



CITY OF BLUE ASH COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER SPRING 2012

A Newsletter Published by
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Planning Continues on Airport Park

Planners for the City of Blue Ash continue to work with designers to complete the design of the new park the City is building at the Blue Ash Airport site. The work being done now is a continuation of the draft plan that City Council reviewed late last year. Construction of the new park is still slated to begin later this year.

The first phase of the development will include the installation of walking/running trails, infrastructure improvements (such as water, sewer, utilities, and roadways) and site work to prepare for additional park development. The updated plans provide additional detail of the nearly four and a half miles of walking/running trails. The trails should open to the public about 12 to 18 months after construction begins.

"We have spent a considerable amount

of time working with the community to get this park right," said Blue Ash Mayor Mark Weber. "The thousands of contacts we have made with Blue Ash citizens form the basis for us to create a great park that will be a gathering place for our community for generations to come."

Development of the second phase is expected to begin in 2014. That phase will add a multipurpose pavilion, gardens, playgrounds, observation tower, entryways, and a sledding hill. Restaurants and bistros also will be constructed during this period.

Under the updated draft plan of the park, restaurants will be located adjacent to the pavilion and multipurpose building. This design allows for better connectivity to the multipurpose building and creates additional uses for it.

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The Cooper Creek Event Center Grand Opening Celebration has been set for April 12 at 6 PM.

For more information about Cooper Creek Event Center, or to contact us about an upcoming event, call (513) 745-8596 or visit www.coopercreekblueash.com.



The heart of Rock 'n Roll will be beating in Blue Ash when Huey Lewis and the News come to town for Red, White & Blue Ash. Exile will also perform. Additional event information will be made available soon at blueashevents.com.

Cooper Creek Event Center Celebration Set for April

A celebration of the opening of the Cooper Creek Event Center will take place April 12-14. While the building has been open since the beginning of the year, the Grand Opening Celebration will be the first time many get to see this new Blue Ash facility.

The celebration will take place over three days and will provide many different opportunities to tour and enjoy Cooper Creek:

Thursday, April 12

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM: Public Tours

6:00 PM: Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, followed by refreshments

7:00 PM: Blue Ash City Council Meeting

Friday, April 13th

8:00 AM - 9:30 AM: Business Community Breakfast

Saturday, April 14

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM: Golf Giveaways

10:00 AM - 6:00 PM: Food and Drink Specials at the Sandtrap Grill

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM: Tours of Cooper Creek, refreshments and mini desserts provided

While the Grand Opening is in April, Cooper Creek has already been a busy place. Through March 15, the facility hosted 24 events. These have including weddings, corporate meetings, and public social events. On February 11, Cooper Creek partnered with radio station WGRR-FM to host *Dine, Dance, & Romance*, a Valentine's event.

Cooper Creek is set to host more than 45 weddings this year. Several other private functions have also been booked. In fact, there is a major event planned for almost every weekend in 2012. Bookings for 2012 have already begun.

Located at the nationally recognized Blue Ash Golf Course, Cooper Creek has nearly 9,000 square feet of rentable space for events. The lower level serves as the pro shop and lounge for the golf course. Serene views of the golf course can be seen from most meeting spaces at Cooper Creek.

Upon entering Cooper Creek, it is very apparent that the facility was built to host both elegant events as well as business and more casual gatherings. Exquisite finishes and large, flexible spaces dominate Cooper Creek. The Grand Ballroom can be split into several different formations to accommodate seating for groups of 50-350. Additional reception space is also available for larger groups and meetings. Catering Adventures Hospitality Group, a subsidiary of Vonderhaar's Catering, provides many high-end food choices exclusive to Cooper Creek.

Paid for with money from a tax issue that was on the ballot several years ago, Cooper Creek is very different from other municipally-owned centers. Blue Ash is taking a very business-like approach to Cooper Creek.

To learn more about Cooper Creek Event Center, visit www.coopercreekblueash.com or call (513) 745-8596.



Planning Continues on Airport Park (continued from page 1)

“City staff and the park’s design team will continue to fine tune the park plan,” Weber added. “This park will take several years to complete, but the work we’re doing now sets the park up to be a real success.”

The updated plan also shows a possible performing arts center near Glendale-Milford Road. The performing arts center is just one amenity that could be added to the park in the future. Other ideas for future development include a family-friendly golf training facility, a dog park, and Extreme Sports areas that could feature a zipline course and an Action Adventure area. Construction on these types of amenities would not begin until 2016.

“This plan gives us the opportunity to expand the features of the park and add new elements as they are desired by the community,” Weber said. “It’s exciting to know that we have a location and a plan that will grow to meet future needs of Blue Ash.”

The City of Cincinnati recently announced it would close the Blue Ash Airport. Blue Ash has no plans to purchase the airport. The tens of millions of dollars it would take to purchase the airport and make it operational are simply too expensive. If the remaining property is developed, Blue Ash will make sure it is a quality development compatible with the park given the City’s zoning and plan review authority.

The new park at the Blue Ash Airport site was made possible when Blue Ash residents passed Issue 15 in 2006. Revenue generated by Issue 15 funds the purchase and development of the new park. Those funds also added improvements to Blue Ash Golf Course, including new cart paths and the construction of the newly opened Cooper Creek Event Center.



Red, White & Blue Ash Set To Rock

Red, White & Blue Ash, the City’s annual Independence Day celebration, will be a big party again this year. With two nationally renowned acts and another stunning fireworks display, this will be a July 4 to remember.

Headlining Red, White, & Blue Ash this year is ‘80s superstar Huey Lewis and the News. The band scored several number one hits, including *Heart and Soul*, *The Power of Love*, *Stuck with You*, and *Jacob’s Ladder*. They had other hits like *Heart of Rock ‘n Roll*, *Hip to be Square*, and *If This is It*. Lewis and his band have provided music for motion picture soundtracks like *Back to the Future* and *Pineapple Express*.

“From 1983 through 1987, Huey Lewis and the News had hit after hit after hit,” said Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Funk. “Those hits provided the soundtrack for many Blue Ash residents’ youths.”

Exile will also perform at this year’s Red, White, & Blue Ash is Exile. The band’s single *Kiss You All Over* was a number one hit on the pop charts in the late ‘70s. The band then reformatted as a country act and recorded 10 number one singles from 1984-’87.

Other bands and a full rundown of the day’s events will be made available soon at blueashevents.com.



Spring Cleaning

Spring is a busy time of the year for homeowners. From getting the yard ready and adding new flowers to repairing damage caused by winter, there's a lot to do. The same is true for the City's maintenance departments. Flowers, lawns, buildings, and streets need attention.

Community Development has provided this checklist as you begin your spring cleaning and repair work:

- Gutters and Downspouts: Pull leaves and debris from gutters and downspouts. Run a hose on the roof and check for proper drainage and repair leaks using chaulking.
- Siding: Clean siding with a pressure washer to keep mold from growing.
- Exterior Caulking: Inspect caulking and replace if deteriorating. Scrape out all of the eroding caulk and recaulk needed area.
- Window sills, door sills, and thresholds: Fill cracks, caulk edges, repaint or replace if necessary.
- Window and door screens: Patch or replace the screen. Save bad screens to patch holes next year. Tighten or repair any loose or damaged frames and repaint.
- Foundation: Check foundation walls, floors, concrete, and masonry for cracking, heaving, or deterioration. If you can slide a nickel into a crack in your concrete floor, slab or foundation call a professional immediately.
- Roof: Inspect roof surface flashing, eaves, and soffits.
- Deck and porches: Check all decks, patios, porches, stairs, and railings for loose members and deterioration. To avoid a potential collapse, closely examine an elevated wooden deck and supports and consider how many people might be on it at a given time.
- Landscape: This is a natural for spring home maintenance. Cut back and trim all vegetation and overgrown bushes from structures. Limbs and leaves can cut into your home's paint.



Driveway replacement that impacts the roadway (such as apron replacement) requires a "City of Blue Ash Permit to Excavate in the Public Right of Way" from the Public Works Department.

Spring Construction

Besides beautiful flowers and garden beds, orange barrels and cones also sprout in the spring. The City of Blue Ash selects streets for maintenance based upon a variety of inputs including: the condition of the street, coordination with utility improvement projects, available budget, etc.

The Blue Ash Public Works Department performs inspections on every street within the City. During these inspections, pavement distress and condition is recorded as to the extent and severity. This information is included in our pavement maintenance program. This program computes the input data and provides a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) number for each street which indicates the state of deterioration of the pavement.

Based upon the PCI various maintenance and rehabilitation techniques can be evaluated. Once all of these factors have been taken into account, the paving program is developed and available budget established.

Public Works Drop Off

The Service Department Center hosts a clean-up day yearly to allow residents access to the facility on a Saturday. This year's clean-up day is scheduled for May 5 from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. To confirm if your items are accepted, please call the office at (513) 686-1250 weekdays 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM. The City will arrange for a company to be on-site to properly shred and dispose of your records at no charge to residents. This service is for residential household records only; no business records will be accepted. Each resident may bring up to four boxes of household records and view the shredding of his or her items.

Brush Pick-Up

City crews will collect brush on a call-in basis only. To schedule a pickup, call the Service Department Center at (513) 686-1250. Requests for removal will be scheduled for the following week. Please have your brush to the curb prior to 6:30 AM Monday morning. The cut ends should be facing the street. Small amounts of brush should be placed in the provided Rumpke waste wheeler. City of Blue Ash Curbside Brush Collection Rules:

- Brush consists of limbs and twigs. Brush will not be collected if mixed with other materials such as yard waste (ornamental grass, flowers, leaves, grass, mulch, and bush trimmings), wood fencing, nails, plastic, metal, lumber, etc. The machine used for this service is not designed to accept these materials and it could lead to damage to the machine or bodily harm to City workers.
- Brush must be placed near the edge of the street or curb (within the City's right of way). Do not place brush in the street or on the sidewalk. Do not place brush near a parked car or fire hydrant.
- Brush must not be larger than 12" in diameter. Stumps and root systems must be detached.
- Please have several small piles rather than one large pile. This will greatly help with efficiency.



Home Solicitation and Transient Vendors Fraud

Every year Blue Ash residents are victims of home improvement frauds. Driveway blacktopping and roof repair are the most common of these crimes. These criminals tend to prey on the elderly.

Typically the vendor will say they have blacktop left over from a “job down the road”, and they will blacktop your driveway for a reduced price. Another popular scam is the repair worker 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.

All solicitors are required by Blue Ash Ordinance to register with the Police Department and obtain a license before canvassing or soliciting, and are required to exhibit the registration certificate and license to any resident upon request.

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 Department at 745-8555.

If you have any questions concerning home improvement vendors call the Blue Ash Police Department.

Other Fraud Traps

Besides illegal door-to-door solicitations, there are other scams that have occurred to Blue Ash residents. These include:

- Relative in Foreign Jail: A phone caller will claim to be a relative in jail in a foreign country and asks for money to be wired for bail. If you get this call, ask for a call-back number. Then try another way to attempt to contact your relative to verify his or her safety. Then notify Blue Ash Police.
- eBay Agents: The victim purchases a large item on eBay and is instructed by the scammer to transfer the purchase money to an “eBay agent’s” banking account. Once the money is transferred, the “agent” will notify the seller to deliver the item; however it is never delivered. eBay does not have “eBay agents.” If using eBay, use only Paypal or your credit card.
- Fake Lottery: Mailings or telephone calls announcing you have won a lottery, but you must first pay taxes on the prize to claim it.

All of the above examples are fraudulent and should be reported to the Blue Ash Police at (513) 745-8555.

Blue Ash Budgeting: Keeping Promises

In 2006, Blue Ash voters passed a Charter amendment that increased the City's earnings tax from 1% to 1.25%. Voters overwhelmingly passed the measure because the City promised to use the money to:

- Purchase 130 acres of the Blue Ash Airport to build a new city park on the site.
- Renovate and greatly expand the Blue Ash Recreation Center.
- Make improvements to Blue Ash Golf Course.
- Build a new facility that would serve as the golf course's pro shop and function as an events facility.

Since the vote passed, Blue Ash expanded the Recreation Center, installed a new irrigation system and cart paths at the golf course, and built Cooper Creek Event Center. We have closed on the land at the airport and construction is slated to begin later this year.

Blue Ash, like most municipalities, has faced budget challenges over the past several years. As the economy shows some signs of improvement, despite the still troubled housing market, many governments will begin to have a bit more breathing room.

At Blue Ash, we have controlled our budget controlling operational costs. Further, we have adapted to reductions in local government revenue unrelated to earnings tax and invested in economic development opportunities, while providing a high level of service and infrastructure enhancement to our residential and business citizens.

Even though the gradually increasing cuts the State is making in the Local Government Fund are a difficult hurdle, things are progressing well so far in 2102. Earnings tax collections are ahead of last year and expenditures are in line with our projections. Continued responsible financial planning has permitted the City to stay on course during the economic downturn, while the Issue 15 projects permit substantial benefit in quality of life amenities.



Blue Ash Business Awards

The Blue Ash Business Awards were handed out by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber on March 12. Congratulations to all of the nominees. This year's winners were:

- Blue Ash Corporate Community Service Award: Cincinnati Eye Institute
- Blue Ash Business of the Year (1-50 employees): Bramkamp Printing Co.
- Blue Ash Business of the Year (51-250 employees): 2TRG
- Blue Ash Business of the Year (250+ employees): Mercy Health Partners
- Emerging Business of the Year: Solica Construction
- Special Recognition for Aspiring, Achieving, and Advancing in Blue Ash: NAI Bergman



Pictured: Lee Ann Liska accepts award for Mercy Health Partners



Around Blue Ash

Cancer Support Community

"The Wellness Community," has changed its name to "Cancer Support Community." The new name ties in to CSC's national organization, which became Cancer Support Community in 2009 when it merged with Gilda's Clubs Worldwide. The new name also better communicates the non-profit organization's mission of cancer support, which includes offering professionally-led support groups, individual counseling, educational presentations, nutrition and gentle exercise programs, and stress reduction classes, all designed to complement conventional medical care.



Sycamore Schools Goes Social

Sycamore Schools has drastically increased its online visibility. The district recently launched a YouTube channel, Flickr account and Facebook page. Sycamore's Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools.

UC Blue Ash Celebration

UC's Blue Ash College and Clermont College recently celebrated the collaboration on the Bachelor of Applied Administration that was launched in the fall of 2011. The celebration event was at UC Blue Ash on March 28. The Applied Administration program is designed for people who already hold a technical associate degree, such as an Associate of Applied Science or an Associate of Applied Business. It provides an opportunity for students who want to take the next step in their professional career by fulfilling the course requirements necessary to complete a bachelor's degree – giving them edge to move into a supervisory or administrative position.

Blue Ash Staff Notes

Blue Ash Police Officer Butch Poppe retired after 41 of service with the Blue Ash Police Department. After leaving full time work in 1995, he stayed on the department as a part-time auxiliary police officer until his retirement in late December 2011.

Police Lt. Dennis Boone retired in February after a 35-year career in Law Enforcement.

Betsy Ellison retired at the end of February after 23 years with the Tax Department.

On 2/17/2012 the Police Department celebrated two promotions – Patrol Officer Roger Pohlman was promoted to Sergeant and Sergeant Steve Schueler was promoted to Lieutenant.

Helping Tornado Victims

Matthew 25: Ministries continues responding to the needs of tornado victims in the Tri-state. Matthew 25 has established three central distribution hubs in the disaster regions and is using these hubs to ensure the efficient delivery of needed supplies to partners in the devastated areas. Donations can be made online at www.m25m.org or can contact Matthew 25 Ministries at (513) 793-6256 for additional options.

Blue Ash Pool Hours

The pool at the Blue Ash Recreation Center is scheduled to open May 26. Throughout most of the summer, the pool will open at noon on weekdays and 11:00 a.m. on weekends with the exception of opening (Memorial Day) and closing (Labor Day) weekends when the pool will be open noon – 6:00 PM Saturday - Monday. For a more complete pool schedule, please visit www.blueash.com.

Sycamore Senior Center

Head out to the old ballgame with a Senior Center Reds Ticket Package that is available for many of the games from April through September. Packages include transportation, tickets and a selection of food. More information is available at (513) 984-1234.

On Wednesday, April 11th, the Sycamore Senior Center will once again sponsor the "Part Time" Job Fair featuring employers from around the tri-state.

Blue Ash/Montgomery Symphony Orchestra

BAMSO will begin their 2012 summer season with a traditional Memorial Day Weekend Concert at the Blue Ash Town Square, in collaboration with the Blue Ash Youth Symphony under the direction of Dale Swisher. The concert, which is titled *A New World Symphony*, includes music of Dvorak, Sousa, and patriotic favorites. Also featured is a gifted concerto competition winner. The concert begins at 6:00 PM and includes a musical salute to the members of the Armed Forces. Sycamore Junior High School will host the concert in the event of inclement weather.





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Mark Your Calendars....

In addition to the dates below, the City will host the traditional Friday Night Concerts on the Square beginning at 8 PM and Tuesday Night Concerts in the Park beginning at 7 PM in June, July, and August. Entertainment to be announced.

April 12-14 – Cooper Creek Event Center Grand Opening

April 14 – Blue Ash Woman’s Club Annual Spring Luncheon, Blue Ash Presbyterian Church, 11 AM - 2 PM, call 891-4043 to purchase tickets

April 20 – Earth Day Celebration at the Rec Center, 4 - 7 PM

April 21 – Blue Ash Historical Society presents Open House at the Hunt House, 11 AM - 1 PM

April 21 – Movie on the Square, Dusk

April 24 – Blue Ash Business Association’s and Blue Ash/Montgomery Rotary Club’s Business Showcase Tradeshow, Blue Ash Embassy Suites, 11 AM - 4 PM

May 4 – United for UNIFAT Benefit Concert at the Square

May 5 – Clean-Up Day, Public Works Center at 6131 Interstate Circle, 9 AM - 3 PM (proof of residency required)

May 7 – Recreation Summer Program Registration Open for Public at Rec Center, 9 AM

May 12 – World’s Largest Sycamore Reunion Party presented by Sycamore Alumni and Friends, Oasis Conference Center, 7 - 11 PM, visit www.ourSAFA.com to purchase tickets

May 13-19 – National Police Week

May 17 – Blue Ash Business Bash at the Rec Center, 5 PM

May 19 – Movie on the Square, Dusk

May 20-26 – National Public Works Week

May 26 – Pool Open Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday – Monday), Noon - 6 PM

May 28 – Memorial Day Parade, Cooper Road, 10:15 AM

May 28 – Blue Ash Montgomery Symphony Orchestra Concert, Towne Square, 6 PM

June 2 & 3 – Pool Open, Noon - 6 PM

June 8 – Pool Open for the Season, visit www.blueash.com for hours

June 9 – Blue Ash Woman’s Club 16th Annual Garden Tour beginning at the Gazebo Tea Garden, Noon - 4 PM, call 891-4043 for details

June 12 – Primary Election Day, Voting Polls Open 6:30 AM - 7:30 PM

June 23 – Blue Ash Historical Society presents Open House at the Hunt House, 11 AM - 1 PM

June 23 – Movie on the Square, Dusk

July 3 – Blue Ash Montgomery Symphony Orchestra Concert, Montgomery Park, 7:30 PM

July 4 – Independence Day, Red, White, and Blue Ash near the intersection of Glendale Milford Road and Reed Hartman Highway

July 14 – Family Moonlight Swim & Dive-In Movie, 6:30 PM

July 21 – Movie on the Square, Dusk

August 4 – Lady Distance Classic (Expect Road Closures)

August 4 – Movie in the Park, Dusk