) began in Blue Ash in April. Although the actual calculations determining the gross real estate tax, credits, rollbacks, etc. can be somewhat complex, it is relatively simple to determine just where your tax dollars are going. Real property taxes are based on the assessed valuations of your property – i.e., 35% of what the County believes the market value is of your property. The millage or tax rate applied to that assessed valuation is essentially determined by the voters in the district where the property is located. The semi-annual tax bill which property owners receive is forwarded by the Hamilton County Treasurer's Office and generally arrives in the year after the tax period being collected. For example, the tax bill that is due for payment in July 2011 covers taxes due for the second half of 2010. Therefore, there may appear to be a delay in the impact of expiring levies or new millage/levies approved by voters.

It's relatively easy to determine just where your tax dollars are going. Your tax bill (or information about your property available through the County Auditor's website at [www.HamiltonCountyAuditor.org](http://www.HamiltonCountyAuditor.org)) contains a breakdown of funding to the various categories, such as schools, county, special project areas, etc. (Click on the “taxes paid” link to access this information from that website.)

To show how your residential taxes are calculated, let's look at an example. Overall, as noted above, residential taxes are based on the “assessed” valuations assigned to your property by the County, with values assessed at 35%. For this example, let's assume that Hamilton County has determined the actual market value of your residential property to be \$200,000. In this example, your assessed value would be

35% of \$200,000, or \$70,000. If you reside in the Sycamore School District, the total current residential property tax rate before reductions and credits is 93.64 mills (or \$93.64 per \$1,000 of assessed property value). Your gross annual real estate tax (but not the final amount you would actually pay) would equal \$6,554.80 (= \$93.64 x 70). The County-determined reduction factor for 2010 is .460431, which means that .460431 x \$6,554.80, or \$3,018.03, is the amount reduced from your gross tax. Therefore, \$6,554.80 minus \$3,018.03, or \$3,536.77, is the amount based on the effective tax rate before any Rollback or Homestead exemption credits (or other applicable rebates).

For this example, let's assume that you are eligible only for the 12.5% rollback (which is common for homeowners). In this case, the full-year tax amount would be \$3,536.77 less 12.5%, or \$3,094.67. A summary of how we calculated the above example is below:

Total est. market value: .....	\$200,000
X 35% = assessed value: .....	\$70,000
Assessed value ÷ 1,000 = .....	\$70
X full tax rate of 93.64 (2010 Syc. res. rate) .....	\$93.64
= Gross tax (before reductions): .....	\$6,554.80
Less: composite reduction factor:.....	\$3,018.03
(2010 residential credit is .460431)	
= Subtotal .....	\$3,536.77
Less: Rollback rebate (12.5% of \$3,536.77): .....	\$442.10
= Actual annual property taxes you would pay	
(before tax credits or assessments): .....	\$3,094.67

The distribution of property taxes to various entities is based on the tax amount before any sales tax credit or current assessments. As you can also see from your tax bills, Blue Ash homeowner's taxes are spread amongst approximately 15 recipients, with the largest portion going to the public schools (about 62% goes to Sycamore Schools for most Blue Ash residential properties). It is interesting to note that Blue Ash's millage (fixed by Charter for many decades at 3.08 mills) represents only about 6% of your property taxes.

## NEWS FROM DUKE ENERGY...SMART GRID UPDATE

In 2011, Duke Energy will be installing digital electric meters in Blue Ash (as well as other Duke service areas). This is Duke's “Smart Grid” program that is an investment intended to serve you better, including improved tools for you to manage your energy use and costs.

The meters are being installed by VSI, a contractor working on behalf of Duke Energy. Specifically in Blue Ash, during the weeks of July 18 and July 25, communication “nodes” (boxes on poles or ground-mounted transformers that retrieve data from meters) will be installed. Meters will be deployed in Blue Ash starting the first week in August and should be completed within a few weeks. Customers will receive a post card, door

hanger, and an in-person notification prior to the meters being installed.

The Smart Grid uses the same digital technology used in industries such as telecommunications to enable two-way communication between Duke and customers. With the Smart Grid, you will be able to monitor your previous day's usage and, if you want, modify how you and your family are using electricity to better control costs. The new grid is intended to give consumers, not utility companies or the government, more decision making ability over energy choices.

Another advantage of the Smart Grid is greater reliability throughout the entire power distribution network, helping to both prevent and pinpoint power outages in events such as storms.

The new “self healing networks” automatically reroute power when a problem occurs. The new grid will also be a benefit to customers as remote meter reading will reduce the need for a meter reader to enter a home, as well as the need for an estimated bill. This new technology will make flexible billing and payment options available to many.

To cover the cost of grid modernization, Duke customers will see small incremental increases in their monthly electric bill; annually, Duke will submit a request to the utilities commission for the cost of their smart grid efforts, less savings realized from the use of this technology.

Check out [www.duke-energy.com/about-us/smart-grid.asp](http://www.duke-energy.com/about-us/smart-grid.asp) for more info.

## PROPERTY MAINTENANCE REMINDERS...

Blue Ash is committed to providing a clean and attractive community, with active participation and cooperation of residents essential to meeting this goal. With “spring cleaning” on many of our minds this time of year, we thought this article might be helpful and can be used to help recognize potential property maintenance violations on your property.

Items frequently stored outside include household items that you may have a use for now or in the future, such as trash containers (including your Rumpke trash and recycling totes), ladders, carts, lawn mowers, landscape materials, water hose, or other lawn and garden equipment. Storage of such items are permitted only to the extent it is an accessory to the residential use of the property (storage related to business activity is not permitted). Below are answers to the most frequently asked questions related to property maintenance and outside storage.

**How should I store these items?** Items stored outside must be fully screened, on all sides so as not to be seen, by a wall, storage cabinet, fence or landscaping and installed with materials of a quality compatible with the immediate neighborhood. Items must be behind the front building line of the house. Screening must be constructed and maintained under applicable City codes. Items exempt from this screening are patio furniture, swing sets and similar equipment, and firewood neatly stacked behind the front building line.

**How should I store my trash and recycling container?** Trash and recycling containers that are stored between a structure and a public street must be completely screened from view from the street. Containers located in a side or rear yard area are not required to be screened, but must be maintained and stored in a clean and orderly manner.

**How tall can your grass or weeds be before it is a violation?** A violation exists when the weeds or grass are more than eight inches in height.

**What area must be mowed?** In addition to the yard or lawn area, you must mow any area between your property and the paved area of all adjacent streets, including ditches, easements, alleys, and unpaved right-of-way. Storm drainage swales, ditches or easements are also the maintenance responsibility of adjacent property owners.

**How much time is allowed to correct a violation?** The violation must be corrected in seven calendar days from the date of the Notice of Violation.

**What is the penalty if I fail to correct the violation?** If the owner does not correct the violation after proper notification, the City will issue a work order to mow the property. The owner is responsible for the contractor's invoice. In the event the property owner does not pay the invoice within 30 days, the cost of the invoice shall be certified to the County Auditor, to be placed upon the property tax bill, collected and paid back to the City. Subsequent violations within one calendar year of the initial notice as specified in City Ordinance 911.03 may be subject to immediate abatement by the City without further notification.

Whether you are a homeowner, tenant, or landlord, having pride in your community and home is the foundation of a great city. Being a responsible neighbor helps to keep the community clean, safe, attractive, and a good place to be. Pride in home ownership shows you care about your investment, your neighbor, your community, and consequences.

Contact Rich Dole, Community Development Program Administrator, at 745-8542 or via E-mail at [rdole@blueash.com](mailto:rdole@blueash.com), with questions.

## THE SCOOP ON EMERALD ASH BORER

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an insect from Asia that is attacking the Midwest's ash trees, regardless of the tree's health. Once an EAB infestation occurs, it kills the tree in three to five years.



EAB is believed to have arrived in the United States in shipping pallets or cargo from eastern Asia about 10 years before it was discovered. It was first identified in the Detroit, Michigan area in July 2002, and then in Lucas County, Ohio, in February 2003.

EAB is a slightly elusive insect because it spends the majority of its life under the bark. The larvae develop beneath the bark of ash trees and are flat, creamy white, with bell-shaped segments, and are about 1" long. Adult EAB are dark metallic green and 1/2" long.

**EAB Life Cycle** - From late spring through autumn adult beetles mate, and the female lays 60-90 eggs on ash tree bark. The eggs hatch 7 to 10 days later, and the larvae tunnel into the tree just beneath the bark where they feed on the live tissue of the tree. The larvae's S-shaped feeding pattern, called galleries, disrupts the transport of water and nutrients, eventually killing the tree. Over the winter, the larvae remain under the bark. When warmer weather arrives, larvae enter the pupal stage and then transform into adults. The beetles emerge through the bark leaving behind 1/8", distinctive D-shaped exit holes. The adults feed on leaves before mating and laying eggs, starting the cycle over again.

**How to Tell if Your Tree Has EAB** - There are several things that may indicate your ash tree has Emerald Ash Borer:

- Branch dieback at the top of the tree

- Vertical splits in the bark
- Sprouting on the trunk and at the base of the tree
- Scratched bark from woodpeckers feeding on the larvae
- Distinct 1/8", D-shaped exit holes in the bark
- S-shaped, sawdust-packed galleries under the bark

EAB is difficult to detect until a tree has been infested for at least a year because the larvae feed from the top of the tree first. When looking for EAB, it is important to peel off the bark to look for the larvae and the galleries.

**Respect the quarantines – don't move firewood** - One of the quickest ways for EAB to infect new areas is by the movement of firewood. As you probably have heard, the Ohio Department of Agriculture's (ODA) quarantine prohibits the movement of all non-coniferous firewood, ash trees, and all parts of ash trees from being moved out of quarantined areas. All 88 counties in Ohio are included in the quarantine. A federal quarantine enforced by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture makes it illegal to transport ash trees, parts of ash trees, and all hardwood firewood out of Ohio. Limiting firewood movement also helps protect against the artificial spread of other pests in addition to EAB, such as gypsy moth and Asian long-horned beetle. Simply obtain your firewood locally, and burn what you buy.

Blue Ash's in-house landscape experts have found EAB in Blue Ash and have discussed the EAB issue a great deal internally. Unfortunately, no real cost-effective solutions exist. Therefore, the City will continue to monitor the situation in our community.

More info about EAB can be found at the ODA website at [www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab](http://www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab).

## 2011 TUESDAY & FRIDAY SUMMER CONCERTS SCHEDULE

The entertainment schedules for this year's concert series are below (*cut this out and save for reference all summer!*). All concerts are free and open to the public.



Visit  
[www.BlueAshEvents.com](http://www.BlueAshEvents.com)  
regularly for updates!

**TUESDAY CONCERTS IN THE PARK** – all Tuesday concerts are held in the Nature Park and begin at 7PM. Lawn chairs are suggested. Concession available.

June 7 .....Maple Knoll Big Band  
 June 14 .....Sycamore Community Band (concert band)  
 June 21 .....Six Pac (country)  
 June 28 .....TBA  
 July 5 .....P&G Big Band  
 July 12 .....Frank Simon Band (concert style)  
 July 19 .....Jim Jones & Matt Snow (Elvis & Sinatra)  
 July 26 .....Cincinnati Brass Band  
 August 2 .....Miami University Steel Band  
 August 9 .....Ricky Nye Inc. (blues/boogie woogie)  
 August 16 .....The Klaberheads (party band)  
 August 23 .....Pam Noah & her Swing Band

**FRIDAY CONCERTS ON THE SQUARE** – all Friday concerts are held at Towne Square near Hunt and Cooper Roads and begin at 8PM. Lawn chairs or blankets are suggested. No concessions.

June 3 .....The Soul Pocket Band (R&B, Motown)  
 June 10 .....Robin Lacy & DeZydeco (Cajun rock)  
 June 17 .....The Whammies (80s)  
 June 24 .....Stagger Lee (country)  
 July 1 .....Systems Go (patriotic)  
 July 8 .....Modulators (Eclectic rock)  
 July 15 .....Forever Diamond (Neil Diamond Tribute)  
 July 22 .....The Chuck Taylors (oldies)  
 July 29 .....My Sister Sarah (dance/party band)  
 August 5 .....Ooh La La (oldies/classic rock)  
 August 12 .....Boo Radley (90s & beyond)  
 August 19 .....The Remains (oldies, British invasion, classic rock)

## SOME "GREEN" TIPS FROM BLUE ASH FRIENDS...

**Recycling Reusable building materials** – Blue Ash resident Robert Cox has asked us to share this “green” news with fellow citizens ... did you know that you can **donate reusable building materials** to **Cincinnati's Habitat for Humanity**? Materials you donate go to Habitat's ReStore, help support Habitat's mission, and help the environment by keeping durable and usable materials out of local landfills. Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Free pickup service is available for large items (call 721-GIVE), and Mr. Cox will even volunteer to help you get smaller items to the store – feel free to contact him at 266-1921.



**Bar/restaurant recycling program** – Did you know that a glass bottle can take one million or more years to decompose? Late in 2010, Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District kicked off their Bar and Restaurant Recycling Program, and the District continues to help restaurants with implementing a system in their business. Many local establishments are already on board, but feel free to pass along this news to your favorite bar or restaurant in Hamilton County if they're not already a part of the effort.

**New area farmer's market** – beginning in late May through mid October, a farmer's market will be hosted on the Raymond Walters College campus in Blue Ash each Thursday from 3 to 7PM. Read more about **The Market at UC Blue Ash** in the “Community Bulletins” article within this newsletter (on Page 4).

**Reducing energy consumption at home** – Reducing energy consumption around your home is yet another way you can “go green.” Your utility bills can be reduced significantly simply by being more conscious of your energy choices around your home ... below are a few simple ways to reduce costs and energy usage.

**Wash wisely** – your dishwasher, clothes washer, and dryer are major sources of energy usage in your home. When washing clothes, use cold water whenever possible, and make sure you have a full load of laundry before washing and drying to maximize each usage. In the warmer months, consider drying clothes outside. Also, don't forget to clean your lint filter after drying clothes as a clean filter improves air circulation. With your dishwasher, also make sure you have a full load before running a cycle. Be conscious of how much you prewash your dishes before loading – just scrape off large chunks. There's no need to use extra water by soaking or rinsing dishes before a cycle. You can also let your dishes air dry – just turn off the dishwasher after the final rinse cycle (opening the door a bit can help dishes dry more quickly).

**Cook consciously** – remember to keep range-top burners and reflectors clean, as this will help reflect the heat more efficiently and will save energy. If you are cooking for one or two, consider investing in smaller appliances, such as a toaster oven, which can use one-third to one-half as much energy as full-sized ovens. Also be sure to cover your pots when boiling or heating liquids as it will get the job done more quickly and your energy use will be reduced.


**Around the garden** – thanks to cost sharing from the Hamilton County Storm Water District (HCSWD), Hamilton County residents can purchase up to two soil fertility test kits for only \$5 each. The cost of additional kits is \$12 each. This offer runs until June 15, and kits may be purchased at the District Office or mailed for an additional \$2 postage and handling fee. Proof of Hamilton County residence is required. Call HCSWD at 772-7646 with questions.



**CITY OF BLUE ASH**  
 4343 Cooper Road  
 Blue Ash, Ohio 45242-5699  
 (513) 745-8500

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**...Your Spring/Summer 2011 Blue Ash Community Newsletter!**

*This newsletter has been printed on recycled paper!* 

**BEAUTIFICATION WEEK**

The Blue Ash Beautification Week judging process this year is set for June 19 through June 25. *But first, the City needs to hear from citizens as to which properties you believe deserve beautification awards.* Nominations will be accepted between June 5 and 12.

It's easy to nominate your favorite property! Here's how:

- Call the City at 745-8500 (then dial zero) weekdays 8AM-5PM.
- Fax nominations to 745-8594.
- E-mail nominations to [administration@blueash.com](mailto:administration@blueash.com).
- Send (or drop off) nominations by mail or in-person to City Hall, 4343 Cooper Road, Blue Ash, Ohio 45242.

All properties nominated for an award will be judged by the Committee between June 19 and 25. Judging criteria includes:

- Overall appearance, lawn area, & tree maintenance

- Type of plantings used – garden variety & color

Please note that Beautification Week winners from the past three years are ineligible to win this year (new this year). Residential awards will be given to approximately eight property owners, and additional selections will be made for the Committee's Choice, Mayor's Choice, and People's Choice Awards. The general public can participate in the People's Choice Award by stopping in the Rec Center between July 5 and 16, and submitting their "vote" based upon the photographs of each nominee to be posted by the Committee.

Winners will be notified in late July and will be invited to a future City Council Meeting for the presentation of awards.

For more info on Beautification Week, call Lee Czerwonka at 745-0402.



**NORTHEAST FIRE COLLABORATIVE WINS AWARD!**

Congratulations to the Northeast Fire Collaborative (NEFC) which received a prestigious award for intergovernmental cooperation from the Ohio City/County Management Association (OCMA). This award recognizes governmental agencies that work together to successfully address problems or improve service to the community. In addition to the OCMA award, the NEFC was a finalist for the award in innovation from the International Association of Fire Chiefs in 2010.

The NEFC was formed in 2008 by the communities of Blue Ash, Loveland, Sharonville, Sycamore Township, and Symmes Township, with the City of Mason joining the group in 2009. Members work together to respond to emergencies, while maintaining their own identities. They have combined efforts for regular tests of equipment (such as ladders and pumps), and also gain price advantages with joint purchasing of certain equipment. In addition to providing needed staffing on a

fire emergency scene, results include a 30% cost savings in turnout gear, a 25% savings in disposable EMS supplies, and a 50% savings in annual ladder testing costs.

If you have an emergency in Blue Ash, don't worry as you will see the same Blue Ash personnel with whom you're familiar; however, you may also see a collaborative unit arriving first if closer or if they are backing up Blue Ash when units are on other emergency calls.

**BRUSH PICKUP REMINDERS...**

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT IN 2011, THE CITY'S RESIDENTIAL CURB-SIDE BRUSH COLLECTION PROCEDURES HAVE CHANGED.** Residents should continue to place small amounts of brush into their provided waste toter for weekly pickup by Rumpke; however, for LARGE amounts only, residents will need to call the Service Department at 686-1250 to schedule a collection time. The department schedules brush collection on Mondays of each week, so calls for pickup should

be made no later than Sunday (leave a message if during non-work hours). Please have your brush to the curb prior to 6:30 AM Monday morning. Check out the Public Works section of [BlueAsh.com](http://BlueAsh.com) for more details about dimensions and placement of brush and other public works services offered to our citizens.

