

Boro Newsletter

Fall 2011

www.raritanboro.org

Message from the Mayor

Raritan was extremely fortunate to have come through Hurricane Irene with minimal damage as compared to our neighboring communities of Manville, Bound Brook, and Somerville. We experienced some flooding along Orlando Drive, Old York Road, and Canal Street. We are very grateful to our Fire Department, Public Works, Police Department, and our Office of Emergency Management (OEM) for the outstanding job they did during the storm. Many of you emailed your thanks for the hard work and diligence these people exhibited during Irene.

There are many things "on the drawing board" for the borough during this last quarter of the year. We are quite fortunate to have been chosen by the Bloustein School of Public Policy and Planning at Rutgers University to be a "living classroom" for their graduate students. They will be working with the borough to develop a concept plan for our waterfront to include recreational activities and make our river a major focal point to attract people and businesses to our downtown. Johnson Drive and Third Street are being repaved with new sidewalk and curbing. The Third Street project has been funded by the developer of Willow Walk at no cost to the borough. The Willow Walk project has begun to clear the site and level the land in preparation for the actual construction, which should begin shortly. Construction will begin on the westernmost edge of the property and move east with the last housing construction closest to Goellner Drive. Three streets in the Town View Manor section, Ashton, Marson and Avon, will be repaved shortly, and we are continuing our dialogue with Somerset County concerning Orlando Drive. In our effort to become a greener community, new lighting has been installed in the borough hall. Motion sensitive light switches have been installed so that when someone enters an office or room the lights automatically come on and then shut off when they leave. We have also gone from a fuel oil burner to natural gas furnace in the borough hall.

We were all saddened and outraged at the recent desecration of one of our houses of worship. Never has anything like this directed at a religious group happened in our town and we will not tolerate anything of this nature. I received many phone calls from you concerning this and many of you offered to roll up your sleeves and paint over the graffiti for the congregation. That's what Raritan is truly all about.

Finally, our thanks and gratitude go out to the John Basilone Parade Committee for another spectacular Basilone Weekend. They make a lot of hard work look very easy.

Jo-Ann Liptak
Mayor, Borough of Raritan

Using the NIXLE Notification System

The Borough of Raritan has been utilizing the NIXLE Notification System for almost two years now. The NIXLE system was used extensively during Hurricane Irene. The Raritan Police Department and Raritan Office of Emergency Management were staffed prior to the Hurricane and throughout the entire storm. During this time period, messages were sent out advising of emergency weather updates, road closures and changing conditions that warranted emergent notification to the citizens.

The NIXLE system has proven to be an invaluable notification system, and is the best and fastest means to get information to the public. The NIXLE system affords the user to receive notification by cell phone text, e-mail and it is also posted on the NIXLE web site. Each user can tailor the notification types they wish to receive as well as the times of day they wish to be notified. During Snow Emergencies messages can be sent to NIXLE recipients advising that snow plowing has started and to remove your vehicles from the roadway.

We recommend that every resident in the Borough of Raritan sign up for this free service, to assist us in keeping you informed in the event of an emergency. To register please go to WWW.NIXLE.COM and follow the directions for new user. Thank you for assisting us to help keep you safe.

Message from the Raritan Police Department

Living in the Northeast has its advantages with the experiences of all four seasons. We just left a rainy summer season and now are enjoying the changing colors of the trees during this fall season. Soon the gloomy, cold and snowy winter days will be upon us. With the winter months slowly nearing the citizens of Raritan are reminded of the Snow Emergency No Parking Ordinance that was amended in February 2011. Within the Borough limits all parking of any type of vehicle on any public road, street or highway is prohibited whenever snow has fallen and the accumulation is such that the road, street or highway is snow covered. This parking prohibition will remain in effect after the snow has ceased and until the streets are plowed sufficiently and to the extent that parking will not interfere with the normal flow of traffic. According to the ordinance, the term snow covered means any precipitation depositing any accumulation on the roads, street or highways, including snow, sleet hail, ice or freezing rain, which requires plowing, salting or sanding. The Borough has posted signs at every entrance into town advising motorists of the ordinance pertaining to no parking when roads are snow covered. Notification to the Raritan Borough Police Department must be made as soon as possible if a vehicle must be parked on a road, street or highway in the Borough due to the vehicle not being able to proceed during extreme weather conditions. Unoccupied vehicles that are parked or standing in violation of this ordinance shall be deemed a nuisance and menace to the safe and proper regulations of traffic. Violations of this ordinance may result in the issuance of a summons and/or the removal of your vehicle from the roadway by a wrecker company at your expense.

The Raritan Borough Police Department is asking for every citizen and guest of our community to assist with keeping the streets safe for our motorists and pedestrians during snow emergencies. By working together and removing your vehicles from the roadways prior to the streets being plowed decreases the man-hours needed by the professional services provided by Raritan Public Works in clearing your roadways.

From the Building Code Enforcement Office

There are many projects that are considered "ordinary building maintenance" under the building code. These projects do not require a construction permit. Some examples of ordinary maintenance are; exterior and interior painting. Installation, repair or replacement of less than 25 percent of the wall area in any given room in a one- or two-family dwelling including plastering and drywall installation. The replacement of glass in any window or door, however the replacement glass shall be of a type and quality that complies with the minimum requirements of the code. The installation and replacement of any window or door, including garage doors, in the same opening without altering the dimensions or framing of the original opening, this shall include storm windows and storm doors. The installation and replacement of means of egress and emergency escape windows and doors may be made in the same opening without altering the dimensions or framing of the original opening, and shall not reduce the required height, width or net clear opening of the previous window or door assembly. The repair or replacement of any interior or exterior trim, decoration or moldings. Replacement of exterior rain water gutters and leaders. There are many other projects such as the examples above that do not require a construction permit. If you have any questions, or would like to be sure that a permit is not required for a project you're considering, please call the building department at (908) 231-1300 Ext 22.

Tips for Fire Prevention

Fall is a beautiful time of year, the weather is crisp and cool, the leaves are changing and winter is right around the corner. With the cooler weather, people begin to spend more of their time indoors, where it is warm and cozy. Due to this increased indoor activity, the fall and winter are also peak times for home fires. Here are some tips to help you prevent having a fire related incident in your home this season. **1.** Have your heating units serviced and cleaned by a certified technician, this includes your furnaces, boilers, wood burning stoves and fireplaces. If you use space heaters, use only UL listed appliances and observe all safety precautions. Follow the instructions that come with the unit. Make sure combustibles such as newspapers and firewood are stored away from your fireplaces, wood burning stoves, boilers and furnaces. **2.** Never leave candles burning unattended and keep them out of reach of children. **3.** Should you use a fresh cut Christmas tree, keep it well watered and away from any heat producing sources, this includes radiators or hot air registers, which can prematurely dry the tree, making it unsafe. **4.** Every home should have smoke detectors on every level, including in the basement, and a carbon monoxide detector in the area of all the bedrooms. **5.** Your family should have an escape plan, if you have children, discuss with them what they should do if there is a fire in the house, how do they get out? What if they can't get out of their bedroom? These are important questions that children need to know the answers to. If you are not sure or have questions yourselves, call our Fire Official, Frank D'Amore at 908-231-9476. He will be more than happy to assist you. Don't forget, a smoke detector is useless if the battery is dead. Change your clock, change your batteries. Stay safe.

Fall and Winter Raritan Recreation

The Recreation Department closed both of its pools for the season on August 31 after a very hot and eventful summer. Arts and crafts lessons were held daily at four of our parks for a period of nine weeks. Two sets of swimming lessons were held at Basilone Pool for children ages 4-10. The highlight of the summer was our Christmas in July activity, which was held at both pools for a week. Santa Claus arrived this year to greet the children with music, decorations, candy, and small gifts. Frelinghuysen Pool was sandblasted and repainted and Basilone Pool was redone with a diamond bright coating.

Two new park signs for Washington School Park and Cardinal Woods Park were installed this summer to continue the aesthetic appeal of our parks. New tables, benches, and a drinking fountain were purchased and installed to upgrade four of our parks. Concrete pads were poured under two more of our baseball bleachers this summer.

Our annual Halloween Parade and costume contest will be held on Monday, October 31.

The Recreation Commission is now preparing for our fall and winter programs. The following programs have been tentatively set up at the Kennedy School gymnasium: Mondays- adult co-ed volleyball, Tuesdays- Zumba (both fall & winter), Wednesdays- youth basketball at Kennedy School / youth cheerleading at Washington School, Thursdays- adult men's basketball, Fridays- youth soccer

We are looking for help in running these programs!! If you can help or want more information on any of our recreation programs please contact the recreation office (908) 725-9411 or e-mail rbartolucci@raritan-nj.org.

Property Tax Deductions

The following \$250.00 tax deductions are available to qualifying homeowners: Veteran and Widow of a Veteran deductions are available for Honorably Discharged Veterans of the Armed Forces with active service in a time of war. Senior Citizen, Disabled Person, and Surviving Spouse deductions are also available. To qualify for these deductions, your annual income, including the income of your spouse, cannot exceed \$10,000.00 after a permitted exclusion of Social Security Benefits, or Federal Government Retirement/Disability Pension, or State, County or Municipal Government Pension. A Senior Citizen must be 65 years of age as of December 31 of the pretax year. In order to be eligible for the Disabled Person deduction, you must be permanently and totally disabled and unable to work as of December 31 of the pre-tax year. A physician's or Social Security Disability or New Jersey Commission for the Blind Certificate must be provided. Please contact the Tax Assessor's office at (908) 231-1300 for applications and information.

Public Works. Leaf Collection

The Department of Public Works will begin vacuuming leaves in October. Beginning at this time, all residents should place leaves at curbside. Leaves are picked up between the hours of 7:00am to 3:30pm on workdays weather permitting. Do not place wood, steel, rocks, or concrete on the leaves to hold them down. These objects can cause extensive damage to the leaf vacuums and will put them out of service at great expense to the Borough. To vacuum leaves, it is necessary to dump the contents of plastic bags, or other containers on the curb line. Please be aware that branches, shrubbery, garbage, and building material are separately picked up. Please do not put these items on leaves because it could cause the vacuum to clog. To facilitate the vacuuming of leaves, please keep vehicles away from the area where leaves are piled. The crews will not rake piles of leaves out from between parked cars or from under them. If you have any questions, please contact the public works at (908) 725-1715.

Join the Raritan Borough Senior Citizens Club

Our Senior Citizens meet the second Wednesday in Borough Hall. To join you must be 55 years of age and a permanent resident of Raritan. Anyone who was a member for 5 years and moved out of the borough may retain membership. The Club provides free in-house luncheons at most monthly meetings; bingo every Wednesday; annual picnic; anniversary and Christmas dinner/dance parties. Presentations are arranged with representatives from various state and county offices. For membership information, call Rose Jacobs at 908-725-6917.

Flu Shots in Raritan

The Raritan Flu Shot Clinic is scheduled for October 14th from 10am to noon in Borough Hall.

Meet Your Neighbor Day

Raritan will hold the 6th Annual "Meet Your Neighbor Day" on Sunday, October 9th with a rain date of October 16th from 12:00-4:00 PM at Frelinghuysen Field on Sherman Avenue. We want to make this year's event bigger and better! With your participation, we can! This event is limited to Raritan residents, workers, and volunteers. All Raritan Borough residents and business owners will receive free hot dogs, soda, ice cream, cotton candy, etc. Games, door prizes, moon walk, human ball, pony rides, petting zoo and free give-aways will be included in the fun.

Spaces for tables are still available. The September 30th deadline has been extended. Also if you would like to volunteer your time to help for this event, or have questions, please contact Councilman/Chairperson Victor J. Laggini, Jr. at (908) 526-3090. For those of you that participated in the past, thanks again for making this event a success and we hope to see you this year. For those of you that didn't take part, we hope that you can make it this year. Let us not forget our neighbors who have been effected by hurricane Irene and the recent rain storms.

Historical and Cultural Committee Begins Second Year

The Historical and Cultural Committee just celebrated its first anniversary and what a year it was! Members were busy conducting oral histories from residents, collecting photographs and organizing events.

The first Historical and Cultural Committee sponsored event was held on Saturday, September 10, on the front porch of the Raritan Library. We were proud to have Kevin Titus portray President Warren G. Harding as he re-enacted the signing of the Knox-Porter Resolution. The resolution was significant in that it brought an official end to the United States' involvement in World War I. President Harding was visiting Joseph Frelinghuysen in Raritan when a courier brought the resolution to be signed.

We also have for sale beautiful note cards depicting scenes of Raritan from the 1800s that were reprinted from Mayor Liptak's extensive Raritan postcard collection. Each package contains eight note cards with four different scenes. We are asking for a donation of \$10/pkg. The cards can be purchased at the Municipal Building, Tropiano Jewelers and the Raritan Library.

If you are interested in sharing an oral history and some of you have old family photos (photos are immediately scanned and the originals returned), please contact Mayor Liptak or Debbie Thomas at 704-8707.

What's New in the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District:

Curriculum and Instruction:

- Advanced Placement Computer Science curriculum and course in place at the High School
- E Science and Social Studies programs in place at the Middle School
- ESL Magnet Program underway at Milltown, JFK, and Adamsville Schools
- Anti Bullying Policy and Procedures reflecting new law in place
- Intermediate School Clubs reinstated through a Student Activities Fee program

Technology:

- 36 SmartBoards installed in classrooms
- 80 LCD projectors installed in classrooms
- 428 computers, laptops, and netbooks purchased for classrooms
- CISCO wireless controller installed at the High School, Middle School, and Wade building
- PowerSchool Parent Portal opened

Facilities:

- Solar panels installed at Middle School, Adamsville, and Hamilton (funded through County program)
- Energy efficient HVAC controls installed at the High School
- Partial paving of Basilone Fieldhouse parking lot (funded through student parking fees)
- Updated phone system installed at Wade Building and Hamilton School
- 2nd artificial turf field installed (funded through Bridgewater Lacrosse and Bridgewater Soccer Associations)
- 3rd artificial turf field to be installed in Fall (funded through lease agreement with Bridgewater Township)

Personnel:

- Interim High School Principal Lew Ludwig started in July

Finance:

- Passed budget in April enabled all programs and services to be maintained for 2011-2012 school year
- \$600,000 of additional State Aid received in July returned to taxpayers to lower tax levy increase to 1%; over \$700,000 will be applied toward the development of the 20112-2013 budget

Board of Education:

- New Board goals established for 2011-2012
- Audio recordings of Board meetings now on website
- New Board member Anne Marie Mead elected from the Borough of Raritan
- New Board president Evan Lerner and Board vice president Patrick Breslin sworn in

The district's focus on increasing student achievement and improving district climate will continue as we analyze and develop action plans that address the results of locally developed assessments, standardized test scores, the District Climate Survey, and the Strategic Plan. Feel free to contact Superintendent Michael Schilder with any questions, concerns, or suggestions. 908-685-2777. Visit the district website www.brrsd.k12.nj.us for more information.

Voting Information

The Borough Clerk is the Chief Administrative Officer in all elections held in the municipality and the Chief Registrar of Voters in the municipality. To be eligible to vote, a person must be 18 years of age or older at the time of the next ensuing election, be a United States citizen, be a resident of the State of New Jersey and of the County at least 30 days before the election and not currently serving a sentence, probation or parole because of a felony conviction.

Dates to remember:

- Tuesday, **October 18**, 2011 is the last day to register to vote for the General Election.
- Tuesday, **November 1**, 2011 is the last day to apply by mail for a Mail-In Ballot for the General Election.
- Tuesday, **November 8**, 2011 – General Election

All election forms can be obtained and returned in the Office of the Borough Clerk Monday –Friday; 8:30 am – 4:15pm at the Municipal Building, 22 First Street, Raritan. The Borough Clerk may also be reached at (908) 231-1300 ext. 13.

Questions? Visit www.NJElections.org or call toll-free 1-877-NJVOTER (877-658-6837)

Visit www.raritanboro.org

Our website contains an expanded version of this newsletter, as well as meeting dates, municipal directory, council minutes, Raritan history and much more.

Send Us Your Comments

Your Mayor and Council welcome your comments, questions, suggestions and ideas. They work for the residents of Raritan. Let them know what's on your mind. They all share a common goal, making Raritan a better place to live.

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| Mayor Jo-Ann Liptak | jliptak@raritan-nj.org |
| Councilwoman Denise Carra | dcarra@raritan-nj.org |
| Councilwoman Stefanie Gara | stefgara@live.com |
| Councilman Paul Giraldi | pg4951@gmail.com |
| Councilman Victor J. Laggini, Jr. | vlaggini@raritan-nj.org |
| Council President Greg Lobell | greglobell@live.com |
| Councilman Anthony Soriano, Jr. | asorianojr@live.com |

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