



Municipal Messenger

Township of Morris

Morris County - New Jersey - USA

2007 - Volume IV , Issue II

Mayor's Message

By Mayor Robert E. Nace



Morris Township continues to have one of the lowest tax rates in the county among full service municipalities. The 2007 municipal budget has been passed with a nominal increase of less than one cent per hundred dollars in valuation. This translates into an annual increase of \$48.00 for the average home. As a percentage of the market value of our houses, the local tax rate actually *decreased* in 2007.

As predicted, NJ state budget actions continue to challenge our ability to maintain one of the best tax rates in the county. The state has pushed more unfunded mandates to the municipal and county level as a way to reduce their budget while at the same time bemoaning the impact of property taxes on local governments. Our 2007 spending to cover these mandates accounted for most of our increased spending. However, our spending increases were offset by excellent tax collection rates and operational efficiencies.

The process of updating our community's Master Plan has begun. The Morris Township Planning Board recently initiated the mandated reexamination process of our Master Plan and has targeted its completion by October 1, 2007. This reexamination process is open to the public and will proceed throughout the summer. A number of special meetings are anticipated and will be noticed in the local papers and on our website at www.morristwp.com. Your participation in this important process is welcomed.

Morris Township continues to be one of the few full service communities in the county. We hope you enjoy the recreational programs and other services that are available to you. Have a safe and fun-filled summer!

Morris Township's Volunteer Fire Department – History Of Commitment To Our Community

By Fire Chief Craig Goss

Morris Township's fire protection is provided by five volunteer fire companies along with a small force of twenty-two (22) career firefighters. These fire companies are:

- Mt. Kemble Fire Company
- Collinsville Fire Company
- Hillside Hose Company
- Woodland Fire Company
- Fairchild Fire Company

The oldest of these volunteer fire companies is the Mt. Kemble Fire Company (formerly Prudentown) which dates back to 1907. All of the township volunteer fire companies were started in local neighborhoods by the residents of those communities and each had its own fire chief. The original locations were in members' barns and the equipment used was hand-me-downs from towns such as Morristown and from as far away as Millburn. Fairs and carnivals were once the source of income for each company along with other means of raising funds, such as donations. This was the start of the Morris Township Fire Department.

On November 20, 1919 the Township Committee adopted rules and regulations governing the Morris Township Fire Department and collectively took control of the individual companies which existed at that time. Each of the four fire companies then in existence were required to sign an individual agreement transferring its equipment and fire houses to the Township of Morris. At this time, a department-wide chain of command was established to include Fire Chief to Deputy Chief to Battalion Chiefs to Company Captains to Lieutenants. However, each individual fire company continued to handle its own calls.

Once the Township accepted the responsibility of purchasing equipment and trucks, the Mt. Kemble Fire Company received the first motorized fire truck in December 1919, followed by trucks for Collinsville and Hillside in 1920 and the Woodland Fire Company in 1925.

In December 1927, the fifth fire company was founded. This fire company became known as the Fairchild Fire Company. The neighborhood requested assistance from the Township Committee in the form of a fire apparatus, which was granted pending the location of a suitable site on which to build a fire house.

With the building of the Fairchild Fire House and the installation of a teletype and siren alarm system in the fire houses, this fire company became known as Headquarters. Bell Telephone Company supplied one transmitter and five

(See [Fire Department](#) on Page 2)



Battalion Chief David Seligson
Fairchild Fire Company member since 1997
Past positions: Fairchild Captain,
1st Lieutenant, 2nd Lieutenant



Battalion Chief Jason Merrick
Mt. Kemble Fire Co. member since 1995
Past positions: Mt. Kemble Captain,
1st Lieutenant, 2nd Lieutenant