

Merchantville BOROUGH NEWSLETTER

Volume 14, Issue 3

Merchantville, New Jersey

Spring 2008



2008 BOROUGH NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 11th

MARCH 7th

MAY 9th

JUNE 27th

(Submissions due by 6/13/08)

AUGUST 15th

(Submissions due by 8/01/08)

OCTOBER 10th

(Submissions due by 9/26/08)

NOVEMBER 21st

(Submissions due by 11/07/08)

Email submissions to:

merchantvillenj@comcast.net

Direct delivery concerns to:

Community Affairs Officer

@ 856-662-2474 ext. 120

MUNICIPAL MEETINGS

Borough Council

2nd & 4th Monday of each month
7:30 p.m. Borough Hall

Board of Education

2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month
7:30 p.m. Public Library

Planning Board

2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month
7:30 p.m. Borough Hall

Historic Preservation

1st Tuesday of each month
7:30 p.m. Borough Hall

Shade Tree Commission

2nd Wednesday of each month
7:00 p.m. Public Library

Public Events

Monthly 7:30 Borough Hall

Board of Health

Quarterly 7:30 p.m. Borough Hall

Municipal Court

Every Wednesday
6:00 p.m. Borough Hall

Arbor Day 2008

This is the 31st year that Merchantville has celebrated Arbor Day. The first of the day's observances was held on Somerset Avenue where the Merchantville-Pennsauken Water Commission continued its long and generous tradition of supplying and planting a tree, this time curbside to the right of the driveway as you enter the Community Center. The Ornamental Japanese Cherry was welcomed to the neighborhood by a sizeable group including, I think, every member of the Water Commission administration and staff, former Mayor Burt German, and some members of the Shade Tree Commission. After the tree was planted, this year's Tree City, USA flag and glass desk ornament commemorating 30 years were displayed to the gathering. This achievement is the result of not only 30 years of Arbor Day observances but also the existence of an active community forestry management program involving a complex collaboration between a volunteer group – the Shade Tree Commission – and the municipal government, Public Works, utility companies, and others.



The second observance was held at the Merchantville School, at the site of a tree donated by the Merchantville High School class of 1958. Present at this ceremony



were Barbara (Grange) Campbell, a member of that class, Shawn Waldron and his seventh grade class, Vern Collins - class of '39, former Shade Tree Commission member and long active in the memorial tree and plaque programs - as well as Shade Tree Commission members Krista Lee, Bob Paulson, and Joanne Steer

The MHS class of 1958 tree was not planted by those gathered, however. It had been planted the previous day by Joe Cuzzupe. Joe has planted countless trees in our

town over the years using his own time and resources. In recognition of and appreciation for his contribution, this year's Arbor Day tree honors him. It is in Morissey Park. You can enjoy more photos of Arbor Day 2008 online @www.merchantville.com.

BOROUGH INFORMATION

Maple & Chapel Redevelopment

On Thursday, May 8th at 10:00 a.m. a groundbreaking ceremony took place on a new 7,900-square-foot facility that will be the home of PNC Bank and other retailers.

Parking study group seeks business input

The Ragan Design group has tentatively scheduled a parking committee meeting for business input on May 29th at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Center. The committee feels that it would be beneficial to have this meeting to allow more participation from the business community.

2008 Temporary Budget

Budget work sessions for 2008 wrapped up on March 10th. The budget isn't finalized but Council decided that until the state of New Jersey works out what will really happen with municipal aid cuts it is pointless to pass a budget before revenues can be predicted with any degree of accuracy. Since that will not take place before late June our municipality will be operating on a temporary budget until that time. That temporary budget was passed as Resolution R08-36 on March 24th.

1. Ambulance Replacement

Over the last few Council meetings there have been discussions on the condition of the ambulance which is 14 years old and in need of replacement. Council is considering several actions to take regarding this issue. Two options are: ambulance replacement or sharing EMS services with other municipalities. Further discussion will be ongoing.

New Zoning Official

With the departure of Walt Sikorsky, Eric Schmidt has been designated as the Code Enforcement Official (Resolution R08-40) and Zoning Officer (Resolution R08-41), both effective as of April First.

Safety

The police department would like to remind all residents to keep their vehicles locked and to keep any valuables left inside their vehicle out of sight. We have experienced a few thefts from unlocked vehicles, items stolen include GPS units and satellite Radios.

Ordinance O08-01

Over a year ago a fire gutted the interior and severely damaged the exterior of a home in the west end of town. The out-of-state owner has remained current on his property taxes but has not had the home repaired or the property even cleaned up since the fire. In order to address this and other similar cases Ordinance O08-01, was introduced. This ordinance creates an Abandoned Properties chapter in our Municipal Codebook and allows the borough to take action on any property which is vacant and not being maintained, but is current with taxes. Properties which are designated as "abandoned" are specifically spelled out by New Jersey State law. This ordinance ensures that the borough can protect neighbors and neighborhoods against damaged or neglected vacant property. This ordinance was passed unanimously on April 14th.

Ordinance O08-02

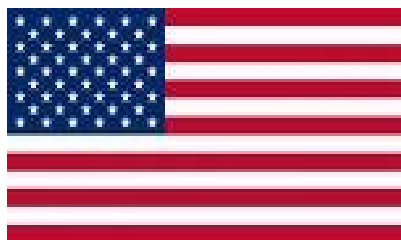
Several months ago, the developer of the Chestnut Station Senior apartments and town homes on West Chestnut requested that the "55 or older" age restriction provision of the redevelopment plan be removed in order to facilitate sale of the properties. A citizen's committee returned with a recommendation that the age restriction on the sales be dropped in return for some other considerations to the borough by the developer. Ordinance O08-02, adopted in a 4-1 vote on April 14th, dropped the age restriction but did not impose on the developer any of the considerations recommended by the citizen's committee.

Ordinance O08-03

As you know if you've been past the corner of Maple and Chapel in the last few weeks, there is a redevelopment now underway there. Part of the redevelopment agreement with the developer, RLC III, included a plan for short-term tax abatements and PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes). Ordinance O08-03 Codified this part of the redevelopment agreement. It was unanimously adopted on April 14th.

Meeting Reminders:

All proposed and adopted resolutions and ordinances are available to the public online @ www.merchantville.com or at Borough Hall between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. The public is welcome to attend Council meetings on the 2nd & 4th Monday of each month from September through May and on the 2nd Monday during the Summer months.



Memorial Day

Services for residents and the public will take place on Monday, May 26th at 10:00 A.M. at the Veteran's Memorial in Wellwood Park. These services will be held at Borough Hall if raining. Memorial Day, which was originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service. Please take a few minutes to join Merchantville in honoring those who have fallen and those who serve today.

PUBLIC WORKS INFORMATION

Trash Collection:

East side is Monday. Trash can not be placed at the curb before 3:00 PM Sunday. Should Monday be a Holiday trash will be collected Wednesday. West side is Tuesday. Trash can not be placed at the curb before 3:00 PM Monday. Wednesday is NON-BURNABLE day. Refrigerators (must have doors removed), washers, dryers, A/C's, all metals, household cleaning agents, paints, oil, auto batteries, and propane tanks. * Note: propane tanks MUST be empty.

Leaves:

Leaves may be placed at curb for pick up on regular trash collection day. THEY MUST BE BAGGED. DO NOT PLACE LEAVES IN THE STREET FOR COLLECTION UNTIL YOUR AREA HAS BEEN POSTED. The Public Works Department will post the area to be collected at least one week before work is to begin.

Trees:

You must receive permission from the Superintendent of Public Works before any trimming or cutting of trees between the curb line and sidewalk can be done.

Curbs & Sidewalks:

The cleaning and maintenance of curbs and sidewalks are the responsibility of the resident.

Recycling:

Friday is recycle day for the entire Borough. Materials to be collected can not be placed at the curb before 3:00 PM Thursday. To obtain a recycle bucket call Public Works at 856-665-0590. Recycling materials: newspapers, magazines, books (soft cover only) cardboard must be flattened. NO FOOD CONTAINER BOXES. Glass and plastic containers. FOOD CONTAINERS MUST BE RINSED

Recycling Reminder

Borough Ordinance 34-4 Recycling; preparation of garbage and trash for collection.

There is hereby established a program for the mandatory separation of garbage, trash and refuse from used newspapers and glass within the Borough of Merchantville. The occupant or owner of any building within the Borough of Merchantville shall separate all garbage, trash and refuse from all used newspapers and glass and shall place the items for disposal, removal and collection in accordance with the regulations listed below and any other regulations listed by the Director of Public Works of the Borough of Merchantville:

- A. Used newspapers. Used newspapers shall be bundled separately and secured in bundles not to exceed 50 pounds and shall not be contained in plastic bags. All cardboard containers shall be flattened in bundles and shall not exceed 50 pounds.
- B. Glass and metal containers shall be contained in reusable metal or plastic containers supplied by the occupant, Owner or borough.

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Should you have a questions or comments for Public Works or if you need a new recycle bucket you may contact the Superintendent at 665-0590 or the Community Affairs Office at 662-2474 Ext. 120

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Residents are reminded that trash should be placed at the curb no earlier that 3:00 PM on the day preceding your scheduled pickup.

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Anyone wishing to report violators are asked to call the police tip line at 856-662-2474, ext 166 and leave a message with the information.

Property Maintenance

This is the time of year when residents start to think about improvements to the outside of their homes and yards. Things such as swimming pools, decks, gazebos, new fences, sheds, garages, and additions. Please remember to contact the Code Enforcement, and Zoning Office BEFORE you start ANY home project. Eric Schmidt is the Code Enforcement and Zoning Officer. He will be glad to assist you in filing the proper forms for permits, variances, and any other paper-work necessary to get your project completed as quickly as possible. Please call Eric at 856-662-2474 ext.110 or email: codeenforcement@merchantville.com for an appointment to talk about the requirements and restrictions for each project.

Yard Clean-Up & Grass Cuttings

Spring has finally arrived, and Summer will soon follow. Residents are reminded to bundle all tree cuttings and brush. The bundles can be no longer than 4 feet, no larger than 24 inches in diameter, and weigh no more than 50 pounds. Leaves and grass clippings must be in bags or cans. All this type of debris will be collected on your normal trash day.

Call before the Fall

C & L Tree Service offers tree trimming and take down services including free firewood. Be sure to "call before the fall" to manage those pesky limbs. Office 856.663.3718 - Cell 609.519.0423 - Email: callbeforetheyfall@comcast.net.

2008 Primary Election

New Jersey will hold it's 2008 Primary Election on Tuesday, June 3rd from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Residents can access information about the election through The League of Women Voters or the Camden County Board of Elections. On May 28th sample ballots will be prepared and mailed to registered voters. May 13th is the last day to register to vote in the upcoming Primary Election.

The following residents have filed petitions for the primary :

Camden County Democrat Committee, Inc:

Edward ' Ted' Brennan and Guido A. Babore (primary ballot candidates)

Camden County Regular Republican Party:

Steve Volkert and Patricia Fields (primary ballot candidates)

Unaffiliated:

Gail E. Ford (primary write-in candidate)



Merchantville's 134th Birthday Celebration Saturday, June 7, 2008

Please join us on Saturday, June 7th for our 134th Birthday Celebration & Downtown Street Fair. This event brings residents, neighbors and visitors together for a day of shopping, exhibitions and yummy food in our historic downtown. Vendors will line Centre Street under tents brimming with a variety of unique products, services and tasty creations. A DJ, balloon bounces, dunk tank and performances by local dancers...a baby parade, huge birthday cake and much, much more. See you there!

Vendor spaces are still available.

Print a Registration Form online @www.merchantville.com

Email: merchantvillenj@comcast.net or call 856-486-2195.

Event Contact: Shawn Waldron

Sponsored By: The Borough of Merchantville Public Events Committee

Parks and Playgrounds Program

Merchantville's Parks and Playgrounds program will begin on Monday June 23, 2008 and run through July 25, 2008 at the Merchantville Community Center. The program is opened to children from 4 years old through 10 years old. The cost is \$125.00 for residents and \$150.00 for non - residents.

Registration will be held during the Merchantville Birthday celebration on June 7th and for the first week of the program. If you have any questions please contact Patti Fields @ 856 663 8691.



What should we do this summer?

WOODBINE SWIM CLUB

On Maple Ave behind Pinsetters

Opening Day

May 24th, 2008

A FAMILY TRADITION FOR 50 YEARS

Join Today!

Call Bridget Bray for membership questions

856-663-9742

New Dog Waste Removal Service Offered

All Dogs Poop offers "pooper scooper" service for your yard on a weekly, twice weekly, every-other week and one time service schedule with no contract required and satisfaction guaranteed. Cat owners get equal time and a litter box exchange service is offered. Born from owner Le Ann Frost's struggle to stay atop the daily "deposits" that her newly adopted greyhound was making, *All Dogs Poop* quickly grew into a thriving concern. There's a 10% discount for seniors and sight dogs. In addition, *All Dogs Poop* provides a public health service to the community. A number of common parasites that are harmful to humans-round worms and hook worms-can be found in dog feces and can affect your family while at play in your own yard. When left behind they can travel to our sewers through rainwater run-off and scientists estimate that this contributes to 20-30% of the pollution in our streams. Do your part to combat these serious health issues by contacting Le Ann at 856-665-6769 or visit www.alldogspoop.com for more information.

St. Peter School News

Diocese of Camden PTA Scholarship Winner

Marissa Wolfe, 8-1, has been awarded the Diocese of Camden PTA Scholarship for the Camden Region. There are 5 regions within the diocese and one student from each region is the recipient of this award. Marissa performed many hours of community service. She volunteered at Cooper Pediatrics in Camden and George B. Fine School in Pennsauken. At Cooper, she read to the waiting patients as part of Reach out and Read, a pediatric literary program. At Fine School Marissa was a kindergarten teacher's helper. She would read in different classes during story time and help during Kid Writing time.

This scholarship is given to students with overall academic excellence and true community involvement. We applaud Marissa for her accomplishments and congratulate her.

Zaner-Bloser Winners!

We are very pleased to announce that 3 of our students were chosen as winners of the 2008 Grade-Level State Handwriting Competition this year: Maureen Cornely, 7th Grade Winner; Ashley Russell, 4th Grade Winner ; and, Cecilia Ensell, 2nd Grade Winner

These winning entries will now be judged, along with the other school winners, in the National Grade-Level Competition.

Our Spring Open House

Many NEW FAMILIES visited the school this past Sunday. Prospective students and their parents interacted with our faculty and staff. Our student ambassadors were on their toes as they partnered with our parents to conduct several tours of our facilities. We truly thank all who made this day a success in so many ways.

Community Welcome Baskets

We are currently collecting items for the Merchantville Welcome Baskets from both businesses and local organizations. Many have been generous in the past and we know the new homeowners appreciate it. Please drop off 50 pieces to 6 Clifton Ave by May 15th for inclusion in the next distribution. Thank you for your support! Any questions please email: thekipps@comcast.net

St. Baldrick's Celebration

On Sunday, March 30th, several members of the Niagara Fire Company of Merchantville shaved their heads for a great cause. The St. Baldrick's Foundation began 8 years ago to raise awareness and funds to conquer kids' cancer. Yearly,



this celebration coincides with the St. Patrick's Day celebration and is now celebrated worldwide. The Collingswood Fire Department hosts this annual event, with participants including firefighters, police and EMT from all over Camden County.

For our team from Merchantville, the day began as a breakfast fundraiser *open to the public* at the Niagara Firehouse. Hot pancakes, eggs, sausage and bacon were served and last-minute funds were raised totally over \$575. The breakfast costs were donated by the Niagara Fire Company Membership. They then ventured to the Collingswood Scottish Rite Auditorium joining the other teams for the shaving. The Niagara Fire Company team raised over \$2000 with the all teams' participating raising over \$62,000. Thanks to all those who supported us! The breakfast fundraiser is open to the public, so

keep an eye out around town next year for flyers/newsletters containing more information.

Library Offers Film Forum and Antique Appraisals

The Library will also host the 'Aged to Perfection Antiques Warehouse' on Wednesday, 5/14 from 7-9 p.m. offering appraisals on your antiques. Admission is free and there is a \$7 per item appraisal fee. On June 4th and the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. the Library offers a film forum. Join us to watch a selected film and then for a discussion afterwards. Bring your dinner in a sack and join other adults for a classic film experience!

Register for these programs at the Merchantville Public Library, 130 South Centre Street. Phone: (856) 665-3128. Visit their website at www.camden.lib.nj.us/merchantville to see the full range of Spring and Summer programs offered



Merchantville Historical Society News

Community Center: The board approved an initiative to apply for the Community Center to be listed on the State and National Registers of Historical Sites. This status carries great weight when it comes to applying for various grants to enable the Borough to restore the building. We will seek guidance from Carol Benenson, who helped us with the Cattell Tract and the Centennial Houses.

Holiday House Tour: We are delighted to announce that Kathleen Boyle Laufer and Rita Boyle O'Brien have graciously consented to chair the house tour for 2008. These well-known sisters will bring enthusiasm, professionalism and energy to this much-anticipated event. Consider joining their committee to ensure an outstanding result. Contact them at: 856-304-3839 or SisterSales@Century21.com if you are able to lend a much appreciated hand or would like to showcase your home on the tour.

Birthday Celebration: The town's birthday celebration will be June 7th. Please email Marge if you will be able to spend some time sitting at our Society's table.

The Merchantville Historical Society memberships are continuing to be sent. We truly appreciate your support to enable us to channel our energies and focus on so many worthy projects.

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new neighbors & friends to our Wonderful Community!

Looking forward to a Busy & Successful Spring!

Kathy Boyle Laufer & Rita Boyle O'Brien

The #1 Team

& Your Exclusive Merchantville Representatives



Century 21 CGW

Cell: 856-304-3839 or 856-308-9536

SisterSales@Century21.com

Remember no question is too small or too irrelevant
We are here for all of your real estate needs and concerns!

Zoning Officer Retires

Best wishes to Walt Sikorski, who has dedicated over 50 years of service to the Borough of Merchantville in various capacities, including Borough Code Enforcement Official, Zoning Officer, Fireman and Fire Official. Joined by his friends and co-workers we celebrated with him at the 45th Street Pub. Councilwoman Pat Fields presented Walt with a proclamation and an engraved clock. Walt will be greatly missed but we wish him well in his retirement. Walt is now free to continue his quest to seek and catch the largest fish found within each of these waters.



Kids Learn On The Job

On April 24th the Borough participated in bring your child to work day. Chief Wayne Bauer along with CFO, Denise Moules and Deputy Clerk, Denise Brouse brought their daughters in to work for the day to learn about Municipal Government.

The children had a great experience and look forward to coming back again soon. We would also like to welcome Denise Moules to Merchantville as our new Chief Financial Officer. She comes to us from Barrington as a shared service to the Borough and is working part time. Congratulations and best wishes to her.

"Richard's Drive for the Goal" golf outing on June 9th is at Commonwealth National Golf Course in Horsham, PA. The Go4theGoal Foundation is a charitable organization honoring the life and spirit of resident Richard Glew Stefanacci and dedicated to helping support children diagnosed with cancer and their families and helping to find a cure for Ewing Sarcoma. We provide financial and emotional support so that they can experience all of the "normal" joys of childhood while they fight to achieve their goal of being healthy again soon. For more information about participating in this event visit www.go4thegoal.com. Join us for a fun day of golf at a great course for the perfect cause.

JOIN Kelly's Ride The mission of Kelly's Ride is to raise money for efforts that improve the quality of life for physically, academically, emotionally and spiritually disadvantaged girls and young women in tribute to the life and spirit of Kelly Marie Vogdes. Kelly's Ride benefits Amigos de Jesus Orphanage in Honduras, Robins' Nest, Inc. in New Jersey and The Kelly Marie Vogdes Scholarship Fund at Philadelphia University. Saddle up and register for Saturday, June 7th, when we host our third consecutive year! Register online @ www.kellysride.com.

See you at the Merchantville Arts Fest!

The 13th annual Merchantville Crafts and Fine Art Festival is right around the corner! On May 17th & 18th our town will be filled with people checking out fine arts and crafts by artisans coming from both near and far - 12 different states from New Hampshire to Florida! We are looking forward to a fantastic weekend and hope to see many residents checking out the artwork on Centre Street!

In addition to the artists on Centre Street, the Niagara Fire Company will be hosting a wine garden. All patrons to the garden must be 21 or older, and sales will benefit the fire company. Earth Tones at 19 North Centre and 13 North Art Gallery will be showcasing some of their featured artists during this event.

Business owners: the festival runs from 10AM to 5PM on Saturday and Sunday. This is a great opportunity to generate new business and possible repeat business with a bounce-back coupon. And don't forget to stay open for the duration of the festival. Even if you normally close at five consider the benefits of staying open late this weekend to maximize your potential.



We can all contribute to a fun and profitable Festival weekend. Remember to smile, and be patient with people unfamiliar with our town. Festival volunteers will be available to provide directions and information, and will be easy to spot in lime green Arts Fest Tees. There will also be an information booth set up at the Gazebo.

Other helpful information: Centre Street, from Maple to Walnut will be closed to vehicular traffic from 6AM on Saturday May 17th through Sunday May 18th at 5PM. Park and Chestnut will open overnight on Saturday. Please plan your route through town accordingly. Main festival parking will be at the lot behind PNC Bank for visitors, the school

lots for Artists and the Verizon Lot for short-term business district parking. Signs will direct traffic to the appropriate places. Please understand that visitors may park on side streets as well. Please do not remove any festival signage. It is there to help traffic flow and to direct festival visitors. If you have any issues with parking or signs, please speak to a festival volunteer. Tables and chairs will be set up on Centre Street for people to sit and enjoy refreshments. Port-a-pots will be located behind PNC Bank and also near the gazebo.

Of course, as a town we want to welcome both artists and visitors by showing our best side. Please be courteous to the crafters. They are our guests and also potential customers. Thank you to all of Merchantville's businesses who have displayed the festival poster in their windows and given out festival postcards to their customers. We are all looking forward to a terrific festival weekend!

The Arts Fair has been made possible in part by the Camden County Cultural and Heritage Commission through the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State (a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts)

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