

METUCHEN MESSENGER

GOVERNMENT AND DEPARTMENT NEWS - PUBLISHED BY THE BOROUGH OF METUCHEN

FALL/WINTER 2003-2004

ISSUE #5



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Metuchen Resident:

The summer has come to an end and the borough has completed its annual budget process. For the fourth consecutive year, the tax rate for municipal services, public safety, roads, garbage collection and parks among others, has remained stable at the rate of .589/\$100 of assessed valuation. This also means that property owners are paying the same rate in 2003 for municipal services as they paid in 1995 while services have been improved. For instance, the borough, over the next several months, will be installing new lighted pedestrian crosswalks on Middlesex Avenue and Center Street and Main Street and Highland Avenue to increase the safety of our residents and visitors who cross our streets. In addition, new bus shelters will be installed on Main Street to conform architecturally to the timber shelter across from Freedom Plaza and the residents of the Lodi and Marsh Avenue section of the borough will be able to access Main Street through Myrtle Park by way of a new pedestrian bridge across Mill Brook. The South Main Street area will see new street lights, flashing crosswalks, new sidewalks and traffic calming devices by the end of this year.

This achievement was not accomplished by accident. The borough has been very aggressive in pursuing outside funding sources to help to defray municipal expenses. For instance this year we were awarded a \$600,000 in Transit Village grant to fund new crosswalks, bicycle routes, bus shelters and traffic calming initiatives. This was coupled with an extra \$200,000 in state aid to stabilize the municipal tax rate.

Again, this year the borough is also mindful that many functions in our municipality are only available through the hard work of Metuchen volunteers who contribute to making Metuchen as affordable as it possible for all of our residents.

I would like to thank Assemblymen Barnes and Diegnan and especially Metuchen resident Senator Barbara Buono for being particularly helpful in securing for the borough the \$200,000 in extraordinary aid that contributed to our stable municipal tax rate this year.

*Sincerely,
Ed O'Brien, Mayor*

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LOCATION OF TEMPORARY MUNICIPAL OFFICES AND POLICE DEPARTMENT

All municipal offices including the Metuchen Police Department are located at the Gulton Building at 212 Durham Avenue during the construction of Metuchen's new municipal building. Please call 732-632-8540 if you need directions or have any questions.

NEWS IN OUR COMMUNITY

New Recreational Fields at Oakite

Bids have been received and a contract was awarded to Country View of Somerset, N.J. to construct recreational fields at the Oakite property located on Hampton Street and Durham Avenue. Improvements include a ball field, grass playing field, irrigation and parking. The acquisition of this property was made possible by a \$450,000 grant from the Middlesex County Open Space Recreational Trust Fund. Also included in that award are improvements to various Little League fields.

New Lighted Crosswalks to be Installed this Fall

The Borough will be installing two new Lighted Crosswalk Systems this fall, similar to the one currently located on Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The first system will be installed on the corner of Middlesex Avenue and Center Street and another at the corner of Main Street and Highland Avenue.

Metuchen's Mayor and Council would like to remind everyone that Lighted Crosswalks are warning systems and **always remember to use caution when crossing the street.**

Transit Village Grant for Central Avenue

This past January, the Borough received a \$600,000 grant in recognition of our recent

designation as a Transit Village. Central Avenue, from Middlesex Avenue to Plainfield Avenue, is slated for a large percentage of these grant monies. Improvements will include pedestrian safety and traffic calming initiatives, along with sidewalk and streetscape improvements.

A Public Hearing will be scheduled for this fall to gather public opinion and comment on the improvements. Residents and businesses in the surrounding area will be notified.

Bus Shelters to be Replaced

The Borough has received grant monies from our recent Transit Village designation to replace the plastic bus shelters on Main Street and to construct a new shelter on the northbound side of Main Street, next to Freedom Plaza. The structures will conform aesthetically to the shelter that the Borough built next to the Revolutionary War Cemetery.

Mill Brook Pedestrian Bridge to be Built this Fall

The residents of the Lodi and Marsh Avenue section of the Borough will soon be able to access Main Street through Myrtle Park. The Borough received bids and awarded a contract to Decker Inc., Elmira N.Y. to construct the pedestrian bridge this fall. This improvement was made possible through the Transit Village Grant the Borough received in January.

Middlesex County Offers Workshop on Backyard Composting

Middlesex County Division of Solid Waste Management is offering a free two hour workshop on Backyard Composting. The workshop will be held on Thursday, October 9th, from 6:30 - 8:30 pm at Metuchen Public Library, 480 Middlesex Avenue. Registration is required and registration forms are available at Borough Hall, 212 Durham Avenue and Metuchen Public Works Department on Jersey Avenue.

Thanks for the Flowers

The Borough would like to extend their thanks to the Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce for the flowers on Main Street and South Main Street. The Chamber expanded their floral program this year to include and additional four large planters.

Thanks are extended also to Vince Vaticano of Vaticano Shoe Repair for watering and caring for the flowers at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Main Street. Mr. Vaticano has cared for all the seasonal plantings at this corner now for over three years.

The Borough also recognizes the efforts and thanks the Metuchen Public Works Department and the Metuchen Parking Authority for helping to water the large planters on Main Street and in the Pearl Street Pedestrian Pathway.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Dog/Cat License Applications

* Applications will be inserted in recycling schedules and received in late December.

All 2003 Dog/Cat licenses will expire in 1/31/04. All Dog/Cats seven (7) months and over must be licensed. After 2/28/04, there will be a \$5.00 late fee imposed in addition to the license fee. Licenses may be obtained at Borough Hall daily from 8:00 am. to 4:00 pm, Monday thru Friday.

Proof of Dog/Cat current rabies shots must accompany all applications and well as proof of altering, if applicable. If your pet's rabies vaccine expires before November 30, 2004, the pet has to be re-vaccinated before a license can be issued. Please speak to your Veterinarian regarding this issue. A separate application is required for each Dog/Cat in the household.

If you no longer own a cat or dog, or if your pet is no longer living, please contact the Health Office at 732-632-8503. Thank you.

Attention: Pet Owners

Animal Waste

Metuchen Borough Ordinance 206 requires clean-up of animal waste. Any person in charge of a dog shall have in his possession appropriate sanitary means to remove any feces so deposited, and dispose of waste in a sanitary manner.

The ordinance will be enforced by the Metuchen Police Department and the Metuchen Health Inspector.

Thank you for helping to keep Metuchen a clean, safe and healthy borough.

MUNICIPAL POOL



Despite the strange weather, the Municipal Pool had a good 2003 season and we are looking forward to 2004. The 2004 early discount date for membership applications will be **March 15, 2004** and applications will be inside the first quarter recycling calendars which come out at the end of December. The pool is the place to be in the summer with many special events-Family Fun Days, Float Nights, Teen and Pre-Teen Dances, Story Hours, etc. So watch for the applications, take advantage of the early sign-up and save money.

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



Fire Prevention Week - October 5-11

Fire Department Open House Friday October 10th 7:30 — 9:00 pm

On October 4th 2003, at the Metuchen Country Fair, the Fire Department has asked the Middlesex County Fire Academy to bring their Fire Safety Trailer. Stop by and see their weather program, a glass room showing how quickly objects burn and a sprinkler system. Also a smoke house for children to walk through. Great learning for children. No rain date.

Looking at Fire Safety

In the event of a fire, remember time is the biggest enemy. Every second counts. Escape first then call for help. Plan & practice an escape route, know where all exits are in a building when you are away from home. Make sure your smoke detectors are in proper working condition and check the batteries. Carbon monoxide alarms are highly recommended, if you do not own one.

Lastly, take fire alarms seriously. Do not ignore fire alarms, do not wait to see fire or smoke. Do not take personal items. Get out and do not go back in.

Free smoke detectors are available for senior citizens or qualified individuals.

FIRST AID SQUAD

The Metuchen First Aid Squad will be participating in the Country Fair on October 4, 2003. At that time, applications for membership will also be available for anyone interested in joining. Make it a point to come and visit and speak with a squad member about what we do.

POLICE DEPARTMENT



- 1) Annual alarm renewal letters will be going out to businesses and residents. It is important that all emergency contact information be updated in the event of an emergency.
- 2) As we have in the past the Police Department will participate in the Country Fair and have a booth manned by our officers.
- 3) On October 25th, members of the department will be involved in Operation Clean Sweep being held at 15 Center St.
- 4) We will be participating in the "Walk Your Kids to School Day" which is scheduled for a date yet to be determined in October. In the past our officers have assisted in crossing individuals and have gotten involved at several of our schools.
- 5) We will be assisting with traffic at the annual Winter Festival Parade currently scheduled for November 30th.

October 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- 1 Development Commission
- 2 Traffic and Transportation Commission
Planning Board
- 4 County Fair
- 7 Borough Council
Library Board
- 9 Zoning Board
- 10 **Fire Department Open-House 7:30-9 pm**
- 13 Holiday (Borough Offices Closed)
- 15 Environmental Commission
Senior Citizens Commission
- 16 Planning Board
Recreation Commission
- 20 Borough Council
- 21 Parking Authority
- 22 Youth Services Board
- 23 Cable TV Advisory Commission
- 25 **National Make-a-Difference Day**
Clean-Sweep Metuchen
Pumpkin Float
(see Recreation)
- 27 Cultural Arts Commission
- 30 Tax Office open until 7 pm

- 3 Borough Council
- 4 Election Day (Borough Offices Closed)
- 5 Development Commission
Library Board
- 6 Traffic and Transportation Commission
Planning Board
Tax Office open until 7 pm
- 10 Pool Commission
- 11 Holiday (Borough Offices Closed)
- 13 Zoning Board
- 17 Borough Council
- 18 Parking Authority
- 19 Environmental Commission
- 20 Planning Board
Recreation Commission
Board of Health
- 24 Cultural Arts Commission
- 26 Youth Services Board
- 27-28 Holiday (Borough Offices Closed)

- 1 Borough Council
- 2 Library Board
- 3 Development Commission
Shade Tree Commission
- 4 Traffic and Transportation Commission
- 8 Pool Commission
- 10 **Radio City Christmas Show**
(see Recreation)
- 11 Zoning Board
- 15 Borough Council
- 16 Parking authority
- 17 Environmental Commission
Senior Citizens Commission
- 18 Planning Board
Recreation Commission
- 22 Cultural Arts Commission
- 25 Holiday (Borough Offices Closed)

**October 5th- 11th is
Fire Prevention Week**

Borough Telephone Numbers	
EMERGENCY - 911	
Police (non-emergency).....	(732) 632-8500
Fire Department (non-emergency)....	(732) 767-1147
First Aid Squad (non-emergency)....	(732) 906-9549
Borough Hall	(732) 632-8540
Board of Education	(732) 321-8700
Emergency Closing of Schools Hotline	(732) 321-8723
Health Department	(732) 632-8503
MEtv	(732) 603-9750 - Fax (732) 603-9871
Municipal Court	(732) 632-8505
Municipal Pool	(732) 632-8517
Planning and Zoning	(732) 632-8554
Public Library	(732) 632-8526
Public Works	(732) 632-8519
Recreation	(732) 632-8502
Senior Citizen Center	(732) 632-8524
Senior Citizen Bus Service	24 hour Advanced Reservations (732) 632-8525, 9 am -3 pm
Tax Office	(732) 632-8510
Tree Service	(732) 632-8540

January 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						

March 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- 1** Holiday (Borough Offices Closed)
- 5** Borough Council- Annual Re-organization Meeting
- 6** Pool Commission
Library Board
- 7** Development Commission
- 8** Zoning Board
Traffic and Transportation Commission
Board of Health
- 12** Pool Commission
- 15** Planning Board
Recreation Commission
Board of Health
- 19** Holiday (Borough Offices Closed)
- 20** Borough Council
Parking Authority
- 21** Environmental Commission
- 22** Cable TV Advisory Commission
- 26** Cultural Arts Commission
- 28** Youth Services Board
- 29** Tax Office open until 7 pm
- 31** **Dog and Cat Licenses Expire**
(See Board of Health News)

- 2** Borough Council
- 3** Library Board
- 4** Development Commission
Shade Tree Commission
- 5** Traffic and Transportation Commission
Planning Board
Tax Office open until 7 pm
- 9** Pool Commission
- 12** Holiday (Borough Offices Closed)
- 16** Holiday (Borough Offices Closed)
- 17** Borough Council
Parking Authority
- 18** Environmental Commission
Senior Citizens Commission
- 19** Planning Board
Recreation Commission
- 20** **Daddy-Daughter Date Night**
- 23** Cultural Arts Commission
- 25** Youth Services Board
- 26** Cable TV Advisory Commission

- 1** Borough Council
- 2** Library Board
- 3** Development Commission
- 4** Traffic and Transportation Commission
- 8** Pool Commission
- 11** Zoning Board
- 15** Borough Council
Early Municipal Pool Applications Are Due
- 16** Parking Authority
- 17** Environmental Commission
- 18** Planning Board
Recreation Commission
Board of Health
- 22** Cultural Arts Commission
- 24** Youth Services Board
- 25** Cable TV Advisory Commission

REMINDER: EARLY POOL REGISTRATIONS DUE 3/15

Borough Office Hours

Borough Hall.....8 am to 4 pm

Construction OfficialMonday - Thursday 5 pm to 6 pm

Library Fall/Winter hours.....Please See Library news

Public Works.....6 am to 3:30 pm

Recreation Department.....8 am to 4 pm

Senior Citizen Center.....9 am to 4 pm

Tax Office open until 7 pm on 10/30, 5/8, 11/6 1/29 2/5

Borough Website.....www.metuchen.com

PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Exhibits:****November 2003:**

Paintings by Nikolai Buglaj
(Meet the artist at the "Art Goes Public" demonstration)

December 1 - 15, 2003:

Model Trains – Frank DeRupo

December 2003:

"The Art of Don Bloom" - including paintings in oil and mixed media, editorial cartoons, and first day covers and illustrations

January 2004:

"Special Items from the Archives" – Metuchen-Edison Historical Society

February 2004:

Poetry and Art by Students Attending Middlesex County Arts High School

March 2004:

"March Madness" – College Basketball Watercolors by Metuchen artist Dolores Powell

Films and Concerts:**October 20, 2003:**

International Film Series – *American Desi* (Indian) at 2 and 7:30 pm.

November 2, 2003:

Classical Concert with String Trio, at 2 pm.

November 16, 2003:

Vicki Smith performs "Ella! The Song is You-The Early Recording Years" at 2 pm.

November 17, 2003:

International Film Series – *My Wife is an Actress* (French) at 2 and 7:30 pm.

November 23, 2003:

Holiday Tea Traditions, a demonstration by Judith Krall-Russo, at 2 pm.

December 8, 2003

International Film Series – *Eight Women* (French) at 2 and 7:30 pm.

March 8, 2004:

International Film Series –

March 21, 2004:

Jim Lacano on Piano, performing Pop Music and Broadway show Tunes at 2:30 pm.

Did You Know ...The catalog of the Metuchen Public Library is available on-line at www.lmxac.org. You may browse our catalog from home, check what's available on the shelf, or search the combined catalog of the 28 public libraries and the county college, which are members of our consortium.

Special Programs:

The Friends of the Metuchen Public Library, Inc. will hold their annual **fall book sale** on Saturday, October 4th, in conjunction with Metuchen Country Fair day, from 9 am to 4 pm. The rain dates will be October 11th and October 18th.

Thinking about publishing a book? Come and listen to Edison author Mark Csordos present "How to Publish Your Own Manuscript," on Sunday, October 19th, at 2 pm.

This fall, the Metuchen Public Library and the Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce will again co-sponsor a series of **free seminars for aspiring entrepreneurs**.

The dates and topics to be covered are:

Library Hours:

Library hours of service vary during the year to accommodate community needs. The current schedule is:

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 10 am to 9 pm

Wednesday, and Friday 10 am to 5 pm

Saturday 10 am to 5 pm

Sunday 1 pm to 5 pm

The Library will be *open* from 10 am to 5 pm on the following holidays:

November 4 Election Day

November 11 Veterans Day

February 12 Abraham Lincoln's Birthday

The Library will be *open* from 10 am to 1 pm

on the following holidays:

December 24 Christmas Eve

December 31 New Year's Eve

October 16 – "How to Start Your Own Small Business"
November 3 – "Creating a Business Plan"

November 6 – "Marketing Your Business"

November 10 – "Financial and Legal Concerns"

November 13 – "Promoting

Sales for Your Business"

These 2-hour seminars will be presented by the Small Business Development Center at The College of New Jersey, and are free. All will be held at the Library, and will begin at 7:00 pm. Registration will begin in October and is strongly encouraged; please call 732-632-8526.

In 2003, readers throughout New Jersey participated in a unique program, sponsored by the Office of the Governor and the New Jersey State Library, entitled "**One Book New Jersey**." One book was selected for each age group – pre-schoolers through adults – and readers shared their impressions during a lecture and discussion program at the Library. Nominations for 2004's adult title include Bill Bryson's *A Walk in the Woods*; *Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail*; Ernest

Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea; Catherine Ryan Hyde's Pay it Forward; John McPhee's The Pine Barrens; Anna Quindlen's How Reading Changed My Life; and Alice Sebold's The Lovely Bones: A Novel. Help select the winner by voting on the website – www.onebooknewjersey.org.

The Metuchen Edison Historical Society will hold its annual “**Local History Day**” on Sunday, February 1, 2004, from 1 – 4:30 pm. Come with your questions, look through photo albums, and share your interest in history with your neighbors. New members are always welcome!

RECREATION



The Metuchen Recreation Commission offers many special events and activities throughout the year. Below is a partial list of upcoming programs. Detailed activity flyers will be distributed through the schools during the course of the year.

October:

Country Fair-October 4th
Rain dates are
October 11th, 18th and 25th.
Look for the Recreation
Commission's Miniature Golf
Booth.

Halloween Poster Painting Contest - Date to be announced. Youngsters are invited To compete in a poster painting contest. We supply the paper and paint, the youngsters supply the imagination! Open to grades K-4.

Pumpkin Float - October 25th
Youngsters will carve pumpkins

which will be mounted on floats and launched on Tommy's Pond. All supplies will be provided. Pizza dinner will be served. A great family activity!

November 2003:

Winter Festival Parade-
Sunday, November 30th
Immediately following the parade, the Recreation Commission will be providing free hot chocolate and an opportunity for youngsters to meet with Santa Claus.

December 2003:

Radio City Christmas Show -
Bus trip to New York City to see the world famous Rockettes on Wednesday, December 10th. Cost for transportation and an orchestra seat is \$72.00.

Jingle Bell Walk- Date to be announced. Join us for the second annual Jingle Bell Walk through the Borough on one of our walking paths. Jingle bells will be provided and a fish and chips dinner awaits us upon return.

Santa's Calling- Date to be announced. The Metuchen Recreation Commission has a special phone line connected to the north pole for one night. You know how busy Santa is at this time of the year. Applications for phone calls will be available in early December.

February 2004:

Daddy -Daughter Date Night -
Friday, February 20th. This event is open to young ladies in 1st thru 8th grade and their escorts. It is a semi-formal evening of dancing, dinner and games, held at the Victorian

Manor in Edison. Registration is required. Event is limited to 450 people.

March 2004:

Mother-Son Date Night -
Friday, March 19th.
This event is open to young men in K thru 8th grades and their escorts. Registration is required. Also to be held at Victorian Manor.

All programs and activities are subject to change and may require advanced registration. Further details will become available closer to event day. Have a program idea? Call the Metuchen Recreation Commission at 732-632-8502. Thank you.

SENIOR CITIZENS



The Metuchen Senior Citizen Center is a drop-in facility for citizens aged 60 and over. A full range of services is offered, including recreation, information and referral, health screenings, counseling and income tax preparation. The center is open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm. Minibus transportation is available for Borough residents aged 60 and over. Door-to-door service is provided free of charge for medical appointments, shopping, nutrition services and club meetings. Reservations are required 24 hours in advance and can be made by calling 732-632-8525 between 9 am and 3 pm. A monthly newsletter, including a calendar of activities, is available upon request by calling 732-632-8524.

Clean-Sweep Metuchen
NATIONAL MAKE-A
DIFFERENCE DAY!

*Join the Metuchen Development Commission,
 The Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce
 and the Metuchen PBA Local #60 in a one
 day volunteer event called:*

Operation Clean-Sweep

Saturday, October 25th
 (Rain date: October 26th)

Metuchen Senior Citizen Center
9 am -12:30 pm

Complimentary Lunch served at 12:30 pm

Great Opportunity to fulfill Student
 Community Service Hours



PUMPKIN FLOAT

at **Tommy's Pond**

Sponsored by the Metuchen
 Recreation Commission

Saturday, October 25th

Please call the Recreation
 Department for info:
 732-632-8502

FIRE DEPARTMENT
OPEN HOUSE

Friday October 10th

7:30 pm - 9 pm

501 Middlesex Avenue

Meet the Metuchen Fire Department
 and learn about Fire Prevention
 Refreshments Served

Borough of Metuchen Initiates Pedestrian Safety Program

In September of this year the Metuchen Police Department will begin an extensive program to enhance pedestrian safety in the borough. This plan will involve a wide-ranging public education initiative that will start with a banner across Main Street alerting motorists that it is state law that drivers **must yield to pedestrians** and that **pedestrians must not jaywalk**. The applicable state statutes are:

- * NJ Statue 39:4-35 Pedestrians have the right to complete the crossing of a street, curb to curb. All drivers are expected to exercise due care for the safety of any pedestrian upon a roadway.
- * NJ Statue 39:4-36 Drivers must yield to pedestrians at and in a crosswalk.
- * NJ Statue 39:4-33 Pedestrians shall use crosswalks, no jaywalking.

In October, Mayor Ed O'Brien will proclaim "Pedestrian Safety Month", which will be kicked off on October 11, 2003 at the Annual Country Fair by the Metuchen Police Department. Police officers will be distributing educational materials on pedestrian safety at the Fair to alert residents and visitors that Metuchen will be vigorously enforcing pedestrian safety laws throughout the borough. This initiative, while concentrating on the downtown where we see most of our pedestrian activity, will also be expanded to other neighborhoods in the borough.

The Metuchen Police Department, along with the Mayor and Council, hope that this pedestrian safety initiative will make the borough the safest community for pedestrians in our state.