

the **Monroe** news



TOWN HALL | Municipal Plaza | Monroe Township, New Jersey 08831 | www.monroetwp.com

Township Council Welcomes New Mayor

Monroe Township swore in its first new Mayor in 28 years when Gerald W. Tamburro took the oath of office on January 1 at the Township Council's Reorganization Meeting at the Senior Center.

Mayor Tamburro received 5,105 votes during the Nov. 3, 2015 General Election, defeating Republican challenger Martin Herrmann who received 3,987 votes and Independent Ken Chiarella who received 1,935 votes.

"My pledge is to maintain a municipal government that is responsive and responsible to all our citizens," Mayor Tamburro said during his inaugural

address. "Today a new journey begins here in Monroe. I take this incredible responsibility very seriously. I am committed to maintaining a stable municipal tax rate, while providing high quality municipal services in a safe and clean community."

Councilwoman Leslie Koppel and Councilman Stephen Dalina were both re-elected to their



Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro is sworn into office by Township Clerk Sharon Doerfler while his wife, Carol Tamburro, holds the Bible. Photo credit: Jimmy Kastner

Council-at-Large seats receiving 5,022 and 5,020 votes respectively. Republicans Joseph Atanasio
Continued on page 14

Township Bond Rating is Now Even Stronger

During the latest financial review during a bond sale, Standard and Poor's has increased the Township's bond rating from AA Stable to AA Plus.

According to the report, the financial services company praised the Township's management and budgetary practices for the increase in the bond rating.

"Our improved rating will save the Township money when we go to sell bonds in the future," Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro said. "We were also told it will help the overall impact on any funding the Board of Education or other Township entities might seek."

According to the report, "the Double A plus long-term rating reflects our view of the Township's strong management with the ability to consistently maintain balanced operations as well as standard financial policies and practices under our financial management association methodology."

The financial services company complimented the Township's "strong budgetary performance; very strong budgetary flexibility; very strong liquidity with total government available cash at 50.3 percent of current fund expenditures and 4.2-times current fund debt service and access to external liquidity we consider strong."

"Our view also reflects the Township's ability to navigate the significant number of tax appeals during the past decade without diminishing its govern-

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Council President Leslie Koppel and a friend tend to their garden sites at the Community Garden. Photo courtesy of the Council President.

TOWN HALL

1 Municipal Plaza • Monroe Township, NJ 08831
www.monroetwp.com

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor:

Gerald Tamburrogtamburro@monroetwp.com

Council President:

Leslie Koppellkoppel@monroetwp.com

Council Vice President:

Stephen Dalinasdalina@monroetwp.com

Council Members:

Blaise Dipierrobdipierro@monroetwp.com

Michael Leibowitzmleibowitz@monroetwp.com

Elizabeth Schneidereschneider@monroetwp.com

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Township Main Number(732) 521-4400

Animal Control(732) 521-0222

Construction Office(732) 656-4585

Court Administrator(732) 521-4020

Township Engineer(732) 605-9440

EMS and First Aid (non-emergency) .(732) 521-1880

Health Department(732) 521-4400 ext. 192

Environmental Protection .(732) 521-4400 ext. 118

Monroe Township Library(732) 521-5000

Utilities Department(609) 655-1050

Office of Senior Services(609) 448-7140

Parks Department(732) 723-5000

Police (non-emergency)(732) 521-0222

Public Works(732) 656-4575

Recreation(732) 723-5000

Recycling(732) 656-4575

Tax Collector(732) 521-4405

Township Clerk(732) 656-4573

Traffic Safety(732) 521-0222 ext. 126

Transportation(609) 443-0511

Seventh Grader Cooks Up Something Special for New Mayor

Monroe Township Middle School student Vinisha Patel wanted to do something special to congratulate Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro on being sworn into office.

Using her passion for baking and a dollop of creativity, Vinisha, 13, baked a cake for Monroe's first new Mayor in 28 years.

"The cake was special, because it was actually two different cakes," said Vinisha, a seventh grader. "One half was an orange-infused pound cake and the other half was a chocolate cake and all of the icing was buttercream."

The entire cake, and the frosting, was made from scratch and decorated by Vinisha.

"The decorating color scheme represents Monroe's school district colors – purple and gold," Vinisha

Vinisha Patel presents a cake to Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro as a way to greet the Township's first new Mayor in 28 years.

said. "The flowers and leaves represent Monroe's greenery."

On January 11, Vinisha presented the cake to Mayor Tamburro, who shared the baked goodies with the Township employees, and presented the Township teen with an Award of Appreciation.

"I was honored to present my first award as Mayor to Vinisha," Mayor Tamburro said. "She is an excellent baker and a prime example of the many talented, hard-working, and giving children that make Monroe such a wonderful community."



Giving Thanks...



A volunteer serves lunch at the annual Community Cares Thanksgiving Feast, held each year on Thanksgiving Day at the Senior Center. The Office of Senior Services is already planning next year's event and volunteers will be sought for the upcoming event.

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Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro

A Day for the Ages

By Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro

The annual tradition, which has grown each year, is a fantastic way to usher in the New Year as it is held during the holiday break from school, when many of us gather and celebrate with friends and families.

I would like to thank the sponsor of the event, the Gardens at Monroe Healthcare and Rehabilitation on Applegarth Road, whose support and generosity are vital to the success of Grandparents' Day.

It was a great day in Monroe as both gyms at the Community Center on Monmouth Road were filled with families as they started their day-long adventure with one another. Upon arrival, the families had their portrait taken, which

was later printed, framed, and available for pick up following the movie.

Before the movie, the families enjoyed a full catered lunch. Even though the children were seeing "Alvin and Chipmunks," the theme of the lunch was Willy Wonka – which everyone enjoyed.

For the raffle, every family received a chocolate bar for each grandchild in attendance, and the winners of the raffle, just like in the classic children's book and movie, were the ones with a Golden Ticket wrapped around the chocolate bar. The grand prize was a gift basket filled with candy, gift cards and a copy of the 1971 movie "Willy

Wonka and the Chocolate Factory," starring Gene Wilder as Mr. Wonka.

After lunch, the grandparents and grandchildren boarded 12 school buses and were treated to the movie at the Regal Cinemas on Route 1 in North Brunswick. For many of the grandparents it is a novelty to board a school bus, which is something many of us have not done in quite some time.

There was a little more excitement than anticipated at the movie, as a malfunction caused the fire alarm to go off and forced the theaters to be evacuated for a period of time.

Participants were given the option to stay and wait for the theater to be cleared, or board the buses and return to the Community Center. Of the 12 buses only four returned as most opted to stay and watch the movie.

Grandparents' Day Out is a special day in Monroe as we gather the different generations and treat them to a day-long celebration as a community.

In addition, I would like to thank the Monroe Township High School Key Club volunteers who took the time during their winter break to help set up, clean up, serve food, register guests and did so much more to help the event run smoothly.

Furthermore, I would like to commend the Recreation Department staff, the Gardens at Monroe and all of the volunteers for doing such a wonderful job organizing and hosting the event. I want to remind everyone to be ready for registration to open for Grandparents' Day Out 2016 later this year.

Please watch for registration information at the Recreation website www.monroerec.com.

Hundreds of smiling faces filled the Community Center on Monmouth Road as grandparents shared the day with their grandchildren at the Recreation Department's Annual Grandparents' Day Out.

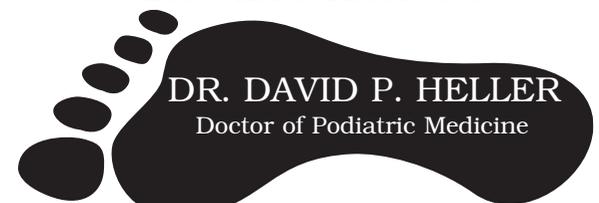
On December 28, more than 600 grandparents and grandchildren enjoyed the free day together, which included a family portrait, a delicious lunch, raffles, and a trip to the movies to see "Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip."



The lucky winner of the Gardens at Monroe raffle at Grandparents Day.

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Dey Farm Renovations Nearing Completion

The bell tower is up at the schoolhouse and the siding is on the barn, as work is nearing completion on the historical renovations at the Dey Farm.

“Work is going ahead smoothly on the project,” Township Historian John Katerba said. “We were fortunate we had excellent weather until January, so a lot of the exterior work was done on time.”

Work on the renovations at the 40-acre Dey Farm on Federal Road between Applegarth and Perrineville roads started in April 2015. The renovations were accomplished, in part, by a \$1 million grant

from Middlesex County. The project includes the reconstruction of the one-room Prospect Plains Schoolhouse, renovations to the timber-frame Dey Barn and roof replacement and gutter work on the England House.

“With the county’s help we will be able to share and preserve more of Monroe’s history for years to come,” Mr. Katerba said.

The Prospect Plains Schoolhouse, built around 1850 and recently dedicated to honor former Councilman Hank Miller, was one of the original Township Schools, and served as the Municipal Building,



The Bell Tower is mounted at the Henry L. Miller School and is part of the ongoing renovations at the Dey Farm.

Courthouse and the Recreation Department until the latter moved to its current location on Monmouth Road.

The schoolhouse was dismantled, numbered and placed in storage before it was rebuilt and painted to look true to the time-period.

“Our contractors know the colors based on what was used in the area at the time,” Mr. Katerba said. “Even the slate-style roof, windows and frames were built using styles and methods similar to that of the 1850s.”

In addition, renovations to the Dey Barn are a major part of the project. The barn was numbered and dismantled and many of the original timber frames and sidings were re-used during the reconstruction.

“Some of the timber frames had to be ‘nursed’ with new lumber,” Mr. Katerba said. “Some of the original timbers were rotted and too weak to be re-used, so new lumber was used to ensure the safety of the building.”

When work is done, the schoolhouse will be used as a showpiece as to how single-room schools were used in the early days in Monroe. The barn will be used to house some of the historical farming equipment that was donated to the Township.

“These buildings will nicely compliment the Dey Farmhouse, which currently serves as the Township’s Museum,” Mr. Katerba said. “We will have more space to display some of the great local artifacts that have

been donated to the town over the years.”

The 40-acre Dey Farm Historic Site and its buildings are overseen by its volunteer Historic Preservation Commission.

Upkeep on the farm is done primarily by the Township Department of Public Works and volunteers from the Historic Preservation Commission, but over the years many local volunteers and scouts have done work at the farmhouse.

“We are truly excited by the progress at the farm,” Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro said. “Once the buildings are opened, we will be able to better showcase Monroe’s agricultural and educational history.”



The Henry L. Miller Schoolhouse getting painted.



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Wolverines Crowned National Champions

For the 12th year in a row, the Monroe Township Wolverine Cheerleaders brought home a national championship crown from the annual competition in Disney World in December.

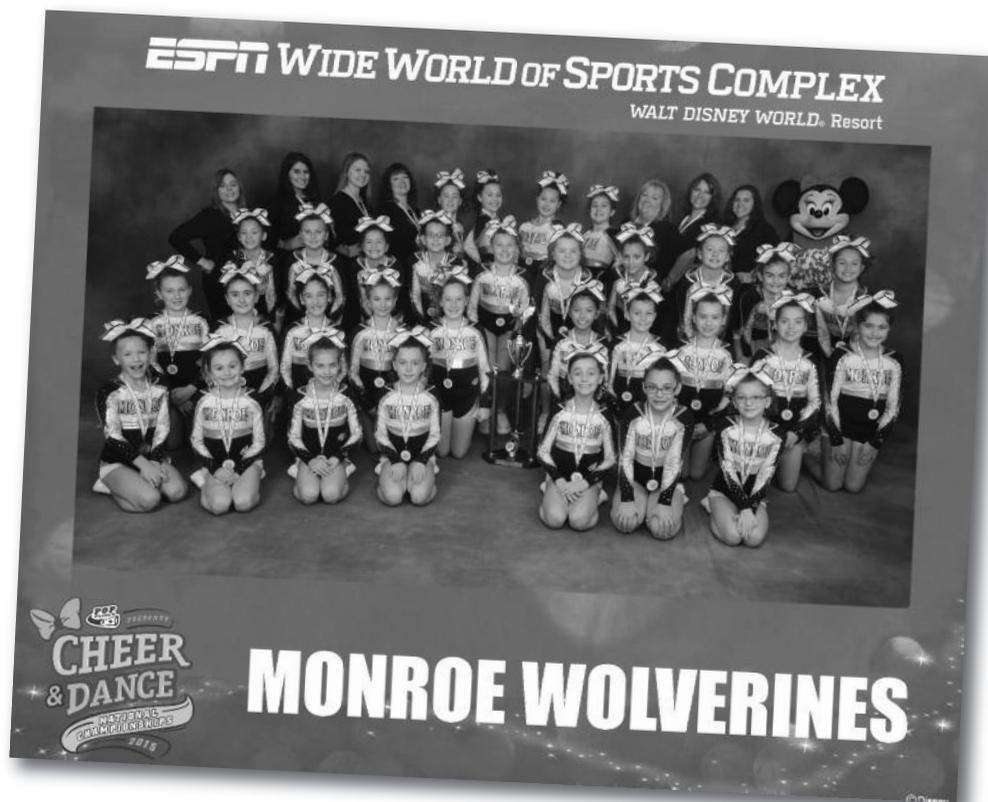
The Junior Pee Wee Black team was undefeated in its quest for the National Championship, taking home first place in the Central Jersey, State, Regional and National tournaments, which featured teams from across America.

In addition, the Junior Pee Wee Gold team took third place, the Junior Midgets team took second place and the Midget team took fourth place at the National Championship

tournament. All of the teams won the regional tournament prior to heading to Disney.

"This was our 19th Championship in 12 years," Recreation Superintendent Mary Lange said. "We are very proud of all our cheerleaders, coaches and parents for everything they have accomplished this season. Their hard work and dedication to the program is what lead to this championship. These girls faced some of the fiercest competition yet, and were able to come home champions once again."

There are 160 participants in the Wolverine Cheerleading program, which continues to grow each year.



The Monroe Wolverines Junior Pee Wee Black team was the undefeated National Champion during the 2015 season, which culminated in a December tournament in Walt Disney World.

"I would like to congratulate all of the girls in the Wolverine program," Mayor Gerald W.

Tamburro said. "To be able to compete in a national tournament at a young age is a memory

and experience that will stay with them and their families forever."

Free Egg Hunt Planned for March 12

The Recreation Department is hoping Punxsutawney Phil's prediction of an early spring rings true as organizers plan the annual free Egg Hunt at the Roller Hockey Rink at the Community Center on March 12 at noon.

The Community Center Rink will be transformed into a springtime oasis as children will race to grab as many candy-filled plastic eggs as they can at the Egg Hunt.

Along with the Egg Hunt, there will be bonnet and top hat contests. Prizes will be awarded for funniest, most original and best looking hat, along with one grand prize winner for best overall hat.

The Egg Hunt will be divided into four divisions: one and two year olds, three and four year olds, kindergarten to second grade, and third grade and up. Parents will only be allowed to help children ages 1 and 2.

Following the Egg Hunt, there will be a spoon race, divided into three divisions. Participants will race from one side of the rink to the other with a plastic egg on a spoon.

"When the Egg Hunt comes around, I know spring is almost here," Councilman Stephen Dalina, liaison to the Recreation Advisory Board, said. "It is always a treat to see all of the creativity that goes into the hat and bonnet decorations and how



Join us for the 2016 egg hunt in which kids hunt for eggs at the Recreation Department annual springtime event at the hockey rink.

much fun the kids have searching for the eggs."

At the conclusion of the event light refresh-

ments will be served.

For more information visit www.monroerec.com.



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Council Cuts Taxes for Open Space

One year after the Township's revaluated tax rates took effect, the Township Council voted to reduce the Open Space Tax by 1 cent per \$100 of assessed valuation from 2.5 cents to 1.5 cents.

"As a result of the township-wide revaluation two years ago, in effect, the open space tax was essentially doubled because of the increase in the Township's overall ratable base," Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro said. "Because of the general increase in the ratables there will be a minimal impact on the amount of money we need to bring in to purchase open space."

The court-ordered revaluation increased the overall property values in Monroe, which in turn increased the amount of money generated for the Open Space Trust Fund.

Money for the Open Space Trust Fund is generated through a local property tax that was approved by voters at a rate of 2.5 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. A resolution passed by the Township Council on February 8 reduces the tax to 1.5 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation.

Under the reduced rate, the owner of a home valued at the 2015 Township average of \$309,000 would pay 40 percent less than he or she paid under the 2.5 cent rate.

"Since 2002, more than \$18 million has been expended on open space and farmland preservation acquisitions," Business Administrator Wayne Hamilton said. "We have been able to purchase 6,600 acres of open space and 1,317 acres of farmland preservation."

The Open Space Trust Fund's current balance is \$5.7 million. The revenue generated from the 1.5 cent rate will generate more than \$1 million a year for open space and farmland land acquisition.

"While we are cutting the rate, we will still be able to continue our aggressive Open Space and Farmland Preservation program," Mayor Tamburro said. "Our planning goal still calls for 50 percent of the Township to remain undeveloped, and we are confident we will achieve this goal."



**Council President
Leslie Koppel**

Community Garden Gearing up For Second Season

By Council President Leslie Koppel

Time to dust off the trowels and clean off the gardening gloves, as the Monroe Township Community Gardens prepares to open for its second season.

Located in the 12-acre park on Applegarth Road, just south of the Millstone River, the Community Garden is run by the Friends of the Monroe Township Community Garden (FMTCG), a 501(c)3 non-profit group that is also the fundraising arm for the Garden.

This year the garden area will be expanded, nearly doubling the facility's size, to 176, 10-foot-by-10-foot garden sites that will be available for rental at \$30 a season.

The garden was an

instant success last year, as all of the sites were rented. Residents came daily to meet new friends and spend time with old friends and neighbors, sharing their interest in gardening with one another.

I was one of the happy gardeners last year. It was a lot of fun and a lot of work, as I would head to the garden before work early in the morning to water and weed my site, making sure my veggies were doing well. Last year marked the first time I was able to successfully grow an eggplant, which was delicious, I might add.

The garden is a true community effort. It was great spending time on the weekends with my children, their friends and the other gardeners, sharing growing tips and eating vine-ripened tomatoes warmed by the summer sun.

There are big plans for the park this year, with the entrance, driveway and parking spaces

at the park slated for paving.

It is important to note that the site was donated to the Township for open space by Todd Ochsner, a life-long Township resident. In addition to the Community Garden, there are long-range plans for the park that include a butterfly garden, children's park and an environmental pavilion.

In addition, the Township Department of Public Works also built a small rest area in the shade using Clean Communities grant money. Through the state Clean Communities program, municipalities earn grant money based on how many tons of recycling is done by a municipality. Monroe earned more than \$92,000 in 2015 and a small portion was used for the benches, made from recycled materials, at the Community Garden.

The Township Utilities Department was a huge

help for the garden, providing a hookup to the municipal water system and also supplying the hoses for the gardeners to use.

Furthermore, Eagle Scout Eric Evans built a 1,600-square-foot wet meadow on the site, along the Millstone River, which will help filter pollutants out of storm water runoff before it goes into the river, and will also create a habitat for native birds and pollinating insects, such as bees and butterflies, which will help pollination of the garden sites.

I would like to commend the FMTCG Executive Board President Leonard Baskin, Vice President Joel Greenberg, Treasurer Gary Busman, along with Executive Board Members Joel Gelfarb, John Katerba, Robert Sidler and Laurie Winter, for all of the hard work they did and continue to do to make the Garden a special place in Monroe.

The Board will be hosting a public information meeting at the Monroe Twp. Senior Center on March 10 at 7 p.m., when residents can learn more about the garden, and can register, in-person, for their very own site.

Anyone interested in renting a site can do so by visiting www.monroetwpcommunitygarden.com and downloading the application and waiver form. Forms may also be picked up at the Municipal Building. Please fill out both forms and return to the Municipal Building, 1 Municipal Plaza, Monroe Twp., NJ 08831, along with a check for \$30 made out to the Friends of the Monroe Township Community Garden.

For additional information about the garden, please contact Joel Greenberg at (609) 235-9316.

A panoramic view of the Community Garden on Applegarth Road.



Library Book Sale

If you are looking for a good book at a reasonable price, then head to the Friends of the Library Annual Book Sale from April 30 to May 5.

"The book sale is a great way to bolster your book collection and pick up some great titles for fantastic prices," Helaine Evans, President of the Friends of the Library, said. "Each year we are more and more surprised with the great selection for readers of any age group."

The sale opens Saturday, April 30, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. with a \$1 entry fee on this day only. On Sunday, May 1, the sale is open from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and from May 2 to May 5 it is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Throughout the sale hardcover books are \$3 (or two for \$5), trade paperbacks are \$2 (or three for \$5), and mass-market paperbacks are \$.50. Special items will be priced as marked. Only cash and checks will be accepted for payment.

The final day of sale is from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, May 5, which is bag

day, when the Friends give those that attend a bag to fill with books for \$1.

No scanners, cell phones or other electronic ISBN search devices are permitted on April 30 or before 11:30 a.m. on May 5 (bag day).

The proceeds from the sale help the Friends fund passes to area museums; host the International Film Festival; sponsor the Children's summer programs, and so much more.

Furthermore, any resident interested in joining the Friends of the Monroe Township Library can do so by filling out a membership form, which can be found at the Library or downloaded on the library's website, www.monroetwplibrary.org. Annual membership is from July 1 to June 30 and there are three levels of membership: Basic for \$10, Family for \$15 and Patron for \$25.

"The Friends do such a wonderful job supporting the Library and providing great services to its patrons," said Council President Stephen Dalina, Liaison to the Library Board.

Get Creative at Library's Makerfest

Makers, inventors and hobbyists will have their creations, ideas and projects on display at the Monroe Township Public Library's Second-Annual Makerfest on March 19.

The free event is scheduled to run from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Library.

"Makerfest is a celebration of crafting, electronics, 3D printing, creativity and more," Library Director Irene Goldberg said. "We had a great turnout last year, and we are excited to bring new ideas and vendors to this year's festival."

The maker exhibitors include professionals with local businesses and hobbyists showing off their crafts and creations. So far, the exhibitors include Home

Depot, Princeton Violins, Grape Escape, Varsity Summer Academy, Rossmoor Woodshop, Princeton Chapter of the Embroidery Guild, Bala Doci glass jewelry maker, Rossmoor Ceramics and a stained glass maker.

Exhibitors can apply by calling the library at (732) 521-5000 x140, by emailing shrubes@monroetwplibrary.org, or by filling out a form at the library.

"Studio M is our Library's hands-on maker lab," Ms. Goldberg said. "We offer 3-D printing and design, music creation, digital photography and videography editing, Arduino programming and much more."



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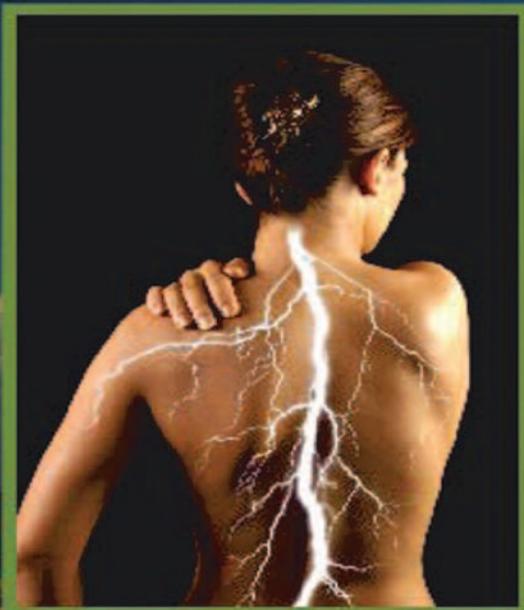
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Grants and Surplus Help Bolster DPW Fleet

The Department of Public Works acquired four trucks and has another on the way – at no cost to local taxpayers.

“Anytime the Township can get equipment or services without having to tap into the capital funds, it’s a win-win for the town and the taxpayers,” said DPW Director Wayne Horbatt.

The DPW received two used 6x6 military trucks through the N.J. State Agency for Surplus Property / Federal Surplus Property Program after applying and being accepted into the program and applying for the specific trucks. The Township was able to receive the trucks because of DPW Foreman Ron Cerankowski, who is also a Captain in the New Jersey National Guard.

“With a few upgrades, the military trucks will be used during snow events and during other natural disasters,” Mr. Horbatt said. “The trucks had low mileage and will be easy to maintain because they are relatively low-tech.”

In addition, the DPW bought a new roll-off truck that is used for hauling containers of recyclables/solid waste from the DPW yard to the landfill and recycling centers. The vehicle and a 2016 Ford F-350 pick-up truck were acquired through funds from the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Recycling Tonnage Grants.

This grant is obtained by filing an annual report on all recycling activities in town. Funds



Two large trucks that the Township received at no cost from the US Army as part of its surplus program.

must be used to enhance the Township’s recycling program, such as buying new equipment or enhancing recycling outreach and education in the community.

In 2013, the latest data that is available from the DEP, Monroe recorded 105,475 tons of recycled materials, which netted \$92,698 from the grant program.

“The grant rewards us for our recycling programs and gives us the

funds for future recycling initiatives,” Mr. Horbatt said. “Our Recycling Coordinator, Joe Slomian, has done a fantastic job with the program and continues to work with local businesses to gather recycling tonnage reports from businesses and developers throughout the town.”

Furthermore, the DPW will soon receive a litter patrol truck through the NJ Clean

Communities Council Grant program, which is another way the town receives grants and funding for clean-up projects throughout Monroe. The litter patrol truck will transport roadside clean-up crews to worksites around town.

The Clean Communities Grant is funded through a tax collected from litter producing products and companies in the state.

Township Bond Rating *Continued from page 1*

mental and financial positioning,” the report notes. “This was largely made feasible through the strategic use of the water and sewer utility funds surplus which had increased to 29 percent of expenditures in 2009 as the result of prior policies regarding capital spending,” Standard and Poor’s stated.

“Standard and Poor’s

validated the decisions we made as we went through the recession,” Business Administrator Wayne Hamilton said. “There has been considerable discussion about the use of the surplus because the Township took over the Utility Department.”

In addition, the report indicated, the Township’s rating could increase again, as it con-

tinues to wean itself from using the surplus funds for the budget.

The report stated: “Should the Township’s economic expansion persist and lead to higher economic income and wealth metrics relative to those of higher rated municipalities, and should it generate positive operating results while eliminating transfers from the utility

fund, we would consider raising the rate again.”

The increase in the bond rating will help the Township get better interest rates when borrowing funds.

“This means every time we go out to borrow money we get a reduced rate,” Mr. Hamilton said. “We just went out for a small

refunding issue and we anticipated net present value savings of somewhere between four and six percent, leaning more on the six percent side. As a result of our credit rating and as a result of competitive bids that we received on the bonds refunding, our net present value savings turned out to be 10.467 percent.”

Monroe Fights Hunger with “Project Empty Bowls”

The Brookside School and the Monroe Township Office of Senior Services are teaming up to raise awareness about hunger in America, while also raising some money for local food pantries.

“This is a fantastic intergenerational project that will raise awareness about a serious issue in the United States: hunger,” said Office of Senior Services Director Bonnie Leibowitz. “Through the project, the students and seniors will purchase, paint and design ceramic bowls and then auction off the bowls. All of the money raised will be distributed to five food pantries, including the Monroe Township Food Pantry.”

The Township Food Pantry provides food for needy residents, regardless of age, based on eligibility. The pantry accepts donations of unexpired foods such as cereal, pasta and tuna fish as well as paper goods including toilet paper, napkins, paper towels and tissues.

“Theresa Anthony at Brookside brought this idea to the Senior Center,” Ms. Leibowitz said. “We thought it would be a great way to get the children and the seniors together to do something wonderful in our community.”

Project Empty Bowls will kick-off with a brunch at the Senior Center on March 11. Tickets are available for \$5 to any registered Senior Center member. At the brunch, the seniors will learn about the project. In April and May, there will be specific days that seniors will be able come to the center to paint and design the bowls.

“We will be supplying the paint and then fire the bisque bowls in our kiln,” Ms. Leibowitz said. “You don’t need to be a trained artist to participate. Project Empty Bowls is more about coming together and doing a great thing for our community.”

The project will culminate when the painted

ceramic bowls are auctioned off at a special evening program at the Senior Center on June 8 at 6 p.m.

“After the bowls are auctioned, we will serve soup, bread and a small dessert to everyone in attendance,” Ms. Leibowitz said. “The school will have its own dinner where the kids, parents and teachers will auction the bowls and have a similar light dinner.”

The students that participate will receive a t-shirt donated to the project by Linda Mundie from the Gardens at Monroe.

“It is always great to see our community come together for a good cause,” said Councilwoman Elizabeth Schneider, Liaison to the Commission on Aging. “What makes Project Empty Bowls even more special is that it will bring our seniors together with our students and their families and teachers in an effort to give to the less fortunate.”

Chorus to Thank Veterans on May 16

Get ready to salute the men and women who served our country as the Monroe Township Chorus presents its annual Salute to the Armed Forces on May 16 at 7 p.m.

This show will mark the first time the Chorus performs at the Richard P. Marasco Center for the Performing Arts, 1629 Perrineville Road.

“We had more than 500 people at our last show at the Senior Center, so we moved this performance to the Marasco Center,” Chorus Director Sheila Werfel said. “The performance will be free, and seating will be first-come, first-served.”

The Monroe Township Chorus will salute those who have served and continue to serve our country with pride and distinction.

“Through choral performances and sing-a-long songs, we will express our reverence, respect and gratitude to all of the branches of the Armed Forces,” Ms. Werfel said.

Under the artistic leadership of Ms. Werfel and its accomplished Music Director David Schlossberg, the Chorus will make this an evening not to be missed.

“We have so many amazing veterans here in Monroe,” Ms. Werfel said. “We want to say thank you to them the best way we know: through song.”

Veterans are encouraged to attend the performance and to wear military decorations, uniforms, caps, or the jacket of their veteran organizations.

“Let us thank you for your sacrifices, and let us thank those who still guard us, our flag and our way of life,” Ms. Werfel said. “Join us as we proudly honor, salute and pay homage to you. Lift your voices and your hearts will follow.”

All residents are encouraged to attend the free concert. For additional information, please contact Ms. Werfel at (609) 619-3229.

The Monroe News is now accepting ads for the Spring Issue...

Call (973) 315-0300

Recreation Calendar of Events

The Recreation Events Calendar will no longer be mailed out separately at the beginning of each year and will now be included in The Monroe News. It will also be available online at www.monroetwp.com.

March 2016

Monroe Township Department of Recreation
120 Monmouth Road • Monroe Twp., NJ 08831
732-723-5000 • monroerec.com



Egg Hunt
Bonnet & Top Hat Contest
Family fun starts at Noon on Saturday, March 12th at the Community Center Hockey Rink



FREE Rabies Clinic
Bring your dogs and cats to the Community Center on Saturday, March 5th 9:00am-2:00pm



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Summer Camp Employment Applications will be accepted starting today	2 PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB Community Center 7 PM	3	4	5 FREE RABIES CLINIC Community Center 9 AM - 2 PM
6	7	8 MTBA Monthly Meeting Community Center 7:30 PM	9 MTGSA Monthly Meeting Community Center 7 PM	10 MONROE WOLVERINES Monthly Meeting Community Center 7:30 PM	11	12 EGG HUNT Community Center Hockey Rink 12 NOON
13 EGG HUNT RAIN DATE	14 RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING Community Ctr; 7 PM SENIOR LUNCH & LEARN Community Ctr; 11 AM	15	16 PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB Community Center	17	18	19
20 FIRST DAY OF SPRING	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 Summer Camp Applications Due. Last Day to Return		

April 2016

Monroe Township Department of Recreation
120 Monmouth Road • Monroe Twp., NJ 08831
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SIGN UP FOR THE SPRING GOLF LEAGUE
RESIDENTS, GUESTS AND HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS MEET WEEKLY AT
CLEARBROOK GOLF COURSE. REGISTER
AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER, TODAY.



Summer Camps

Be on the lookout for
Summer Camp
registration and information

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6 PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB Community Center 7 PM	7	8	9 MTBA Opening Day James Monroe Park MTGSA Opening Day Thomas L. Allen Softball Complex
10	11 RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING Community Ctr; 7 PM SENIOR LUNCH & LEARN Community Ctr; 11 AM	12 MTBA Monthly Meeting Community Center 7:30 PM	13 MTGSA Monthly Meeting Community Ctr; 7 PM MAYORS CUP Bowling Tournament, 9 AM	14 MONROE WOLVERINES Monthly Meeting Community Center 7:30 PM	15	16 MTSC 2016 Spring Kick-Off Soccer Tournament Thompson Park 8 AM
17	18	19	20 PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB Community Center 7:00 PM	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

The Recreation Events Calendar will no longer be mailed out separately at the beginning of each year and will now be included in The Monroe News. It will also be available online at www.monroetwp.com.

Recreation Calendar of Events

May 2016

Monroe Township Department of Recreation
120 Monmouth Road • Monroe Twp., NJ 08831
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Veterans Park
spray ground
OPENING DAY OF THE
SPRAY GROUND IS
FRIDAY, MAY 27TH
Open Daily
10am-8pm

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB Community Center 7 PM	5	6	7
8	9 SENIOR LUNCH & LEARN Community Center 11 AM	10 MTBA Monthly Meeting Community Center 7:30 PM	11 MTGSA Monthly Meeting Community Center 7 PM	12 MONROE WOLVERINES Monthly Meeting Community Center 7:30 PM	13	14
15	16 RECREATION ADVISORY SCHOLARSHIP DINNER Community Center 7 PM	17	18 PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB Community Center 7 PM	19	20	21
22	23 SENIOR/SENIOR COMMUNITY EVENT Multiple Locations	24	25	26	27 VETERANS PARK SPRAY GROUND opens for the season 10 AM	28
29	30 MEMORIAL DAY	31				

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Township Council Welcomes New Mayor *Continued from page 1*

and Harold Kane Bhagat and Stanley received 4,107 and 3,891 Edelman received 1,291 votes respectively and Independents Chirag and 1,228 votes respectively.



Council President Leslie Koppel being sworn in by Township Clerk Sharon Doerfler with her son holding the Bible. Photo credit: Jimmy Kastner

During the reorganization, the Township Council selected Councilwoman Koppel as the Council President and Councilman Dalina as the Council Vice President.

"I am honored to serve as the Council President," said Council President Koppel. "It is my pleasure to serve alongside my colleagues on the Township Council. And it is our promise to continue to serve the people of Monroe and do what is best for our community."

Mayor Tamburro's win resulted in his Ward 2 Council seat being vacated, which was subsequently filled by Blaise Dipierro, who was unanimously appointed at a special meeting of the Township Council on January 13.



Council Vice President Stephen Dalina is sworn into office by Township Clerk Shaorn Doerfler while his wife, Susan, and children look on. Photo credit: Jimmy Kastner

Councilman Dipierro is a lifelong Township resident who recently retired as a detective in the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office.

"I want to thank the Council for their vote of confidence in me," Councilman Dipierro said. "I'm ready to get to work and learn more about the workings of municipal government.

I'll also be meeting with my friends and neighbors to hear their concerns and see how I can help them. I am excited to continue my father's legacy by serving our community in this capacity."

The councilman's father, Michael J. Dipierro, served as Mayor and a Councilman for many years.



Councilman Blaise Dipierro being sworn in. He follows in the footsteps of his father, Michael, who served as Mayor and Township Councilman.

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drsteve@monroevet.net
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Our Senior Center: A Hub of Activity

By Councilwoman Elizabeth Schneider



**Councilwoman
Elizabeth Schneider**

On any given day, hundreds of the 17,000 registered members visit the Monroe Township Senior Center seeking assistance from one of the social workers on staff, free AARP tax preparation during the winter months, or for any of the various social functions held at the Halsey Reed Road facility.

While the Senior Center is a hub of activity for our lively seniors in Monroe, it is also the home of the Township's Office of Senior Services, which provides vital help, support and services to many seniors living in Monroe.

The key component of the Senior Center is its outreach program, in which the talented, trained and certified employees visit homebound, disabled and other residents in need, determine their specific situation, and put them in touch with healthcare

professionals, hospitals, assisted living facilities and homecare providers.

In addition, the Office of Senior Services also employs a social worker, LPN and two certified SHIP (Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program) counselors, who provide direct counseling and referral assistance, support for family caregivers, Medicare assistance, heating assistance and other vital assistance programs.

There are also regular health discussions and screenings at the Center. Nearly every week, local professionals specializing in medical, legal and financial services hold highly attended lectures providing our seniors with information important to them.

Once a week, the Middlesex County Surrogate's Office opens its satellite office at the Senior Center, offering probate services to residents that schedule appointments by calling (732) 745-3055.

The Center also has numerous support groups for those with Parkinson's disease, cancer, diabetes and low vision, as well as those who are stroke survivors. These groups meet regularly and allow those living with these chronic ailments to meet and share their feelings in an open, caring environment.

The Senior Center also oversees the Monroe Township Food Pantry, which provides food for needy residents, regardless of age,

based on eligibility.

Furthermore, the annual Community Cares Thanksgiving has become a holiday tradition for many residents, with more than 140 residents attending the third-annual early afternoon feast. It includes a family-style serving of turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, vegetables, bread, juice, coffee, pie and other delicious desserts all at a nominal cost of \$10. Planning has already started for the 2016 event.

For residents that may have a hard time making it to the Center, free transportation is available. Reservations can be made by calling (609) 448-7140.

While all of these programs are vital to the

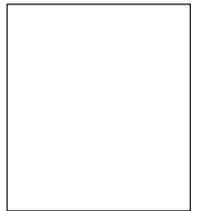
ongoing success of our Senior Center, the facility is also a great social gathering place. The Office of Senior Services offers a variety of art, exercise and music programs.

Most recently, table tennis has been added as a regular activity at the Center, on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. It is an open-format in which residents will play doubles matches on a first-come, first-served basis.

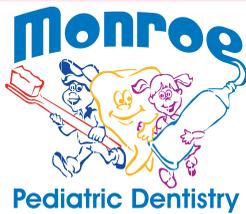
There is so much to do at the Senior Center. I would encourage all of our senior residents to visit the facility and learn how they can benefit from the many programs that our fantastic staff provides.



A panoramic view of folks enjoying a Thanksgiving Meal at the Senior Center.



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