



The Village Pump

SPONSORED BY SV ACTS, INC.

SPRING VALLEY TOWNSHIP, OHIO

JUNE 2012

SPRING VALLEY ACTS – Carla Smith

Usually in summer, the village and township is abuzz with kids out of school, ball games, fields being planted, lawn mowing and other summer activities. But the buzz has grown to include big projects for our area as well. Remodeling and painting has been done to the George Barrett Cement House and the Spring Valley United Methodist Church. The Township Hall is being updated. The Senior Center is readying for a move. Founders Park is cleaned up and the local 4-H club has planted flowers. The next great Potato Festival is being planned. There is planning underway for the community to beautify our bike path area and let's not forget that although we are never ready for the inconvenience, the Main Street project will begin after the Potato Festival.

To do most of these projects takes a great many dedicated volunteers. These people take pride in the village to keep it a place for all to enjoy. Without these people, our village will only decline and disappear. Please become a volunteer to help keep our village flourishing.

If you can help a few hours, a weekend, just about any time, contact the SV ACTS, the village, or the township to see how you can help.

ACTS has approved the creation of a committee to undertake landscaping of the Bike Trail through Spring Valley. It has been discussed with the Greene County Master Gardeners and approved by Spring Valley Village Council and ODNR.

What we need is your opinion. What would you like to see on this section of the trail? Do you have a favorite tree or shrub? Native plants? Benches? etc. Are you opposed to this idea? Please let us know.

There will be a meeting at the George Barrett Concrete House (GBCH) at 7PM on Thursday, June 14th to discuss this project. You can also call George McGowan at 416-1842 for further information.

Look for these upcoming events in our community.

Movie Night – June 15th 8:30pm by Spring Valley United Methodist Church.

Softball at Walton Park – Games begin at 6pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Youth Reading program at the Library beginning July 11th.

Snell Studio and Friends Art Camp – first week of August

Family Carnival by Spring Valley United Methodist Church – end of August

Have a Great Summer! *Carla*

SPRING VALLEY VILLAGE COUNCIL – Eric Snell

Letter to residents of the Village of Spring Valley:

This letter is to inform you of what is happening in your community. Your input is needed.

Items covered

1. Main St. Project
2. Community Development
3. Budget
4. 2013 - Music & Art Festival
5. June 16 - Clean up Day

How to Get Information and Answers

If you have any questions there are several ways to get answers and information

- Village Council Meetings are on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 7:30pm.
- Email: springvalleyoh@gmail.com ; personal email: ericjasonsnell@gmail.com
- Phone: 937.862.4485 (village office); 937.862.4726 (my home); 937.604.0357 (my cell)
- Twitter: @springvalleyoh
- Website: www.springvalleyohcouncil.com (we will post updates on this site)

1. Main St. Project

The project is to update and replace Main St. and some of the underlying infrastructure.

Summary of the Project

Will start after Potato Festival 2012; will end by June 30, 2013

Covers Main St. from Spring Valley Paintersville to Elm St.

Will replace

Waterlines - 60 years old - upgrade from 6" to 8"

Water connections to homes

Storm sewer where needed

Road surface - will remove crown

Adds curbs

Changes parking between Vine and Plum St.

There will be points in time when access to driveways may be unavailable, but we will make sure to communicate with all homeowners on a regular basis and post the schedule at the Town hall. We will minimize impact to travel and maintain access to homes and businesses.

This project is funded through Grants from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) and the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The projected cost is over \$900,000 and we have received grants which will cover the cost. The Village will have to spend between \$30,000 and \$50,000 our required contribution to the project. The bid and award will happen in July and August. The work will be scheduled to begin the week after the Potato Festival this year and be completed no later than June 30, 2013.

The scope of the project is Main St. from Spring Valley-Paintersville Rd. to Elm St. The project will take the street down to the foundation, put down a new street which is leveled, add or replace the curb, replace the main water line, the side connections to each water service along the street, upgrade - as needed - the storm sewer, and add an electrical conduit for future use. If the bid for this work comes in less than the available grant, we have included the update, repair, and replacement of sidewalks as work that can also be done with the funding.

The crown of the street will be leveled and the new curb will create better drainage and clearly delineate the edge of the street.

Parking is going to change from angle parking to parallel parking along E. Main St. on the south side between Vine St. and Plum St. This change will save a few of the trees and create more green space between the houses and the street.

Some trees will have to be removed. 18 trees are marked for removal, either because they will potentially become unstable or the root systems will cause problems with the new street and eventually new sidewalks. To offset the unfortunate, but necessary removal of trees, the Planning Commission (a council led committee) has been directed to prepare a beautification plan to be completed after the Main St. project is finished.

A diagram of the project can be viewed at the town hall. Please feel welcome to attend any council meeting to ask questions, or ask any council member.

2. Community Development

We need your input for our community's development.

What changes do you want us to make?

What do you want us to achieve?

Here is what we're thinking: We want to work to bring visible community activities and a couple of active businesses back to our very small downtown. This won't be easy and it won't be fast, but it is possible. I'm not sure what businesses make sense and are sustainable and the village council can't start or create businesses,

but we are working to make the downtown more pleasing and attractive to small businesses. We want to take advantage of the bike path passing through our community and make the village more accessible and welcoming to visitors and new residents.

We are planning to have a Music and Art festival in July 2013. This will be a community event with a block party and dances on Friday and Saturday evening.

What else do you want us to set as goals? We welcome your input and ideas. Please attend a council meeting or write us an email or letter with your thoughts. You can also send an email to SpringValley@gmail.com, call my phone (shown below) or write us at POB 418.

3. The community budget

We'd like to share information on the village's budget

a) Projected income and expenses this year:

General Fund - Income: \$80,000; Expenses: \$129,000*

Streets - Income: \$17,000; Expenses: \$25,000

Motor Vehicle - Income: \$12,000; Expenses: \$16,000

Police - Income: \$7,000; Expenses: \$7,000

Water - Income: \$110,000; Expenses: \$122,000

a) What are our primary costs?

Employee wages are our primary costs.

b) What have we done to date?

Reduced the cost of the street lights by 22%

Adjusted employee salaries to maintain the same level of reimbursement, but have more of the expenses be covered by the Water Administrator salary.

Monitor expenses and still working to further reduce or eliminate costs

*General Fund expenses are abnormally high this year due to the Main St. project.

If you have questions about the details of a given fund, please contact us using one of the methods listed at the beginning of this letter.

The Water fund is a Utility and the income and expenses are separate by law from the other Funds. The ongoing water system expenses and income are planned out for 50+ years to maintain the system with regular maintenance activities. It will require a regular increase in rates over time in order to keep up with inflation. The expected increase on an annual basis is 3.5%. The water fund balance is reviewed annually and adjustments to the water rates depend on the projected income and expenses to maintain the necessary balance to properly maintain the water system. We monitor the expected balance of the fund and adjust water service fees to maintain the appropriate ratio of income to maintenance costs.

4. 2013 - Music & Art Festival

In line with our vision of adding community events and bringing in visitor and potential residents and businesses, the Village Council is planning to start a local Music and Art Festival. We are targeting to have the "First Annual Spring Valley Music & Art Festival" after the Main St. project is completed in 2013. Doug Walters, Council President, is leading the organization and planning for this festival. We welcome all input, volunteers, and ideas in order to make this a successful endeavor.

5. June 16 - Clean up Day

The Council has ordered two 6-ton dumpsters to be available June 16. These are available to village residents to remove large trash items. The dumpsters will be placed along Maple St. next to the bike path. Do not dump hazardous material. Signs will be posted describing allowed and disallowed materials.

Respectfully,

Eric Snell, Mayor, Village of Spring Valley

937.604.0357 (cell) 937.862.4726 (home)

ericjasonsnell@gmail.com springvalleyoh@gmail.com

The Village Council is trying to put together a "**Welcome Package**" for new residents. Other than the obvious businesses, we are hoping to add anyone who has a home business or trade that you would like to have added. We are also hoping local merchants will add coupons or discounts. Mary Kay, Avon, dog watching, accountants, babysitting, or trades are welcome. Please contact springvalleyoh@gmail.com or call (937) 862-4475 if you would like to be included by June 1, 2012. www.springvalleyohcouncil.com

SPRING VALLEY LIONS CLUB—Dave Jordan

The fiscal year for the Spring Valley Lions has come to its end. Looking back over the year - it has been a successful year for the club to make donations to some local charities and International Lions. We would like to thank all those who patronized our food trailer at different events, and look forward to seeing old friends in the coming year. Election of officers was held. Lori Carroll will again serve as President; Chris Carroll will serve as secretary. They both attended the District 13J Convention in April in Chillicothe, and they both attended seminars that will enable them to be more effective in their offices. Dave Jordan, the treasurer, will be attending the state convention in Dublin, Ohio in May. He will also attend various seminars there that will assist him in his office. As far as membership, the club extends an invitation to anyone who would be interested in joining the Spring Valley Lions. You can do so by contacting any Lions member that you know, Jimmy Smith, or Dave Jordan.

The club lost two members since the last newsletter - Roy Owens and Lorraine McCoy. They will be sadly missed and the club sends our sympathy to their families.

SPRING VALLEY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE —Judy Madden

The Spring Valley Area Chamber of Commerce quarterly business dinner meeting will be Wednesday **August 8th** at the George Barrett Cement House located at 4 E. Main St. in Spring Valley. Dinner will be at 6:00pm and our program will start at 6:45pm. This will be a carry-in dinner and the Chamber will provide the meat, drinks, and table service. Just bring something to share and put in a reservation by calling Judy Madden at 862-4110 or Pat Zehring at 862-6621.

Our program is going to be our Eighth **Mini Antique Road Show**. We are asking that you bring one item per person for evaluation and remember these are going to be suggested values. Our guest speaker will be Gloria Phillips. This program is always a lot of fun.

Our next business meeting will be November 7th with our program to be announced later.

4-H

Clover Valley 4-H Club - Mya Lockhart, News Reporter

January 8, 2012

The Clover Valley 4-H Club elected officers: President - Maria Smith; Vice President - Missy Kelleher; Secretary - Clara Haines; Treasurer - Destiny Miller; News Reporter - Mya Lockhart; Historian - Alyssa Waggoner; Flag Keeper - Valerie Spicuzza; Recreation - Megan Miller; Sergeant at Arms - Megan McPherson.

February 25, 2012

The Clover Valley 4-H club took a field trip to the Spring Valley Fire House and learned the basics of being a firefighter. They got to dress in the heavy coat and pants and got to spray the hose as a team. They learned how to work together and about fire safety.

April 7, 2012

The Clover Valley 4-H Club filled Easter Eggs and hid them for the annual community hunt at Walton Park. They enjoyed it and even got a little candy at the end.

2012 Easter Egg Hunt Prize Winners

	Ages 0-3	Ages 4-6	Ages 7-9	Ages 10-12
Golden Egg	Tyler Thompson	Faith Mangan	Madison Haney	Tahner Snell
1st prize	Lamya Harding	Jordis Keck	Luke Miller	Christopher Keirn
2nd prize	Kara Hall	Kya Sims	Luke Miller	Travis Foster
3rd prize	Bobby Urschel	Savanna Johnson	Elijah Smith	Thomas Foster

Thanks to all who came out and participated!

The Clover Valley 4-H Club does the Easter Egg Hunt as a Community Service. The Club plans the event by selecting candy & prizes, filling the eggs, hiding the eggs and running the event. A Big Thank You to the Spring Valley ACTS for sponsoring this event!

Our next two Community Services planned are placing flags for Memorial Day on the Veteran's graves in Spring Valley Cemetery to honor and remember them for their sacrifices given to our country. Also again this year, we will be planting a 'quilt square' with various flowers located in Founders Park along the bike path, sponsored by Spring Valley Historical Society, Greene County Master Gardeners and Spring Valley Gardens.

SPRING VALLEY COMMUNITY LIBRARY — Sue Losekamp

1 E Walnut St Telephone & Fax# 937- 862-4538

Hours: Mon & Wed 3 – 7, Tues & Thurs 2 – 6, Sat 10 – 2**Note: We will be closed July 2, 3 & 4 for Independence Day****SUMMER READING**

Our summer reading program will begin on **Wednesday July 11th at 5:00pm** and continue for the following 3 Wednesdays. We will have stories, snacks and crafts for pre-kindergarten to middle school children. The older children will be reading and discussing the book **100 Dresses** by Eleanor Estes. This is a classic but timely story about bullying. And we will try to actually make (perhaps with some help from other groups) 100 Dresses (or Britches) for charity groups in Haiti, Africa, or other impoverished areas. We welcome donations of washable material (1 yard minimum), elastic, ribbon, and bias tape. Please call [862-4538] or drop by the Library to enroll for this fun program.

New ADULT FICTION:**Calico Joe** John Grisham**Unnatural Acts** Stuart Woods**Breaking News** Fern Michaels**Calling Invisible Women** Jeanne Ray**A Dog's Journey** W. Bruce Cameron**Letter from a Stranger** Barbara Taylor Bradford**Stay Close** Harlan Coben**The Shoemaker's Wife** Adriana Trigiani**Harbor Nocturne** Joseph Wambaugh**2312** Kim Stanley Robinson**New NON-FICTION:****Heroes for My Daughter** Brad Meltzer**Illustrated Guide to Chickens** Celia Lewis**New for YOUNG ADULTS:****The Accidental Hero** Matt Myklusch**Chomp** Carl Hiaasen**Moon Over Manifest** Clare Vanderpool**The Grave Robber's Apprentice** Allan Stratton**New for CHILDREN:****May B.** Caroline Starr Rose**War Horse & Farm Boy** Michael Morpurgo**Toy Story: a spooky adventure****Miss Fox's Class Goes Green****Spider-Man Versus Venom****Flat Stanley and the Firehouse****Mole's Babies****Puss in Boots Look and Find****New DVDs:****The Muppets****The Adventures of Tintin****True Grit****Gulliver's Travels**

We will be taking orders for the COMMUNITY CALENDAR in the next few weeks. This calendar shows the dates of Village Council and Township Trustees meetings, Fire Department drills and meetings, ACTS, Chamber of Commerce, and Lions Club meetings, special events in the village, plus the birthdays and anniversaries of your friends and neighbors. Order your calendar today—just \$6 for the calendar and that includes up to 4 listings. (Additional listings are just \$.50 each.) This began as a Spring Valley School project, so the calendar runs from September to August, the traditional school year. Order your's today!

SPRING VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring Valley Historical Society meets at 7pm at the George Barrett Concrete House on Main St. on the 3rd Thursday of every other month. The remaining meetings in 2012 will be: July 19th, September 20th, and November 15th. Contact person is Bettylou Sullivan, (937) 862-4573. Call and leave message if you need additional information.

The next Spring Valley **Historic Walking Tour** will be on **September 9**, 2012, noon till 4pm. Tours start at the Barrett House. There is no charge, but donations are welcomed.

The Historical Society is looking for **photos of war veterans** who have served our country. They will be displayed at the Potato Festival. Send/request info to jamesbird@earthlink.net or Gary Zehring at gapz@netzero.net

Spring Valley Village and Township by Carl E Smith.

The village of Spring Valley, oddly enough, didn't begin where it is now. It had its start on the other side of the Little Miami River from where it is now, on the land belonging to Washington Alexander, South Carolina ancestor of some well known Alexanders of this region. The old stage route ran up that side of the river, with a famous old stage coach inn. The settlement was called "Transylvania" meaning "across the woods". Many celebrities, we're told, stayed there, including President Monroe once, and others whose names elude now. It was a historic old hostelry. – *continued next Pump.*

SPRING VALLEY JUNIOR FIRE DEPARTMENT—*Amanda Zehring*

Would you like to experience hands-on training of what it would be like to be a firefighter? If you are between the ages of 14 and 21, then please join us for our next training. For further information contact Amanda Zehring at amanda.zehring@yahoo.com.

Congrats to the high school seniors who graduated, and welcome our three new members!

SPRING VALLEY PARK DISTRICT—*Tracey Wright*

Youth Softball games begin May 31st.

Walton Park is getting new playground equipment this summer – paid for partially by the park district and partially by a grant we received this spring.

SPARTUNES – *Shery Snell*

Spartunes **Spring Concert** will be held on Friday, **June 1st** at 7:00pm at the United Methodist Church, along with recital performances by the students of Snell Music Studio.

SPRING VALLEY SENIOR CENTER NEWS

1489 Spring Valley-Paintersville Rd., Spring Valley, Ohio 45370
Center Hours: 9am to 4pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday, and 6pm to 9pm Friday
(937) 862-4475 Telephone # (937) 862-9975 Fax # svcenters@yahoo.com

Spring Valley Senior Center continues to offer activities for seniors and keeps trying to add some new ones! We've started showing a **movie on the third Friday afternoon** and have had a good turnout for "The Help" and "War Horse" so far. June 15th we will be showing "Courageous". Anyone interested in Scrabble or Bridge? (not going at this time but have had request) How about some new Euchre or Canasta players or Pool or Cornhole? We welcome anyone 50+ interested in joining us.

Our membership meeting put three new board members on – Harold (Junior) McCoy (returning after a year or so off), Joe Martin, and Karen Atwood. They will join Linda Blanton, Louise Holton, Gayle Miller, Dick Nettles, and Sharon Neff. We thank Esther Hofferbert, Joy Muterspaw, and Bonnie Berry for the work they did in their last term. Also at the meeting, Carrie Smith reported that the SV Twp trustees have architect's plans for the upgrades and are working on getting EPA approval for change-of-use so that we can begin putting in the lift, handicapped-accessible restrooms, new heating and air, new flooring, etc in the Lodge and they are applying for additional grant money for bigger windows and new doors. We will probably be six-months behind schedule on the move but Mr. Barker that owns the Schoolhouse has indicated that they will extend the lease for the period (probably till June). The Board has looked into CAP (Community Action Partnership) meals and we are looking at \$2 meals catered in for 2013, supplemented by Area Agency on Aging.

Volunteer Appreciation in April recognized 43 volunteers for 2680 plus hours. Volunteer of the year is Suzanne Earnhart of Mount Holly, who helps serve meals three days a week, plays cards afternoons, linedances, and does Wii bowling. She's a very friendly and welcoming person here at the center! Also honored was Esther Hofferbert, who lives on Hussey Pike and has been a daily presence, clearing tables and baking pies for the Center, as well as playing dominoes, and serving on the Board of Directors. She was added to our Hall of Fame for 10 years + of service to the center.

We have a **craft supply/garage sale** at the center Thursday and Friday, **May 31 and June 1** from 9am to 2pm. Sandy is clearing out a lot of the ceramics stock so if you know anyone interested in ceramics tell them about us! We will have 150 molds, ready-to-paint bisque, a 9' pouring table, and a small kiln. We have several quilt tops that need finished, a number of quilt panels, and a PVC quilting frame. There are many embroidery books and patterns, kits, and all kinds of odds-and-ends crafting supplies. There will even be a couple of pieces of yard equipment. Come check out what we're selling! There are some pictures on our website www.springvalleyseniorcenter.com

Thanks to those who came to our Ham & Beans Dinner. Attendance was sparse - maybe it was too warm for beans or people don't think of it as Sunday dinner, or there may be too many things going on, especially with the Fire Dept Pancake Day the same weekend... we still brought in over \$300, with about 2/3 of that profit that will go toward our new building. We raffled off a donated afghan and Joy McCoy was the lucky winner. Our next meal is our **June birthday carry-in / 25th anniversary party** on **Friday June 22** at 6 pm. Hotdogs and hamburgers will be provided. There is no charge and we'd love to have you join us!

Don't forget that the public is welcome to come for lunch – all ages – from 11:30 to 1 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. We have menus available with the main entrée, although we also always have fried fish, chicken, chicken salad,

salads, and vegetables. We will be starting to serve summer salad plates with lettuce and fruit and you can get it with chicken salad or cottage cheese for \$5. Most main dishes are \$3 and sides and drinks for \$1. Most people can eat for \$6 or less! We have pies most days, although our main pie-maker, Esther Hofferbert is currently recuperating from a broken shoulder. The director and staff will try to take up the slack, but you might have to carry your own tray to the dishwasher area!

Menu for the week of May 28: Mon- closed for Memorial Day, Tue- chicken divan, Thur- Swiss steak, Fri- hamburgers, chicken & noodle soup; week of June 4: Mon- Polish sausage, Tue- chopped steak, Thur- baked chicken, Fri- sausage gravy & biscuits; Week of June 11: Mon- pork chops, Tue- cabbage rolls, Thur- sub sandwiches, Fri- Janet's burgers, vegetable soup.

For those into crafts, we've recently had some great classes on hardanger embroidery, Swedish weaving, and floral bouquet quilts. We'll be doing folded star ribbon ornaments June 8. The quilt room is taking a break from classes for a month but you can still bring in your ideas and work on projects! It will be open. We'll also be gearing up for things to sell at Potato Festival... Come join in the activities and be part of a community! *Janet Miller*

SPRING VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Office phone: 862-7691 Office hours: M – F, 9am-12noon

Pastors: Gary and Sandi Maynard, Home phone: 429-9539

Pastors' e-mail: Sandigary@prodigy.net

Web site: www.commoncupchurches.org/svumcpartyline

Church e-mail: SpringValleyUMC@gmail.com

Sunday School: 9:15, Worship: 10:30

COMING SOON:

Alumni Sunday, June 3rd. We had such a wonderful time getting together with visiting alumni and friends last spring that we're doing it again... complete with the "Gloria" led by Shirley Koogler, music duets with Pat Richardson and Lorna Cummings, and an awesome quartet! Reception following the service.

COME JOIN US for a special time of worship, and fellowship!

SPRING VALLEY "MOVIE NIGHTS" ARE BACK!

FREE! FREE! Dinner & a Movie with... POPCORN, COOKIES, HOT DOGS, AND LEMONADE!

Come gather at Thompson Pavilion for movie #1, Friday, **June 15th** starting at dusk/8:30ish.

Bring your own blanket and lawn chair for a great, FAMILY movie: "*Soul Surfer*".

In case of rain, movie will be shown in the church.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS, BRING THE KIDS! SEE YOU THERE!

Our annual WORK WEEK returns, beginning Mon. **June 25th**. Contact the church office @ 862-7691 if you need work done, or would like to help serve others in the Village.

ICE CREAM BLAST: Sat, **July 28**, 4:00 to 7:00 pm. (More info later)

COMMUNITY CARNIVAL, **August 25!**

On this Saturday afternoon, Spring Valley families are invited to come together to share in some great family fun and games... of our own creation. Each family is invited to create and host a station such as penny toss, face painting, cake walk, cow patty bingo, dunking tank, bounce house, etc. Put on your thinking cap and let your loved ones know you need their help, as we offer a community wide, back-to-school carnival to all of our neighbors.

Questions: contact team leader, Shery Snell, or Pastor Sandi, or Carla Smith.

So far we have... the Snells – Penny Toss, the Harners - Cake Walk, the Pikes – White Elephant sale, etc. Recruit your adult children and grandkids and put on your thinking caps. How many game stations do you think we might be able to have?

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL SPRING VALLEY GRADUATES!

Ruth Lyons' 50-50 Club – Part 2

Last edition of the Pump featured Ruth Lyons, the pioneering Cincinnati radio and TV talk show host who entertained millions of Midwesterners from the 1920s through 1967, when she retired. Listening to her show was a big part of growing up in Spring Valley in that era. As might be expected, her long career mingling with many famous people produced a lot of colorful stories. The following accounts are drawn from a thorough and readable biography, *“Before Oprah: Ruth Lyons, the Woman Who Created Talk TV,”* by Michael Banks, available from the Spring Valley Library. Disaster brought Ruth to a wider audience in 1937, when days of rain caused the worst flood of Cincinnati’s history, with the Ohio River cresting just under 80 feet, more than 25 feet above flood stage. The studios of WKRC radio, where Ruth was hosting a show called “A Woman’s Hour,” were located in the Alms hotel on one of Cincinnati’s famous seven hills, and the staff was asked to stand by to continue broadcasting during the emergency. The staff slept on their desks with telephone books for pillows, broadcasting evacuation warnings and emergency instructions. The disaster was compounded as gasoline and oil tanks from a nearby tank farm broke loose or began leaking, covering the water with inches of gas and oil. A sparking trolley wire ignited the mix, setting two square miles of water on fire, engulfing several factory buildings in flames as workers fled and Cincinnati firefighters strove to contain the fires. At one point a policeman rowed Ruth downtown, where the water covered the streetlights. During the disaster, WKRC radio was the most powerful station still on the air, and thousands were introduced to Ruth’s voice as she reported during the disaster and raised funds for the Red Cross as the waters receded.

Broadcasters were frequently asked to support charitable causes, and in 1939 Ruth and her staff were invited to entertain patients at Children’s Hospital. Ruth was shocked by the bleakness of the hospital surroundings, which surely would add to the difficulties faced by a sick child often far from home and family. At Christmas time, she found out that the hospital put up a small tree in its lobby to be enjoyed by those who were able to leave their beds, and each child was given an orange. She shared this bleak picture with her audience, begging them to donate whatever they could spare to buy toys for the children. She arranged to purchase toys at a discount at a local store, and she and her staff wrapped them and delivered them to the children, one staffer dressed as Santa. Thus began “The Christmas Fund”, an annual tradition that soon began to raise millions, enabling the staff to give gifts on birthdays and other holidays. The Ruth Lyons Children’s Fund continues to support children in 17 area hospitals. Details may be found at WLWT’s web site, www.wlwt.com (enter “Lyons” on the search feature on the website).

Ruth loved the Cincinnati Reds, frequently appearing in their dugout wearing a Reds baseball cap. In 1961 the Reds had an especially good team, fueling hopes for a World Series title, and Ruth wrote a song, “Rally Round the Reds,” which she sung frequently on the air – and soon had her audiences singing it too. In 1956, many Reds had made it onto the All Star team, so in 1957, Ruth decided the All Star game should consist entirely of her favorites – all Reds! Although today coaches, fans, players, and managers select All Star teams, in 1957 fans alone selected the teams, and Ruth knew how to reach out to Reds fans. She urged her listeners to flood the mail with letters for Reds players, and to get their friends to write in as well. The flood of mail had the desired result: an all Reds team, but it also caused complaints! The baseball commissioner looked into the matter and quickly replaced some of the Reds with other players. It was several years before Major League baseball again allowed the All Star team to be selected by fan votes. Ruth had a gift for putting people at ease on her show, but occasionally controversy or tensions erupted on the show. Ruth had no tolerance for racism. In 1952, she invited Arthur Lee Simpkins, a black singer with a pure tenor voice to appear on the show. Simpkins seemed ill at ease, so for his second number Ruth suggested a popular song of the day, and danced with him for a few minutes after he sang. Ruth frequently danced with a guest, but had never danced with a black man. Many fans were upset, but others supported her action. Ruth ignored the hate mail and invited Simpkins back on the show several times.

Occasionally guests were rude. Annette Funicello, a young star of the Walt Disney TV show, did not know who Ruth was and let Ruth know on the air that she was put off by having to appear on a show with an old woman. Ruth stalked off the set with the theme music still playing and yelled to her secretary, “Get Walt on the phone right now!” Disney heard what was on Ruth’s mind, and Annette joined a small group of celebrities who were never invited back on the 50-50 Club.

Submitted by Barb Fouke

The *Village Pump* is available online at www.springvalleyoh.com or if you would like the “Pump” emailed directly to you each month, just email to losekamp@aol.com with “Subscribe Pump” in the subject line.