

BROWN TOWNSHIP

ESTABLISHED 1830

FALL 2018

Neighborhood Watch in Jeopardy



When it comes to crime, we've had an organized flow of communication within the township for more than ten years. Residents keeping eyes and ears open, taking pictures, and writing down license numbers—in an effort to protect ourselves and our properties—has paid off. Now, that security is in jeopardy. We are in serious need of new leadership.

Our Neighborhood Watch, coordinating with the Sheriff's department, has resulted in quite a few arrests over the years, the last one being the mail fraud perpetrator in 2018. From 2007 through 2017, **107 arrests resulted from 984 calls** to Brown Township. That's almost ten arrests per year on average, of which two per year result from reports of suspicious persons. Keeping our Neighborhood Watch active and intact is of significant value to us all.

This is a citizen-led initiative. Each road needs residents who know and see their neighbors regularly. New residents want to be included in Neighborhood Watch communications and many residents look for education on crime protection. The Watch signs posted by the township on our roads are a deterrent. Knowing that neighbors look out for each other in a coordinated effort brings comfort and peace of mind to many of us and may make a thief think twice.

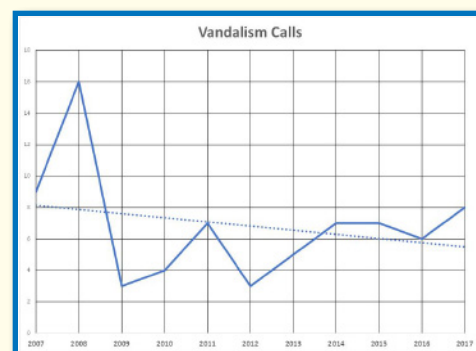
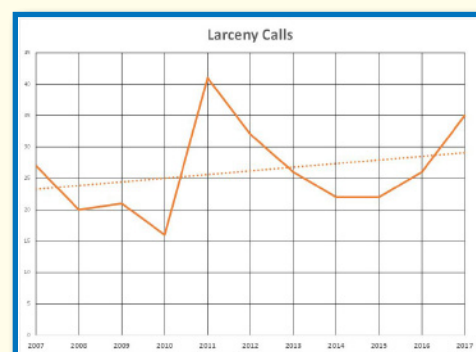
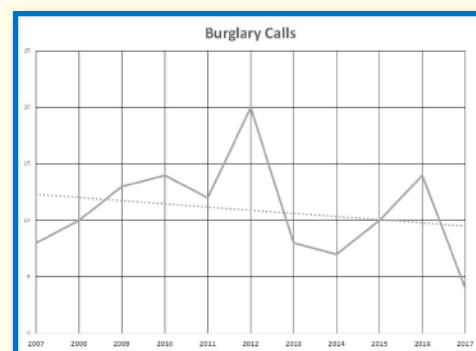
Residents that are willing and able to do the following should contact Joe Martin, Brown Township Trustee, at joe_martin@browntwp.org:

- Coordinate with a lead person for each road (Road Captain).
- Coordinate communications with the Sheriff's office.
- Relay accurate information to and from residents in a timely fashion.
- Possibly arrange an informational meeting every year or two.

Our Brown Township Neighborhood Watch program has worked well for more than ten years. Please consider helping.

Trustees Sayre and Martin contributed to this article. Statistics provided by Franklin County Sheriff's office.

Crime Calls 2007–2017



HATMAKER TO RETIRE

Prairie Township Administrator Tracy Hatmaker has announced his retirement, effective November 30 after 15 years in the position.

Previously, he served as a planner with the Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department and in various capacities with Ross County, Ohio for eight years, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for two years, and Loudon County, Virginia for three years.

In 2002, during his time with Franklin County, he served as the lead planner on the Brown Township Comprehensive Plan process, working with the committee and developing concepts and white papers – concepts that anticipated the policies of the Big Darby Accord.—such as conservation development and the importance of water quality.



Later, while at Prairie Township, Tracy served as the townships' representative on the four-member client group providing day-to-day management of the Big Darby Accord planning process. In that role, he represented not only Prairie Township, but also Brown, Pleasant, Washington, and Norwich townships. Others represented the City of Columbus, Franklin County,

and the suburban municipalities involved.

Members of the G-4, as it was called, were responsible for process-building, meeting arrangements, directing the preparation of alternatives based on modeling results, and perhaps most important, communicating with their constituent jurisdictions.

Tracy recently commented that building relationships during that process was perhaps the most important result of all. "Working with a range of stakeholders – county, city, suburbs – was a big accomplishment. The Accord set the bar high for development where the bar had not been high before," he said.

The Brown Township Board of Trustees is grateful for Tracy's help and for his friendship and wish him the best in the future.

PUBLIC SAFETY SUMMARY

Each issue of the Brown Township newsletter contains a quarterly wrap-up of public safety reports and calls in Brown Township.

Norwich Township Fire Department

Calls to addresses in both incorporated and unincorporated portions of Brown Township:

	Fire Calls		EMS Calls	
	Incorp.	Unincorp.	Incorp.	Unincorp.
June 2018	3	4	2	6
July 2018	0	5	1	6
Aug. 2018	5	2	1	14

Franklin County Sheriff's Department

Calls to addresses in unincorporated Brown Township:

June 2018

Reported June 25, occurred between June 19 and 20 – criminal damaging at an address on Morris Road.

July 2018

July 15 – criminal trespass and damaging at an address on Patterson Road.

Reported July 18, occurred July 14 – theft of motor vehicle parts and accessories from an address on Feder Road.

Reported July 20, occurred between July 19 and 20 – criminal damaging at an address on Patterson Road.

July 26 – identity fraud at an address on Amity Road.

August 2018

August 2 – green leafy material impounded for destruction at an address on Amity Road.

Reported August 3, occurred July 12 – fraudulent credit card charge at an address on Walker Road.

Reported August 19, occurred between August 18 and 19 – missing juvenile from an address on Patterson Road.

Hilliard Division of Police

Non-routine calls to Brown Township addresses within the City of Hilliard:

June 2018

No non-routine calls.

July 2018

No non-routine calls.

August 2018

No non-routine calls.

History of Morris Road House

I didn't know that my old brick house on Morris Road was one of the photos on the Brown Township website until township Trustee Pam Sayre mentioned it to me. As we chatted, she suggested I write something about the house's history for the township newsletter. That's how this article came to be.

My husband, Jim Gravelle, grew up in a 19th century clapboard house in Chelmsford, Mass., north of Boston. It was then a rural area. He and his brothers and sisters showed dairy cows in 4-H and plowed their garden with a horse. That's why he wanted to live in the country in an old house on land with room for a horse or two. We wanted the house to be brick for ease of maintenance, and we didn't want one that had been restored, partly because we couldn't afford it.

Through a real-estate agent, we looked at a lot of houses that were unsuitable—too big, too decrepit, too expensive, across the street from a trailer park. Finally, we put a classified ad in *The Dispatch* along the lines of “Wanted: old brick house in the country.” Pete and Chris Yost had owned the Morris Road house only about a year, but they wanted more land for their “growing menagerie” of animals, as Chris puts it. So they sold it to us in 1976.

Following are some facts about our property and house, based mostly on the lengthy abstract of title that traces the ownership of the land for more than 200 years through copies of such legal documents as deeds and wills.

■ Like all other land in Brown Township, our property was once part of 1,000 acres in the Virginia Military District, which Congress created in 1790 to pay soldiers, in lieu of cash, for their service in the Revolutionary War. The acreage was deeded to Col. Hugh Stephenson, who lived in Jefferson County, Virginia.

■ One document indicates that Lucas Sullivant surveyed the tract in 1796. He laid out the streets of Franklinton, now Columbus' West Side, in 1797.

■ Over the years, the 1,000 acres were divided into smaller tracts as the Virginia planters died and left the “land in Ohio” to their many heirs along with, according to the 1817 will of Stephenson heir Abraham Shepherd, their slaves. By 1920, our property



was part of the Richard Jerman farm. It included a tract of about 85 acres with an abutting 1½ acres where the house stands.

■ Early surveyors wrote about the land “on the waters of Darby's Creek” and marked the boundaries with trees—“an elm, mulberry and red oak.” They didn't include buildings in their surveys, so determining when a house was built can be difficult. The date is usually inferred from an increase in taxes or in the mortgage amount when the property was sold.

■ When I started covering Worthington for *The Dispatch's Northwest Neighbor News* in 1985, I was surprised to hear a name I recognized from our abstract—Demas Adams. He had a house built in 1818 that still stands at 721 High St. in Worthington and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Adams was a land speculator who owned property throughout Franklin County. He bought several tracts in what is now Brown Township from Charles M. Shepherd in 1839 and sold one of them, the property where our house now stands, in 1848.

■ Like the Demas Adams house, ours has ash floors; and the woodwork includes black walnut and oak. Those trees would have been readily available. Brown Township had a sawmill as early as 1837. Isaac Hayden built it on Big Darby Creek between what are now Roberts and Morris roads, according to the 2005 Brown Township Comprehensive Plan.

■ The comprehensive plan—a development guide put together by Franklin County employees—says our house was built in 1850. But I think it's closer to 1865. Based on the money amounts in the documents, there was no house when Demas Adams sold the property to Morgan Morgan in 1848 or

when Morgan sold to Maria Bynner in 1850. She married Evan Jones, and there was a jump in value when Evan and Maria Jones sold the property to Richard Jerman in 1865.

■ The only mention of the house in the abstract is in the will Richard Jerman wrote 20 years later—in 1885: “I give and devise to my daughter, Sarah Jerman, the tract of land purchased of Edward Evans (one eyed) containing 83½ acres. Also 1½ acres of land on which the Brick House stands being part of the tract purchased of Maria Jones and adjoining the tract of 83½ acres.”

■ Adding credence to the 1865 date is that the Erwin house – the only other old brick house on Morris Road—likely was built between 1865 and 1870. Reportedly, the bricks for both houses were made from clay on the property and fired in a kiln built for that purpose. Years ago, I found evidence of an old well in the woods behind our house where the kiln probably was located.

■ The property's ownership was contested several times over the years. In the early 1900s, when Morris Road was known as the Bynner Free Pike, a court ruled that 14 heirs of Sarah Jerman would share ownership. They all sold their interests to Harry Elliott and his wife, Arla May, in 1921. In 1942, William Howard Elliott enclosed the west porch, according to a penciled notation on an interior wall that we found when we replaced the wood enclosure with brick.

■ From 1954 until 1973, the property was part of the farm of Walter and Pauline Parker, a well-known farming family in the township.

■ In 1990, we raised the roof over the kitchen to create a second story on the back of the house with a bedroom, a laundry room and two full bathrooms. I would have preferred not to meddle with the architecture, but it allowed us to restore the dining room, which had been chopped up with two walls to turn it into what was then the only bathroom in the house. It made my day when our neighbor Ellie Jerman said the dining room looked just as she had remembered it from years before.

Carol Lease Gravelle



Brown Township
2491 Walker Road
Hilliard, Ohio 43026

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Brown Township Administration Office

2491 Walker Road, Hilliard, Ohio 43026
(614) 876-2133

Website

www.BrownTwp.org

Fiscal Officer

Greg Ruwe • (614) 876-2133

Trustees

Mr. Gary Dever • (614) 876-4768
Mrs. Pamela Sayre • (614) 878-0199
Mr. Joseph Martin • (614) 870-9601

Norwich Fire Department

Jeff Warren, Chief • (614) 876-7694

Franklin County Sheriff's Department

Emergency • 911

Non-Emergency • (614) 525-3333

Meetings are held the third Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at 2491 Walker Road, Hilliard, Ohio.



L-R: Fiscal Officer Greg Ruwe and Trustees Gary Dever, Pam Sayre and Joe Martin

Fall Lawn Tips

"Get Grassy!", a program of Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, offers these tips for fall lawn care:

Leaf it on your lawn—Mulch leaves with your mower to put nutrients back on your lawn. Put extra leaves, branches, and twigs in yard waste bags and set out for collection.

Choose Fall—Fall fertilization is good because it encourages a deep root system. Remember to follow label instructions and keep fertilizer off hard surfaces and away from water.

Pledge to take care of your lawn year-round at getgrassy.org.

Neighborhood Watch Programs **Work!**

When I ran for Sheriff, one of my top priorities was to have law enforcement and communities work together more in keeping everyone in Franklin County as safe as possible. One of the best ways we can accomplish this is by ordinary citizens having strong block watches in their neighborhoods.

Deputies can't be everywhere, so when citizens take active roles in keeping a watch on their neighbors, it makes it easier for law enforcement to do our jobs, and is another tool in helping to keep the people of Brown Township, and Franklin County, safe.

Sheriff Dallas Baldwin