

VILLAGE OF  
**WALTON  
 HILLS**  
 WORK. PLAY. LIVE.

*Journal*



Dear Neighbors and Friends,

As we begin 2017, I want to put into perspective all of the challenges that Walton Hills has overcome while reinforcing the fact that despite those challenges, we have remained on course. That is the true challenge though, staying on the course as planned, chartered and agreed upon by our elected officials and by the employees of the Village. Before I go over the different challenges we've overcome, I'd like to outline how we put our long term plans into place in Walton Hills.

Each September, I, along with the Village Council begin the process of presenting plans for the next calendar year. Several open meetings are held to discuss everyone's ideas (the open meetings are held throughout the year if something should come up). We have operated this way successfully over the last six years and have managed to live within the budgeted guidelines of each year. Our Village Council members are fully aware of every aspect of the budget as they are the governing force that controls and approves all expenditures yearly. Please remember that all improvements and updates throughout our community cannot be accomplished without Council's approval.

As the Mayor, I approach each day, week, month and year with a positive attitude, positive perspective and a positive long term vision for Walton Hills. Our leaders strive to have the same positive outlook on Village matters. When challenges arise, it's how we face them and deal with them that defines who we are; that is the same for the Village of Walton Hills. When I became the Mayor, the Village faced some major challenges including having \$1.8 million in deficit spending, two years back to back. Perhaps those deficits were a result of a lack of leadership and

a lack of having a positive perspective on how to deal with difficult situations.

Nearly every year since becoming the Mayor of Walton Hills, the Village has been presented with difficult situations (this usually happens during the holiday season for whatever reason) that will have a major impact on our community. In 2012, we were notified that the Ford Motor Company would be closing. In December of 2013, we were notified that Arhaus Furniture would be packing up and moving out of the Village by April of 2014. To say that we were concerned would be an understatement, but we rolled up our sleeves and got to work.

Village leaders reviewed all of the facts and information for each situation and we worked through the challenges with a hopeful, positive and optimistic attitude. When we had an approved plan in place, we moved forward in a way that would benefit our entire community. We were able to keep Arhaus Furniture in Walton Hills for two additional years (they closed their doors in late 2016) and our strong leadership put into place a plan to redevelop the old Ford Plant property. Our journey during the last six years has had many ups and downs, but we've managed to bring positive recognition to our community despite the challenges we've faced.

In late November of 2016, Transtar Industries, Inc. notified Walton Hills that the company filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy in order to reorganize its debt and secure the future of the business. While this is another challenge for our community, we have already rolled

*(Continued on Page 3)*



# \$100,000



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# Mayor's Letter

(Continued from Page 1)

up our sleeves and have started planning how we'll move forward. The Village Council is fully aware that Walton Hills has reached out to Transtar to offer help and support in any way possible. Please understand that with the projected decline in revenue of Transtar Industries (and with the closures of Arhaus Furniture and the Ford Plant), Walton Hills will not receive additional revenue for our Village in 2017 until the financial issues are resolved and the property is redeveloped.

Now that I have been transparent and open concerning the Village's future finances and challenges that we will face, I want our residents to know that we are projecting a deficit for 2017 if we do not find other revenue sources for Walton Hills. We will be holding a town hall meeting late this month and one in February to provide residents with the facts as well as what our plan will be to solve these short term issues.

As the Mayor, I personally want to answer any questions that our residents have about our community's operations, expenditures and long term plans for our community. All too often we have residents that make false or misinformed statements about our Village's operations. Sometimes, those residents, because of their strong-willed nature, come off as bullies. When those strong-willed residents are given the facts they don't apologize for their bullying nature, they always find something else to complain about. I understand not all residents can find happiness, positivity or even kindness in their lives, therefore I accepted becoming their "complaint department" and wonder why they never help our community in anyway?

All I ask is for the misinformed to please ask your questions directly to me, do not attack the Village's employees or our elected officials. When you elected me to office I took an oath to uphold the ordinances and zoning code throughout Walton Hills. Just as we are to follow all Ten Commandments as we are taught as a child and not to pick and choose which ones we're going to follow, I use the same process in leading the Village. Our ordinances aren't a part of a buffet where we can pick and choose which ones we'll follow, we have to uphold each one. With that being said, sometimes when we enforce our codes, laws and ordinances, we make a few people angry and those same residents turn these issues into attacks on me personally and on our Village employees.

I have no problem in answering any questions or concerns that our residents have. When these questions go unanswered, it leads to more confusion and frustration amongst our community. If you have a question, go to the source and get the facts. I have always been open and transparent and willing to help our residents since becoming the Mayor in 2011. Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. I am here to serve each and every one of you and I will provide you with answers to your questions, even when they may not be the ones you want to hear. **Please contact me at the office by calling 440-232-7800.**

May God to bless you in the New Year!

*Kevin Hurst*

Mayor/Safety and Economic Director, **I.G.I.T.**



The annual Santa Delivery was held on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. Santa delivered toys to children of all ages at 54 homes in Walton Hills with the help of the Recreation Department, the Police Department, the Oakwood Village Fire Department, Village Council members and several other volunteers!



## Vic Nogalo, Tax Administrator

A new tax season will soon be upon us. The 2016 tax year filings for all residents over 18 and individuals conducting business within the Village of Walton Hills will be due by April 18, 2017. Since April 15 is on a Saturday and Emancipation Day is on Sunday, April 16 and will be observed on Monday April 17, the 2016 annual returns will be due on Tuesday April 18; unless a copy of a federal extension is provided to the tax department by the filing deadline. Please remember that an extension is not an extension to pay taxes, it only allows you more time to prepare your return. For example, if you are still waiting around mid-April for certain documents to arrive and you cannot complete your tax return but expect to owe approximately \$500, you should file an extension and send in \$500 by April 18, 2017.

For the second year in a row we will require all retirees to file. A much simpler form will be sent to all retirees who are most likely not to have any taxable income. The form will ask five standard questions relating to certain taxable items such as: working wages, lottery winnings over \$10,000, business income, shareholder distributions and rental property income. If none of the revenues are applicable, the retiree simply signs the form and sends it in; otherwise the retiree should file a regular Village tax form. We ask that everyone sends a copy of page 1 of their 1040 federal form; this will allow the tax department to ascertain if there is any potential taxable income.

Two state law changes will begin with the 2016 tax year filing:

1. No amount is due if your tax return calculates to an amount owed of \$10 or less. If your tax return calculates to an overpayment of \$10 or less, it will be credited to next year's taxes.
2. A resident's multiple business activities inside and outside of Walton Hills will be combined in accordance with the new state law formula. I do not have room to fully explain this here, but the calculation and the instructions will be part of the Village's tax form and are available on our website.

As was the case for last year's tax return, the **Declaration of Estimated Tax for 2017** found at the bottom of the 2016 individual tax return will determine if a taxpayer is required to make estimated tax payments during 2017 if the estimated amount is calculated at \$200 or more. Therefore, if your estimated taxes for the 2017 tax year calculate to \$190, you are not obligated to pay estimated taxes throughout the year. The same payment due dates for estimated taxes as in the previous year will be effective for tax year 2017:

- 1st quarter 22.5% due by 4/15/17
- 2nd quarter 45.0% due by 6/15/17
- 3rd quarter 67.5% due by 9/15/17

- 4th quarter 90.0% due by 12/15/17

Employers within the City of Cleveland will begin withholding 2.5% for payroll taxes beginning in January 2017. In most cases, Walton Hills' residents working in Cleveland will not owe the Village any tax at the end of the 2017 year due to the fact that the Cleveland rate is now equal to the Village's tax rate of 2.5%. Please remember this when filling out your "2017 Declaration of Estimated Taxes."

2016 pre-printed income tax forms will be available at the Village Hall or can be downloaded from our website. There is also an interactive electronic "auto calc" form available on our website. It is recommended that only **Internet Explorer** or **Safari** web browsers are used for the "auto calc" form. Once completed, the calculated return can be printed out, signed and sent to the Village along with any supporting documentation.

The Village of Walton Hills continues to pride itself on customer service. The proximity of having the tax office in the Village is an added benefit where your municipal income tax return can be prepared at no cost by a member of the Finance Department.

### Legislation Note:

**Due to the timing of December's Regular Council Meeting, the legislation that was unanimously approved was unable to be printed in this issue of the Walton Hills Journal. The legislation from the Regular Council Meeting held on 12.20.2016 will be published in February's Journal along with the legislation approved at this month's meeting.**

# Walton Hills Police Department Information

**Kenn Thellmann, Chief of Police**  
**Councilman Denny Linville, Safety Committee Chair**

There are some new faces in the Walton Hills Police Department. During the last few months of 2016, we welcomed several new members to the department: two part-time police officers, one auxiliary officer and one dispatcher. Mayor Hurst swore in Patrolman David Raykov in August, Patrolman Austin Blackwell in December, Auxiliary Officer Alison Fiorucci was sworn-in during November and Dispatcher Essence Sullins took her oath in December.



Police Chief Kenn Thellmann presented Officer David Raykov (above left) and Officer Austin Blackwell (above right) with their badges after being sworn-in by Mayor Hurst in front of family, friends and co-workers.



Auxiliary Officer Alison Fiorucci was presented with her badge by Chief Thellmann and Communications Supervisor Shannon Cartier presented Dispatcher Essence Sullins with her badge after being sworn-in.



**Don't forget to like the Walton Hills Police Department on Facebook.**  
**You can view photos, videos, and get the latest information on what's going on in the Village.**



# January Recreation News

Carol Stanoszek, Recreation Director (440) 786-2964 stanoszekc@waltonhillsohio.gov  
Mary Brenner-Miller, Recreation and Community Life Committee Chairwoman

**Event: MORNING MEETING WITH THE MAYOR**

**Date:** Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 9am

**Site:** Community Room

**Note:** This is a great way for you to hear about what's happening in Walton Hills! Ask questions and get answers while enjoying coffee and breakfast with your neighbors!

**Event: GIUSEPPE'S RISTORANTE**

**Date:** Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** Leaving Village Hall at 11:40am

**Site:** Northfield Village

**Note:** Enjoy an authentic Italian lunch while enjoying the company of your friends and neighbors!

**Event: SENIOR LUNCH**

**Date:** Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 11:15am

**Site:** Community Room

**Cost:** \$5

**Note:** You'll hear about the life of Laura Ingalls Wilder.

**Event: CAROL'S BOOKWORMS**

**Date:** Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 7pm

**Site:** Community Room

**Cost:** A food item for our Village pantry.

*Please note that all programs and trips are subject to change due to bad weather. Please call the Recreation Department for any concerns:  
**440-786-2964***

**CAROL'S BOOKWORM REVIEW**

Last month we read and discussed the book

"The Rainbow Comes and Goes,"

by Anderson Cooper & Gloria Vanderbilt.

We rated this book:



Out of 5

**Reminders:**

**The Village Hall will be closed on Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> for the New Year's Day holiday.**

**The Village Hall will also be closed on Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup> for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.**

**Old Time Auto Service**

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# 2017 Medicare Premiums, Deductibles, and Cost-Sharing Amounts

Kathleen Kapusta, LISW-S Social Worker

## Part A (Hospital Insurance)

Hospital Deductible	\$1,316/benefit period (renews when out of a hospital or Medicare facility for 60 days)
Hospital Copayment	\$329/day for days 61-90 \$658/day for Lifetime Reserve Days
Skilled Nursing Facility Copayment	\$164.50/day for days 21-100
Part A Premiums*	\$413/month for those with fewer than 30 quarters of Medicare-covered employment \$227/month for those with 30-39 quarters of Medicare-covered employment

## Part B (Medical Insurance)

Annual Deductible	\$183
Premium for those with incomes	
Below \$85,000 if single,	\$109/month
\$170,000 if married**	\$134/month-new Medicare enrollees

\* Most people with Medicare do not pay a monthly premium for Part A because they have (or a spouse has) 40 or more quarters of Medicare-covered employment (meaning they worked at a job where they paid into Medicare).

Because of the low Social Security COLA, .03% for 2017, a statutory "hold harmless" provision designed to protect seniors, will largely prevent Part B premiums from increasing for about 70% of beneficiaries. Among this group, the average 2017 premium will be about \$109, compared to \$104.90 for the past four years.

\*\*For the remaining roughly 30% of beneficiaries, the standard monthly premium for Medicare Part B will be \$134 for 2017, a 10% increase from the 2016 premium of \$121.80. Because of the "hold harmless" provision covering the other 70% of beneficiaries, premiums for the remaining 30% must cover most of the increase in Medicare costs for 2017 for all beneficiaries.

The approximately 30% of Medicare Part B beneficiaries not subject to the "hold harmless" provision, thus having to pay the higher monthly premium, include those who:

1. Do not receive Social Security benefits
2. Enroll in Part B for the first time in 2017
3. Are directly billed for their Part B premium
4. Are dually eligible for Medicaid and have their premium paid by state Medicaid agencies
5. Pay an income-related premium



## Thank You Carol James Florist

The Village of Walton Hills thanks Carol James Florist for decorating the Christmas tree in the Village Hall lobby.

They also provide a beautiful floral arrangement for display each week.

You can give Carol James a call at **440.786.1811** to order your next floral arrangement!



# Street Commissioner's Report

**Dan Stucky, Street Commissioner**  
**Councilman Brian Spitznagel, Infrastructure Committee Chairman**

I hope everyone enjoyed our Christmas lights displays throughout the Village during the holiday season and I hope you applied safe and cautious winter driving techniques while viewing the lights! The service department's main responsibility is to provide safe and hazard-free streets throughout the Village. During the winter, crews are available 24/7 for snow removal and ice control. Our service department members are also always on the lookout for any pot holes that may suddenly appear and require a quick cold patch asphalt repair.

The winter months usually allow us to catch up on some much needed maintenance in Village-owned buildings. We will be kept busy in the New Year with our recent purchase of the former Sacred Heart of Jesus Church property on Alexander Road. We will be performing some restoration and alteration projects within the various buildings located on the 5.39 acre parcel. Depending on weather conditions, we would like to also remove and/or trim some of the overgrown landscaping and trees on the entire property.



Each year we participate in several recycling programs, the first of which is the live Christmas tree collection. We will be picking up any live Christmas trees for recycling during the first two weeks of January. Please have all tree bags, ornaments, wires and light strings removed prior to placing your tree in the berm area for pick up. Other recycling programs to be held this spring and fall include the household hazardous waste (HHW) collection, used computers collection and old tires collection. The roundups are in conjunction with the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District and are free to Walton Hills' residents. More information on the roundups in upcoming issues of the Walton Hills Journal.

## WALTON HILLS...DISCOVER ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL

A FAITH-FILLED, CATHOLIC SCHOOL COMMUNITY EDUCATING STUDENTS FROM PRESCHOOL – 8TH GRADE

### INFORMATION NIGHT

THURSDAY, JAN. 19, 2017

6:30 TO 8 PM

ST. BASIL PARISH EDUCATION CENTER  
BRECKSVILLE  
PRESCHOOL, JR. KINDERGARTEN,  
KINDERGARTEN & FIRST GRADE



[WWW.STMICHAELSCHOOLINFO.COM](http://WWW.STMICHAELSCHOOLINFO.COM)

### OPEN HOUSE

SUNDAY, JAN. 22, 2017

10:30 AM TO NOON

ST. MICHAEL CAMPUS  
INDEPENDENCE  
2ND - 8TH GRADE



**St. Basil Campus**  
Preschool - Grade 1  
8700 Brecksville Rd.  
Brecksville  
440/717-0398



**Transportation to St. Michael School is provided to  
Walton Hills residents by Bedford Transportation**

Facebook: [bit.ly/ST\\_MICHAEL\\_FACEBOOK](https://bit.ly/ST_MICHAEL_FACEBOOK)  
Twitter: @sms\_blueangels



**St. Michael Campus**  
Grades 2-8  
6906 Chestnut Rd.  
Independence  
216/524-6405

# SEAT MATE???

Councilwoman Gloria Terlosky, Information Committee Chairwoman

If you are thinking about jumping on a plane to visit family or to go on a nice, sunny vacation, I caution you concerning who might end up as your seat mate. Recently a woman was on a flight to Charlotte, North Carolina and her seat mate was her emotional support animal—a duck wearing red shoes and a Captain America diaper! The duck helps calm and comfort the woman who is still negatively affected after a traffic accident.

This is not something new. First came the comfort dog which morphed into a comfort monkey followed by a comfort kangaroo. Yes, a kangaroo! I wonder if



the kangaroo was charged extra for the joey since it was a “carry-on?” Airlines always find a reason to charge an extra fee!

Be sure to get all of your ducks in a row when choosing your seat! It could

be Donald Trump sitting next to you or it could be Donald Duck! Flying is not what it is quacked up to be. Monkeys are cute, ducks are cute and even a kangaroo has its charm, but what about that individual who has a penchant for snakes? I would have to draw the line when it comes to snakes! I do not think I could wrap my mind around the idea of its beady eyes staring at me. So, have fun choosing your flight, as for me, I’ll take the train! Also, you might want to bring along a snack like a banana or some nuts for your seat mate, it is always nice to share after all!

*Happy travels!*

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***For more information or to schedule a private day or evening tour, please call the school office: 330-467-7921***

**JOIN US FOR OPEN HOUSE!  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 1:15–3:15**

Registration for students in Preschool, Kindergarten and Grades 1 –8 now being accepted for the 2016-2017 school year.



**9200 Olde Eight Rd, Northfield, OH 44067  
330-467-7921  
[www.sbcatholicsschool.com](http://www.sbcatholicsschool.com)**



# Spotlight on

## Eric Keffer

### One of the many threads in the fabric of our Village

This month we're going to introduce you to someone who not only lives in Walton Hills, he works here too. Meet Eric Keffer! He's the pastor of Walton Hills Church of Christ. Eric and his wife Annette live in the little house located on the church's property. Eric began his ministry at Walton Hills Church of Christ in November of 2014 after serving a church in southern Illinois for seven years. More on Eric's service in ministry in a minute, but first let's see where it all began for him!

Eric was born in Barberton on July 14, 1960. He grew up there and attended Barberton High School. Eric and his wife Annette were high school sweethearts! The couple began dating as teenagers and got married in 1981. Eric and Annette have two sons, Joseph and Matthew, two incredible daughters-in-law Ashley and Leanna, and the love of their lives is their 2-year-old granddaughter Ingrid! Eric and Annette also have a four-legged furry family member that they love, their dog Bandit!

Eric earned his GED after leaving high school and then served for more than 25 years in the food service industry. He managed several restaurants in the Akron area. Eric began working in ministry full time in 2008. After being heavily involved with church for about five years, Eric was given the opportunity to preach when his home church was transitioning to a new minister. Shortly thereafter, it became obvious to Eric that preaching was what he was being led to do. After about a year of working a full time job and preaching weekly, Eric left the restaurant business to pursue a full time preaching position. As already mentioned, Eric served at a church in southern Illinois for seven years before moving back to northeast Ohio in 2014 to become the pastor at Walton Hills Church of Christ.

In Mark 16:15 of the Bible, it says, "He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation,'" and that's exactly what Eric does! His ministry extends beyond the walls of Walton Hills Church of Christ. Eric has a passion for serving people both stateside and worldwide! For example, he, along with some members of Walton Hills Church of Christ went to West Virginia last summer after the flooding there to provide them with some relief. In 2005, Eric went on a mission trip following Hurricane Katrina and in 2013 he became involved with Helping His Hands Disaster Response. Eric said that he loves being able to help people so when he has the opportunity to serve a mission focused on doing just that, he jumps at the chance! Eric said it would be great if disasters stopped happening, but until they do we should be ready and willing to respond!

Another place that Eric travels to for missions work is the Philippines. Eric made his first trip to the Philippines in 2013 and has traveled there once each year since 2013. In total, he's gone on four trips to serve the people of the Philippines. Eric said that he became involved in the mission to the Philippines almost by accident. He was serving at the church in Illinois and decided to investigate some of the missions that the church was supporting financially. The mission to the Philippines had been receiving support from the church for 30 years and when Eric inquired about what the money was used for no one could give him a detailed answer!

When Eric had the opportunity to get to know the director of the mission, he told Eric that he had invited past ministers to travel with him to see the work of the mission in the Philippines and none had



ever taken him up on the offer! Eric felt that if his church was going to support something, then maybe they should have firsthand knowledge of what they were supporting! Eric fell in love with the Philippines, its people and the mission of helping to spread the good news of Jesus everywhere!

Eric was not raised in church and said that he understands what it means to come from a less than "normal" background. He also said he became a Christian "later in life," and he wants everyone, everywhere to know that they are loved! He makes it his mission to share the love of Jesus with folks around the globe! Eric wants everyone to know that even though this spotlight article is about his work in Christian ministry, the spotlight shines on the mission itself which is sharing the gospel of Jesus!

Eric said the door is always open at Walton Hills Church of Christ for anyone who wants to come in. Sunday morning services start at 10:30! He hopes to see you there!

# Calendar of Events

## January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 	2 New Year's Day Holiday Village Hall Closed Blood Drive 2-6pm Women's Club Board Mtg. 7pm	3 C.O.W. Mtg. 6pm	4 Historical Resource Center Open 1-3pm & 7-8:30pm	5 Mayor's Court 4pm	6	7
8	9 50 Plus Club Board Mtg. 10am	10 C.O.W. Mtg. 6pm	11	12 Mayor's Court 4pm	13	14
15	16 MLK Day Village Hall Closed  50 Plus Club Mtg. 1pm	17 Council Mtg. 6pm	18 Morning Meeting w/the Mayor 9am	19 Mayor's Court 4pm	20	21
22	23	24	25 Giuseppe's Ristorante Leaving Village Hall at 11:40am  Women's Club Mtg. 7pm	26 Mayor's Court 4pm	27	28
29	30 Senior Lunch 11:15am  Carol's Bookworms 7pm	31				

**Women's Exercise Class** - Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30 to 7:30pm in the Community Room

**Mahjonn** - Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 to 4pm at the Walton Hills Church of Christ

**Knit-Wits 2 Needles** - Tuesdays from 1 to 3pm at the Walton Hills Church of Christ

**For the most up-to-date info, call the Village Voice Info Line 440.735.5001 Option 5  
Extra copies of the Walton Hills Journal are available at the Village Hall**



As the Mayor, I would like to thank our Village Council members for their hard work and dedication that they demonstrate each year. Several Council members volunteer their time for numerous events that take place in and around our community. They include: the Veterans Day and Memorial Day observances, the Fourth of July parade, Community Day and countless others like the Santa Delivery and Christmas Tree Lighting! The extra time you volunteer to our Village truly shows that you care for the future of Walton Hills. Thank You!!



The photos from top left to bottom: Councilpersons Gloria Terlosky and Mary Brenner-Miller join me at a volunteer event, Councilman Paul Rich assisting Santa Claus (Councilman Don Kolograf) deliver gifts at Christmastime, Councilpersons Kolograf, Terlosky, Rich, Brenner-Miller and Linville and myself at Bedford's July 4th parade and Councilman Don Kolograf, myself and Oakwood Village Mayor Gary Gottschalk at a recent Community Day.

