

Volume Eleven
Issue One
Early Winter 2004



Merchantville Borough Newsletter

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those serving our country, especially those from Merchantville and our neighboring communities. Godspeed your safe return.

"We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression...everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship in his own way...everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want...everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear...anywhere in the world."

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Yep, it's that time of year again! Bring your brothers and sisters and friends (and your parents, too!) to the **Annual Easter Egg Hunt**, held on the lawn of the **Community Center** on **Saturday, April 19th**, beginning at **10:00 AM**. It's for all children (& grandkid's, too!) from the fifth grade and under.

They'll be lots of eggs to find, candies and treats!

Make sure you bring a basket to collect the goodies.

Parents, grandparents and guardians: Be sure to bring a camera to this fun-filled Merchantville tradition. If raining, then it will be held in the Merchantville School Gym (along Chapel Ave).

8th Annual Merchantville: Spring Fine Arts & Crafts Fair

Saturday, May 17th from 10:00 am 'til 4:00 pm

Rain or shine in downtown Merchantville

Call for Artists of all Ages: Juried Fine Arts & Crafts Show & Sale

Please Register by April 17th for the early bird discount.

Main Street Merchantville: 5 East Park Avenue, Merchantville, NJ 08109

For more information, call **856.665-7372**.

Funding has been made possible by Camden County Cultural & Heritage Commission through the NJ State Council on the Arts, Department of State, A Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

You're invited to **Neighborhood Nights with Borough Council**. Everyone is always welcomed to participate in Borough Council meetings; however, the schedule below is specifically dedicated to your neighborhood. So, get together with your friends and neighbors and visit Borough Council. The information, input and ideas you provide can only help to make this Borough better! *Hope to see you there!*

- **West End:** West of Browning Rd: **April 28th**
- **Mid-Town:** Alexander & Chapel; west to Browning Rd: **June 23rd**
- **Cattell Tract:** North of railroad station & Chestnut Ave: **September 22nd**
- **Town Center:** From Alexander & Chapel to Cove & Westminster: **Oct. 27th**
- **East End:** Cove & Church to Ivins Ave: **November 24th**

The Mayor & Borough Council meet in Council Chambers in Borough Hall, 1 W. Maple at 7:30 PM on the 2nd & 4th Monday of each month (except for July and August when the meetings are on the 2nd Monday only). Remember: The public is always invited to Council meetings...stop on by! Get involved!

Do Your Part: Vote! It takes just a few minutes!

School Board Election and Budget Vote is scheduled for **Tuesday, 15 April from 2:00 PM until 9:00 PM**.

All Borough Districts will cast their votes in the Library at the Merchantville School, 130 South Centre Street. See ya there!

Note: April 14th, 3PM is the deadline for obtaining absentee ballot application in person at the County Clerk's office.



Creating Awareness to Stop Abuse: CASA

A newly formed Domestic Violence Response Team will be handling calls in both Pennsauken and Merchantville communities. The team consists of trained, certified responders (both men and women) that will lend an empathetic ear and furnish options to victims of domestic violence.

ALL ENCOUNTERS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

This service is available 24 hrs/day & 7/days per week.

The team is committed to

Creating Awareness to Stop Abuse (remember CASA!).

For more information, or to become a volunteer, please contact:

Ptl. Michael Haigh at 856.662.0507.

Next Time You Buy Groceries,

Pick Up Some Cash for Our Schools

Clip and save your box tops for both Merchantville Elementary and St. Peter's schools! If you clip coupons from hundreds of participating General Mills products, our schools will receive 10 cents for each one! That's up to \$20,000 for each school year!

Making a difference has never been so easy!

So clip those box-tops and give them to a neighborhood child to deliver to the schools. To learn more about this program how Merchantville schools can earn cash, go to:

*boxtops4education.com or call
Mary Beth Creamer at 488.0398.*



The Borough's Construction Official and Building Inspector, Bill Joseph is on active duty.

Our prayers and good wishes are with him.

*Until his return, here are the
Temporary Construct'n Office Hours:*

TUESDAY EVENINGS 5:30-9:30PM

PLEASE RING BELL

**AT BASE OF MAPLE AVENUE ENTRANCE STEPS
FOR CONSTRUCTION OFFICIAL**

A new committee has been created through the efforts of members from several vital organizations in town. The MAC Committee is an outgrowth of the Borough's Public Events Committee, MBPA Marketing Committee, Main Street's Promotions Committee, The Recreation Committee and the Volunteer Council.

Merchantville Activities Coordination Committee

The mission this committee is: 'To market and promote Merchantville as a commercial destination both locally and regionally through the organization and coordination of positive image events and retail promotions, as well as publication

of an annual calendar of activities. To structure a process for submission, documentation and oversight of all community events and promotions in order to facilitate a positive image of Merchantville and attract a broader market of consumers.'

The goals of this committee are:

- *To build a broad based committee including representatives from business, government and community groups.*
- *To create a process for submission, documentation and coordination of community events and retail promotions.*
- *To support marketing and promotion of events through development of a community activities resource and information packet.*
- *To accept input and publish an annual community activities calendar.*
- *To communicate to the public allied opportunities to enhance existing events or promotions. To advise, inform and educate the community about this committee and process.*

In simple terms, the MAC committee will act as a clearing house for events and provide materials and advice to anyone running an event in the Borough.

Monthly meetings take place on the **first Thursday** of each month at **5 West Park Avenue** at **9 a.m.** These meetings are open to the public and an informational MACC voice mailbox will be provided at 665-6211.

Visit the Borough's website at

www.merchantvilleNJ.com

For the up-to-date information on Merchantville

News.....Business Directory.....Shopping Specials.....Events Calendar.....School Information.....Community.....Government....and more! *It's just a "click" away!*





BOROUGH CAN ACCEPT ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS!

The Borough accepts electronic payments for both property tax and Merchantville Sewer Utility charges through online service companies and banks. It is important to use your Block and Lot Number, and in some cases a Qualifier Number, so that your payment can be applied to your account. Unfortunately, if this information is not on the electronic payment, we must return the payment to the payor, thereby resulting in additional interest charges that may be levied against you.

At one time, the Borough used "account numbers" but with the update in technology, they are no longer used. Your Block, Lot, and Qualifier number appears on your tax bill and on your sewer bill; or you can contact the tax office to obtain this information, 856-662-2474 ext 102.

Also, for your convenience, there is a night deposit box to the left of the front entrance to the Borough Hall.

The **Office of Emergency Management** is becoming a very active organization in the Borough of Merchantville! The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) has been meeting regularly to update the Emergency Plan in case of disaster. While we hope never a need to implement it, it's very important to be prepared and to have a plan (especially given the world's circumstances).

As a result of the plan, we are asking you to notify us of any Borough residents who have any special needs, such as a disability or health condition. This information will help Emergency Personnel to be ready to provide any special assistance to those in need or who are homebound in the event of an emergency. We're also asking for volunteers who are Amateur Radio Operators to assist with communications. These operators will enable the Fire, Police, EMS, and other agencies to communicate according during an emergency.

Please contact Christina Zia, Emergency Management Coordinator for the Borough at 662.2474, ext 162 for more information.

"He who plants trees, loves others besides himself."

Thomas Fuller

Have you ever thought of planting a tree because it's a gift to be enjoyed by many yet holds special private significance; to commemorate a birth, or because it's your way of "making a difference"? Here's your chance to take advantage of a unique opportunity being offered through your Shade Tree Commission. We are offering a limited number of native trees to be planted *anywhere* in Merchantville, anyplace you wish!

- Your cost is 50% off the cost of a similar tree, from a reputable nursery, AND the tree will be professionally planted for FREE. Each tree will be 1 1/2 to 1 3/4" in diameter.
- Why native trees? They have a long lifespan (as compared to today's "fashionable" trees); are disease resistant; provide excellent shade and are majestic during their middle and later years.
- *Anywhere* means just that. Your lawn, their lawn (with permission) or anywhere on public property including our lovely parks! Wherever you like! *So long as it's in Merchantville*

Are you ready to do a good thing? *"Leave" it to us!* Call the Shade Tree Commission by **May 16th at 662-2474 ext 173**. The Merchantville Shade Tree Commission meets at 7:30 PM, the second Wednesday of each month, at the Merchantville Library. We can all serve Merchantville better by knowing *your* Borough and Street Tree concerns. *Come join us!*



Speaking of Trees!

The Borough of Merchantville and the Merchantville Shade Tree Commission will be celebrating **Arbor Day** with a tree planting on **Friday, May 2nd at 10:00 AM** at the **Emergency Medical Squad Build'g on East Park Avenue**.

This year the MEMS will be honored for their 30 Years of dedicated service to the Borough. All are invited!

It's better to be safe than sorry.

From the Community Affairs/Crime Prevention Office:

This is a warning about SCAMS presently being attempted in other communities regarding efforts to gain entrance to a home stating that they're from a utility company and they need to check your gas, or water, or electric. Unless you've called a utility company and the person at your door can show proper Identification... **DO NOT** let them in. Call the police. Should they show you an ID and you're still uncomfortable...don't hesitate to call the police. The police don't mind checking things out, and "real" utility workers will not object to it.

Also, if someone solicits work around your home, call the police. This could be someone offering to do tree work, or paint your house, or do lawn work. No one may solicit in the Borough without registering with the police. Call us at **662.2474 ext 120** or **662.0507** and we'll check things out. *Be safe!*

Did you know???

Attention All Dog Owners!

State law requires that all dogs be licensed. If your dog does not have a Year 2003 tag, please bring a copy of your pet's rabies vaccination (Please note: It MUST be valid through November 30th, 2003) and, if applicable, proof of neutering to the Borough Clerk's office.

The office is located in Borough Hall and is open from 9AM 'til 5PM, Monday through Friday. Licenses are \$7.00 for neutered pets and \$10.00 for non-neutered. Please call 662.2474 ext. 103 for more info.

Valid Rabies Inoculation certificates and proof of neutering MUST be presented to obtain a license.

The **"Welcome To Merchantville"** sign is being refurbished. It should be back in place very soon, gracing the entrance to the **"Borough Beautiful."**

Merchantville Garden Club

The Garden Club is looking for help around town. Please call Kathryn Gorski at 663-5099 if you are interested in weeding, planting and/or watering at any of our gardens at the Gazebo, Merchantville circle, Borough Hall, the planters along the railroad berm and at Browning Road.

The Garden Club is a small, fun group and could really use your assistance to make the Borough as Beautiful as it can be....give us a call at 663-5099 today!



ATTENTION ALL YOU WALKERS!

Next time out why not grab a plastic bag and pick-up some litter and trash as you get your daily exercise. Thank you in advance for your help!

Dept. of Public Works Update

Please remember:

There's no scheduled leaf and debris pick-up during the Spring; so, please bag your leaves and tie all branches and twigs...they'll be picked up on your regular trash day.

Note: Yard cleanup debris (leaves, twigs and weeds) gathered by a landscaper or cleanup contractor/service must be taken away for disposal by your contractor.

Please limit the weight of all containers and bags to approximately 40 lbs/each. *Thanks!*

"We'll get by with a little help from our friends..."

The Department would appreciate it if property owners would go one step further, and take a few extra minutes to help clean up debris along their curb and place the gatherings in bags or containers and put it out with regular trash. This consideration would be most helpful in keeping the storm sewers open for free flow during spring rains (which we could use to offset further drought). Your efforts will go along way to making this truly the "Borough Beautiful!"

Special Welcome to **Sam Slattery**, the Department's new Superintendent! *Welcome aboard, Sam!*

Sam and the MPWD can be reached at 665.0590; or 662.2474, ext.160.

Please save the insert in this newsletter regarding the Public Works Schedule for 2003. Please post it where it will be readily referenced in your home or business.

Overnight Parking Number: 662.2474, ext 116

Please call in nightly information regarding all vehicles not registered and permitted by the Borough if parked on any Borough street overnight.

NOTICE OF SEWER UTILITY RATE INCREASE

In 1996, the Borough of Merchantville and the Pennsauken Sewerage Authority (PSA) entered into an Interlocal Services Agreement whereby PSA agreed to continue to transmit the Borough's wastewater from the Borough's borders through Pennsauken to the CCMUA interceptor line. PSA also agreed to perform regular routine maintenance of our wastewater collection system. In return, the Borough (through the newly-created Merchantville Sewer Utility [MSU]) agreed that its user fees would not be less than the full rate charged by PSA to its customers. At the time of the agreement, there were no fee increases to our customers.

PSA has recently increased its fees and, for the first time, we are obligated to increase ours accordingly.

The new annual MSU fees effective as of January 1, 2003 are: Residential \$156.00; Senior Citizen \$74.00; Commercial \$132.00 minimum plus \$1.27 usage charge per 100 cu ft. The MSU commercial fee increase, while substantial, is the minimum we can contractually charge our commercial customers.

Your sewer bills will be mailed before the end of April and will be due on June 1st. Please note that the grace period for late payment without interest is 10 days. Payments received after June 10 will be charged interest as of June 1st.

If you have any questions about the sewer bills, please call 856-662-2474, ext 102.

The Award Winning **Merchantville Borough Newsletter** is published by the Mayor and Council, and is distributed as a service to the community.

For more information, please contact:

Paul Finnegan at 488.4408 or Paul Stridick at 486.0523