

Boro Newsletter

Spring 2011

www.raritanboro.org

Message from the Mayor

As I write this message the weather is beginning to look and feel more like spring than winter. I know you join me in welcoming the longer daylight hours and eventually the warmer weather. As the weather does warm we turn our thoughts to Spring and Summer recreation activities. Our pools and playgrounds will have many wonderful programs for our youngsters again this summer. Look for the bulletins from our Recreation Commission about Summer activities. Don't forget the annual Easter Egg Hunt being held this year on Saturday, April 23rd at Frelinghuysen Field. In the event of rain it will be held in the Community Room of the Municipal Building.

Some people have expressed concerns to me about sharing services and specifically merging our Public Works Department with the Borough of Somerville's Public Works Department. Let me clear up some misinformation that has been circulating throughout the town. At this time **WE ARE NOT DOING AWAY WITH OUR PRESENT GARBAGE PICKUP** but, we are exploring other options that could be more cost effective for the tax payer. The Raritan DPW will continue to service the municipality as they have always done. If you do have questions about this please email me or call me and I will be happy to address any of your concerns.

Please be sure to visit our borough website www.raritanboro.org to keep up to date on things that are happening within Raritan. You will find a volunteer form posted on line. We can always use more volunteers. Remember that "Lunch with the Mayor" is held on the third Saturday of the month with the exceptions of June, July and August from 11 AM until 1 PM. Bring your brown bag lunch and any concerns you may want to talk over with me. This has been very successful and well attended activity.

Finally, as we as a community celebrate the induction of John Basilone into the New Jersey Hall of Fame, let's not forget that this year is the 30th Anniversary of the Basilone Parade. Mark your calendars for another truly spectacular weekend in September .

With my best wishes for a wonderful summer,
Jo-Ann Liptak, Mayor

Preserving Raritan's Rich History

It has been a busy first year for the Cultural and Historical Committee! Members have begun videotaping oral histories. Photographs are being copied and framed. Projects and events are being planned.

Photographs will soon be displayed throughout the first floor of the Municipal building. Come check them out. Maybe you can help us identify some of the subjects. They may even be relatives! If you are interested in donating photos (the originals will be scanned and promptly returned), memorabilia or being interviewed for an oral history, please contact one of our members: Debbie Thomas, Chairperson., Jim Fidacaro, Vice Chairman, Karen Eastlund, Secretary, Councilman Greg Lobell, Jane Fidacaro, Dan Soriano, Al Capetta, Adele Goetsch, Tim Rack. The committee meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 in the Municipal Building meeting room. We invite anyone interested to join us.

Leftover Items from Yard Sales

Please be sure that all unsold items are removed from lawns and driveways after your sale and all signs are taken down. Remember that bulk trash pick-up is the second Thursday of each month. Place bulk items at curbside after 4:00 pm the night before. Weekly garbage should not be placed curbside until 4:00 pm the day before your regularly scheduled pickup.

Spring and Summer Raritan Recreation

Our first year Zumba program is proving to be a great success with thirty participants. The women range in age from 23 to 63. Another first year program was youth cheerleading for girls in grades K-4. Our Recreation Board member, Melinda Perry, is coaching this program.

Opening Day for our baseball & softball programs will be Saturday, April 16. Hot dogs and drinks will be provided to all who attend. Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday, April 23. The Easter Bunny will be visiting for picture taking. Both events are held at Frelinghuysen Park, located on Sherman Avenue.

Our two wading pools for children ages 1-11 will open on Monday, June 27. Swimming lessons will be offered for a fee. Arts & crafts instruction will begin on that date also at four of our parks. Anyone interested in summer employment as a lifeguard(must be certified) or playground instructor should stop by the recreation office for an application.

Additional equipment will be installed in many of our parks this summer. The pool surface at Basilone Pool will be repaired before it opens. Concrete pads will be poured under the bleachers at the girls' softball field and the Junior Little League field before the season starts. In the near future we will be opening a dog park on the west side of First Avenue near the train underpass.

For further information on any of the above, please call the recreation office at (908) 725-9411. The recreation office is located at 16 Anderson Street behind the firehouse. Our office hours are M-F from 7-9 pm.

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.

A Reminder to our Residents from Public Works.

Although we have written about this in previous issues, it bears repeating. In traveling throughout the town, we are again seeing garbage and recycling placed out the on curbs on the wrong day or at the wrong time. Please remember that garbage, recycling, and bulk trash cannot be placed curbside until 4:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled pick-up for your area. Also, bulk trash **does not** include construction material, TV's or any electronics such as computers, printers and monitors. Arrangement for the disposal of construction material is the residents' responsibility. Borough residents should take any electronics to the Somerset County Recycling Center, 40 Polhemus Lane, Bridgewater on the first Saturday of each month. DPW would like to remind residents that grass clippings will be collected at the DPW Facility on Orlando Drive again this year. Collections will begin on Saturday April 16 from 9:am to 1:00pm. *We are here to help you!* Please call our office at 908-231-1300 Ext. 24 if you have any questions. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping Raritan a town we can be proud of.

National Night Out

On **Tuesday, August 2, 2011** from **6pm to 9pm**, the Raritan Borough Police Department will again be hosting our annual "National Night Out" event on the field at Washington School on First Avenue.

National Night Out is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support for and participation in local anti-crime efforts, strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships, and send a message to criminals letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

During past events, police, fire, rescue and other municipal representatives were present, coordinating events ranging from demonstrating emergency equipment to "dunking" a police officer. At this year's event there will be games and giveaways for the children. The night will be both informative and lots of fun. Please mark your calendars as the Raritan Police Department would like to extend an invitation to each of you to attend this very worthwhile event.



*Our mission is to end domestic abuse
and empower victims by providing
protection, education and resources.*

DVRT Volunteers Wanted!

Want to make a difference in the life of a domestic violence victim? Become a Domestic Violence Response Team volunteer and work with the police in your community to help domestic violence victims through the crisis. We provide:

- ❖ 24-hour On-Call Service
- ❖ One-to-One Crisis Intervention
- ❖ Information referral
- ❖ Aid in securing emergency shelter
- ❖ Safety Planning Strategies
- ❖ Understanding the Dynamics of Domestic Violence and the Cycle of Violence
- ❖ Advocacy for Rights of Victim

Join our team now. 40-hours of specialized training is provided to each new member.

Contact DVRT Coordinator Annmarie Crispino at (908) 359-0003 ex. 219 or
e-mail: annmarie@resourcecenterofsomerset.org

Official Notifications by E-Mail and Text Message

The Raritan Police Department is currently utilizing a notification service to access important, valuable community information when you need it, using the latest technology.

Our agency will create and publish messages through the Nixle Community Information Service. Nixle will then deliver this information to you instantly by cell phone, text message and/or email. Notifications can also be accessed online at Nixle's web site at www.nixle.com.

Example messages may include emergency road closures, planned traffic construction and special event notifications as well as other relevant safety and community event information.

The service is reliable and free for our group to use. There is NO spam and no hidden cost; you receive messages as part of their cell phone text messaging plan. YOU decide what information you want to receive and whether you want it sent to your cell phone, email, or just simply over the web.

Please register now at the company's main web site: www.nixle.com. There you can also access their Frequently Asked Questions area.

We also ask you to forward this information to 5 of your neighbors or friends in the community, encouraging them to register.

New communication forms continue to evolve and we believe this service will allow us to keep you informed in the most convenient, reliable way possible.

New Residential Housing Registration and Maintenance Code

A new Residential Housing Registration and Maintenance Code goes into effect in Raritan Borough on April 1, 2011. The new housing code states that **all** buildings containing residential dwelling units, not solely occupied by the property owner, are required to be registered with the Raritan Borough Property Maintenance Department. This includes multi-family homes that have been registered by the State of New Jersey, as well as two-family homes, and non-owner occupied single family homes. A multi-family home is defined as a building containing 3 or more residential dwelling units.

The Raritan Borough Housing Code requires that the property owner, or the property owners designated agent, file a property registration statement with the department. Upon receipt by the department of a valid registration application, an inspection will be performed on each dwelling unit and the entire premises. The Property Maintenance Inspector will verify that each rental unit and premises are in compliance with the New Jersey State Housing Code, Raritan Borough Zoning and Housing Ordinances, and all other State and Local Code requirements. An owner occupied dwelling unit in a building is not subject to inspection, but all other dwelling units including any common area available for the use by tenants are subject to an inspection by the Raritan Borough Property Maintenance Department.

A certificate of Rental Housing Compliance will be issued by the department after it is verified that the unit and premises are in compliance with the code. The certificate is valid for 24 months or until a tenant vacates a dwelling unit. A new certificate is required prior to the occupancy of a dwelling unit by a new tenant. Further information on the Raritan Borough Housing Registration and Maintenance Code can be found on the Borough Website at www.raritanboro.org or by calling the Department of Property Maintenance at (908) 231-1300 extension 24.

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.

Poison Protection

Poisons can be found in everyday items located in all areas of your home – kitchen, closets, bathrooms, attic, garage, dining room, laundry room, storage areas and basements. Common household products are a leading cause of unintentional poisonings, especially among young children. Even a relatively low dose of an otherwise harmless substance can cause serious injury in a child's hands. Simple precautions can prevent accidental exposures. To help prevent accidental poisoning, follow these poison prevention tips:

Keep household chemicals and medications out of children's reach or locked in cabinets. If your child is exposed to something dangerous, call the poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 right away for help.

Medicine Safety: Tips for Parents

- Know the right dose for your child. It will vary according to the medicine and the child's weight.
- Read the label and ask questions about dosing.
- Never call medicine candy.
- Use child-resistant containers, but remember nothing is child-proof.
- Keep medicines in their original containers.
- Put the poison control number, 1-800-222-1222, on or near every home telephone and save it on your cell phone. The line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Poisoning in Kids: How to Know and What to Do

Some signs of a poisoning are:

- An open container nearby
- Pills, berries, etc. in the mouth
- Strange odor on the breath
- Burns around the mouth
- Upset stomach, nausea, vomiting, dizziness or unconsciousness

If you suspect that a poisoning has occurred, call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 right away. Waiting for symptoms can be life-threatening. All calls are kept confidential. Do not induce vomiting or give anything by mouth without consulting a doctor or the Poison Control Center. If the patient is unconscious, convulsing or having trouble breathing, call 911 right away.

To find out more about Poison Protection, check out the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System at www.nipies.org, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov or contact Somerset County Department of Health at 908-231-7155.

April Programs at the Raritan Library

Adult Program:

Julia Child Says "Bon Appétit" - Thursday April 28th @ 6:30pm

Presenting the life of Julia Child, actress Linda Kenyon will perform at the Raritan Public Library. Kenyon will portray the famous American cook, author, and television personality. She will also disclose how Julia introduced French cuisine and cooking techniques to America. Besides revealing Julia's public face, Kenyon will also focus on Julia's private side-especially her relationship with her husband, Paul Child. Register for this fascinating program. As a bonus, you will taste one of her special recipes.

Children Programs:

Butterflies! Beautiful, Beautiful Butterflies - Saturday April 2nd @ 1:30pm for Ages 4 and up

Do you want to learn more about butterflies? Join us for a fabulous program by Butterfly Rick. He will bring live and pinned butterflies from all around the world, and will answer your every question.

Guitar Bob presents Kids on the Move - Monday April 18th @ 6:30pm for Ages 3-8

Bob's lively music gets your kids jumping, shaking and dancing. Bring your little ones for jumping elephants, adventurous astronauts, and bunny rabbit rock-n-roll.

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.

Up Coming Dates to remember:

Wednesday, **April 6**, 2011 is the last day to register to vote for the School Board Election.

Monday, **April 18**, 2011 is the last day to file Party Declaration Forms to change political party affiliation for the June Primary.

Wednesday, **April 21**, 2011 is the last day to apply by mail for a Mail-In Ballot for the School Board Election.

Wednesday, **April 27**, 2011 – School/Board of Education

Tuesday, **May 17**, 2011 is the last day to register to vote for the Primary Election

Tuesday, **May 31**, 2011 is the last day to apply by mail for a Mail-In Ballot for the Primary Election.

Tuesday, **June 7**, 2011 – Primary Election

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

A registered voter currently affiliated with a political party who wishes to change their party affiliation must file a Political Party Affiliation Declaration Form 50 days before a Primary Election. A registered voter currently not affiliated with a political party may declare their party affiliation up to and including Primary Election day. You can print and complete the Political Party Affiliation Declaration Form online through this link: http://www.njelections.org/parties_doe.html

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 Office of 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)

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.

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

Newsletter edited by James Foohey
jkfoohey@gmail.com

