

# New Britain Borough



# NEWS

Volume 23, Number 1

Winter 2014

## ***Borough Hall name changed to Burkart Hall***

On November 12, 2013 New Britain Borough Council renamed our Borough Hall to Burkart Hall. The Burkart Family has a long history in New Britain Borough as well as a history with our Borough Hall building. Edwin Burkart, a founding member of the Library and Literary Society, made a motion in 1912 to build a library and a place for the Literary Society to meet. This is the building that became our Borough Hall in 1969.

Edwin Burkart officiated at the laying of the building cornerstone on September 13, 1913. Louise Burkart, his wife, procured a donation of 63 books for lending.

The Burkart Orchestra, consisting of Edwin Burkart and his sons, Henry, Esher and Edwin Jr., played at many Library concerts; and both Edwin and Louise Burkart served on the Library board and participated in many of the programs held at the Library.

The next generation of Burkarts, Henry and Florence, also participated in many programs and appeared in several of the plays staged at the Library. Henry Burkart served his country in World War I.

The son of Henry and Florence, Bruce Burkart and his wife, Nancy, continued their family's tradition of service and citizenship through Nancy's tenure as Librarian, Bruce and Nancy's volunteer work at the Mercer Museum and Bucks County Meals on Wheels, as well as Bruce's service to his country during the Korean War, the many hours he spent repairing and maintaining the Library building before and after it was deeded to the Borough, his service as the Borough's first building inspector as an elected Borough tax collector for 24 years, on New Britain Borough Council, as Judge of Elections, and many other selfless acts of citizenship, including his current service as Borough Historian.

It is clear why Council wanted to honor Bruce and Nancy Burkart, as well as their ancestors, by renaming the building in their honor.

## ***Police Merger***

New Britain Borough Police has merged with Doylestown Borough Police effective January 1, 2014. The new department called the Central Bucks Regional Police Department is located at 57 W. Court Street, Doylestown, PA 18901. The police building located at 56 Keeley Avenue is now closed. If you have an emergency, dial 9-1-1. All other calls should be directed to 215-345-4143 during business hours (8:30 AM – 5:00 PM Monday-Friday). After business hours calls should be directed to the Bucks County Radio Room at 215-348-3524.

Website: <http://cbrpd.net/home.html>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cbrpd>

## ***In Appreciation to Out- going Council Members***

A very special thank you to outgoing Council members **Robert Belchic** and **Craig Sturza**. We applaud their years of extraordinary commitment to their community.

Robert Belchic served on Council for over 25 years with the last two years as Borough Council President. Bob served on many committees over those years and recently worked on the police regionalization committee. He also has an important role on the Community and Business Committee as, among other things, liaison to Delaware Valley College. Bob has many forward-thinking visions for the Borough, so we are fortunate that he will continue serving on the committee.

Craig Sturza has served on Council for five years and has been active with the Administration Committee. We are fortunate that Craig will continue to serve the community on the Burkart Hall committee.

## Around Town

The AROUND TOWN column will be a regular column in our newsletter. We'd like to make it a column about residents and businesses in the Borough who have special events, and we'd like to acknowledge good deeds. If there is a birth, marriage, milestone anniversary, special birthday, someone in the family graduating college, getting special honors for academic and/or business achievement, someone that performs a good deed or gets special recognition, please let us know by contacting Marie Esher Coia at 215-348-4586 or email [nbbtreasurer@comcast.com](mailto:nbbtreasurer@comcast.com)

**Paul Tiers of Paul Tiers Landscaping in New Britain** is taking very good care of our War Memorial again and again. Here is a picture of our Memorial on Veterans Day after Paul added some plants, weeded and mulched. Mr. Tiers maintains our Memorial without ever being asked. Thank you again, Paul!



Recently a fundraiser was held for two-year old **Stella Seybolt**. Stella has leukemia and needs two and a half years of treatments. **Linda Rasmussen** the owner of the **Hair Café in the Town Center Shopping Center**, **Jane Dittmar** and **Lori Clappier** hosted this event at Maennerchor Field in Doylestown. Stella and her parents **Carl and Kristen Seybolt** live in New Britain. 35 raffles worth over \$4,000 were donated by local businesses. Over \$10,000 was raised to help the Seybolt family! Stella Fest was successful thanks to live music from the band Live Addiction, donated food and beverages and the caring and hard work of a few angels!

The Wreaths Across America ceremony, organized by the Historic Preservation Committee, was not able to be held at the New Britain Baptist Church Cemetery on December 14 this year because of inclement weather. However, a special shout out to **Jackie, Michael, Emily and Julia D'Agostino** of Tamenend Avenue for braving the ice and snow to get the wreaths onto the graves of the veterans. They placed the wreaths on the same day as the ceremony was scheduled. Thank you to the D'Agostino family!



The New Britain Borough Historic Preservation Committee wishes to thank the following for their kind donations to **Wreaths Across America**. These donations allowed the HPC to place wreaths on the veterans' graves in the historic New Britain Baptist Church Cemetery.

Sandra Alford  
Bruce & Maureen Arnold  
E. Marie Bennett  
Mary E. Biagioli  
David & Mary Blumenfield  
Bruce & Nancy Burkart  
William & Barbara Burnett, Jr.  
Anthony & Marie Esher Coia  
Jill & Janet Coulton  
Jackie & Michael D'Agostino  
Benjamin & Sarah Eastburn  
Eiseman Construction  
Margaret Fabry  
William & Ruth Ann Focht

Elaine Hanrahan  
Keith & Jane Kinyon  
Joanne Malta, In Memory of  
Jacob Malta  
David & Mary Pat McGinn-Holewinski  
Richard & Lorraine Moxey  
Michael Parke & Amy Gulden  
Ruth A. Peters  
John & Peg Remmey  
Jo Schuler & Harry Baum  
Donna & Karl von Lipsey  
Joseph Waga

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**Douglas Brady, DPT, JD, MBA**  
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## Spotlight on Borough Businesses

*We are highlighting a different Borough business in each newsletter to help promote them so they can continue to be viable and prosperous-which benefits us all. We will also inform you of new businesses in the Borough. Small business provides goods, services, and employment to the community. Please shop and frequent our Borough businesses.*

### **Gieseler Insurance Agency**

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**www.gieselerinsurance.com**

Gieseler Insurance Agency has been located at 650 E. Butler Avenue next to the entrance of Delaware Valley College for the past 13 years. The owner, Steve Gieseler, has over 32 years of experience helping individuals and businesses solve all their insurance needs with a competitive price and the appropriate policy. They provide competitive prices on auto, home, liability umbrellas, contractor liability, workers comp, boat, motorcycle and many other types of insurance. They try to match their clients' needs with the perfect insurance company. Gieseler Insurance has a variety of companies to choose from including: Erie Insurance, Grange, Travelers, Progressive, Infinity, Mercury, Foremost, AIC and more. By having several different insurance companies available to their 5,000+ customers, they are independent agents who are not captive or restricted to one company. Every customer is unique, and so are insurance companies.

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If you are looking to save some money and reduce your household expenses during these uncertain times, Gieseler Insurance can help your family review all your insurance needs and make sure you are not spending too much money on your insurance.

"Compare and Save" is their motto. Most people are surprised at how much coverage they are missing and are pleased with how much money they can save with Gieseler Insurance.

## **Moments with the Mayor**

Well, the snow and ice have sure made their presence known. The New Year has brought us some of the coldest weather we've experienced in awhile. The Borough has already issued one State of Emergency due to weather, and according to the Farmer's Almanac there may be more to come. Beside the problems



a winter storm may bring, there is a quiet beauty to the aftermath of a snow storm and the sparkling glow of an ice storm leaving everything aglow with a spectacular coating. New Britain Borough is truly a place for all seasons, and we can look forward to the newness of spring that is just around the corner.

The November elections brought us two new members to Council. I'm sure that Lori Kesilman and Robyne Kelemen will bring new ideas and continue to keep the best interest in quality management of the Borough and best interest for its residents in the forefront. Let's welcome them to our governing body and give them the support that Council members need in moving New Britain forward.

Speaking of moving our Borough forward, the new Central Bucks Regional Police Department was officially born on the first of January 2014; I'd like to thank all of the people that worked very hard to make this happen. As reported, the combined savings in Police costs for 2014 will be over \$130,000, which is quite a savings considering Police costs have been increasing annually in both boroughs.

The New Year claimed one of our "Special" residents, Austin Brown, known to many as Chief Brown or just Brownie. He was a very special person who served his country and his Borough for most of his life. Please keep Austin in your thoughts and prayers as we move through the future.

I would like to mention that at the January Reorganization meeting, I asked Council to consider bringing at least one High School student on board as Youth Council member of the New Britain Borough Council. Other municipalities have done this with success. It should benefit both the Borough and the young person for a better understanding of what happens in Borough government and what our youth are thinking. So, watch for the results in the near future.

Lastly, I want everyone to enjoy the rest of our winter. I invite you all to come to our regular monthly meetings to become more aware of what is going on in your Borough and express your like or dislike of how the Borough is moving ahead.

# A Warm Welcome to Two New Council Members!



**Robyne Kelemen** has been a resident of New Britain for 11 years, and takes pride in supporting her local community. Currently she is on the Board of the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) for Simon Butler Elementary School. She has worked with local busi-

nesses to set up a short course enrichment program for the elementary students, and worked in fundraising for the PTO. Robyne has also coordinated and volunteered in activities supporting food bank clients through Temple Judea and the Bucks County Opportunity Council.

Professionally, Robyne has worked in the pharmaceutical industry in technical and management roles for over 20 years. Currently she is Associate Director at Janssen Pharmaceutical Research and Development of Johnson & Johnson, where she works with scientific information for government regulatory agencies. She has previously been employed by Merck, Cephalon (Teva), Procter and Gamble, and several smaller companies. She has a Ph.D. in bioengineering from the University of Pennsylvania, a bachelor's in chemical engineering from the University of Delaware, and is a licensed professional engineer.

Robyne is widowed, and has two sons. Her partner is Jay Stollak.

Robyne looks forward to representing the needs of the New Britain community on Council. She believes we are at the cusp of great changes for the Borough, with more walkability and trail access, as well as enhanced efforts toward positive planning and development aimed at securing New Britain as a regional destination.



**Lori Kesilman** grew up in Buckingham and went through the Central Bucks School District. She now lives in the borough with her twin daughters and her husband, Stu. She believes in kindness and fair treatment of all people, and tries hard to incorporate that idea into all aspects of her life. Lori is looking forward to being a repre-

sentative for the people of the borough in her new role as councilwoman.

Lori graduated from Temple University and earned her masters degree in technology education from Lehigh University. She currently teaches language arts at Palisades Middle School. She loves her job. She has been working at Palisades for 13 years. In that time she has been an academic team leader, a school technology leader, managed the school and teacher websites, inserviced teachers, and written cyber classes. She is currently teaching two cyber classes and four traditional brick-and-mortar classes. She has been an active member of the Student Support Team and is assistant director of the school's annual musical.

In addition to Lori's volunteer work at school, she puts on a fashion show with three great friends each November at Peddler's Village called Rose Petals that benefits Cystic Fibrosis patients. Lori and Stu both volunteer for the Mid-Atlantic Burn Camp, a camp for children who have survived burns. On the weekends, Lori looks forward to lazy mornings at home with her family.

Lori feels blessed to live in such a caring community and is looking forward to giving back to the Borough that she loves.

## Winter Clean Up

Clear your sidewalks of snow as soon as possible to avoid packing and icing to provide safe access for your neighbors. Never blow snow into the street as this creates added work expense to the Borough's snow plow contractor and keep an eye for traffic as you clear near the road and in front of your mail box.



### Melissa Ceresi, DMD PC

960 Town Center  
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# Getting to Know Our Council Members

The Council of New Britain Borough is a body of seven elected officials who serve without compensation. The role of Council is to oversee all activities of the Borough, including the management of Borough employees. Council is responsible for making policy, passing ordinances, approving contracts and agreements, voting appropriations, approving all personnel decisions, and establishing and maintaining the Borough's budget. In this and future articles, we will interview our Borough Council members so that our residents and businesses can get to know them. In this issue we will meet **Peter LaMontagne**.

**How long have you been on Council?** Four years

**Why did you decide to run for Council?** Council was not meeting the needs of a modern municipality. Property values are lower in New Britain Borough than the rest of Central Bucks. We were 15 years behind adjoining municipalities in building Bike and Hike trails, and didn't even have a B&H plan for our Borough. As to open space, there were too few votes in favor of expanding the Nature Preserve using non taxpayer funds!

**How long have you lived in the Borough?** About 35 years

**Are you married? Do you have children?** I am married to Tess, my high school sweetheart and have three daughters, each smarter than the others.

**What is your profession?** I am a consulting engineer, specializing in centrifuges which thicken and dewater wastewater sludges throughout North America.

**Any other volunteer activities other than Council?** The Wilma Quinlan Nature Preserve. I feel passionate about the opportunity Dr Miriam Groner gave us to develop and expand the Nature Preserve to make it an asset of the Borough. To that end, I've gotten a lot of people interested in rescuing it from



decades of benign neglect. We are making great progress in making the Preserve attractive and user friendly.

I like to write and have published a lot of articles and papers for the Water and Environment Federation, the non profit trade association for the water and wastewater industry. For the Borough I re-wrote the open space plan, two PECO grants, and chaired the B&H committee that wrote the B&H plan. I was President of the New Britain Civic Association for many years

and continue helping out at the Covered Bridge Park.

**Do you have any hobbies?** Woodworking, from ball and claw furniture to the gazebo in the Park. I like to cook, and my wife and I travel all over the world.

**What goals do you have for the Borough?** I want the Borough to be more attractive to home buyers. In the last 50 years we've gone from a rural farming village to suburban, housing units in the Borough have tripled. What will happen in the next 50 years? I and maybe you will be gone then, but the Borough will remain. Number one priority is to use income from the endowment funds to expand the Wilma Quinlan Nature Preserve. It is a grand opportunity for the Borough to have an exceptional area for passive recreation at no cost to the taxpayer. Secondly, we need to improve the Butler Avenue corridor and tie Delaware College to the Business district with a Bike and Hike trail.

**What would you like people to know about you?** There is a lot of work that need volunteers to help. Some of that work is hands-on, other tasks require help with planning and organizing. We need more people to be active in the Borough, especially people that live up by the college, and south of Pine Run Elementary School. It is so rewarding to work with others to accomplish things. For myself, I believe nothing happens unless we think, plan, and work towards clearly defined goals.

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# The Wilma Quinlan Nature Preserve

New Britain Borough owns the 28-acre Wilma Quinlan Nature Preserve, which has been open to the general public since its inception in 1972. The entrance is on Mathews Avenue near Sand Road. It is a lovely piece of land lying along the Neshaminy Creek, which covers many acres of wet lands, upland woods, and fields. Recently the Borough received three acres of land and a bequest for the Preserve, and has purchased an easement covering approximately 1.3 acres that connects the Preserve with 18 acres of Home Owner Open space across Cooks Run.

The Preserve has two distinct portions. One is a 1.5-acre wildflower meadow that was part of the property of Miriam Groner. The rest of the Preserve is uncultivated, except for the removal of invasive species where practical and some replacement with native plants. Footpaths are maintained so visitors can enjoy the Preserve and the wildlife.

With support from PECO through a generous grant that was matched by funds provided through the Bequest from Miriam Groner, volunteers and local businesses have partnered to make improvements to the Preserve. The result of this partnership has brought new signs to the Preserve and the Meadow that describe the wildlife and provide information about the Preserve. It has also allowed for benches to be obtained and placed throughout the Preserve and Meadow so visitors can sit and enjoy the wildlife. Landscaping around the benches and signs add to the beauty of the Preserve, and new birdhouses provide homes for the numerous bird species that call the Preserve home.

You can view pictures of the Preserve and learn more about this New Britain Borough gem on this website: <http://www.wilmaquinlanpreserve.org/> .

We would like to extend special thanks to the many volunteers, supportive businesses and groups who gave their time, energy, and expertise to the Preserve over the past year.



- ◆ Special thanks to PECO for a grant that made this possible, to the Miller family for granting an easement, to Bucks County for providing Open Space funding, and to Black Oak, Inc. for the pending donation of 3 acres of land which would bring the total to 31 acres. Special thanks also to Miriam Groner, who through her Estate, provided land and funds to maintain and improve the Preserve.
- ◆ Thank you to all the individuals, businesses, and groups who have given so much to our community:

Bob & Winnie Binkley  
Ambrose Randa Woodworking  
Jim Chant  
Bateman Brothers Lumber  
Marge Eberz  
Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve  
New Britain Civic Association  
Ruth Ann & Bill Focht  
Boy Scout Troops 41 & 37  
Bob Gilbert  
Delaware Valley College  
David Horne  
Delaware Valley Concrete  
Patrick Huss  
Eiseman Roofing  
Dan Kintner  
H.S. Smiley  
Peter & Tess LaMontagne  
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*Photos by Patrick Huss*

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# Austin C. Brown Jr., long-time Borough resident and Police Chief

Died on Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013, at his home. He was 91.

Austin Brown was the devoted husband of 53 years to the late Laura Mae Brown and father to the late David Austin Brown. He is survived by his daughter, Shirley Jean Brown of New Britain. Born in Philadelphia, he was the son of the late Austin C. Brown Sr. and Lillian Vanderslice Brown.

Mr. Brown was a graduate of Doylestown High School, Class of 1941. He built his house on Butler Avenue in the late 1940's where he lived until his death.

He was a proud veteran of the United States Navy during World War II. After returning home from the war, he worked for several years as a carpenter before joining the New Britain Borough police force, where he served as a patrolman for eight years before being elevated to chief of police, serving faithfully for 19 years. After retiring as chief, he continued to work for the Borough as a building inspector, and a plumbing inspector. He also served as fire marshall.

Mr. Brown was very active in various professional and community activities. He was a member of the Doylestown Lodge #245, the Consistory in Allentown, the American Legion, the Chalfont Fire Co., the Pa. Chiefs of Police Association, the F.O.P., and the Bucks County Chiefs of Police Association, where he had served as president in 1977. He was also a member of the New Britain Borough Council for six years and a Shriner at Lulu Temple, Plymouth Township.

Austin, or Brownie, as many affectionately called him, dedicated much of his life to our community. He will be missed by all who knew him.

## Stormwater

### Stream Protection:

While you're keeping warm cleaning out your basement remember to dispose of hazardous materials such as oil, paint, medications, etc. to a hazardous waste drop off; never flush or dump. Maintain your vehicle by checking and repairing oil / antifreeze leaks. Any illegal dumping or drainage activities should be reported immediately to New Britain Borough. If you notice any signs of stream pollution or have any questions contact the Borough at 215-348-4586.

### Rainwater Runoff:

Now is a good time to consider Spring projects such as installing rain barrels on your downspouts, lowered planting beds (rain garden), connecting roof drains to stone pits, etc. in order to reduce runoff and aid water quality for your downstream neighbors. These methods will help provide ground water infiltration, increase stream base flows, reduce droughts and decrease flooding.

### Construction:

Stormwater controls are required for most additions of impervious surfaces which may require permits. Please check with the Borough office to determine if permits are required.

More information at [www.newbritainboro.com](http://www.newbritainboro.com)



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☐ Business    \$25

**Larger Donations** - It is important to acknowledge your support. In addition to our appreciation, expressed in a letter suitable for framing, prominent donations will be reported in the New Britain Borough Newsletter. Support for capital improvements to the Park can be recognized with signage at the Park or a plaque on the capital item and may also receive newspaper coverage.

Check website for changing information.  
[www.newbritaincivic.org](http://www.newbritaincivic.org)

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## ***New Britain Borough Officials***

<b>Mayor:</b>	David Holewinski
<b>Council:</b>	<b>Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month in Borough Hall, 7:30 PM</b> Jeffrey Gilmore, <i>President</i> ; Mary Pat Holewinski, <i>Vice-President</i> ; Joseph Cangelosi; Robyne Kelemen; Lori Kesilman; Peter LaMontagne; Margaret Remmey
<b>Planning Commission:</b>	<b>Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month in the Borough Office, 7:30 PM</b> David Holewinski, <i>Chairman</i> ; Karl Dieterichs, <i>Vice Chair</i> ; Denise Spence, <i>Secretary</i> ; Jack Brady; Joseph Cangelosi; Paul Land; Michael T. Parke; Rick Eggleston; William Macklem; Michael Stanislaw
<b>Zoning Hearing Board:</b>	<b>Meets, as needed, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month in Borough Hall, 7:30 PM</b> Robert Bair, <i>Chairman</i> ; Anthony Coia, <i>Vice Chair</i> ; Andrea Antell; John Wolff, Jr.; David Ziegfried; <i>Alternates</i> : William Schaefer and Jackie D'Agostino; <i>Solicitor</i> , Christen Pionzio
<b>Tax Collector:</b>	Richard Sabol, 215-489-8658 ( <i>Hours: Tuesday, 6 - 9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. - noon</i> )
<b>Solicitor:</b>	Michael Goodwin
	<b>Police Chief:</b> James Donnelly, Office 215-345-4143
<b>Newsletter Contributor &amp; Coordinator:</b>	Marie Esher Coia

The following Borough personnel are located at the Borough Building, 45 Keeley Avenue.  
Phone 215-348-4586. The office is open Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Website: [www.newbritainboro.com](http://www.newbritainboro.com) Email: [NBBORO@comcast.net](mailto:NBBORO@comcast.net)

<b>Borough Manager:</b> ..... Robin E. Trymbiski	<b>Borough Secretary:</b> ..... Jane Kinyon
<b>Treasurer:</b> ..... Marie Esher Coia	<b>Zoning Officer:</b> ..... Thomas Yatsky
<b>Roadmaster</b> ..... Mark Hintenlang	
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