

the Monroe news

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



Monroe is MikeyStrong By Steven Nichols and Councilman Stephen Dalina

Monroe Township High School senior Michael Nichols (called "Mikey" by friends and family) started lacing up his skates to play organized hockey when he was seven years old.

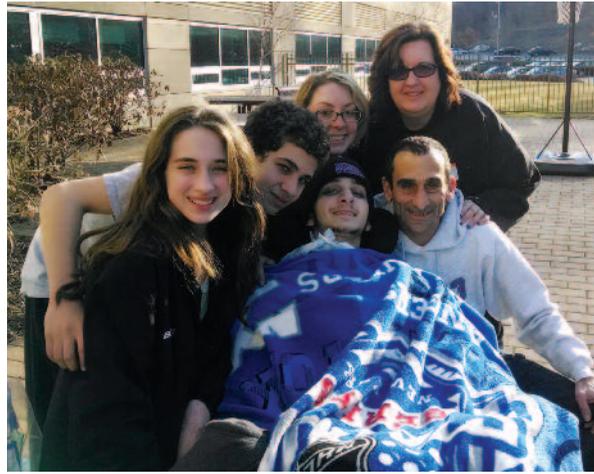
Over the years, he would try his hand at baseball, football and basketball, but at 13 years old, Mikey decided that hockey was his true passion. He said that no other sport gave him the same feeling of excitement and joy like hockey did. He loved the speed, loved the contact, and loved being part of a team

On Jan. 4, Mikey suffered a traumatic injury during a school hockey game; his C5 Vertebra was fractured, causing a spinal

cord injury that left him paralyzed from just below his chest down.

Since the injury, Mikey has been treated at Morristown Medical Center and Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation and he has improved medically. Each day, he goes through three hours of therapy.

"This injury has affected our family immensely and without the moral and fundraising support of many, this would be impossible," Steven Nichols, Mikey's father, said. "The night



Mikey and his family

Mikey got injured a group of his friends started a twitter hashtag, prayformikey23, which has been tweeted and retweeted by people all around the world, who have all shown their support for

Continued on page 15

Inside This Issue...

- Township to Pay Tribute to Fallen Veterans 2
- 2014 Budget Message 3
- Important Numbers 3
- Millstone River Clean-up. . 4
- Monroe Ranked 14th Safest City in New Jersey . 5
- Energy Aggregation is a Home Run. 7
- Youth in Government Services 11
- Senior Lunch and Learn . . 14
- Fireworks Extravaganza Set for July 4 15

Remembering Councilman Irwin Nalitt

A loving husband and father, a passionate and dedicated elected official, and a quick-witted and hilarious emcee, former Councilman Irwin Nalitt will be remembered and missed by all

residents of Monroe Township.

"It is impossible to list all of Irwin's accomplishments for the Township of Monroe," Mayor Richard Pucci said. "He may have retired and moved to Monroe, but he started a whole new chapter in his life, dedicating his time and energy to our community."

Irwin was born in Bayonne and lived in Manhattan before moving to Monroe in 1982.

Once he got settled in town, Irwin started giving back to his community, serving on the Monroe Township Board of Education, the Planning Board and was the President of the Concordia Civic Association.

Irwin served as Councilman at Large from 1988 until his retirement in 2011. It should be noted, he began his political career at the young age of 70.

Continued on page 10

Check out the local calendar of events, pages 12-13.



State Senator Linda Greenstein honored Irwin Nalitt when he was inducted into the NJ League of Municipalities Elected Officials Hall of Fame.



Kids gather eggs at the annual Egg Hunt held at the hockey rink at the Monroe Township Community Center on Monmouth Rd.



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Township to Pay Tribute to Fallen Veterans

Mayor Richard Pucci, the Township Council, and the Veterans Council of Monroe and Jamesburg will hold two Memorial Day Ceremonies on May 26 to pay tribute to those who died protecting our liberties.

The first ceremony will be held at 8:30 a.m. May 26 at the Veterans Memorial at the Municipal Building. The second ceremony will be held at Veterans Park on Avenue K at 9 a.m.

“It is important to remember and honor those who died protecting our freedoms,” Mayor Richard Pucci said. “Memorial Day allows us to preserve the memories of all of our fallen soldiers, and say thank you to the Veterans who lost fellow service men and women.”

Bus transportation will be available from the Municipal Building to



Veterans Park, with return service.

Furthermore, the Jamesburg Memorial Day Parade is slated to start at 10 a.m. The parade starts at Veteran Park in Jamesburg and travels down Gatzmer Avenue and up Railroad Avenue.



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Township of Monroe 2014 Budget Message

By Mayor Richard Pucci

In accordance with my responsibilities under the Faulkner Act, I am submitting the Mayor's Budget recommendations for the Municipal Government in 2014. I would like to thank the Business Administrator and all Department Heads for their outstanding efforts in formulating the budget.

The state and national economy continues to struggle; local property tax appeals continued at high levels in 2013. Property tax refunds and credits totaled \$1,905,996.25. For the fifth year in a row, Municipal State Aid is at a continuing reduced level.

However, local real estate values appear to be stabilizing and in some cases rising. Also, the property revaluation is now completed and the only remaining issue is the tax appeal process at the Middlesex County Board of Taxation after May 1. All of these factors should reduce the impact of the extraordinary tax appeal refunds in the last five years, which totaled over \$15.5 million.

Non-tax anticipated revenues are up in several areas including con-

struction permit fees and ambulance fees. Our tax collection rate was an excellent 99.3% in 2013. We are achieving our goal of reducing our reliance on utility surplus revenues by anticipating \$1.5 million less than used in 2013. For the fifth consecutive year, we were at or under the 2% tax levy cap.

I am submitting a Budget for Municipal Purposes that totals \$51,418,512.33, up 2.54% from 2013. The proposed spending plan translates into annual taxes of \$1,350.18 for municipal purposes for an average assessed home of \$300,709 (as a result of the revaluation), which compares favorably to \$1,374.38 for last year's average assessed home of \$164,992 (for a reduction of \$24.20 in annual municipal taxes in 2014).

For the 23rd consecutive year, there will be no increase in water and sewer rates, which remain among the lowest in Central New Jersey.

The 2014 Municipal Purpose Tax, which is the only portion of property taxes that the Mayor & Council are responsible for, is estimated at 21% of your



Mayor Richard Pucci

total property taxes. The Board of Education makes up the largest portion of property taxes at 57%; the County at 16%; and the Fire Districts at 6%.

Monroe Township remains one of the premier residential communities in Middlesex County with a beautiful and green landscape. We are proud of our quality municipal services and schools. Monroe Township was recently ranked as the 14th safest town in New Jersey of 565 municipalities. Last fall, New Jersey Monthly magazine also recognized Monroe Township as the best empty nester community in New Jersey. Furthermore, Monroe Township remains only one of two communities in Middlesex County with a population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile. With continuing open space acquisitions, Monroe Township continues to work towards its goal of 50% undeveloped land in our community.

Continued on page 7

TOWN HALL

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

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor:

Richard Pucci rpucci@monroetwp.com

Council President:

Gerald Tamburro gtamburro@monroetwp.com

Council Vice President:

Leslie Koppel lkoppel@monroetwp.com

Council Members:

Stephen Dalina sdalina@monroetwp.com

Michael Leibowitz mleibowitz@monroetwp.com

Elizabeth Schneider eschneider@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 |
| Municipal Utilities Authority | (609) 655-1050 |
| Office on Aging | (609) 448-7140 |
| Parks Department | (732) 723-5000 |
| Police (non-emergency) | (732) 521-0222 |
| Public Advocate | (732) 521-4400 ext. 135 |
| Public Works | (732) 656-4575 |
| Recreation | (732) 723-5000 |
| Recycling | (732) 656-4575 |
| Senior Center | (609) 448-7140 |
| Tax Collector | (732) 521-4405 |
| Township Clerk | (732) 656-4573 |
| Traffic Safety | (732) 521-0222 ext. 126 |
| Transportation | (609) 443-0511 |

the **Monroe news**

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Millstone River Clean-up a Success

More than 670 pounds of trash and recyclables was collected along the Millstone River, near its terminus with Perrineville Road, on April 5 during the Monroe Township Environmental Commission and Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association's eighth-annual Stream Clean-Up.

The 117 volunteers who cleaned the area around the stream included Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, members of the Environmental Commission and community volunteers. The trash was then collected by the Department of Public Works, who sorted it to ensure it was either sent to the landfill or recycled.

"I would like to thank all of the volunteers who spent their Saturday

cleaning up the Millstone River," Township Director of Planning and Environmental Protection John Riggs said. "We've never had this many volunteers before. They all did a fantastic job keeping litter out of a stream that eventually becomes our drinking water."

The residents spent two hours cleaning the stream, removing various items such as bottles, cans, film, metal posts and so much more, with a majority of it being found near the bridge on Perrineville Road.

"While we may not be able to stop people from throwing something out of their car windows, we hope that by participating in the clean-up folks, will think twice before doing

so I the future," Mr. Riggs said. "I can't tell you how many soda cans and bottles we found along the road. If it weren't for the volunteers, these would still be lying along the roadside."

The Monroe Clean-up was part of a larger effort by the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association to clean areas along the river.

"We are happy to be a part of this larger effort," Mr. Riggs said. "We use the adage, 'think global act local.' If every community can do its part in putting trash where it belongs, in landfills, we can help preserve the earth for future generations."



Most of the 117 volunteers who helped remove trash from the Millstone River on April 5.



Volunteers weigh the debris that was collected during the clean up.

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Monroe Township Photography Club

The Photography Club meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Community Center and is open to all Monroe residents, High School age or older. All aspects of picture taking and equipment are discussed. All levels of photography experience are welcome. Annual dues are \$25.

For More info call (732) 723-5000

First Trout Season Opens at Manalapan Lake

Anglers lined up along the shores of the Manalapan Lake on April 4 at 8 a.m. With their rods and reels in hand, they opened the lake's first official trout season

Opening Day for Trout was the culmination of three years of hard work by Boy Scouts Troop 3, the Monroe Township Engineer's Office and Public Works

Department, Middlesex County, and the State Division of Fish and Wildlife

"It has been such a rewarding experience," Councilman Stephen Dalina said. "It was a true Monroe project. We had scouts and community volunteers work together with municipal, county and state government agencies and accomplish a goal that

will bring active recreation back to the Manalapan Lake."

The lake was first stocked with trout on March 19, when more than 500 trout were dumped into the lake from a state hatchery. A week later more trout were added bringing the total to more than 2,000 trout.

Continued on page 6

Monroe Ranked 14th Safest City in New Jersey

Monroe Township's low crime rate, excellent school system, many volunteer organizations and so much more led to it being named the 14th safest municipality in New Jersey, according to a list compiled by a private security company, SafeWise, and reported on www.nj.com.

"Monroe was ranked the 14th safest community out of the 565 municipalities in New Jersey," Mayor Richard Pucci said. "This ranking came on the heels of being named by New Jersey Monthly magazine as the most desirable place to live for empty nesters."

The ranking is based on SafeWise's criteria, which includes FBI crime data from 2011, population, unique safety initiatives and security programs implemented in recent years, as well as educational and charitable organizations, among other criteria.

In addition, the State Police recently released the 2012 Uniform Crime Report, which showed that Monroe's crime rate was 6.5 per 1,000 residents, with a total of 267 crimes in 2012. Compared to the other 24 municipalities in Middlesex County, the crime rate in Monroe is the second lowest with only the tiny hamlet of Helmetta having a lower

index of 6.4 and 14 crimes in 2012.

The 2012 average crime rate for all municipalities in Middlesex County was 18.5 offenses per 1,000 people, which is more than 2.8 times greater than Monroe Township's crime rate of 6.5.

The Township's average crime rate for the past five years was 7.26 per 1,000 residents, which was the lowest in Middlesex County and 2.42 times lower than the county average of 17.61.

The low crime rate and the accolades from SafeWise is a direct reflection on the proactive and dedicated service of the men and women of the Monroe Township Police Department, whose presence and active initiatives throughout the Township help keep the streets safe.

"I'd like to commend the Monroe Township Police Department for its outstanding service, especially for the programs and activities developed in the area of crime prevention," Mayor Pucci said. "We just held our D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) graduations at the Middle School, which has been a long-running cooperative effort between the police

and the school district, aimed at keeping our children educated about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and reducing crime."

Furthermore, the Department's Detective Bureau reaches out to and responds to requests for speakers and information on crime prevention. During a typical year, several dozen informative talks with the public are conducted and include topics such as home safety, personal safety, computer internet safety and general crime prevention.

In August, the Monroe police hold the annual National Night Out event in Thompson Park. The gathering provides residents with an opportunity to meet one-on-one with police and strengthen relationship between the community and police and other emergency management personnel.

Moreover, the Township has a proactive Municipal Alliance that facilitates a series of programs for children and adults to spread the message about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse.

SafeWise also commented that despite its large size, Monroe is a close-knit community that has maintained its small town roots with

Crime Stats 2012 – Middlesex County

| Town | Crime Rate per 1,000 |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Helmetta | 6.4 |
| Monroe | 6.5 |
| Plainsboro | 7.6 |
| Middlesex Borough | 9.8 |
| Spotswood | 12.1 |
| Jamesburg | 12.2 |
| South Brunswick | 12.5 |
| Milltown | 13 |
| South River | 14.1 |
| Sayreville | 14.4 |
| Old Bridge | 14.8 |
| Piscataway | 14.8 |
| Metuchen | 15.3 |
| Edison | 16.6 |
| Cranbury | 16.7 |
| Carteret | 17.7 |
| Highland Park | 17.8 |
| East Brunswick | 18.6 |
| South Plainfield | 19.1 |
| North Brunswick | 19.3 |
| South Amboy | 20.4 |
| Woodbridge | 21.3 |
| Perth Amboy | 28.1 |
| Dunellen | 35.3 |
| New Brunswick | 41.3 |

comprehensive recreation programs and facilities that keep the youth occupied with productive and healthy activities.

"Our annual celebrations and gatherings at the Dey Farm, the Fourth of July Celebration in Thompson Park and the Green Fair at the Oak Tree School are all well attended with audiences from throughout the entire community," Mayor Pucci said. "The fairs all provide an opportunity for police, fire and EMS personnel

to meet with residents."

Furthermore, SafeWise recognized the Township's outstanding school district, noting that the high school was ranked 124th out of 328 schools in the state in the most recent New Jersey Monthly list of the top public high schools in the state.

The Township was also commended by SafeWise for its low tax rate and affordable houses, which make the community a desirable place for people to live, raise a family and retire.

Mayor Pucci Honored at Library Gala

When it started, it was just a card table in the Municipal Building and a handful of books.

Now, 25 years later, the Monroe Township Public Library is one of the busiest buildings in the Township, lending books, DVDs, CDs and other items to more than 1,500 visitors on a daily basis.

"When I first ran for Mayor, I promised to bring a Library to Monroe," Mayor Richard Pucci said. "It took a year to get off the ground, and now 25 years later we are known for having one of the best libraries in the State."

From story times and puppet shows for kids to book discussion groups and computer classes, the bustling building has programs and items for residents of all ages.

"If you enter the Library on any given day, you will see students doing research, seniors looking for materials or children enjoying a sing-along," Councilman Stephen Dalina said. "To see a facility start from nothing and blossom into a state-of-the-art bustling hub of activity is a wonderful thing."

On April 4, the Monroe Township Library Foundation held a fundraising gala to commemorate the Library's Silver Anniversary and to honor Mayor Pucci for his work in establishing a Public Library in Monroe Township.

"The Mayor was instrumental in getting the Library off the ground, and we felt it was important to honor him for all of his efforts," Library Director Irene

Goldberg said. "His continued support and the support of the Town Council makes it easy for us to provide quality services to our residents."

Since opening in the lower level of the Municipal Building in 1989, the Library has gone through numerous changes, most notably, the construction of the free-standing facility at 4 Municipal Plaza in 1999, which was expanded five years ago.

"The expanded building has become the cultural hub of the Township that we envisioned when we first opened 25 years ago," Mayor Pucci said. "A lot of that has to do with Irene Goldberg, who has been our director since we opened. Along with her staff, Irene has made the Library a model for all others in the state."



Mayor Richard Pucci is presented with a ceramic rendition of the Monroe Township Public Library by Library Director Irene Goldberg.

Along with the thousands and thousands of books, magazines, and periodicals for residents to borrow and read, the Library also has many DVDs and CDS to borrow, novels and young adult books and so much more. And it is not just a building with services, downloadable books, magazines, music and films can also be accessed

remotely. The rotunda art gallery hosts works from artists on a rotating basis, and the front display cases regularly showcases works from students or displays from our Historic Preservation Commission.

"The Library is a much different place now than it was 25 years ago," Mayor Pucci said.

Trout Season Opens

Continued from page 4

"With so much happening at the lake we are happy to announce that it will be the home of the annual Fishing Derby on August 12," Recreation Superintendent Mary Lange said. "It will be great to hold the Fishing Derby right here in Monroe Township."

The trout are the latest addition to the Manalapan Lake, which received 822 unexpected residents in August 2012, when Fish and Wildlife

officials transported fish from Brainerd Lake in Cranbury when its dam broke. A few weeks later, 20 channel catfish were added to the lake from a state hatchery.

"As more and more fish were added, more and more people went to the lake to fish," Councilman Dalina said. "It is great to see so many people in Monroe to enjoy time outside."

The lake-stocking project began in 2011,

when representatives from the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, Township Department of Public Works along with Shannon Cenci from the Township Engineer's Office used sonar equipment to map the lake by measuring its depth, which was mostly between eight and 12 feet deep. Then the lake's oxygen levels were tested and it was determined to be suitable to sustain fish life.



The State Division of Fish and Wildlife stocked the Manalapan Lake in Thompson Park with more than 2,000 trout for the inaugural trout season. This was the first batch of trout brought to the lake on March 19.

Then, Troop 60 constructed more than 100 fish habitats at the Department of Public Works garage, under the supervision of DPW

Supervisors Casey Florek and Robert Hode. The habitats were made from brush and dead Christmas Trees that

Continued on page 8

Energy Aggregation is a Home Run for Monroe

By Council President Gerald W. Tamburro

It is hard to believe that it has been a year since we started the process of procuring a third-party electric supplier for the residents in our entire Township.

Those residents who have switched have received the first energy bills under the Township's 22-month contract with ConEdison Solutions to supply electricity to all households for 8.435-cents per kilowatt hour. The savings for those enrolled is noticeable.

While the initial bill did not reflect the cost per kilowatt hour that was secured when we went out to bid, the rate was calculated correctly using the 8.435-cents. Subsequent bills have reflected the correct cost per kilowatt hour.

This rate is fixed for the 22-month term of our contract. Since we received that rate, the cost of electricity has gone up considerably. However, ours will remain constant.

The consultants informed us that more

than 65 percent of those eligible to convert did, which is the highest conversion rate of any town they have worked with.

The contract with ConEdison Solutions was the result of the Monroe Township Community Energy Aggregation (MTCEA) Program, launched by the Township in early 2013. Monroe was one of the first municipalities in the state to successfully award an electric supply contract under the Government Energy Aggregation (GEA) Act, which gives municipalities the authority to undertake a bulk purchase of electric power supply for its residents.

To help announce the program to residents, the Township held meetings in various locations, in order to reach residents who could save the most through aggregation. Our consultants told us the program was so successful in Monroe because of the educational programs we held, the fact that many

of our residents shop for electric rates, and the trust the residents had in our local government.

When the Township Council approved the ConEdison Solutions contract on Nov. 14, the rate was nearly 2 cents less than the JCP&L generation rate, and unlike private third-party energy suppliers, our rate is locked for 22 months, meaning it is guaranteed until December 2015. Furthermore, the Township Council requires the rate, for renewal, to be at least 5 percent lower than the then current JCP&L rate.

What the Council discovered, was that due to the extremely cold winter, many private third-party energy suppliers increased rates to their customers, and many residents reported paying between 16 and 20 cents per kilowatt hour in recent months.

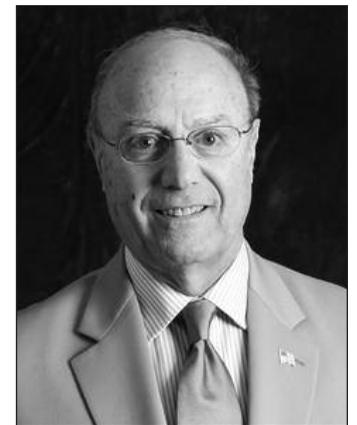
The Township sought to aggregate the energy supply because of the many homes in town that are serviced entirely by

electricity, especially those in some of our active adult communities.

Many of these residents sought private third-party suppliers, prior to the municipal aggregation program because they were promised competitive rates that would be lower than JCP&L. While initial rates were lower, they soon ballooned to nearly double the JCP&L rate.

There was no impact on electrical service when the program rolled out. JCP&L still provides delivery service, maintains the power lines, and issues a single bill for electricity.

The JCP&L bill includes charges for delivery service, and a separate line item for power supply received from ConEdison under the MTCEA program.



**Council President
Gerald W. Tamburro**

In addition, residents who are on a 12 month budget plan with their current provider will be able to maintain the same type of billing plan under the aggregation supplier.

Residents can still opt into the program. If they have a private third-party supplier, they should first check to see if there is a cancellation fee. If not they must cancel the third-party supplier and call ConEdison Solutions toll-free at (855) 884-9794 or by send an email to: aggregation@coned-solutions.com.

2014 Budget Message

Our positive record of achievement is primarily due to a continued effort of everyone working together in a united way for the betterment of the Township.

Special appreciation must go to our Township employees, our volunteers who serve on the numerous boards and agencies and our emergency services

Continued from page 3

personnel, who continue year after year performing such dedicated services for all of our residents.



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Trout Season Opens at Manalapan Lake *Continued from page 6*

were collected by the DPW. The habitats were anchored by concrete and sunk in two locations in the lake.

In July 2012, state fish and wildlife officials conducted a fish netting, where they collected samples of fish in the lake to ascertain how

many fish are in the lake and to determine the fish to be in good health.

The State Fish and Wildlife Council

approved the adding of Manalapan Lake to the trout stocking program on Nov. 19 after a two month open public comment period, in which fish and wildlife officials received 69 comments in favor of the program and none opposing it.

Recently, Middlesex County Division of Parks and Recreation representatives constructed a boat launch, which will allow anglers to bring their manual or electric powered boats to the lake.



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Nicholas Laviola and his father Vincent look to catch some trout on opening day of the season at the Manalapan Lake on April 5.

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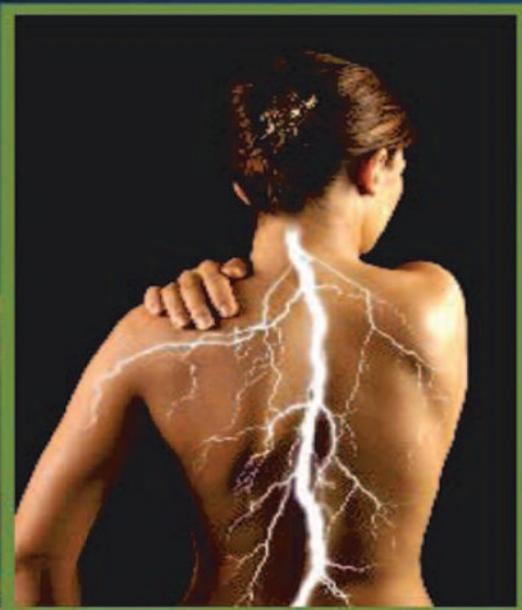
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Monroe Township Senior Center's Special Events

June 23: Old Fashioned Ice Cream Parlor Luncheon, sponsored by the Friends of the Senior Center, Inc., takes you back to the "Good Ol' Days." You will enjoy a menu and music straight from the 1950s. Tickets: \$15 p.p. To make a reservation, please stop by the Senior Center or call the FRIENDS at 609-448-7598, for more information.

July 11: Post July 4th Celebration, is a day filled with music, fun, and traditional barbeque fare, from 1 to 3 p.m., at the Senior Center. Event information will appear in the July issue of the Senior Focus, the Senior Center's monthly newsletter (which will be available around June 16).

August 13: Tricky Tray Auction, sponsored by the Friends of the Senior Center, Inc., is a special fundraiser with plenty of fun. Take a chance to win specially-themed gift baskets and other items on display. Event information will appear in the August issue of the Senior Focus (which will be available around July 15.)

To Contact the Friends of the Senior Center, Inc.: 609-448-7598; to Contact the Office/Senior Center: 609-448-7140.

Open at Your Own Risk



Open at Your Own Risk by Sue Fielder was the winner of the Monroe Township Photography Club's April 2014 contest with the theme: Doors, Windows, etc. Learn more about the club at www.monroephotographyclub.com.

Remembering Councilman Irwin Nalitt

Continued from page 1

"I used to joke with Irwin and say he was the daytime Mayor," Mayor Pucci said. "He was retired and was able to meet one-on-one with residents during the day. The great thing about Irwin was that he enjoyed hearing from residents and being their voice on the Council."

Throughout his 23 years of service on the Council, he served on the Township's Master Plan Committee, the Library Board of Trustees, the Commission on Aging, and the Monroe Township Insurance Commission. He was named to the NJ League of Municipalities Elected Officials Hall of Fame in 2009.

"I had the pleasure of being friends with Irwin and served on the Council for 11 years with him," Council President Gerald Tamburro said. "He was a kind and wise man, who was more than willing to share his knowledge of the town with everyone he met. He will be missed by all who met him."

Irwin was instrumental in the formation of the Monroe Township Public Library in 1988, when it was run from a card table in the Monroe Township Municipal Building. Through his



Irwin Nalitt was one of the many people who helped cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the Library Expansion.

efforts, the library expanded and moved into half of the lower-level of the Municipal Building. Irwin helped make the Library a free-standing facility in 1999 and worked to get it expanded again in 2009. In 2004, a playground at the Library was named after Irwin and his late wife, Helen, for their work at the Library.

"Even after retiring from the Council, Irwin was still a member of the Library Board of Trustees and the Commission on Aging," Mayor Pucci said. "He was still committed to being involved in his community."

In addition, Irwin worked closely with the Office of Senior Services and was a vocal supporter of seniors in Monroe Township. He was a vocal advocate for a free-standing Senior Center, which was opened in June 2013. As

a symbol of his years of dedicated service to the people of Monroe Township, and especially the seniors, the main ballroom in the new Senior Center is named the Irwin Nalitt Meeting Room.

It is impossible to list all of Irwin's civic achievements. His hard work will live in perpetuity as future generations enjoy all that he has helped Monroe become.

"Irwin was a mentor to many and friend to many more," Township Business Administrator Wayne Hamilton said. "When I first started working in the Township, Irwin guided me through the important issues facing the town. Throughout the years he became a close friend and father figure to me. I, like many others, am a better person for having met and known Irwin."

Youth in Government Services

By Council Vice President Leslie Koppel

For the past three years I have been fortunate enough to spearhead a joint effort with the school district to bring local government into the classroom.

With the help of Monroe Township High School Social Studies teacher Gail Demarco, we developed the Youth in Government Services Internship Program.

The concept of the program is simple. Township employees and officials are interviewed by the students in Ms. Demarco's class and discuss her or his role in the Township.

This program is near and dear to my heart. I grew up in Monroe, attended Monroe schools and chose to raise my family in Monroe. Having grown up in town, I wanted to do something as an adult to give back to and foster civic interest in my community.

So I decided to run for the Township Council and am now the Council Vice President. I've served on the Planning Board and I work closely with the Human Relations and Cultural Arts Commissions. I've been able to give back to the Township where I grew into the woman I am



**Council Vice President
Leslie Koppel**

today.

It is my hope that by meeting with the Township officials and learning how the municipality functions on a daily basis, the students might be encouraged to give back to their community.

It is often said that knowledge is power. By giving the students an insight into local government, it may spur community involvement among the students and open new avenues for them to share their skills, ideas and passions with the people of Monroe.

Over the years, the speakers have included: Business Administrator Wayne Hamilton, Director of Planning and Environmental Protection John Riggs, Historian John Katerba, Recreation Program Supervisor Jay Brown and many others.

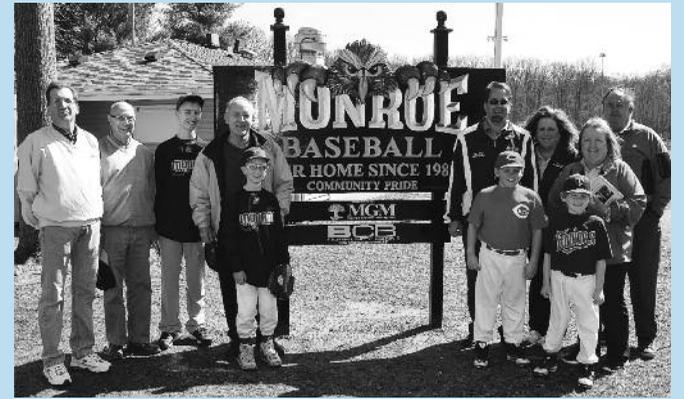
All of the speakers

aim to give the students an insight into all aspects of the Township and show them that it takes people with many varied skills to work together to make Monroe such a great place to live.

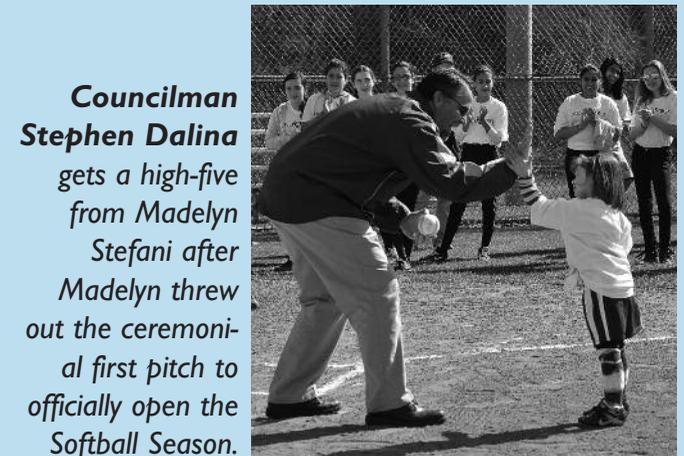
In turn, the speakers also get a lesson. By meeting with the students, the officials get to hear about Monroe from the teenage perspective, giving us a better idea on what we could do to improve their lives. Teenagers generally don't often come to the Municipal Building or to Council meetings. By bringing their government to their classroom we can forge bonds with the students and start a larger dialogue with them to ensure that we are doing all that we can to make them feel included and active in our community.

The Youth in Government Services Internship Program is a learning experience for everyone involved, and a project I look forward to each year. I would like to thank Ms. Demarco, her students and the Monroe Township School District for continuing the program and educating all involved on how Monroe Township functions.

Play Ball!



The new Monroe Baseball sign was unveiled at baseball opening day on April 5 at James Monroe Park. The sign was made possible because of two: MGM-Monroe Grounds Management and BCB Community Bank.



Councilman Stephen Dalina gets a high-five from Madelyn Stefani after Madelyn threw out the ceremonial first pitch to officially open the Softball Season.



First pitch thrown at baseball opening day.



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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.

June 2014

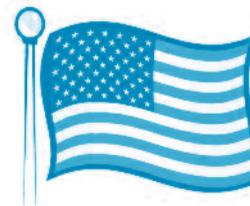
Monroe Township Department of Recreation
120 Monmouth Road • Monroe Twp. NJ, 08831
732-723-5000 • monroerec.com



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|--|---|--|--|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Community Center, 6:30 PM | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MTG. Community Center, 7:00 PM | 10 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Comm Center, 6:30 PM MTBA MONTHLY MTG Comm. Center, 7:30 PM | 11 MONROE TWP. SOFTBALL ASSOC. MTG Community Center, 7:00 PM | 12 MONROE WOLVERINES MONTHLY MEETING Community Center, 7:30 PM | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Community Center, 6:30 PM | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 MAYOR'S CUP MEN'S GOLF Concordia, 8:00 AM | 24 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Community Center, 6:30 PM | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 FIRST DAY OF SUMMER REC CAMP, M.T.S.E.P.A. CAMP, TENNIS LESSONS, Falcon BB: Defense Camp Falcon BB: Hitting Camp | | | | | |

July 2014

Monroe Township Department of Recreation
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CELEBRATE
INDEPENDENCE DAY
AT THOMPSON PARK
ON JULY 4, 2014
5:00PM—9:00PM
FIREWORKS AT DUSK



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|---|--|---|--|--|-----|
| | | 1 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Community Center, 6:30 PM | 2 | 3 | 4 FIREWORKS & CELEBRATION Thompson Park, 5:00 PM | 5 |
| 6 | 7 LADY FALCON FIELD HOCKEY CAMP MONROE FALCONS PITCHERS & CATCHERS CAMP JULY 7TH-9TH | 8 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Comm Center, 6:30 PM MTBA MONTHLY MTG Comm. Center, 7:30 PM | 9 MONROE TWP. SOFTBALL ASSOC. MTG Community Center, 7:00 PM | 10 MONROE WOLVERINES MONTHLY MEETING Community Center, 7:30 PM | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 LADY FALCON FIELD VOLLEYBALL CAMP BOYS FALCON LACROSSE CAMP JULY 14TH-18TH | 15 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Community Center, 6:30 PM | 16 MAYOR'S CUP BASKETBALL Community Center, 6:00 PM | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 GIRLS LACROSSE CAMP JULY 21ST- 24TH BEGINNER GOLF CAMP JULY 21ST-25TH | 22 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Community Center, 6:30 PM | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Community Center, 6:30 PM | 30 | 31 LAST DAY OF SUMMER REC CAMP & M.T.S.E.P.A. CAMP | <p>FARM DAYS FOR KIDS CAMP AGES: 7-10 YEARS OLD DATES: JULY 7th-11th OR JULY 14th-18th OR JULY 21st-25th TIME: 9:00AM-12NOON WHERE: ETSCH FARMS FEE: \$150.00 CHECK PAYABLE TO: ETSCH FARMS</p>  | |

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

August 2014

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National Night Out
at Thompson Park
6:00PM, August 5th
Safe, fun night!



Annual Fishing Derby
New location!
at Thompson Park
9:00AM, August 12th
Free food, drinks, and fishing!

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|----------|---|--|--|--|-----|-----|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 MINI DRAGONS SUMMER CAMP INTRO KARATE SUMMER CAMP FALCON BASKETBALL CAMP JUNIOR GOLF CAMP LADY FALCON SOFTBALL CAMP JR. FALCON BASKETBALL CAMP MAD SCIENCE (FIRST SESSION) BEGIN | 5 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Comm Center, 6:30 PM NATIONAL NIGHT OUT Thompson Pk, 6:00 PM | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 FIRST DAY OF PRE-K MAD SCIENCE CAMP MAD SCIENCE (SECOND SESSION) MONROE FALCON WRESTLING CAMP LADY FALCON BASKETBALL CAMP | 12 FISHING DERBY THOMPSON PARK, 9:00AM MTBA MONTHLY MEETING COMMUNITY CENTER, 7:30PM FAMILY SKATE NIGHT COMMUNITY CENTER, 6:30PM | 13 MTGSA MONTHLY MEETING Community Center, 7:00 PM | 14 MONROE WOLVERINES MONTHLY MEETING Community Center, 7:30 PM | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 FIRST DAY OF CHILDREN'S THEATRE CAMP TWIRLING CAMP HIP-HOP GYMNASTICS CAMP | 19 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT COMMUNITY CENTER, 6:30PM YOUTH GOLF CLINIC APPLEGARTH DRIVING RANGE, 9:00AM | 20 MAYOR'S CUP DUPLICATE BRIDGE Encore, 12:00 PM | 21 MAYOR'S CUP TABLE TENNIS Community Center, 6:00 PM | 22 | 23 |
| 24 31 | 25 FIRST DAY OF SUMMER ART CAMP HEALTHY LIFESTYLES CAMP | 26 FAMILY SKATE NIGHT Community Center, 6:30 PM | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

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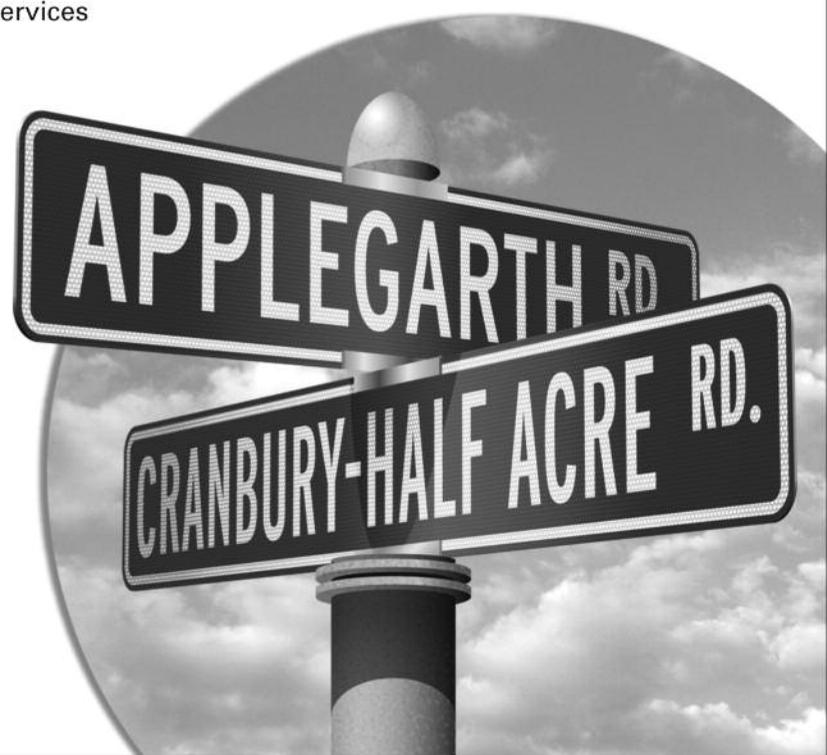
- Family Medicine
- Orthopedics
- Sports Medicine
- Obstetrics & Gynecology
- Internal Medicine
- General Surgery
- Geriatrics
- Pulmonary Medicine
- Podiatry
- Gastroenterology
- Pediatrics
- Rheumatology
- Breast Surgery
- Neurology

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Remi Koppel and her mother, Council Vice President, **Leslie Koppel** read Dr. Seuss' "Oh, The Places You'll Go," to Ben Howroyd's class at the Oak Tree Elementary School.

There is Plenty to Discuss at the Senior Lunch and Learn

Prescription drug abuse and alcohol abuse awareness; travel tips; poetry and love letters; grandparents as babysitters — the Monroe Township Recreation Department Senior Lunch and Learn series tackles any and all issues that seniors face.

"We bring in great speakers and groups to provide our seniors with the latest information on a wide array of topics," Recreation Program Supervisor Jay Brown said. "In March, for example, we had 30 seniors learn valuable safety tips for when they are babysitting."

The free program is run jointly by the Recreation Department and the Municipal Alliance Against Drugs and Alcohol.

"For many years, John Najar, who is the Educational Consultant for the Municipal Alliance, has helped to bring in speakers who have taught our seniors some valuable lessons on relevant and important issues," Mr. Brown said.

On March 17, Diana Starace, Injury

Prevention Coordinator for the Level One Trauma Center at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, presented "Grandchild Safety Tips, For Your Peace of Mind," to the group.

Ms. Starace, who is also the Coordinator of Safe Kids Middlesex County, taught the Seniors about the importance of recognizing choking hazards, preventing TV and furniture tip-overs and medical safety.

"Just like our other guest speakers, Diana and her group were thorough and really made an impression on our seniors," Recreation Program Supervisor Jay Brown said. "The Lunch and Learn program helps keep out seniors up-to-date on the latest information to keep them and their family safer."

Ms. Starace was joined by her Robert Wood Johnson staff: a pediatric resident, Dr. Michelle Phillips; a medical student, Nate Jones; Concussion Center Coordinator Maureen Sharlow, and APN

Geriatric Initiatives Ellie Incalcaterra.

The Lunch and Learn Program is open to any Monroe resident 55 years or older, who has a valid Monroe Township Recreation ID card, which can be purchased at the Community Center for \$5 and is good for a year. The group meets at the Community Center, located at 120 Monmouth Road.

"Other than the annual Community Center registration fee, there is no cost to attend a Lunch and Learn session," Mr. Brown said. "We require residents to register for the sessions, so we know how much food will be needed; free lunch is served at each of the programs."

Anyone interested in attending the Lunch and Learn series in the future can call the Community Center at (732) 723-5000.

"The Recreation staff would like want to thank the Mayor and Township Council for providing healthy strategies and addiction prevention support system to our seniors," Mr. Brown said.



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Fireworks Extravaganza Set for July 4

Fireworks, food, fun and games are on tap as the Township prepares for its annual July 4 Independence Day Celebration at the Manalapan Lake in Thompson Park.

"July 4 is a Friday this year so we're anticipating making the celebration the biggest yet," said Recreation Superintendent Mary Lange. "Thompson Park is such a gorgeous setting and the lake is the perfect backdrop for the fireworks. It will be a memorable night."

The free event is slated to begin at 5 p.m.

with the fireworks going off at dusk.

"There will be plenty of games and rides for kids, a DJ playing music and, of course, vendors selling food and drinks," Ms. Lange said. "It is like a huge beach party right here in Monroe. It has become such a local tradition that a lot of families plan their Fourth of July festivities around our fireworks display."

The celebration will take place along the frontage of Manalapan Lake with large inflatable rides, pony rides, dance contests, and so much more.



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"Each year the crowd gets bigger and bigger," Mayor Richard Pucci said. "It is always fun to see so many residents coming out to celebrate our nation's birthday with their friends and families."



Women's Champs in Mayor's Cup Bowling was the team from Renaissance at Monroe.

Monroe is MikeyStrong *Continued from page 1*

Mikey."

In addition, a grassroots effort to raise "a few dollars" by selling t-shirts and bracelets, and setting up a www.giveforward.com donation page by some of his classmates, mushroomed into an all-out effort spearheaded by some of the Nichols' closest friends to raise funds to cover the many medical and quality-of-life costs that the family must incur, such as remodeling their home.

Five months after the injury, the Nichols family hopes that Mikey will return home in the coming months and contin-

ue his rehabilitation on an outpatient basis.

Although Mikey faces monumental challenges in his recovery, he has retained the optimism, humor and competitive drive that he was so well known for before the accident. He approaches painful therapy sessions with the same fervor and focus as his hockey workouts.

Mikey has set his ultimate goal to some day play the game he loves again. His short term goals are far simpler and normal for a teenager: returning home to his family, joining his Senior Class at the prom and

graduation in June, and continuing his education.

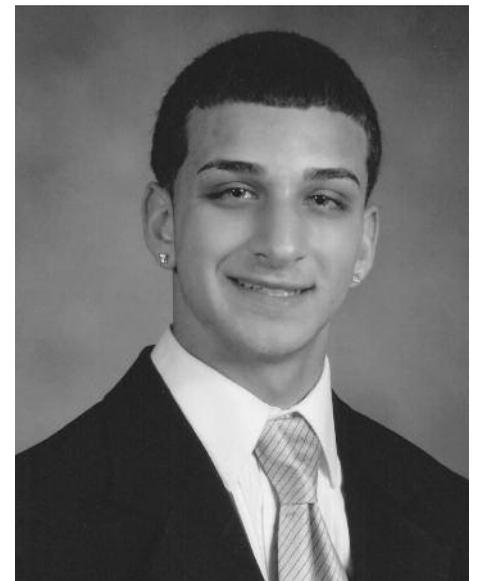
"We are grateful to our loving and caring community," Nichols said. "The prayers, encouragements, fundraisers and overall support and compassion is truly appreciated. The Mayor, Dr. (Kenneth) Hamilton, Principal (Robert) Goodall and the school staff continually reach out to us. In addition, the community of families of those with spinal cord injuries is very close knit. They help us navigate this very difficult journey."

The next step for the

Nichols family is to prepare their home for Mikey's return. Specifically, a ramp for wheelchair access will be added and a living suite has been designed to accommodate Mikey's medical needs.

"The Mayor and our elected officials have vowed to assist with the necessary home modifications that must be done before Mikey returns home in the near future," Councilman Steve Dalina said.

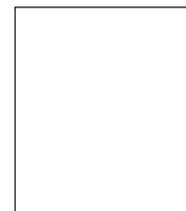
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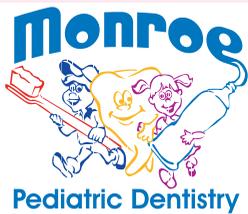
Michael Nichols

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