

# THE WATER GAP TIMES

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue Number 51 - Spring 2023



Stay connected with community happenings by following us on Facebook at Borough of Delaware Water Gap.



## PICK UP THE POCONOS DAY SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2023, 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

The sign-up sheet for Pick-up the Poconos is at the Borough Hall or email or call Allisen to sign up  
[boro@dwgpa.gov](mailto:boro@dwgpa.gov)

After the cleanup, you're invited to the Earth Day Celebration at Pocono Organics! 10:30AM-3:30PM  
Volunteers are exclusively eligible for door prizes at the celebration! The event is open to the public. Food & Craft Vendors | Face Painting | Magician K9 Unit | Reptile Show | And More!



## Primary Election Day Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Polls open at 7:00 a.m. & close at 8:00 p.m.

### Borough Office

49 Main Street  
PO Box 218  
Delaware Water Gap, PA 18327  
Phone: 570-476-0331 Fax: 570-476-0380  
[boro@dwgpa.gov](mailto:boro@dwgpa.gov)  
[www.dwgpa.gov](http://www.dwgpa.gov)

Hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
After 1:00 p.m., by appointment.

Borough Secretary/Treasurer – Allisen Trotter  
Municipal Authority Secretary – Lauren Hoglund  
Borough Superintendent - Chris Chmielnicki  
Delaware Water Gap Police Department  
570-476-4674  
[police@dwgpa.gov](mailto:police@dwgpa.gov)  
Chief of Police, Michael J. Ceccato  
Officer Jim Fisher  
State Police – 570-619-6800

*Dial 911 for emergencies only*

### **Borough Council**

Jamie Levy, President  
Zack Booth, Vice President  
Derek Anspach  
William Buzzard  
Terry Fagan  
Lisa Paulette  
Jack Shoemaker

Larry Freshcorn, Mayor

*Council meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*

*Council work sessions are held on 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*

### **Municipal Authority**

James Reynolds, Chair  
Harry Darlington, Vice Chair  
Martin W. Wilson, Secretary  
Jeff Higbee  
Steve Simister

*Municipal Authority meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*

### **Planning Commission**

Derek Anspach, Chair  
Ann Biffen  
Valerie Higbee  
Gary Schubert

*Planning Commission meetings are held as needed.*

### **Zoning Hearing Board**

Frank Davis  
Carol Penna  
Dmitri Snytkine  
Harry Kent Darlington, Alternate  
*Zoning Hearing Board meetings are held as needed.*

### **Building Code Board of Appeals**

James Holbrook  
Bob Mancuso

### **Zoning Officer**

Michael Manter

### **Building Inspector**

Dave Manter

### **Emergency Management Coordinator**

Howard Ike

### **Floodplain Administrator**

Walter Conway

*The Borough of Delaware Water Gap*  
AN APPALACHIAN TRAIL COMMUNITY

**Council News!!!**

Dear Borough Neighbors,

Winter is nearly behind us, and Spring is on the horizon. Pretty soon we will be in our gardens planting and pruning.

Before I get into borough news, I'd like to recognize two members of our borough, our Superintendent Chris Chmielnicki and our Borough Police Officer, Jim Fisher. Superintendent Chris has done an excellent job in his first winter staying on top of the weather and making sure our roads are safe and fit for travel. Officer Jim has been diligently patrolling our borough, responding to incidents and meeting our residents. Gentleman, thank you for your efforts and your service, it is greatly appreciated.

In terms of borough news, our borough has been approved for a grant to purchase and install three Traffic Calming Signs. These signs are designed to slow motorists driving through our borough. These new signs are part of councils continuing efforts to address our borough's speeding issue. We are also exploring other speed reducing measures to keep our borough safe – stay tuned.

As I am sure you are all aware, Rt. 611 is still closed because of the hazards associated with the rockslide issue. Aside from a few minor updates on the progress of the remediation project, there is still no date certain for the work to be completed or any timetable for the roadway (either all of it or one lane) to be opened. Our borough businesses have been hit the hardest from this closure. Council has been working with our local businesses, through our Economic Development Committee, to mitigate some of the harm. Please shop local, when you can, and try to help our borough businesses weather this storm.

I am pleased to report that while other municipalities are raising taxes to address their financial needs, our borough is as fiscally sound as ever. To put our borough finances in perspective we currently have about \$470,000.00 cash on hand, in our borough operating accounts. Those operating accounts are funded by borough revenue streams and taxes. We collect approximately \$102,000.00, in property taxes, \$77,000.00 in income/other taxes and about \$110,000.00, in other income (our leasing of land to Adams for a billboard being the largest of our non-tax-based revenue sources). Our annual budget is about \$290,000.00. Just doing a simple computation \$470,000.00 (cash on hand) minus \$290,000.00 (our budgeted expenses) we have \$180,000.00 of excess reserve capital (not earmarked in any way or designated by our budget). This is before we even receive our 2023 property and income tax revenue, which are paid later in the year.

I have been asked by several concerned residents if council is planning to raise taxes. I understand the concern; most of us live on a very tight budget and can't stockpile cash like a municipality. I recognize that even the slightest increase in taxes could destroy a household budget. I also realize that using a threat of raising taxes, is an easy way to manipulate public sentiment, even if actually raising taxes is not only unwarranted but just flat out false. However, this type of fearmongering is only effective when people do not have all the information they need to draw their own informed conclusions. That's why I outlined the state of the borough's finances in this letter. I hope the information is informative and helpful. If anyone has any questions or concerns about this, contact me, attend the budget committee meetings or the monthly council meetings. The 2023 Budget is posted on our website and moving forward, our cash on hand will be posted in our Monthly Meeting Agendas under Treasurer's Report.

Lastly, I wanted to reach out to our community and make a plea for public service. We need you. As you know our council is made up of seven members. These councilmembers are elected officials but unlike most elected officials they do not receive a salary or any financial benefit for their service. We do it because our work makes a difference and helps create a better community for us all to enjoy. You can help. We have committees to staff, events and functions to run and a government that needs diversity, youthful enthusiasm, and creative inventive minds. It is hard work and at times very time consuming but it's a great way to give back and help out. If anyone is interested contact me and I will help get you involved.

Cheers!!!

Jamie Levy, Borough Council President

[j.levy@dwgpa.gov](mailto:j.levy@dwgpa.gov)

**Town Wide Yard Sale**  
**Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> (rain date May 21<sup>st</sup>)**  
Watch for upcoming flyer for details.

*The Borough of Delaware Water Gap*  
AN APPALACHIAN TRAIL COMMUNITY

**Mayor's Corner April 2023**

Happy Spring fellow residents! I'd like to start with the 611 closure. PennDot has been updating me on a regular basis concerning the progress of the project. As I write this, PennDot has submitted the plans for repair to the National Park Service so they can begin their permitting process. Once the permits are issued PennDot will contact the contractors skilled in making these types of repairs. The lead time for this is about 30 days and then the repairs will begin. The contractors will start by drilling into the side of the mountain and grout in large metal pegs. After that, metal netting will be attached to the pins which will hold any rocks from coming loose and falling onto the road. The affected area starts at about the overlook and stretches south for about a mile. There has been no solid finish date as of yet but they estimate early Fall before the road will reopen. I'm hoping it will be sooner. Stay tuned to the Boroughs website for updates and if you have any questions please feel free to contact me through the Borough office.

As we move into summer we will begin to schedule our Borough events. I will be working closely with Tammy Cornelius and Friends of DWG to get the events scheduled and help with the logistics. I'm also going to try to regroup our Emergency Management Committee as there is a lot of work to be done concerning Emergency Preparedness. We really need members for these two groups as we 'put the band back together' so to speak. It takes volunteers to make things happen in the Gap and we could really use your help. It doesn't take a lot of your time, so if you are interested please contact me or the Borough office. Your town needs you. Lauren Chamberlain and our businesses have formed a group to help bring events and foot traffic to our town and support our businesses while 611 is closed. Please take some time and stop in to our businesses and see what's new. They could really use your support, and stay tuned to the events they have lined up! Lastly I'll touch on the Police Dept. We currently have two highly trained officers, which includes our Chief of Police. Our officers have always been dedicated in serving the town and we are still in need of a few more. Borough Council has been trying to hire on our behalf but unfortunately we haven't received any applications. As with all industries, hiring seems to be a challenge. I will be working on a different approach, in addition to the advertising that Council is doing, in search of good candidates to fill two positions. Summer is usually our busiest time so I'm hopeful we can fill these positions before then. I hope everyone has a great summer and I hope to see you at our community events! As always if you need anything or have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me through the Borough office or cell: 570-977-1292.

Mayor, Larry Freshcorn

**Founder's Day**  
**Saturday, June 24th**  
**9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Arts & Crafts Show  
Steamtown Train  
History Museum Tours  
Fine Art Gallery Exhibit  
& more!

Keep your eye out for an upcoming flyer for details

**Presbyterian Church of the Mountain**  
**Free Gazebo Concerts**

Sundays, 6:00 to 7:30 PM  
June 5th to August 28<sup>th</sup>

Bring a lawn chair or blanket.  
Hot dogs, baked goods & beverages sold to benefit the concert series.

**Rain or shine**  
**(Inside in the event of rain)**

The Dutot Museum & Fine Art Gallery  
Open Saturdays & Sundays, 1:00 to 5:00 PM  
May 26<sup>th</sup> through October 1<sup>st</sup>

Opening Reception for Artist St. Clair Sullivan, Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM  
Opening Reception in Memory of Artist Ed Lopez, Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 to 9:00

**Jill and Jack Swersie & Friends**

*Present*

**The "Cars & Guitars" Art Show**

Opening Reception, Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 to 9:00 pm &  
Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, Noon to 5:00 pm  
at the Dutot Museum & Gallery

**A New Beginning Studio and Collectors' Sale**

By Artist Tricia Lowrey Lippert

Friday, May 19, 2023, from 7 to 9 pm  
Saturday, May 20, and Sunday, May 21  
1:00 to 5:00 pm  
at the Dutot Museum & Gallery

## Local History Spot

By Marty Wilson

### 1923 Carleton Canoe

A hundred years ago this November a green, sixteen-foot Carleton canoe was built at the Old Town Canoe factory in Maine. A few months later it was shipped to the Winchester Company at 312 Broadway, New York City. Winchester had added canoes and other goods to their line of firearms in an attempt to expand their business. From New York the canoe traveled by train to Delaware Water Gap where it most likely was enjoyed by tourists visiting the Kittatinny House. We have no definitive evidence that the Kittatinny bought the canoe, but it seems likely as it ended up being sold at an auction, held at Lake Lenape, of Kittatinny property shortly after the October 1931 fire that destroyed the grand hotel. Today that canoe is on display in the Dutot Museum Annex.



Canoes are fascinating watercraft. Humans have been using them for at least ten thousand years. They are elegant in their simplicity, both in design and use. They range from simple dug out logs to those utilizing the latest carbon-fiber construction. And they are simple to use. Anyone can get into a canoe and paddle around without special training. Therefore, after the Civil War as tourism began to expand, canoes became a natural amenity for resorts to offer guests if there was navigable water nearby. That was true here in Delaware Water Gap where visitors could use them on Lake Lenape and on the Delaware River. By their nature, however, canoes can be fragile things, easily succumbing to neglect. Before aluminum canoes came along after WW II, and then more modern plastic models, most canoes were made of thin

strips of wood and canvas; they required regular maintenance. So how did one of the Kittatinny's canoes, in pristine condition, end up at the Dutot Museum?

That story begins with the auction mentioned above of the property that survived the Kittatinny fire where a Mr. Eugene Swartz bought the canoe to use on the pond at his farm in Smithfield Township. In 2013, at the age of 101, Mr. Swartz talked about the auction to borough resident and canoe enthusiast Dr. Ian Foster. Dr. Foster had spotted the canoe in Mr. Swartz's barn and subsequently persuaded the family to sell it to him.

From the time Mr. Swartz bought the canoe in the early 1930s until Dr. Foster bought it in 2013 it had been used only a few times. It had spent most of its life hanging in a barn, neglected, and in needed a major overhaul. Of an inquisitive nature, Dr. Foster set out to discover everything he could about the canoe. With the help of an expert, he was able to remove enough old varnish to reveal a serial number. The serial number enabled Dr. Foster to ascertain the canoe's origins by consulting a database maintained by the Wooden Canoe Historical Association. Dr. Foster then had the canoe restored to its original condition.



The canoe is constructed with a canvas covering over Western red cedar planking, spruce gunwales, and birch decks, seats, and thwarts. Unlike the aluminum and plastic canoes with which we are most familiar, this wooden canoe is a thing of beauty. The intricate construction of its different colored woods contrasts in an attractive manner with the repainted green canvas covering. When it was new in 1923, the canoe cost \$35.

After having the canoe restored Dr. Foster returned it to Lake Lenape where it spent its early years for a short paddle (see photo). He and his wife, Sally, then donated it to the Dutot Museum for the public's enjoyment.

The other photo on this page shows Fred Astaire and his sister Adele canoeing on Lake Lenape in the 1920s in a different Carleton canoe. The canoe Fred is paddling is not the canoe on display in the Dutot Annex; it has closed gunwales instead of the open gunwales the canoe at the Dutot has. (In 1998 Fred's daughter visited the Trail's End Cafe—today's Coven Coffee Shop--and told Lucy Kosmerl that some of Fred's favorite memories were of Delaware Water Gap.) Take note of the clothing Fred and Adele are wearing for their canoe outing. It was a different time. Visitors from the city dressed in their "Sunday best" to hike local trails and to boat on local waterways.

Like other artifacts on display at the Dutot Museum, the Carleton canoe reminds us of days gone by here in the Gap. It is part of the borough's history. Thanks to Dr. Ian and Mrs. Sally Foster for their generous contribution of this canoe to the community. It will help to preserve the borough's history.