

May 2005

**UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Don't forget the Memorial Day Parade, May 30, 9:30 AM The Township's Annual Celebration** The Civic Association, together with the community and government of Harding Township invites any interested Township group or organization to participate in this year's Harding Township Memorial Day Parade. Call Tony, Parade Chair, 973 4011971 to have your organization added to the Order of March. *In case of rain, the parade is cancelled; the ceremony is held indoors in the Sellitto gym at Harding School.*

**MEMORIAL DAY BICYCLE CONTEST:** This year there will be a new and special entry for all students (any age) in Harding Township Schools not participating in other marching activities: ***THE PATRIOTIC BICYCLE contest!***  
Dress up your bicycle, yourself, and come to Harding school for the start of the parade at 9AM. RIDE in the Parade!! Be patriotic and be creative!  
There will be a \$25 gift certificate to CARVEL ICE CREAM SHOP in Madison!  
The contestants will be judged by the FIRST AID SQUAD and will be announced at the Memorial Park after the essay contest. Good Luck and don't forget to wear your helmet!

The **HARDING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY** The Tunis-Ellicks House is preparing for the Memorial Day Open House on **Monday, May 30** when visitors are welcomed from 10 a.m. to noon immediately following the events at Memorial Park. The traditional refreshments, lemonade and cookies, will be served on the back porch.

**The Library will be closed on Friday, May 13** to prepare for **Art in Bloom**.

**STEAK AND LOBSTER DINNER** , Friday, June 3rd 6-10pm, rain or shine at the Firehouse on Village Rd, New Vernon.

Steak dinner \$18    Lobster dinner \$22    Chicken dinner \$14.  
Dinners include salad bar, french fries, bread, beer, wine, soda, coffee and dessert. Also available for sale: clams, corn on the cob, and burgers for kids. Please, for safety, no strollers allowed.

**Please come help at *The Harding Clean Up Day, Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> 9:00-11:00, Bayne Park!*** Come to the park and get a free Tee shirt (while they last), a street assignment where you will go to pick up debris, and a garbage bag. Refreshments provided. We need your help to keep our town beautiful. Rain date will be May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Please be sure to wear sunscreen and bug spray. (Sponsored by the Harding Township Environmental Commission and funded through a Clean Communities Grant.)

## **THE LIBRARY**

Friends of the Library cordially invite you to **Art in Bloom 2005** on **Friday, May 13** and **Saturday, May 14**. Please join us at the Preview Party on Friday from 5:00 until 8:00 p.m. (\$20 per person—tickets available at the door) and plan to return for a more leisurely look on Saturday, May 14 from 9:00 a.m. until noon (no admission charge). The show will be held at Parish Hall, below the sanctuary, of Church of Christ the King. Paintings, fine crafts, and sculpture will be available for sale. Basket Boutique and Silent Auction. Celebrate spring and community in support of the Library!

**Children's Storytime...** *Garden Growing* on Wednesday, May 18. Both sessions meet at 10:30 a.m. in the Municipal Building. A program for pre-schoolers. Please contact the Library for information at 973-267-8000, ext. 132.

**Adult Evening Book Discussion Group...** will meet on Wednesday, May 25 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss Julie Otsuka's *When the Emperor Was Divine*. Otsuka's debut novel tells the story of a Japanese-American family in a Utah internment camp during World War II. The book has been "highly recommended" by the *Library Journal*.

**Library Facts:** The Library selects and purchases its own books. They are not provided by the County Library. Gift books are added to the collection through a *Giving Tree* program. Library closings are posted on our website: [hardingcivic.org/library](http://hardingcivic.org/library).

**Reminder:** Annual Harding Township **Fat Tree Contest** is accepting entries. Rules are: 1. Find the fattest shade tree on your property. 2. Measure up the trunk 3 feet. 3. Record the circumference of your tree at that point. 4. Send the measurement, and species identification of the tree together with your name, address, and telephone, to the Harding Twp. Shade Tree Committee, Box 666, New Vernon NJ 07976, **no later than May 24, 2005**. Winners will be announced during the Memorial Day celebration, but need not be present to win. Previous winners and Historic Designated trees are not eligible.

### **Harding Township Boy Scout Troop 43 news: Six New Eagle Scouts**

This troop has a long history of Eagle Scout achievements, this year being no exception. Sponsored by the New Vernon Presbyterian Church, and led by Scoutmaster is Peter Dugan, recent inductees into **Eagle Scout** rank are graduating high school seniors **Derek Becht, Thomas Clifford, Gregory Fullenkamp, Evan Godfrey, Gregory Maynes and Nicholas Somers**. All Eagle Scout projects involve obtaining and coordinating considerable volunteer assistance, and obtaining any necessary funding. Special appreciation goes also to long term Scout leaders Chuck and Mary Becht. This year's accomplishments were the following:

**Derek Becht** designed and built a new creche for the New Vernon Presbyterian Church. **Tom Clifford** built and installed ten bluebird nesting boxes along the trails at the

Frelinghuysen Arboretum, observed the boxes, and recorded the data, which he provided the Park Commission for study. **Greg Fullenkamp** worked with the Harding Township/Green Village Bridle Path Association to map the horse trails in the Township and Village using GPS technology. Trail markers were posted at key points along the trails and the data collected was organized on software to create a new bridle trail map. **Evan Godfrey** restored an historic millrace along Bailey's Mill Road. Rocks, trees and other debris were cleared and a bridge, dam and access steps built to create a walking path winding through woods along Primrose Brook. **Greg Maynes** organized help to clear trails and build boardwalks to make the Tiger Lily Lane property in Harding, managed by the Great Swamp Watershed Association, accessible to the public. **Nico Somers** organized a computer recycling event in conjunction with the Township DPW. The money raised was given to a local non-profit organization.

#### **Announcement from your New Vernon Volunteer First Aid Squad**

"The Bees Are Coming!" Here are some bee, wasp, and yellow jacket facts...Bees normally build their nests in soil, but they also use such other natural holes such as abandoned rodent nests or tree hollows. Bees can sting only once. Wasps sting multiple times, as their stinger is barbed. They sting when they feel threatened, so remain calm! Yellow jackets make paper-like nests either below or above the ground. If you know that you will be working near a nest, protect yourself. Wear long-sleeved, tight-fitting clothing. Tuck your pants and sleeves into gloves and socks. The best time to control a nest is at night when the insects are in their nest. Use a flashlight, but don't carry it. Place the flashlight where it will shine on the nest. If the bees or wasps escape, they will fly to the light instead of to you! If you have been bitten by a bee, wasp, or yellow jacket, be aware of the signs for a severe allergic reaction--sense of throat closing, tightness or pain in the chest, wheezing, pale skin, severe headache, pounding in the ears, fainting--and call 911 for help. Be sure to give the dispatcher your location and remain on the line as long as needed.

If you are interested in topics like these and how to handle medical emergencies, why not join the New Vernon Volunteer First Aid Squad and help others while helping yourself? Call Con Crowley at 973-656-0488 or John Thomas at 973-267-9424 for further information.

#### **TOWNSHIP NEWS**

##### **Township Committee, May 4.**

**The proposed new shade tree ordinance** (see below) **was tabled** by a unanimous vote of the Township Committee, following spirited public discussion at the hearing on May 4. This ordinance had been requested by the Shade Tree Advisory committee, to "close a loophole " in the current ordinances. It had been alleged by the Tree Committee: Caron Menger and Justine Kovacs, together with Chris Allyn of the Environmental Commission, that developers in Harding had been purchasing property

with existing homes (that they intended to tear down), and then clearing the land of many trees (in some cases greater than 20) for new construction.

The current Harding Tree Protection Ordinance enacted in 2001, and extended Township-wide in 2002, established a Tree Conservation area in developed (i.e., property having a residence on it) property, which applied to: 25 feet along most property lines; 50 feet from portions of lot bordering roads; and required a tree removal permit for trees of 8" or greater diameter, measured 4-1/2 feet above ground. For undeveloped land, the tree conservation area was the entire property.

Proponents of the proposed legislation stated that the threat from "developers" purchasing already developed properties was sufficient to require a limit of tree removal on developed properties **to 10 trees a year**. The proposed ordinance also would have required a notification to the Township of intent to remove any tree, even one tree, prior to start of work. The proposed ordinance had been approved as consistent with the Master Plan by the Planning Board at its April 25 meeting, but not without strong objections by some members of the Planning Board as being an unwarranted invasion of private property rights.

There was evidence presented at the May 4 Township Committee meeting that disputed the level and frequency of the threat to Harding trees by "developers". Questions were raised concerning who was a "developer" and why the homeowner couldn't change his mind about more or less trees and lawn area on his property without recourse to inspection from a Township official, with concomitant threat of a stop-work order and criminal fines. In addition, a document introduced refuted the Environmental commission statement that cutting trees harms the environment. A study by the US Soil Conservation Service showed runoff from storm events in soils of the Harding Township type, as being 98% from roofs or paved surfaces, but 80%, 78% 77% and 75% from lawns, meadow, woods and brush, respectively.

The question as to future tree conservation ordinance necessity will be subject to review by newly-established subcommittee chaired by Lou Lanzerotti, Members of this new committee appointed by the Township Committee at the May 4 public meeting include Caron Menger, the current tree protection officer, Justine Kovacs, Hesna Pfeiffer, Pat Burke and Gabriel Lopez.

**(Following is the report of the introduction of this ordinance at the April 6 meeting: Caron Menger (Shade Tree Advisory Committee) and Chris Allyn (Environmental Commission) were in attendance regarding a letter their groups recently sent to the Township Committee concerning suggestions to close a loop-hole in the current shade tree ordinances. Justin Kovacs (Harding Township Friends of Trees Inc.) was also on hand to lend support. According to Menger and Allyn, there is a growing trend for property developers in Harding to purchase property with existing homes (that they intend to tear down), and then clearing the land of many trees (in some cases greater than 20) for new construction. Current Township ordinances do not prohibit homeowners from cutting trees that are outside the "conservation" or "buffer" area of a**

property (generally the perimeter of a property and along streams). Allyn and Menger said they were not aware of any residents doing major cutting, only developers. In contrast, current ordinances do not allow similar cutting of undeveloped land (land without existing residences). Allyn, Menger and Kovacs spoke about the benefits of trees and the intent of the existing shade tree ordinances to preserve trees. Allyn and Menger proposed an ordinance that would limit to 10 trees, the number of trees a property owner could cut in any one year. While receptive to the goals of the proposal, Mayor Murray expressed deep reservations about any ordinance that would limit the rights of property owners. The Mayor also questioned whether the proposed ordinance really furthered a matter of personal taste and asked if there were more facts on the actual harm such tree cutting was caused. Allyn referred to the joint letter which quoted from a NJ DEP June 2004 report and from a September 1999 study published in the Journal of Arboculture. The Mayor asked everyone to think about a less intrusive solution.

(Township attorney, Roger Clapp, said that he had worked on legislation for other towns including Millburn and Mendham that required a “replanting plan” if more than a certain number of trees were to be removed by a homeowner. He did not know, however, if the legislation had been effective in reducing the number of trees removed or improving the quality of the replanting.

(A discussion also took place on the need to enforce existing shade tree ordinances to prevent violations such as the cutting of trees in the “buffer” or “conservation” zone. Menger suggested that certain developers were not obeying existing ordinances. The Mayor agreed to work with Menger and the Shade Tree Advisory Committee on ideas for more effective enforcement and education to help ensure compliance.

(Mary Prendergast made a motion to introduce the 10 trees per year limit ordinance at the May 4<sup>th</sup> Committee Meeting. Donald Dinsmore seconded the motion and Epsey Farrell voted yes and the motion was carried. The Mayor voted no, and instructed Roger Clapp to get more information on the background and effectiveness of the Mendham ordinance. It was noted that by introducing an ordinance at the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, it would save time, until the final adoption of an ordinance, even if amendments were made to the original ordinance, because the introduction would start the clock running on the process to effect legislation. )

#### **April 6, 2005 Meeting Affordable Housing Update**

The Committee noted that the project was moving ahead on schedule and that no onsite resident superintendent was necessary. The Township is looking at several “green” building alternatives subject to certain cost considerations, as well as incorporating as much native landscaping as practicable.

#### **Glen Alpin, Post Office and Fennimore Academy**

Mary Prendergast noted that the Township had applied for a \$219,000 grant from Morris County Historic Preservation Trust. Plans for the development of the Ortman

Garage site, including the new post office and bakery/deli are proceeding as well as the development of the Fennimore Academy on the other side of Village Road.

### **Ten Towns Meeting**

Mary Prendergast reported on a recent Ten Towns meeting. She said no decision had yet been made on the project to restore **Loantaka Brook**. The EPA and Ten Towns will contribute funds to the restoration of **Bayne Park**. However, current plans look expensive and are "over-engineered" according to Gary Annibal, so they are being revised. Harding DPW will also do some of the work, further reducing costs. Prendergast noted that the Ten Towns 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration is on June 24<sup>th</sup> at the Visitors Center in the Great Swamp.

### **Resolutions**

The following resolutions were approved unanimously:

#### **Resolution TC 05-65 Introducing the 2005 Budget.**

The proposed Municipal Operating Budget will increase the tax rate by \$0.01 per \$100 of assessed value to \$0.221 (4.7%.) The Open Space tax will increase from \$0.02 to \$0.04 per \$100. The public hearing on the Budget is scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 P.M.

**Resolution TC 05-66 Appointing Chris Allyn, GIS Consultant.** Mr. Allyn will work at least 4 hours a week at \$75 per hour and has agreed that his fees will not exceed \$15,000 for 2005. Mr. Allyn has worked on several major GIS projects for the Township as a volunteer and has an in-depth familiarity with Township's systems and requirements.

### **April 20, 2005 meeting**

#### **Morris County Circulation Element Update**

The Mayor clarified that he was strongly opposed to any proposal involving the construction of a Route 287 entrance ramp located at Route 202 and Tempe Wick Road.

#### **Dicksons Mill Road Bridge**

A hearing date on the proposed Dicksons Mill Road bridge replacement is tentatively scheduled for May 18, 2005.

#### **Ordinances**

The following resolution passed unanimously:

Resolution 05-70, Ordinance 8-05: The introduction of Ordinance 8-05, the Capital Bond Ordinance Appropriating \$600,000 for restoration and rehabilitation of Glen Alpin. Ordinance 8-05 is an appropriation of \$600,000 that will be used to replace the roof of the Glen Alpin property. The appropriation will be paid for by a \$30,000 down payment from the Capital Improvement Fund, and a \$570,000 bond. Mrs. Prendergast projected that the roof replacement project work was expected to start sometime in September and finish the following Spring.

### **PLANNING BOARD, April 25**

The Caplan/ "Ridge at Sand Spring"/Lyll subdivision continued extensive hearings, with more to come, although winding down toward approval. The application

involves 5 lots with an average size of 5 acres, although 1 lot would be 8 acres, another 1 lot has 6 acres, and 3 lots would be 4 acres each. The Board took a voice vote and indicated the general approval for the subdivision. Counsel for the Board Gary Hall voiced his judgment that Applicants had met the burden of showing that 5 lots could be sustained on this property, although hearings on this issue will continue next month.

The Carey subdivision on Van Buren Rd, for three lots, all of which meet the 5-acre size limitation, was approved in principle.

New applications: a completeness waiver was granted for Valgenti, a major subdivision for 2 lots with lot size averaging, off a flag lot on Glen Alpin Rd, Block 35, lot 20, near Country Drive. In addition, the hearing started for a major subdivision creating a new lot at the terminus of Country Drive, Block 35, lot 21.09, Margolis.

### **SCHOOL BOARD NEWS**

Incumbents were re-elected and the budget passed at the election April 19. The new school budget will boost taxes by 3 percent. It means a tax of 38.5 cents per \$100 of value or \$3,850 per \$1 million of value. The current 2004-05 rate is 37.6 cents per \$100 or \$3,760 per \$1 million of assessment. Overall, this budget represents a \$13 increase per \$100,000 of assessed value and includes two additional projects: a new increased capacity water cistern for fire use and an improved electronic security system.

### **SHADE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION,**

No report as such, see Township committee report above

### **BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT , HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

No reports this month

### **HARDING TOWNSHIP CIVIC ASSOCIATION**

**EDITOR'S NOTE: THE DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT TWO ISSUES OF THE THUMBNAIL ARE May 31 and June 30** respectively. After June, the next issue is September, the deadline for which is August 31. Please send copy to the editor, Hesna Pfeiffer. Most preferred format is by E-mail, **email hesnaj@aol.com**, as we don't have to re-type, but fax is also acceptable, to the editor's **fax, 973 540 8911**. Call the editor if you have any transmission questions, **973 538 0020**. *The Thumbnail is copyrighted and published by the Harding Township Civic Association, and is mailed to every home in Harding Township.* Don't forget to check the Civic Assn website for information about your town! [www.hardingcivic.org](http://www.hardingcivic.org).

**RECYCLING:** Commingled recycling of plastics, aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles/jars, mixed paper, corrugated cardboard and household batteries at Municipal Garage every Wednesday, 7AM-Noon, (7AM to 9AM self service); and 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays 5/28, 6/11, 6/25, 7/9, 7/23 from 9-12 AM. Please do NOT leave recyclable materials if the center is closed.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**, meetings at 8PM, unless as noted.

Municipal Court (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)	4 PM	
Municipal Court (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday)	11AM	
Environmental Commission (1 <sup>st</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM	6/6, 7/11
Seniors (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday)Chrst KingCh	11 AM.....	
Planning Board (4 <sup>th</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM....	5/23, 6/27
Hist Preservation Comm (1stThursday)	8 PM	6/2
Board of Health (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday)	8 PM	
Board of Education (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM....	5/24, 6/14, 6/28
Board of Adjustment (3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday)	7:30 PM....	5/19, 6/16
Township Committee(1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed)	8 PM.....	5/18, 6/1
Shade Tree (2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday) 3 PM	5/9, 6/14	
Harding Twp Civic Association	7:30 PM	5/16, 6/6