



Municipal Messenger

Township of Morris

Morris County • New Jersey • USA

2006 - Volume III , Issue II

Mayor's Message

By Mayor Robert E. Nace

Slow down, it's your neighborhood safety we are talking about!

Morris Township has stepped up its enforcement of speed limits in residential neighborhoods and on connector streets with heavy volume. Analysis of traffic tickets shows one common fact – half of the speeding violations in our neighborhoods are done by the local people who live there.

Dads, moms, and teenage drivers often become complacent on their home turf and contribute to the speeding problems in our residential areas. Perhaps the most dangerous place for kids to play is the neighborhood street when a parent is late picking up their children from an activity like soccer or dance class.

Our traffic surveys compile information on traffic volume and speed. The results show that most drivers operate within 6 to 14 miles per hour (MPH) above the posted speed limit. This increases the amount of distance required to stop your vehicle by up to 10 feet for every additional MPH you are traveling.

We need your help! If we all drive at the posted speed limit, your neighborhood will be a safer place, as will the other residential areas of the Township. Also don't forget to buckle up for safety, and please hang up the cell phone while driving!

Remember, it starts with you. Slow down, stay focused, and save a life!

Have A Happy & Safe Summer

Morris Township Swimming Pool Improvements Underway

By Recreation Committee Members Kathleen G. Hyland & Richard A. Watson

In the fall of 2005, the Township circulated a survey to all of the patrons of our two swimming pools – Ginty Pool located off South Street and Streeter Pool located off Sussex Avenue. The goal was to elicit feedback about what pool users liked and didn't like about the pools themselves and the pool program in general.

The response was voluminous and very helpful. We have learned from you, our customers, that there are a few areas where improvement is needed in order to give pool users the type of summer recreation experience that can be thoroughly enjoyed by all. We are determined to make the improvements necessary to continue to attract thousands of Township families to the pools each summer.

In addition to incorporating many of the ideas suggested by the survey responders, we've established an Advisory Committee of pool users, a group of 19 residents who will continue to guide us by making recommendations for necessary improvements.

Specifically, the actions we have taken so far include:

- The bathrooms, mentioned by many survey respondents, will be given an interim make-over before the pools open this season and a more complete renovation at the end of the season. Daily cleaning of the bathrooms will be more aggressively supervised by the pool managers and us, the Recreation Committee. Additional personnel will be hired to clean up around the pools, especially on weekends. This should help reduce the infestation of bees. In addition, the Township Health Dept. has been asked to develop more plans to reduce bees and other insects.
 - The membership rates have been kept the same, and the rate structure has been simplified to eliminate what some have seen as unfair treatment of single parents.
 - Pool patrons will now be allowed to use guest passes purchased in
- (see [Pool Improvements](#) on Page 3)



Some members of the Advisory Committee of pool users meet at the Streeter Pool. Pictured from left to right: Back row – Barbara Silverstein, Kathy Endres, Jenn Honig, Jean Viotto, Sharon Panko, Jim DelGiudice, Township Administrative Ass't Karen Carman, Mayor Robert Nace, & Maura Braun; Front row – Deputy Mayor Richard Watson, Karen Dembi, & Garbirelle Meyer. Picture courtesy of Tim Quinn.

Morris Township's Wildlife Management Activities

By Thomas Kenny, Special Projects Coordinator

Morris Township's Wildlife Management Program has hit its stride, beginning with the success of last season's deer culling program. Initially, the Township's goal for 2005 was to cull 200 deer, but due to the efforts of over 35 volunteers and the leadership of Township Patrolman Steven Summerer, this goal was exceeded by 42%. This culling, combined with projections on reduced deer reproduction, means there will be almost 700 fewer deer in Morris Township this spring.

Hopefully, our success will continue as we enter the second year of the Township's Canada geese management program. Last season our focus was more on information gathering and education regarding how to properly manage our exploding Canada geese population. However, the Township intends to make this year a more active one in terms of reducing, but not totally eliminating, resident geese.

In January 2006 Township officials filed the required paperwork with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for permits to properly handle the Canada geese and the eggs they produce. Township staff also contacted many large private and corporate property owners in our community to determine their interest in receiving training in the handling of goose eggs, as well as gaining access to their land so that management activities can take place. So far, twelve landowners have expressed an interest and will be contacted directly to notify them of dates/times for our various activities.

In late March 2006 the Township partnered with the Morris County Park Commission (MCPC) for training in the proper handling, or adding, of Canada goose eggs which causes the eggs to cease to be viable. Subsequent to training, in early spring some of the larger property owners in the Township, working under the Township's depredation permit, began investigating the presence, or lack thereof, of nests and eggs. In June or July, in partnership once again with the MCPC as well as the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, a Township-wide roundup of adult geese will commence. This process involves physically removing the Canada geese from problem areas.

In late summer, the deer management program begins again under the continued supervision and guidance of Patrolman Steven Summerer. If culling is to occur in your neighborhood, please be on the lookout for flyers announcing such activity, as well as bright, orange signs posted to trees and poles warning that deer management activity is taking place in your area. Feeders will be strategically placed in areas where deer congregate the most to begin the baiting process. As the deer get used to locating the feed (i.e. corn), hunters will return to cull, or thin, the herd. To augment the Township's deer management efforts, the MCPC will continue its own deer management program at Loantaka Brook Reservation, Lewis Morris County Park, and Fosterfields Living Historical Farm.

Deer season's duration is approximately five months long beginning in early September and running until February. The use of bow and arrow begins the hunting season with the possible introduction of firearms in late November.

If you have any questions regarding our deer management plans and activities, please contact Patrolman Steve Summerer at (973) 326-7450 or (973) 539-0777. Volunteers are needed for our 2006 Canada geese management activities. If you would like to volunteer or have questions, please contact Thomas Kenny, Special Projects Coordinator at (973) 326-7427.



Steve Miller, Executive Director of the Morris Museum, and students from the Riverview School in Denville turn the soil at the Museum's groundbreaking ceremony. Photo courtesy of Morris Museum.

Morris Museum Breaks Ground For Historic Expansion

By Kimberly Tauriello

On March 20th the Morris Museum broke ground on its \$8 million expansion and renovation project, scheduled for completion in the summer of 2007. Museum officials, architects, elected officials, and members of the community gathered at the museum for the historic event.

The catalyst for expansion is the world-renowned Murtoth D. Guinness Collection of 700 rare mechanical musical instruments and automata dating from the late 16th to early 20th centuries. A new wing for the Guinness Collection will provide a permanent, public exhibition & research facility with a gallery, viewable storage, and resource center.

In addition to the Guinness wing, other important improvements will include a grand, two-story Entrance Pavilion, a Family Discovery Place, and a Science Learning Center, as well as the restoration of the museum's historic main building, the 1913 Frelinghuysen Mansion.

The museum trustees have embarked on a \$15 million capital and endowment campaign, *Assuring the Future*, which includes this \$8 million project. As of March, 2006, they have raised \$5.8 million.

Serving more than 200,000 visitors each year, the museum celebrates creativity in the arts, sciences, theatre, and history, with a focus on education. The Morris Museum is located at 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township. Admission to the museum is always free for museum members and is free to the public every Thursday from 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm. For more information, call (973) 971-3700, or visit www.morrismuseum.org.

Increasing Use of Technology Controls Cost and Improves Service

By Mayor Robert E. Nace

Morris Township has grown nearly 44% – from 16,000 to 23,000 people – between the last two census periods. Our focus on increasing the use of technology is a key ingredient in helping us provide high-quality services to our community while maintaining essentially the same number of employees over this period of time.

Over the next year, we plan to offer additional and enhanced services facilitated by the use of technology. At the same time, we will be using technology to manage our costs in an effective manner, reducing our budgetary expenses wherever possible.

Here are some of the highlights of our plans for 2006:

- This year we will replace our old telephone system with a state-of-the-art Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) system that will reduce our communications costs by up to 50%.
- At the same time we will be able to provide high speed communications links to all municipal facilities at no increased cost to the taxpayers.
- We will also be implementing new recreation tracking software that will enable us to better manage our pool memberships. Our new technology-assisted renewal process will enable our pool members to renew on-line over the Internet and to pay by credit card, if desired.
- Following the introduction of our new recreation software, we will begin adding the ability to pay for other Township services via credit card as well.
- We are also working on an agreement with Verizon which will allow that company to provide Cable, Internet, and VOIP telephone service to our residents. We are looking for this agreement to provide greater competition among television service providers for our community's residents.

We are constantly evaluating new technologies to help us reduce costs and to provide better and improved services to our residents. For more information about the use of technology within Morris Township, please visit our website at www.morristwp.com.

Township Acquires Doremus Property As Open Space

By Thomas Kenny, Special Projects Coordinator

In April 2006 Morris Township acquired another parcel of land as open space. Located on School House Lane and anticipated for use as passive recreation, this 5.4-acre property is contiguous to another recently acquired open space parcel known as the Spence property. Both parcels are located within the Washington Valley Historic District, a residential and agricultural area predating the American Revolution.

In addition, the Doremus property is near 900-acres of county-owned land making it an excellent buffer area for the upper reaches of the Whippany River watershed.

This latest land acquisition was made possible through cooperation among property owners, Richard and Sharon Doremus; the Township Committee; the Morris Land Conservancy, an open space advisory organization based in Boonton, NJ; and Morris Township's Open Space Committee.

The Township purchased the property for \$550,000 and will soon file an application under the NJ Green Acres program for reimbursement of up to 50% of the total eligible acquisition costs. The Doremus land purchase will increase Township-owned open space to nearly 500 acres.

Pool Improvements

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- one year during the following year as well.
- The regular pool hours have been revised, opening at 10:00 am on weekdays.
- Healthier food choices, such as fresh fruit, will be offered at the concession stands based on parental feedback. You should know the concessionaire has warned us that when healthier food is offered, very few people buy it. Let's prove him wrong!
- Additional play equipment, including a water slide for the Ginty pool, will be installed.

We plan to throw a preseason party for the entire community at the Streeter Pool on Friday, June 16, from 5:30 pm

Your Township Committee

Robert E. Nace, Mayor
Richard A. Watson, Deputy Mayor
Kathleen G. Hyland
H. Scott Rosenbush
Jan Wotowicz

Check our website at:
www.morristwp.com or refer to your Municipal Calendar for more information on key dates for Morris Township meetings & other activities.

Acknowledgements

Volunteer Senior Editor

Linda K. Murphy

Township Senior Editors

Karen J. Carman, Admin. Ass't.
Fred J. Rossi, Twp. Administrator
Questions and/or comments may be sent to kcarman@morristwp.com

to 8:30 pm to show the public the renovations we have made and to introduce the pool program to new residents. We look forward to seeing you all there and encourage your feedback to help make these excellent facilities even better.

For more information, please visit the Morris Township website at www.morristwp.com or contact the Recreation Department at (973) 326-7370.

Recognize Special People With A Pathway Paver

Morris Township's Memorial Pathway at Ginty Field is your opportunity to recognize special people in your life.

If you have a family member or other special person you would like to recognize, purchase an engraved brick paver in their name. Acknowledge those who have made a difference in your life or someone you loved who passed away.

To order by mail, send your contact information, your desired paver message, and check made out to the Township of Morris to:

**Attn: Paver Project
PO Box 7603
Convent Station, NJ 07961-7603**

Please call (973) 326-7400 if you have questions or visit our website at www.morristwp.com for the order form.

Township of Morris
P.O. Box 7603
Convent Station, NJ 07961-7603
www.morristwp.com

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TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING HOURS
8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

FIND OUT MORE ON OUR WEB SITE
www.morristwp.com

FREE BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING
June 15 and July 19, 2006
9:00 am to 12 noon
For more information, please call
(973) 326-7390 – Health Department

**FIRE AND FIRST AID VOLUNTEERS
ARE NEEDED! HELP US HELP YOU!**
If you are interested, please call
(973) 326-7460 – Fire Department
(973) 539-1776 after 6 pm – First Aid Squad

VOTE IN THE PRIMARY ELECTION!!
June 6, 2006
Polls open 6:00 am to 8:00 pm

Morris Township's 2006 Budget

By Mayor Robert E. Nace & Deputy Mayor Richard A. Watson

Morris Township's Finance Committee is pleased to report that our 2006 Municipal budget, for the 2nd year in a row, involves a tax increase at less than the rate of inflation. The budget has been available for viewing on our website since its introduction on April 5, 2006. You can review it in more detail by going to www.morristwp.com.

People are sometimes surprised to learn that the municipal portion of your property tax bill, for which you get police and fire protection, recreation and health services, garbage pickup, road plowing, the public library, and various other services, represents only about 25% of the total tax bill. The balance goes to Morris County (15%) and the three-town Morris School District (60%).

We are pleased to be able to offer this budget which was achieved in spite of the following pressures which are dictated either by market forces or by law:

- A decrease in state aid to municipalities.
- A slight decline in our base of commercial 'ratables'.
- A 25% increase in fuel and utility costs.
- NJ State mandates, including extra pension contributions, an 8% increase in our library contribution, an 11% increase in health care costs, and a labor arbitration system that mandates wage increases for certain unions in excess of the inflation rate.

To place our budget in another perspective – with all the financial pressures we've experienced, *YOUR MUNICIPAL TAX IS LESS THAN HALF WHAT YOU WOULD PAY FOR A HOUSE OF THE SAME FAIR MARKET VALUE IN MORRISTOWN.*