



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

Fire Department (Continued from page 1)



Mt. Kemble Captain John Romano
Member since 1993
Past positions: 1st Lieutenant, 2nd Lieutenant



Collinsville Captain Michael Zucker
Member since 1994
Past positions: 1st Lieutenant, 2nd Lieutenant



Hillside Captain Philip Grossi
Member since 1992
Past positions: 1st Lieutenant, 2nd Lieutenant



Fairchild Captain Robert Duffy
Member since 1984
Past Positions: Department Battalion Chief,
1st Lieutenant, 2nd Lieutenant



Woodland Captain Greg Marquardt
Member since 1994
Past positions: 1st Lieutenant, 2nd Lieutenant

receivers which necessitated the hiring of paid operators to handle fire alarms for the entire Township. The teletypes were used to give the exact location of the call and the nature.

In 1932, the first career firefighter – a driver – was hired and assigned to the Mt. Kemble Fire Company. Over the years, all fire stations were staffed with career firefighters to operate the fire apparatus. Today we currently have career firefighters working day shifts in three of the fire stations – Hillside, Woodland, and Fairchild – while Collinsville and Mt. Kemble have career firefighters available 24 hours per day.

Today the fire houses and apparatus are maintained and purchased by the Township of Morris. But the volunteer fire companies themselves are supported solely by donations from the citizens of Morris Township. Each company provides its members with uniforms to make the department stand out in its public affairs. Extra incidentals are purchased by each company from donated funds according to their own needs. Other activities that the companies support for their members have been bowling, baseball, and softball teams, as well as special teams for competing in a “firematic” contest annually.

Morris Township provides fire protection with the following equipment: five fire engines, two ladder trucks, one rescue unit, and one air unit. In addition the following specialized services are provided in conjunction with Morris County: DECON unit and large water flow operations (i.e., Ironman and Quick Attack).

Over the years the department has answered many calls for assistance. These calls come from not only the residents and commercial properties of Morris Township but also from neighboring communities. Morris Township’s Fire Department has assisted neighboring communities such as Morristown, Morris Plains, Cedar Knolls, Whippany, Florham Park, Madison, Chatham Township, New Vernon, Mendham Township, Randolph Township, Denville, Parsippany, and Greystone Park. In return these neighboring fire departments are ready and willing to assist the Township when we need help. In 2005, the department responded to an all time high of 1,350 calls including operations in New Orleans, Louisiana for almost one month.

Where once one fire company stood ready to protect the Township, now five fire companies form the basis of your Fire Department. The Morris Township Fire Department stands ready to “Protect Life and Property, Safeguarding the High Quality of Life in the Township”.

For more information, please contact Fire Chief Craig Goss at cgoss@morristwp.com. Also, your Morris Township Fire Companies sponsor various events in cooperation with the Township Recreation Department for children in their own district. You can check with your local Fire Company for specific events and dates at the following phone numbers:

Collinsville (973) 326-7373 Fairchild (973) 326-7374 Hillside (973) 326-7368
Mt Kemble (973) 326-7375 Woodland (973) 326-7369

Electronic Check and Credit Card Payments Accepted For Township Services

By Bob Nace, Morris Township Mayor

Last year the Township’s Finance and Information Technology Departments initiated a program to make the payment of municipal services more customer-friendly. In the first phase of implementation, electronic processing of check payments for swimming pool registrations and property taxes was initiated.

In the next phase of implementation this fall, the Township will begin accepting credit card payments for most municipal permits and licenses as part of a negotiated contract with one of our local financial institutions. Residents will be able to pay for dog and cat licenses, swimming pool memberships, parking permits, building permits, and so forth with more convenience. We hope you find that this credit card processing makes our services to the community easier to use.

Do You Know Where This Historical Monument Is Located?

By Sarah Harris, Commission Member,

Morris Township Historic Preservation Commission

Thank you to all who responded to our historical monument question posed in the last issue of the Municipal Messenger. We were pleased to have a number of responses from members of our community and many of you had the correct answer which is:

This monument is located in Morris Township on a grassy triangle at the end of Van Beuren Road where it intersects with Spring Valley Road. It was erected by the Morristown Chapter of The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) between 1910-1912 to commemorate the January 1777 march of General George Washington and his army to camps in and around Morristown after victories in Trenton and Princeton.

The D.A.R. erected five other similar monuments to commemorate this historic march. Today only a few still remain.

Look for other "Do You Know Where?" historic sites in our Township in upcoming Municipal Messenger issues and feel free to contact us at sarahfh57@aol.com.



"BY THIS ROUTE, WASHINGTON WITH HIS ARMY RETIRED TO MORRISTOWN AFTER HIS VICTORY AT PRINCETON, JANUARY 1777 ---- ERECTED BY THE D.A.R."

Easy Ways To Be "Green"

By Barbara Gardner, Morris Township Environmental Commission

AT THE SUPERMARKET

- *Support Local Farms.* Find suppliers of organic & sustainably produced meat, poultry, eggs, and produce whenever you can.
- *Bring Your Own Grocery Bag.* Take a cloth bag to and from the store, not paper or plastic.

AROUND THE HOUSE

- *Save money in the bathroom.* Buy water efficient faucets and showerheads.
- *Recycle and recharge.* Digital cameras, camcorders, cell phones & all used batteries can be recycled. Recharge whenever you can and find a store that will recycle them for you.
- *Adjust refrigerator and freezer temperatures.* Keep the fridge at 37 degrees and the freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit.
- *Lighten up with energy savings.* Switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). They cost a bit more but last up to 10 times longer than regular bulbs.

For more information, contact Morris County Municipal Utility Authority. See their website www.MCMUA.com or call (973) 829-8006.

New Trails Plan Under Development As Part of Open Space

By Tom Kenny, Morris Township Special Projects Coordinator

On March 22, 2007, the first official meeting to kick off the Township's new trails plan was held during the regular meeting of the Open Space Committee. Barbara Davis and Andrew Szwak from the Morris Land Conservancy, the consultants who will assist Morris Township in drafting its plan, were in attendance to briefly outline a plan of action.

As Barbara and Andrew noted in their presentation, the plan is essentially a mapping project that will likely be adopted as an element to the Township's master plan. The trails plan will highlight points of interest, linkages with other municipal and county-owned parks, and construction standards by trail use including security measures. The trails plan will also include acquisition of property, if necessary, to complete the trails system, as well as stewardship and maintenance issues.

The timeline for this plan is rather aggressive as a draft plan is anticipated for review by the appropriate committees in summer 2007 with the delivery of the final plan in September, 2007.

For more information, please contact Tom Kenny, Special Projects Coordinator, at kenny@morristwp.com or (973) 326-7427.

Your Township Committee

Robert E. Nace, Mayor
Richard A. Watson, Deputy Mayor
Jeff Grayzel

Kathleen G. Hyland
H. Scott Rosenbush

Check our website at: www.morristwp.com or refer to your Municipal Calendar for more information on key dates for Morris Township meetings & other activities.

Summer Concert Season Planned At Ginty Field

Bring blankets or lawn chairs and enjoy this season's Summer Concert Series.

Tuesday dates and artists include:

- Tuesday, July 17 at 7:00 pm
Hanover Wind Symphony (Classical & Contemporary)
- Tuesday, July 31 at 7:00 pm
The Kootz Band (R&B, Swing)
- Tuesday, August 7 at 7:00 pm
Heather Mulvey (Americana, Celtic, & Contemporary Folk)
- Tuesday, August 21 at 7:00 pm
The Frost Kings (Rock & Roll)

A Sunday concert is scheduled:

- Sunday, August 12 at 4:00 pm
Morris Music Men (Traditional & Contemporary)

Please check www.morristwp.com for more details. Also please note that the schedule may be subject to change.

Recreation Advisory Committee

By Bill Foelsch, Director of Parks and Recreation

The Recreation Advisory Committee consists of 25 members, each appointed by the Township Committee for a three-year term. This committee is responsible for the planning and implementation of long-range plans for parks and recreation programs, including needs assessment and construction. The Advisory Committee meets every third Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Municipal Building on Woodland Avenue. Please bring your input to one of our meetings.

Township of Morris

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www.morristwp.com

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If you are interested, please call
(973) 326-7460 – Fire Department
(973) 539-1776 after 6 pm – First Aid Squad

Be “Pool Cool” Close To Home This Summer

 By Bill Foelsch, Director of Parks and Recreation

Morris Township's favorite “Cooling Off” spots in the summer heat – **Streeter Pool** and **Ginty Pool** – will be open daily until Labor Day, September 3. Both pools feature Olympic size pool tanks with attached diving/pool slide areas and separate wading pools for young children. Membership covers recreational swimming at both locations, craft activities, games, and special events.

Red Cross Swim Instruction lessons are held at each pool for children ages 4 to 12. Swimming instruction is available to all Township children, regardless of pool membership. The combined pools support the **Morris Township Summer Swim Team** competing in the North Jersey Summer Swim League. Both a competitive swim team and a clinic swim team are offered for ages 6 to 17 (children must pass a qualifying swim). Swim team practices and meets alternate between each pool.

Evening Splash Parties and **Teen Parties** were held at the pools in July. Additional **Teen Parties** will be held August 8 at Streeter Pool and August 15 at Ginty Pool.

The Parks and Recreation Department is pleased to welcome a new food concessionaire for the pools in 2007. Bruno Pascal, owner of **Café Z** in New Brunswick, is operating our concession stands this summer. You can enjoy traditional pool food favorites as well as enhanced menu with items such as wraps and salads – truly something for every taste bud.

Although the pools will officially close for the season on Labor Day, Monday September 3 – one final special event – a community-wide “**Morris Township Resident Pool Picnic**” for

all Morris Township residents will be held at Ginty Pool on Saturday, September 8 from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The picnic is sponsored by the Morris Township Recreation Advisory Committee and the Swim Pool Advisory Committee. Admission is \$5.00 per person. Activities will include swimming, food, music, arts and crafts, and games.

Looking to the future, the Township Committee has awarded a construction contract for a long-awaited improvement to the Township pools. The bathhouses at both Ginty Pool and Streeter Pool will be completely renovated after the 2007 swimming season. New fixtures, hot water systems, showers, counters, and lighting will be installed in the bathrooms. A new ventilated drop ceiling will be installed in the bathrooms, and the ceilings and lighting in the open-air arcade areas will be replaced. A new bathroom suitable for family use and fitted for service to individuals with disabilities will be constructed at each pool. All of these improvements will greet our members for the 2008 swim pool season.

Save gas, save the hassle, and join us for a great summer of hometown fun at Morris Township's Ginty and Streeter Pools!