The formal history of Minerva Park dates back to July 1895, when the “Minerva Amusement Park” opened to an average daily attendance of 25,000 visitors. For 7 glorious years, laughter and gaiety rang forth from this, the first amusement park in Franklin County.

But let’s back up a bit. Four years earlier, at an August 1891 public meeting, Westerville citizens voiced indignation at the failure of the Cleveland, Akron & Columbus Railway Co. to provide transportation for 400 passengers who had purchased tickets to the State Fair. The regular train had failed to stop, stranding the passengers for hours. Garry Waldo Meeker (1859-1917) suggested that an electric railway between Columbus and Westerville would be an indispensable public convenience. Four years later, he piloted the first electric car of the new Columbus Central Railway Co. from Broad & High into Westerville that ran at an exhilarating speed of 5 mph, preceded twice daily by a sprinkler car that wet the roadway nearly side-to-side to cut down on the dust. To encourage ridership, Meeker conceived of a recreation park along the route, located on the 227-acre farmland that he had purchased in July 1892.

The resulting Minerva Amusement Park was enjoyed by the “respectable” folk of the Gay ’90s ... the stone water tower/jail was quick to house any ruffian who threatened disharmony. Delighting young and old were the Zoological Garden, an Ornithological Museum, the Scenic Railway Roller Coaster, Shoot the Chutes (the water slide of its day), swimming, boating, baseball, bowling, concerts, dancing, picnics, ... continued on page 6
Community Garden Kick-Off Meeting
Join us Sunday, March 9, 4 p.m., at the Community Building. Who should attend? Community gardeners participating in 2014 and interested residents who want to learn more about the gardens and possibly rent a plot. A 100 sq.ft. plot rents for only $25 for the entire growing season, April through October. Available sizes are 4’x25’ or 10’x10’, but availability is limited. Gardeners are required to pay their fee and sign the 2014 Minerva Park Community Garden Guidelines and Rules to reserve a plot. For information, contact Karen Cogley at 899-2024.

Regular Green Team Meeting
Join us at the regular Green Team meeting on Tuesday, March 18, 7 p.m., Community Building, to discuss the 2014 agenda. •

Village Financials
If you have questions about the information provided here, please call Fiscal Officer Lynda Sudderberg at 882-5743.

January 2014
Beg balance general fund......$121,535
Receipts.........................$36,188
Disbursements...............($82,828)
Ending balance................$74,895

January - MP Police made 4 misdemeanor arrests.
1-3 ......10:40a, 2500 blk Jordan Rd, traffic stop resulting in an arrest, warrant on file
1-7 ......8:20a, Minerva Lake Rd at StRt 3, traffic warning
1-7 ......1:39a, 3000 blk Minerva Lake Rd, domestic dispute
1-14 ....1:23p, 3000 blk Minerva Lake Rd, traffic warning
1-27 ....4p, 2800 blk Minerva Lake Rd, arrest, warrant on file
1-28 ....midnight, 3100 blk Minerva Lake Rd, criminal damaging
1-29 ....1:20p, 5400 blk Cleveland Ave, arrest, warrant on file
1-29 ....4:53p, 5400 blk Cleveland Ave, arrest, warrant on file
1-30 ....midnight, 2800 blk Maplewood, phone harassment •

Our New Neighbors!
Underwritten by your $20 MPCA dues
Sherry Gilmer, 2586 Minerva Lake Rd, 269-832-2784, from Battle Creek MI
C Liddle & Evan Dicken, 5164 Lakeland Ct, 440-8058 & 940-2739, from Columbus
Tim & Andrea Jones, 5280 Elmhurst Ave, 507-4863, from Westerville
Sean & Sarah Penney, 5261 Westbridge Rd., 740-990-9977, from Delaware OH
Rachel & Bill Bentz, 2702 Minerva Lake Rd, 740-502-9523, from Howard OH

** * *
If you learn of any new residents, please advise Paul Miller, pemill@earthlink.net

Medic 119 made 40 runs - 6 run into Blendon Township (exclusive of MP) and none into Minerva Park, with 23 patients transported to local hospitals. 18 members volunteered a total of 379 hours for the month, bringing the year-to-date total to 379 hours. Leading volunteers for the month were Frank Meredith (50.3 hours), Scott Logsdon (50.3 hours), and Tim Lockard (41 hours).
As I write my report to you, it sounds like we are not finished with the winter weather just yet. In the event of a significant snowfall, please remember to move your cars off the streets so they can be plowed. I met with one of the Blendon service staff who plow our streets, and he said how much they appreciate it when vehicles have been removed from the streets.

Income Tax Issue: As most of you know, the income tax issue on the February 4 ballot failed by a very small margin, just 15 votes. While we are disappointed by both the results of the election and the low voter turnout, we must look to the future to meet the needs of our residents without the $360,000 of additional revenue that we needed. How will this affect the 2014 budget and services provided, such as parks and recreation (the pool operation, for example), the Leaf Pick-up Program, and Police protection?

- The pool will open on schedule: May 24 at noon.
- The 2014 Leaf Pick-up Program will not be reinstated.
- The Village does not have 24/7 police coverage at this time because of staffing issues. Even though there are rumors circulating that the Franklin County Sheriff’s Department and the Blendon Township Police Department routinely patrol, they do not. They respond only to emergency calls.

Your Village Council, Fiscal Officer, and I will continue to work on the budget. The Council is considering putting the income tax issue back on the ballot, probably in November.

Golf Course Property Development Project: After a lengthy meeting with the Fischer Homes’ representative, Jason Wisniewski asked to meet with the Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Commission and Village Council and hold an Open House so residents can view proposed plans and ask questions. Depending on the timely receipt of the Fischer Homes Preliminary Development and Zoning Application, the following meetings have been tentatively scheduled: Combined meetings of P&Z and Council on Tuesday, March 11, and Monday, March 31, both at 7 p.m., and an Open House on Friday, March 28, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. ... at the Community Building, 2829 Minerva Lake Road. Please watch minervapark.org and the MPCA Facebook page for any updates. As always, please call me or a Council member with any questions.

Discount Pool Membership Sale: As previously mentioned, the Pool will open on May 24. The Discount Sale for the 2014 season has been scheduled for Sunday, April 6, from noon to 3 p.m. at the Community Building. For more information and the registration form, visit minervapark.org/pool.

Earthen Dam: We are waiting to see how the plans that Fischer Homes submits to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources affects the classification of the dam. This classification will determine our next action step(s).

All Council members were present at the Regular Council meeting held on February 10, except Councilwoman Jennifer Pauken, who was excused.

Police: Chief Kim Nuesse had received a renewal contract for the Lexipol Policy and Procedure Manual, explaining that the Village contracted with Lexipol to incorporate Best Practices, Risk Management, and Training. It will be published in the coming weeks. After publication, officers will be able to access scenario training to correctly choose actions in a variety of situations. The price to renew the contract will remain the same as the last contract.

EMS: Chief Rick Hoechstetter reported that his department has lost several in-charge medics with the adoption of EMS billing and that they are interviewing replacement candidates. At this time the vehicle is fully functional. With the current shortage of medics, the challenge of remaining in service (a function of the vehicle and adequate staffing) has increased. If the vehicle fails, Village will have to explore the much more expensive alternative of outsourcing EMS, fire, and rescue services.

Planning & Zoning and Code Enforcement: The P&Z Commission meeting was rescheduled to February 11, so there was nothing to report. There will be a hearing at the April 14 Council meeting for a variance request by the Yasmin Market owners for an oversized sign to
replace two signs on the front of its store.

**Minerva Park Community Association:** The Mayor reported for Councilman Way. The 75th Anniversary Committee met and has set the celebration date for September 12, 2015. The initial meeting was well-attended, with a very good brainstorming session for the all-day celebration. Many volunteers will be needed to make the day a success. If you are interested in helping, please call Bonnie Townsend at 890-2427.

**Northland Community Council:** There was no report.

**Council Reports:** Typically I have summarized the Council reports here in my Mayor’s column. We are beginning the process whereby the Committee Chairs offer their own reports ...

**Legislation:** Pam Park-Curry asked the Council to consider the following legislation (minervapark.org/legislation):

- **Resolution 2014-3** - This was a 1st reading to go into contract with Cardinal Vending Services, which will provide vending machines for the pool. The Village will get a monthly commission based on 15% of gross receipts.

- **Resolution 2014-4** - Accepting the amounts and rates of the Franklin County Budget Commission of our property tax revenues for 2014. This resolution is required as we adopt a tax budget for 2014. Motions suspending the rule that requires three readings and passing the resolution were approved unanimously.

- **Resolution 2014-5** - Contract for technology services with Kirch Group Technology. Motions suspending the rule that requires three readings and passing the resolution as an emergency (so it could go into effect immediately) were approved unanimously.

- **Resolution 2014-6** - Contract for Radio Dispatch Services for the MP Police Department. This contract has the Franklin County Sheriff providing radio dispatching services to the MPPD. Motions suspending the rule that requires three readings and passing the resolution as an emergency (so it could go into effect immediately) were approved unanimously.

- **Ordinance 11-2013 - Traffic code changes.** This was tabled on the 2nd reading. Chief Nuesse and the Village Engineer will be surveying the streets and cul-de-sacs to see if these code changes are sufficient and necessary.

- **Anticipated upcoming legislation ... pool fees for 2014, 2014 appropriations budget (a temporary 2014 budget for the first three months of 2014 was approved in 2103), contract for general liability insurance.** The Legislative Committee will be working with Planning and Zoning on fee structure and other issues in conjunction with the proposed Fischer Development.

**Finance, John Michels.**

The Finance Committee met on February 13 to discuss the 2014 budget. Fiscal Officer Lynda Sudderberg and Police Chief Kim Nuesse provided helpful information and answered questions about key budget appropriations on which Council will need to decide. The Finance Committee requested cost estimates for:

- Contracted services for emergency and limited police coverage.
- Engineering costs associated with Director’s Findings and Orders.
- Routine maintenance and repair of South Lake rock dam and silt pit.
- Tree removal and engineering costs for earthen dam remediation.

The Finance Committee is scheduled to meet again on March 3 to discuss the budget and make recommendations to Council, including whether or not to put the income tax issue on the ballot in November.

**Safety:** Todd Walter had no formal report for safety but reminded everyone, contrary to rumors, Blendon Township Police and the Franklin County Sheriff’s Department do not patrol the Village. Police Chief Nuesse confirmed that Blendon Township and Franklin County only respond to emergency calls.

**Service, Jennifer Pauken.**

The Service Committee met in January and February to continue progress on materials required by the Ohio EPA Director’s Findings and Orders. We are developing the response manual and public notification plan for sanitary sewer overflow incidents and expect this phase of the project will be nearly complete in early April. Look for articles related to the Findings and Orders and sanitary sewer overflow incidents in upcoming issues of the Villager and minervapark.org. We continue to address occasional service issues with Rumpke. I encourage residents to contact me at mp-pauken@minervapark.org with any concerns related to trash pick-up.

**Streets:** Ed Detwiler obtained the Streets records from his predecessor and announced a Streets Committee meeting for February 20.

**Community:** David Way received a quote of $4,300 for the Veteran’s Memorial from TechStone and will have a committee meeting the end of February or mid-March to discuss. There is a need to raise funds for the placement. •
Ongoing yoga classes will continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m., Community Building. Contact Terri, 734-308-3884, for information.
strolls in the cool woodlands, pony rides, fireworks, grande vaudeville, and theater.

Minerva Amusement Park’s popularity faded with the opening of Olentangy Park, only 3 miles from downtown Columbus, resulting in the Minerva Amusement Park closing in 1902.

Fast forward a few years. Minerva Park became the site of the Fourth Regiment of the Ohio National Guard encampment, and later a streetcar graveyard with the Columbus Central Railway Co. abandoning its old rolling stock of streetcars on what is now Minerva Lake Road.

In 1926, the sound of ripsaws, bulldozers, and steam shovels awakened Minerva Park with the construction of streets and sewers, and the first houses started appearing on the landscape.

In the 1930s, Minerva Park again suffered hard times with the stock market crash of 1929. Nearly all of the lands were forfeited or sold for delinquent taxes and assessments. As an inducement for the public to purchase lots, the Minerva Lake Golf Course opened in July 1930.

The War Years of the 1940s, when lots sold for 50 cents to the top figure of $3.50 at a sheriff’s sale, brought a small band of neighbors together with a common bond – a desire to maintain and preserve the quietness, beauty, and uniqueness of the area. Thus the Village was incorporated on September 7, 1940 ... and it is this date that we celebrate in 2015 with Minerva Park’s 75th Anniversary.

Your MP Community Association is planning a day-long celebration on September 12, 2015. You will be hearing more about this event in the coming months, but rest assured there is much to be done. If you would like to help...
in any way, please contact MPCA President Dani Wolf (948-2372) or Volunteer Coordinator Bonnie Townsend (890-2427). Additionally, please join the planning team at its next meeting, March 12, 6 p.m., at the Community Building.

Learn More
Stop by the northeast corner of the South Lake to read the historical marker, or visit minervapark.org/history.htm.

Getting to Know You
Much of the knowledge of Minerva Park’s history rests with MP’s de facto historian, Rob Stuart, who has lived in the Village since 1981. When he and Arlene moved into Minerva Park, Rob became intrigued with the history of this quiet oasis. A trip to the Columbus Library yielded an initial 12 photos of the Minerva Amusement Park, and Rob was hooked.

Following 1924, when the Dusenbury Brothers who owned both Minerva Park and Olentangy Park decided to close Minerva Park, Rob’s favorite quote later became, “Like Rip Van Winkle, Minerva Park closed its eyes and slept for the next 24 years.”

Rob’s fascination led him to collect many more photos, postcards, and memorabilia of the Village. Being an AEP power station engineer for 35 years, designing electrical power transmission and distribution systems, it’s no wonder he has an operating miniature amusement park in his living room.

Rob and Arlene were members of the MP Civic Association, the forerunner of the MP Community Association, and have participated in Founders Day celebrations and 4th of July parades with bands and children riding their decorated bicycles and pulling decorated wagons. Rob is often seen at Village events with his much-revered history presentations.

Editor’s Note: In the coming months leading up to MP’s 75th Anniversary celebration in September 2015, we would like to share interviews with some of MP’s beloved “old timers,” so if you want to be featured in a “Getting to Know You” article or suggest a neighbor or past resident for an interview, please contact Rose Hart at rose_hart@hotmail.com. And please help us find long-ago residents who have moved out of the Village.
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1 Hour Free Consultation

NO PARKING on MP Streets
... during or after snowfalls. Snowplows do a cleaner, better job clearing our roads when vehicles are pulled into driveways. This is especially critical on the courts and cul-de-sacs where maneuvering space is limited.

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The Villager is mailed to all MP homes for delivery by the 1st Monday of each month. Residents are invited to submit articles & other items of interest. Use the drop box inside the front door at the Community Building. The Villager reserves the right to refuse publication of any item submitted. All items presented for publication must include the contributor’s signature and phone number. The Villager is online at minervapark.org/villager.

Next deadline:
Wednesday, March 19, 5p

Adviseers are included as a service to residents. We do not review their qualifications and are not responsible for consequences arising out of the services provided.

Residents should make their own investigation as to the ability and background of the person or company offering the services.