Morris Plains celebrates and honors retiring Mayor Frank Druetzler and swears in Mayor Jason Karr

See full story inside
Good evening.

Tonight, at our Reorganization Meeting, I would like to report on our accomplishments during 2018 and to share our plans and goals for 2019.

The governing body continues to work on the Borough’s infrastructure. In 2018, we paved Malapardis Road, Drake Way, Court Road, Diana Road, a portion of Johnson Road and Memorial Field parking lot. Sidewalk replacement was also completed on Park Way. The County repaved West Hanover Avenue. The Council approved paving projects for 2019 which will include Idlewild Drive, Kathleen Place, Bryce Way, Municipal Parking Lots located off Franklin Place and the entrance to Simons Park. With the approval of two grant applications, we also anticipate the paving of a portion of Parker Drive and Granniss Avenue.

The Southeast Morris County Municipal Utility Authority has closed and capped a well located at Simons Park and drilled for a new well at the same location. A new pump house will be constructed on that site. A water main will be added to form a continuous loop from Jim Fear Drive to Parker Drive. There will also be a continued water main added from Forest Drive to Park Road, in order to complete a loop and eliminate dead-ends in the water lines. The MUA will be improving a walking path at the end of Forest Drive as part of the construction.

Updating of the Borough’s website has begun and will continue in 2019. A committee of volunteer fire department members and councilmembers are currently working together to design and order a new quint, otherwise known as a ladder truck, the delivery of which is expected in 2020.

I am happy to report that the access road connecting West Hanover Avenue to Central Avenue and Central Park has been completed and is named Governor Chris Christie Way. We thank the Morris County Freeholders and our Assemblyman Jay Webber for their assistance in making this project happen. We anticipate that this will grant relief to traffic on Central Avenue during Central Park events. The police will continue to monitor the traffic flow on Central Avenue. This past summer, the State of New Jersey also completed restoration of the bridge over Watnong Brook on Central Avenue.

Signature Place, the high-end apartment complex located on 250 Johnson Road, held its grand opening in April. As of now, it is nearly 90% occupied. Chick-Fil-A restaurant, to be located in the Kohl’s Shopping Center, has an anticipated opening date in the spring of 2019. I know many are looking forward to this new addition as it will be a first location in Morris County. The entire Kohl’s plaza is also undergoing a facelift and redesign.

Our affordable housing litigation with M&M Properties, located on the west side of Route 53, and JMF Properties, located at 1000 American Road, have now been settled. On December 26, 2018, we received our Confirmation of Satisfaction of Conditions and Final Judgment of Compliance and Repose, bringing this matter to a close.
Last month, M&M Properties completed its soil and stream remediation, and we expect that they will be coming before the Planning Board in January. This property will consist of 434 residential units along with 15,000 square feet of retail space and a 170-room hotel. Thirty-four of the “affordable” units will be located in a building separate from the market-rate units and will remain “affordable” in perpetuity. The remaining 39 affordable units will be interspersed among market-rate rental units.

Demolition for the JMF Property known as “The American,” located at 1000 American Road, has started and may take up to three months to complete. The project will consist of 156 for-sale units and 125 rental units (inclusive of 50 affordable units), for a total of 281 dwelling units. Construction has begun at 900 American Road where a flex-use building is being erected. The outside shell is up, and base coat paving has been completed.

The Johnson & Johnson property on the east side of Route 53, which was sold to Vision Real Estate Partners, has started interior demolition of the northerly building and childcare center. Mane USA was interested in construction on a portion of the Vision property. Their application was denied by the Planning Board and this is currently in litigation.

Our police department continues their successful program, “Coffee with a Cop,” where residents can get questions answered and show their appreciation to our dedicated police department. Be sure to look for the announcement of their next scheduled date. In 2019, the Borough will enter into an agreement with the Morris Plains School District, to provide Class III Special Law Enforcement Officers in our schools. The Class III Special Law Enforcement Officer will help to provide safety and security of occupants and school property.

Once again, our Community Garden had a successful gardening season with the donation of over 2,600 pounds of food to the Interfaith Food Pantry, over 500 pounds more than ever before, thanks to all of the gardeners’ contributions.

Last week, the Borough closed on a piece of property located at the corner of Malapardis Road and Johnson Road. The property will be used for open space and passive recreational use. This property was purchased with a $475,000 grant from the Morris County Open Space Trust Fund and appropriations from the Borough’s capital improvement fund.

Eagle Scout candidates from Boy Scout Troop 39 have started and/or completed projects in the Borough, including a dock at Community Park pond, a new “welcome” sign at the corner of Hanover Avenue and Speedwell Avenue, and newly constructed and refurbished used flag drop-bins to be located at Town Hall, the Community Center and the Watnong VFW. Thank you to the Scouts, the volunteers and businesses for these successful and beneficial projects.

I encourage everyone to sign up for Morris Plains Email Alerts and Smart 911. Links may be found on the Borough’s website. This will enable you to keep up with the happenings of Morris Plains and will assist First Responders in the event of an emergency.

One thing that continues to make our Borough unique is the dedicated volunteers who keep the “Community of Caring” working. Anything that interests you, we have a position – this includes playing in the Community Band – for all ages; the Morris Plains Volunteer Fire Department, that you can join at age 14; the Morris Minute Men First Aid Squad that you can join at the age of 16; our Museum for those who enjoy history, the Garden Club, Beautification Committee and Clean Communities Program, for those who enjoy the outdoors; and the many sports groups and scouts. We can always use volunteers, and there is something for all ages and interests. They all do a spectacular job; and our residents appreciate all they do, whatever it may be.

On behalf of the Borough Council, I wish to thank the Borough employees, all of the many volunteers on boards, commissions and committees, and all citizens for your commitment to our town. This is what makes it truly special. We thank you for your continued trust in us. We are always available, and always welcome your thoughts.

Happy New Year and God Bless You!

Mayor Jason C. Karr
Mayor Karr presented retiring Mayor Druetzler with an American Flag which was flown over the Borough Municipal Building on December 31, 2018, in respect of his final day as our Mayor. Lt. Michael Rolph took charge of the responsibility for the raising, lowering and folding of the flag. In the flag casement, folded and placed behind the American Flag, is a retired 9/11 Flag. Mayor Druetzler was also designated by Mayor Karr and Parade Committee Chairman, Steve Welsh, as the Grand Marshal of the 2019 Annual Memorial Day Parade. (photo credit: Jim Lent, Morris Newsbee)

NEW COUNCIL MEMBER APPOINTED

At a special meeting held on January 31st, the Borough Council appointed a new member to fill the Council seat that was vacated by Jason Karr when he took his elected position as Mayor at the Borough’s Annual Reorganization Meeting held earlier in the month.

The Council members unanimously selected Joan Goddard from the three candidates put forth by the Morris Plains Democrat Committee for consideration to fill the unexpired term. The other two residents interviewed by the Council members were Cara Parmagiani and Nancy Verga.

MEMBERS JOE CECALA AND LAURIE FU RETIRE FROM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Thank you for your years of service and devotion to the Community of Caring!
"20-Time" is a program at Borough School based on the corporate practice of giving employees one day a week to work on a project of their choice, giving people the freedom to work on something about which they are truly passionate. Ideas such as Gmail and Post-It Notes are just two examples of concepts that were born from the corporate 20-Time model. All 5th-8th graders, one day per week for 20 weeks, are provided time to work on a project of their choosing. After forming a partnership and choosing a topic, students develop an elevator pitch, hone a project, create a website, all while being supported by their 20-Time coach, a Borough School staff member. Borough School is proud of the many innovative and thoughtful projects that students have produced through 20-Time.

When 8th grade students Emma Cahill, Maya Rocco and Ava Marcantonio teamed up for their "20-Time" school project in November, their thoughts turned to two schoolmates - a brother and sister who are coping with their father's struggle with terminal brain cancer, after having lost their mother suddenly to illness just a few years ago. Emma, Maya and Ava wanted their project to be something that could assist the Wald family, especially in light of Christmas coming around the corner. They wanted to plan and create something that would possibly help to raise enough money to purchase a few Christmas presents and brighten the holiday for the two siblings.

Well....the next several weeks of their efforts would turn a small spark of a kind gesture into a giant bright light of magical goodwill in the community. The girls 'pitched' their project to fellow classmates and appropriate school staff, and acquired approval to move forward with planning a fundraising walk for the Morris Plains community. They then got all of the necessary ‘ducks in a row’ to make it happen. From acquiring approval from the Borough Council and Police Dept., to soliciting sponsorships from local businesses and organizations, designing and printing t-shirts for participants, creating a website, flyers and other publicity, and more. The word of their project and the reason behind it spread quickly, and soon the Rotary Club became an active supporter - starting a "Go Fund Me" page to help the cause. Walk registrations, sponsorships and other donations began rolling in. In all - thousands of dollars were collected and given to the family of Billy Wald to help, not only provide them a merrier Christmas, but also to assist with medical and other bills the family is faced with.

On Sunday, December 2nd, over 100 walkers gathered behind Borough School to begin their 3K Winter Wonderland Walk through the streets of the Boro. A light rain did not dampen spirits. The Community of Caring came out in full-force to show amazingly generous support for the girls and their project and to help their neighbors in need.

Congratulations to Maya, Ava and Emma for developing and carrying out a wonderful 20-Time project, and thanks to all in the community who supported their efforts in so many ways.
A Message from Superintendent of Schools, 
Mr. Mark R. Maire

Happy New Year to our entire Morris Plains school community! As a district, we renew our commitment to helping all children succeed to the best of their own individual abilities. We resolve to continue to offer a wonderful, safe, and nurturing learning environment for all of our students. We also look forward to our continued partnership with our community.

As a school district, we remain committed to our strategic goals:

- To improve the social and emotional wellness of our students.
- To improve our data collection of stakeholder perspectives, student learning, and school process.
- To foster empathy and global awareness in our student body.
- To increase student access to learning spaces that align to the district’s instructional vision.

As we look towards the future of the Morris Plains School District, we are encouraged by the dedication and passion of our staff and the enthusiasm and diligence of our students. In the coming year we will continue to:

- Pay attention to our literacy initiatives
- Implement our intervention and remedial programs
- Focus on students’ well-being through special programs that promote social and emotional aspects of learning
- Provide security and safety
- Emphasize best practices of instruction and professional development and
- in February, launch district-wide Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee. The committee will meet approximately once per month to achieve the following goals: (1) identify core values/competencies, (2) identify data collection tools to assess current strengths and needs, and (3) review/select curriculum and instructional practices to promote SEL.

Drafting the 2019-2020 Budget

In creating the annual budget, we conduct a challenging balancing act between two, often competing interests: providing the resources necessary to maintain excellence in education and exercising fiscal responsibility in order to minimize the impact on our taxpayers.

Administration is working diligently to ensure that all the items in the budget are essential to the effective operation of our district and support the needs of our student learners. A board presentation on the proposed 2019-2020 budget will be announced shortly. The presentation will be open to the public, and will also be available on the district website.

On behalf of the Morris Plains school community, I would like to thank Mr. Ken Wilbur, who dedicated his time to serve as a member of the Board of Education. Mr. Wilbur was an active board member and served as a member of the Finance, Negotiations, and Policy Committees of the Board. The district acknowledges Mr. Wilbur’s commitment to our students and our school community.

January – National School Board Recognition Month

One of the most important groups of a school district’s organization is the Board of Education. Nine people from our community volunteer to help provide guidance and direction to our school system. January was National School Board Recognition Month. I would like to express to the members of our Board, and to our community, my sincere thanks for the work, talent, and time that each member dedicates to our district. Throughout my tenure, I have had the pleasure of working with a diverse group of individuals who share ideas, debate issues and work very hard to be a supportive and caring unit. Individual board members have come and gone, but the one consistent trait of all those who have served has been the fact that they always put students first in their decisions.

Each of our nine board members is elected to a three year term. As the lead governing body, the board advocates for our children by setting a clear direction for the district while upholding the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community.

Please join me in expressing to our Board of Education that we recognize and appreciate them for what they do for our community and our schools.

New Board of Education Members

At the January 7th board meeting, new board member Diane Del Russo was sworn into the Morris Plains Board of Education. Additionally, Denise Rawding was re-elected Board President and Shawna Longo was re-elected Vice President.

Board members pictured above are: (from left to right, front row) Mrs. Lucia Galdi, Mrs. Shawna Longo (Board Vice President), Mrs. Christina Perry, and Mrs. Jessica Williams. Back row (from left to right) Mrs. Diane Del Russo, Dr. Denise Rawding (Board President), Mr. Mark Maire (Superintendent), Ms. Amy Barkman (Business Administrator), Mrs. Maria Manley, Mrs. Amy Lyons, and Mr. Adam Higgins.

Morris Plains School District Welcomes Officer Dave

The Morris Plains School District hired Class 3 Officer Dave Xenitelis to serve as a beneficial resource for Mountain Way and Borough School. Officer Xenitelis is employed, trained, and supervised by the Morris Plains Police Department and has become a welcoming and reassuring presence in our schools. He provides daily security, while building relationships within the district and community.
Inclement Weather Decisions
When inclement weather strikes, the decisions surrounding delayed openings, early dismissals, and school closures take many factors into account. Student safety remains paramount. 

Honeywell Instant Alert for Schools is our main notification tool for school closings, early dismissal, and delayed openings due to inclement weather. Families have the option to receive Honeywell text message notifications, in addition to the usual phone and email messages. If you have not yet completed a registration form and would like to be included in the Honeywell alert system, please email Cristie Bruhn at cbruhn@mpsdk8.org.

In addition to utilizing the Honeywell Alert system, school closing information is posted on the district website (www.mpsdk8.org) and on New Jersey News Channel 12.

2019-2020 School Calendar
The board of education is in the process of approving the 2019-2020 school calendar. Once next year's calendar is approved (February board meeting), it will be posted on the district website for folks to access. The Morris Plains School District works closely with the Morris School District to maintain continuity and consistency.

Community Support
The Morris Plains School District is extremely fortunate to work in collaboration with generous and supportive school-community organizations, composed of Morris Plains residents and staff who volunteer their time to enhance our district.

Below are some upcoming events that are worthy to note:

**MPEA Volleyball Fundraiser - February 22:**
The Morris Plains Education Association raises money each year to offer scholarships to high school seniors who graduated from Borough School.

**HSA Friday Night Strikes Bowling Fundraiser - March 15**
Mark Your Calendars! Friday Night Strikes is the MPHSA’s biggest fundraiser of the year! Join the MPHSA for a fun night of bowling, food and another AMAZING basket raffle! If you would like to make a donation or sponsor a lane, please contact the MPHSA at MorrisPlainsHSA@gmail.com. Please keep an eye on the HSA website and Facebook page, along with your student's backpack mail, for ticket information and sales. We hope to see you all there....Let's Bowl, Let's Rock & Roll!

**Harlem Wizards - March 31**
Picture this: Morris Plains School District teachers and staff playing a fast-paced basketball against the slam-dunkin' Harlem Wizards. It was a great time when it happened two years ago, and it’s happening again in a special fundraiser sponsored by the Education Foundation of Morris Plains on Sunday, March 31 at 3 p.m. in the Morristown High School gym. Come cheer our team on! For more information, visit www.educationfoundationmp.com

Mrs. Longo Earns National Award
Congratulations to Shawna Longo, middle school music technology teacher at Hopatcong Borough Schools and Morris Plains Board of Education Vice President, for being selected as the 2019 recipient of the Mike Kovins TI:ME Teacher of the Year Award. This is a National award, and it is the most prestigious award for Music Technology Education. Mrs. Longo will be recognized at the TI:ME 2019 National Conference, held in conjunction with Texas Music Educators Association in San Antonio, TX. The Morris Plains School District is extremely proud of Mrs. Longo's accomplishments.

Borough School Spelling Bee Winner
On Wednesday, December 12th, Borough School held its first school-wide spelling bee in many years. Fifteen students, representing all six grade levels competed against one another in front of the entire student body. At the conclusion of the bee, Shaila Joshi was crowned the Borough School 2018-2019 Spelling Bee Champion. We wish Shaila the best of luck as she moves on to the regional competition. Our fingers are crossed that she makes it all the way to the Scripts National Spelling Bee Championship and we get to watch her on ESPN in the spring!

Please don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Twitter @WeAreMPSD.

It is an exciting time to be involved in education and working in a collaborative manner to support our community’s educational programs. Our children benefit a great deal when we practice the philosophy,“Together we can make a difference!”

All my best,

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Students learn about Martin Luther King, Jr., and make their own dream to change the world.

Mountain Way students transform their original paintings into new digital masterpieces using iPads.

Members of Select Chorus help to kick-off the start of the season for Morris Plains Basketball Association.

Students design and race their bots in Borough's iSTEAM class.
It cannot be denied that our Community’s greatest treasures can be found at two locations within Morris Plains: Borough and Mt. Way Schools. Every member of the Police Department, from Chief to Crossing Guard, takes very seriously the responsibility we have towards the students, staff, and faculty of each school. To that end, Chief Jason Kohn and the members of the Morris Plains Police Department are pleased to announce continuing advancements in the relationship with our schools.

On January 1, 2019, the Department and Board of Education hired Special Class III Officer David Xenitelis. Officer Xenitelis, a retired Morris Township Police Officer, will play an integral role in the safety and preparedness of both buildings and will continue to foster relationships with our young residents. Also last month, the Department debuted the Law Enforcement Officers Against Drugs (L.E.A.D.) program in second grade classrooms at Mt. Way School. The program at that age focuses on positive attitudes and behaviors, while fostering healthy relationships and resistance to negative peer pressure. Officer Anne Marie Ferris will be joining our other L.E.A.D. officers, Sgt. Ryan McKay and Sgt. Chris Cornine. We wish Officer Ferris and Officer Xenitelis luck as they serve our schools.

The Garden Club members have been busy little elves these past few months. It started with the making of over 1200 bows at our November meeting. This year, you may have noticed the Christmas trees in the tubs that line Speedwell Ave were decorated with silver and red bows. Those are the bows that were made at the meeting. Our call for volunteers to assist us that night was overwhelmingly received and we are so grateful for the response and help.

Next, the Garden Club elves (pictured right) decorated the library Christmas tree as well as the wreaths/poinsettias found around the library. Finally, the elves decorated the trees and birch branches in the 96 tubs in time for the Boro’s tree lighting ceremony. A big thank you to the Public Works Department for planting all the trees and birch branches for us.

The elves (and their spouses) finally got to rest and enjoy themselves at the annual Garden Club Christmas party in December. This year, in addition to appetizers, drinks and dessert, we were treated to a wonderful presentation by Edward Karlsson. Ed is head of the patient-operated horticultural program at Greystone. Every year, the program yields organic crops of commercial-grade produce, plants and flowers that are available year-round to the public at the Greenhouse Store on campus. The program is one of several vocational training opportunities available to patients interested in learning new skills prior to discharge. All the Garden Club members can’t wait for spring to visit the store – we urge all of you to check it out as well.

Our October meeting included a presentation by Bill Moran on Great Estates that are now Public Gardens. Our website, allseasonsgc.org highlights some of Bill’s facts and fun tidbits.

The 2019 program schedule includes topics on ferns and container gardening. Our website has the full program listing. The programs are free and open to all Morris Plains residents. Please call Kathy Kelly at 973-886-6640 or Lu Ann Totaro at 973-644-4612 if you plan on attending, are interested in joining or you just want to find out more about our club. We’d be happy to have you join us for a meeting.
MORRIS PLAINS HISTORY - PART II

PLAY BALL! ALWAYS A POPULAR PASTIME IN MORRIS PLAINS

The Morris Plains Team was the 1927 Winner of the Intercounty Baseball League
This picture includes the current mayor at the time Richard Lindabury (1927-1929) as well as future mayors R.V.D. Totton (1929-1931), Gerald Coursen (1947-1953) and Jim Fear (1954-1961).

SPECIAL VISITORS

Our visitors, the Van Houten’s, traveled all the way from Seattle, WA to research the Fairchild Family. We were ready with our archives. Barbara Dabinette, (3rd from r. and one of our members), is also a descendant of the family. They compared notes and discovered they were actually distant cousins, sharing their 10th great grandfather.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO MAYOR FRANK DRUETZLER
WE INVITE YOU ALL TO SEE A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF FRANK'S MANY YEARS OF SERVICE TO OUR “COMMUNITY OF CARING”.

WE STILL NEED VOLUNTEERS TO PRESERVE THE HISTORY OF OUR TOWN!
Due to a lack of staffing, the Morris Plains Museum is now only open on the first and third Saturday of each month from 10 until 1 pm. To help, call town historian Dan Myers at 973-267-3308. The Morris Plains Museum Association fulfills our mission statement - to collect, preserve & exhibit information about the history of our town.
Menorah Lighting

Santa Claus Comes to Town
Congratulations to MP resident Glenn Thompson Visscher on his installation as Worshipful Master of the Cincinnati Lodge No. 3, Morristown, NJ of the F&AM (Free & Accepted Masons) on December 15, 2018. Their Masonic Lodge is located on Maple Avenue in Morristown. Glenn is a long-standing member of the Borough’s Memorial Day Parade Committee.

Eagle Scouts David Albin and Galen Wu were celebrated at a Court of Honor held on Saturday, January 5 at the Morris Plains Community Center. David (right) and Galen (left) were both members of troop 173 in Parsippany.

Photo Credit: Frank Cahill

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Photo Credit: Frank Cahill

Community Band holds Holiday Concert at Presbyterian Church

Community Band Holiday Concert

UNCLE FRANK’S FISHING CONTEST
Saturday, May 18, 2019
Community Park Pond
7:00 to 10:30 AM
ALL residents 13 years or younger

sponsored by the Morris Plains Rotary Club
Morris Plains Recreation 2019 Summer Programs!

Summer Program Registration Begins April 24th. Registration Fee Increases May 16th

Informative Flyers & Registration Materials will be available beginning April 19th @ morrisplainsboro.org

The Fun Begins July 1st - August 2nd for Grades K-9/Fall of 2019!

Morris Plains Recreation Summer Program News!

Morris Plains Community Park Pool

Pool Booklet & Membership Form available March 1st @ Morris Plains Community Center & morrisplainsboro.org

Come Swim With Us This Summer!

Morris Plains Recreation
Summer Counselor Employment

Preparations are underway for 2019 Summer Programs!

Applications for Summer Counselor Positions available at the Morris Plains Community Center Monday - Thursday, 9 AM-4 PM
Winter/Spring Recreation Programs:
(pre registration required)

Tuesday Evening Yoga with Lauren Deodino
Thursday Evening Yoga with Peg Clark
Gentle Beginner Yoga with Diane Tartaglia
Adult Drawing with John Darvie
Adult Painting with John Darvie
Youth Drawing with John Darvie
Youth Painting with John Darvie
Airbrush Painting Workshop with John Darvie
Relays & Recess Remedies with Mrs. Graziani
Spring Gardening with Mrs. Graziani

US Sports Institute Spring Programs:
(pre registration required)

April - June
Foundation Tennis
Development Tennis
Tennis Squirts
Squirts T-Ball
Squirts MultiSport

Senior Programs

Adult Book Club
with Charlot Lamm
Every 4th Wednesday at 2PM
Morris Plains Community Center
(pre registration not required)

Senior Exercise
with Stacy Williamson & Hollie Parrillo
Thursdays at 10AM
Morris Plains Community Center
(pre registration required)

MP Residents: Men’s Basketball
(no fee or pre registration required)
Thursday, 8:30-10PM  MP Borough School

MP Residents: Men’s Soccer
(no fee or pre registration required)
Wednesday, 8:30-10PM  MP Borough School

MP Residents: Young Adult Basketball
(no fee or pre registration required)
Tuesday, 8:30-10PM  MP Borough School

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny!

April 13 ~ 9 AM
Morris Plains Community Center

Relays & Recess Remedies!

Mondays:
March 11, 18, 25 & April 1
2:50 to 3:50PM
Mt. Way School Room 12
Fee: $35.
(pre registration required)

For additional information and registration forms, contact the
Morris Plains Community Center at 973-538-3455
Monday - Thursday, 9AM - 4PM
or visit us @ morrisplainsboro.org
Happy New Year!

Everyone here at the Library hopes that you and your family had a wonderful holiday season. I'd like to thank our wonderful Morris Plains Garden Club for decorating our Library for the holidays. It always looks so lovely.

And thank YOU if you’ve donated to our annual fundraising appeal. We have so many wonderful things planned, so your donations are greatly appreciated.

You may have met our new staff member, Stephanie Avallone. She usually works Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday. Be sure to stop by and say “Hi.”

As the winter weather can be unpredictable, please remember that if the Morris Plains Public Schools are closed, our Library will be closed also. If it's snowy on a Saturday, please call the Library at 973-538-2599 after 10:00 a.m. or check our Facebook page or website, at www.morrisplainslibrary.org.

Thanks to all the stuffed animals who enjoyed our sleepover on November 30th. They had fun and didn't get into any trouble (mostly!) Be sure to check our Facebook page for other fun events for kids. You can always sign your child up for our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Program, and story time is still Tuesday at 10:30.

---Mary Ellen---

This season our staff has chosen the following as suggestions for your reading pleasure:

- ‘Becoming’ – Michelle Obama
- ‘Churchill: Walking with Destiny’ – Andrew Roberts
- ‘The Reckoning’ – John Grisham
- ‘Target: Alex Cross’ – James Patterson
- ‘The Next Person You Meet in Heaven’ – Mitch Albom
- ‘Kingdom of the Blind’ – Louise Penny
- ‘Master of His Fate’ – Barbara Bradford Taylor
- ‘You Don't Own Me’ – Mary Higgins Clark
- ‘The Other Wife’ – Michael Robotham
- ‘Orange Blossom Days’ (Large print) – Patricia Scanlan
- ‘Leverage in Death’ (Large print) – J.D. Robb
- ‘Past Tense’ – Lee Child
- ‘Killing the S.S.’ – Bill O’Reilly

We're always collecting food for the Interfaith Food Pantry. Non-perishable items are always needed to assist members of our community.

Stay warm with a good book!

---Mary Ellen---
Morris Plains Community Band Seeks Additional Members

The Morris Plains Community Band, a volunteer concert band consisting of musicians ranging in age from 14 to over 80, is continuing to grow and is hoping to attract even more players.

As it is a volunteer organization with no obligation or commitment, those fifty-some members include some who are not able to attend regularly. That allows us to be able to attract between 20 – 25 players to each rehearsal, and between 30 – 35 to our concerts.

We would like to yet increase our numbers, so that even more people will be available for our rehearsals and performances.

We welcome all instrumentalists, but we especially need French Horn players. The band will be expanding its concert program in the upcoming year, and will be featuring the volunteer choir that performs with us during the winter holidays in our summer concert in Roberts Garden park.

The original Morris Plains Town Band was founded in 1888 by local blacksmith Larry Monahan. The current Morris Plains Community Band was established in October of 2015 and is led by retired professional musician and band leader Larry Ripley of Morris Plains, who is the third member of his family to lead a town band.

The band rehearses at 7:00 pm on Wednesday evenings in the Morris Plains Community Center, and always welcomes new members. No audition or commitment is required. Our musicians include young people in the early stages of learning music and adults who may not have played since their school days, and are enjoying playing music once again. Our music is fairly easy to play, our members attend rehearsals and concerts when they are able to, and we perform regularly for area nursing homes, assisted-living facilities and senior citizen residences. We also give concerts at Lyons VA Hospital and the NJ Firemens Home in Boonton.

For more information about the Morris Plains Community Band, please contact Larry Ripley at larryripley@verizon.net or 973-998-1081.
Health Buzz: From the Board of Health

Diabetes is a chronic (long-lasting) disease that affects how your body turns food into energy. 27 million Americans have type 2 diabetes, and 86 million have prediabetes and may not know it.

You are more likely to get type 2 diabetes if:

• Diabetes runs in your family. If you have a parent, brother, or sister who has it, your chances rise. Everyday lifestyle activities, like exercise and healthy eating, lower your odds.
• You have prediabetes. This means your blood sugar level is above normal but has not reached the diabetes level. The more active you are, and the more able you are to maintain a healthy weight, the less likely you are to develop diabetes.
• Not being physically active. Moreover, it is never too late to incorporate some physical activity into your lifestyle. Check with your doctor first, so you know what is safe for you to do.
• Extra pounds around the waist, as belly fat seems to be a particular risk factor.
• A body mass index of 25 or higher.
• You have had heart disease.
• You have high blood pressure.
• Your good cholesterol is low, less than 40 mg.
• Your triglyceride level is high, over 150 mg.
• Your age is 45 or older. The chance of getting type 2 diabetes rises with age, but it is not a normal part of aging.
• You are Hispanic, African-American, Native American, or Asian American. Diabetes is more common among these groups.

Tips to prevent developing type 2 diabetes:

• Losing just 5 – 7 percent of your body weight can make the difference in reducing your risk.
• Roast, broil, grill, steam or bake when preparing foods.
• Get at least 2.5 hours of moderately intense exercise every week. Taking 30-minute walks 5 days per week is a good goal.
• Routine physicals that include a yearly blood test will help you and your doctor know how your blood glucose levels. Morris Plains offers adults blood screening yearly at the October Wellness Fair.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics

Key Staff from Morris Plains School District Attend Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

The Morris Plains Municipal Alliance invited members of the Morris Plains School District to attend a training program to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness and substance abuse disorders in young people. On January 17, eight members of the district, including administrators, nurses, counselors and members of the child study team attended the training.

Participants learned the risk factors and warning signs of a variety of mental health challenges common among adolescents, including anxiety, depression, psychosis, eating disorders, ADHD, disruptive behavior disorders, and substance use. Role-playing and simulations demonstrated how to assess a mental health crisis; select interventions and provide initial help; and connect young people to ongoing care.

Brian Wilson, School Counselor at Borough School, said, “I want to thank the MPMAC for their support in making this workshop possible. I highly recommend the program to anyone who seeks to identify, understand and assist youth in need and those experiencing mental illness.”

The program, offered nationwide, also offers a curriculum for adults. To learn more about the Mental Health First Aid USA, or to find a course or contact an instructor in your area, visit www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org.
**BLOOD DRIVE DATES**
Mark your calendars! All blood drives will be held at the Presbyterian Church of Morris Plains at 400 Speedwell Avenue from 8 AM to 2 PM.

- March 2nd  
- April 13th  
- May 4th  
- June 8th  
- July 6th

**A MESSAGE FROM YOUR FIRE OFFICIAL**
This is a friendly reminder to all residents that snow is coming! Please adopt your nearest fire hydrant and make sure that it is cleared of all snow. Help our fire department help you in a time of need. Thank you!

**Preschool Advantage**
Do you know a family that needs help to afford the cost of preschool? Tuition assistance can make it possible for 3- and 4-year-olds in this area to attend a quality preschool program. Preschool Advantage has been assisting families in Morris and Somerset counties for 25 years. Applications are now available for the 2019 – 2020 academic year with priority funding given to those who apply by February 28, 2019.

To learn more about Preschool Advantage and the application process, visit www.preschooladvantage.org, call (973) 532-2501, or email info@preschooladvantage.org.

**KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**
Morris Plains School District will hold their annual Kindergarten Registration and Screening on May 21, 22, and 24 at Mountain Way School. Any parents who have Kindergarten age children shall access the link below and follow the detailed instructions to pre-register their child (no later than March 1).

[http://tinyurl.com/mpsdkreg](http://tinyurl.com/mpsdkreg)

Children must be residents of Morris Plains and five years of age on or before October 1, 2019, to be eligible for a September 2019 entrance into kindergarten. A birth certificate, proof of residence and health information are required at the registration.

Any questions please call or email Cristie Bruhn at 973-538-0339, option 3 / cbruhn@mpsdk8.org.

**DO YOUR PART**
Please **FEED THE BARRELS**

MORRIS PLAINS CLEAN COMMUNITIES
THANK YOU
FRANK DRUETZLER
for 32 Years as
Our Mayor in the
“Community of Caring”

CONGRATULATIONS, FRANK!
HAPPY RETIREMENT
Recycling Updates:
The MCMUA has been doing inspections of curbside recycling materials throughout the county. Morris Plains received the following feedback regarding our recycling:
"As in most Morris County towns, plastic bags are the main source of contamination in Morris Plains. Two other common types of contamination we found were unrinsed food containers and greasy pizza boxes."

Please be sure to keep all plastic bags/wraps out of recycling bins. When ordering pizza, please throw out the bottom piece of cardboard if it is greasy and recycle the top part. Please DO NOT place your mixed recyclables in plastic trash bags.

In addition, we also received the following from the MCMUA:
For 2019 there is a change in acceptable plastics. We will only be accepting #1, #2 & #5 plastic bottles/containers. This is due to the stringent restrictions that have been put in place and changes in market conditions. Please do NOT recycle #3, #4, #6 and #7.

Reminder - we no longer are able to take books at the recycling center. If you go to www.newlegacybooks.com you will be able to find the location of book collection bins.

The deadline for the next issue of Plains Talk is April 12th, 2019. Please submit articles and pictures to plainstalknews@gmail.com.

Can a Pizza Box be Recycled?
Here is the “not so simple” answer.

Cardboard pizza boxes are technically recyclable. However, pizza contains grease and greasy residue contaminates paper destined for recycling mills. Paper fibers can’t be separated from the oils, ruining the whole batch of recycling. This costs the paper industry up to $700 million per year.

IF YOU’RE A PIZZA LOVER WHO LOVES TO RECYCLE, WHAT CAN YOU DO?
Recycle just the parts of the box with NO grease or food stuck to them. If the lid is grease free, tear it off and recycle, while trashing the greasy bottom.