

May 2008

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Harding Township Historical Society: Thursday evening, May 15 at 7:30 PM, at the N.V. Firehouse, Village Rd. "An evening with Thomas Jefferson" by Steven Edenbo of the American Historical Theatre, an accomplished performer and student of 18th century American history. His uncanny resemblance and acting skills place him among the premier Jeffersonian interpreters in the country. The program is approximately one hour followed by a question and answer period. Admission is free for HTHS members, others \$5.00 at the door. Reserve at (973)292-3661.

A special meeting at which Morris Township officials will present information regarding the **Mt. Kemble Regional Recreation Complex** to the Harding residents, is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 20 at 7 PM at the Elementary School gym, Lees' Hill Rd.** Representatives from "Preserve Harding", a grass-roots' residents group opposing the project, will present the case against the complex. See last month's thumbnail, or the Civic Association website, <http://www.hardingcivic.org>, for background information on this issue.

Don't forget the Memorial Day Parade, May 26, 9:30 AM The Township's Annual Celebration Any interested Township group or organization to participate in this year's parade. Call Tony, Parade Chair, 973 401-1971 *In case of rain, the parade is cancelled; the ceremony is held indoors in the Sellitto gym at Harding School.*

The **HARDING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY** welcomes visitors to Tunis-Ellicks House Open House on **Monday, May 26** immediately following the events at Memorial Park. Lemonade and cookies are served on the back porch.

The ESSAY CONTEST subject for school-age children is "What personal Characteristics should the President of the United States Posses?" Essays are due by May 19, at the Harding School, or mail to Tony Kolega, 48 Millbrook Rd. New Vernon NJ 07976.

From the Harding Tax Collector: The grace period for collection of 2nd quarter taxes is May 10. As that is a Saturday, the grace period is extended to **Monday May 12.**

THE LIBRARY

Thursday, May 29th, 4:00 p.m.—Groundbreaking for the Library's new home!
Please help us to celebrate this festive occasion. All are welcome.

An Invitation to All Harding Children, PreK-Grade 8:

Be a Groundbreaker! *here's how~*

- 1. visit the Library any time before May 29th**
- 2. write your name, grade, and school on a piece of paper**
- 3. drop your entry in the designated hat**
- 4. a winner will be drawn at the groundbreaking ceremony**

Children's Book Clubs—The Winter/Spring session is officially over ~ a big thank-you to all participants. We look forward to seeing enthusiastically-reading 4th-5th- and 6th-graders in November!

Storytime with Lynn Hughes: Wednesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Your pre-schooler will love these highly interactive mornings featuring stories, songs, and crafts. Story themes in May are *Let's Plant Flowers and Gardens* (5/14), *Do Bugs Bug You?* (5/21), *What Is a Whale?* (5/28), and *Let's Go Sailing* (6/4).

Evening Book Group: Wednesday, May 28 at 7:30 p.m. Join the Evening Book Group for spirited discussions covering a wide range of literature. This month's selection is *The Invisible Wall*, Harry Bernstein's gripping memoir of a young Jewish boy's formative years in a northern English town.

Stay informed on the continuing progress of the *Enriching Our Community* Capital Campaign through the Library's Web site: hardinglibrary.org. Click on *Check Out The Vision*.

STEAK AND LOBSTER DINNER, Friday, June 6th 6-10pm, rain or shine at the Firehouse on Village Rd, New Vernon. (Please, no strollers)

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.

Harding Township Health Dept announcement.

The following free programs are offered by Dr. Dorothy Zufall, Health Educator for Harding/Hanover Townships. Pre-registration is required at 973-428-2460. Both are at the Whippanong Library, 1000 Route 10, Whippany, NJ

"The Medicines in Your Spice Rack" – this program will identify spices that have been researched and verified as herbal medicines; on Thursday, May 22, 2008;

“The Perils of Summer” – precautions for prevention of Lyme Disease, West Nile Virus, poison ivy rashes, food poisoning, insect stings on Saturday, June 21, 2008

A Message from the Harding Twp’s Deputy Clerk/Registrar’s office

There is a primary election to be held **June 3, 2008** for local and state representatives. It is a voter responsibility to be aware of voting regulations.

New-to-Harding and non-registered residents are encouraged to vote. In order to do so, a resident must complete a registration application 21 days before an election. To register please contact the Clerk’s Office at the Harding Township Municipal Building at (973) 267-8000, the Superintendent of Elections at 973-285-6715 or visit www.morriselections.org. Residents can obtain absentee ballots if they will be out of town or unable to visit the polls at the Municipal Building on the day of the election. Please contact or visit the Municipal Building or county for an absentee ballot application form. A form can also be obtained from the county website at www.morriselections.org. You may apply for an absentee ballot to the County Clerk (in writing) up to 7 days before the election or in person by 3:00 PM on the day before the election. If you have not voted in a primary for a while, and you want to contact the Superintendent of Elections Office at (973) 285-6715 to verify your affiliation status, to prevent Election Day disappointment.

Frequently Asked Questions:

WHEN ARE ELECTIONS HELD IN MORRIS COUNTY?

1. **Primary Elections** are held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in June.
2. **General Elections** are held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Polls for both Primary and General Elections are open 6:00AM to 8:00 PM.

MUST I DECLARE A PARTY AFFILIATION WHEN I REGISTER?

No, but you may fill out a [Political Party Affiliation Declaration](http://www.morriselections.org) form at that time. Form can be found on the county website www.morriselections.org. This form must be filed no later than 50 days preceding the PRIMARY in which the voter wishes to vote. A newly registered voter or a voter who has never voted in a Primary Election can affiliate with a party on the day of the primary.

MAY I VOTE IN A PRIMARY ELECTION IF I HAVE NOT DECLARED A PARTY PRIOR TO ELECTION DAY?

Yes, if you are a registered voter who is currently not affiliated with a party, you will complete a [Political Party Affiliation Declaration](http://www.morriselections.org) **at your**

polling place on the day of the Primary Election. This declaration must be made before you will be permitted to vote in that Primary. *From Election Day on, you will be affiliated with that political party until you notify the Superintendent of Elections Office of a change at least 50 days prior to the Primary Election*

MAY I RETURN TO UNAFFILIATED AFTER DECLARING A PARTY?

Yes, you may return to "unaffiliated" status by completing a [Political Party Affiliation Declaration](#) form at least 50 days prior to the Primary Election.

MAY I VOTE IN A PRIMARY ELECTION IF I AM DECLARED US CONSTITUTION, GREEN, LIBERTARIAN, NATURAL LAW, REFORM, OR CONSERVATIVE PARTY?

No, you **CANNOT** vote in a Primary Election. Only Republicans, Democrats and unaffiliated who declare on Election Day may vote in the Primary Election.

TOWNSHIP NEWS

Township Committee, May 7, 2008

Key Ordinances: Harding Library - Ground Lease for the library was passed.

2008 Capital Budget – totaling \$456,000 for improvements to township facilities (\$190K), water lines for fire fighting (\$75K), parking lot and driveway (\$75K), DPW trucks (\$55K), payment to Morris Township for sewers for affordable housing project (\$37.5K), traffic lights (\$9K) and Bayne Park rinks, lighting (\$15K).

Sewer pump Capital – emergency funds to replace two pumps that failed simultaneously.

Public Hearing was held on the 2008 Municipal Budget. This was the second presentation of the budget. For a full report, see last Thumbnail, or website: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>. It was learned that the salary increase (4% in this budget) of municipal employees follows the contract as negotiated with the police department. The town seeks to have parity in the increases awarded to the union and non-union employees. The 4% is believed to be in line with other communities in NJ.

Key Resolutions: Waterline Extension – passed a resolution to allow the extension of water utility to 3 more lots on Sand Spring Lane off James Street. Concerns were raised that this would enhance the town's infrastructure and thus make that area more attractive to development as per the Highland Council.

Cash Capital - \$98,000 budget of "cash capital" (furniture and improvement of municipal facilities) was approved for improvements to municipal driveway and parking lot (\$50K), computerize fingerprinting machine, computer and software for Police Dept (\$30K), furniture and filing for Police Dept (\$15K), removal of oil tank at

DPW facility (\$3K).

Updates from the Chair

Thank You – to Bayne Park committee for the latest running of the Fishing Contest which attracted 65 participants. Nine fisher-persons (boys and girls!) won prizes, in the 2008 version of this decades-long running event. Special thanks went to David Smith of Bernardsville (formerly of Harding) for donating the prizes.

Mt Kemble Recreation Complex – Two more letters were received on this subject, one in favor and one opposed. About 25-30 have been received to date with 90%+ opposed.

COAH Related – TC voted to pledge \$500 to a fund being raised by the League of Municipalities to make a possible legal challenge to the new 3rd Round COAH regulations. It was mentioned that at first blush, the new regulations appear to require 10-15 more COAH units be built in Harding.

Administrative Updates:

Emergency Dispatch Service – Heavy sigh of relief expressed as the system is working very well. HT transferred this critical function from Chatham to Morris County after over two years of discussion and study. The new system delivers better sound reception and area coverage.

Garden Club Proposal for Bayne Park. Garden Club has raised private donations in the amount of \$4,000 for the replacement of a timber wall with a stone structure. Approval was granted.

Hearing Persons Present

Length discussion was held over the format for the May 20th special meeting (at the School) regarding the Mt Kemble Recreation Complex. At this meeting, representatives of Morris Township are going to present their plans and make the case why the property should be either re-zoned for this use or ceded to Morris Township. Representatives of Preserve Harding, the grass roots group that opposes the project, asked if they would be allowed to make a presentation on their own behalf. A long discussion ensued the result of which concluded that Preserve Harding would be allowed to present their issues. The discussion highlighted that it is important that the special meeting is firmly moderated.

Planning Board Meeting -- April 28, 2008

The big item at the meeting was the application by Morris/Post & Rail (48-52 Red Gate Road) for a major subdivision, requesting the creation of four lots. The Morris family is subdividing the lots to allow homes to be built by adult children. All lots will be conforming in all respects though a few minor variances were necessary. The Board and attendees were treated to a history of this property which has been in the Morris family since before the Civil War, 1849 to be precise. The application was approved unanimously.

In the discussion section of the meeting, an ordinance was passed which establishes a "municipal housing liaison", a position recently required by Trenton. The individual so designated will act as the contact point on Affordable Housing. The Planning Board was briefed on the new 3rd Round Rules regarding COAH (Council on Affordable Housing) Rules. The new rules appear to roughly double the ratios used to calculate a town's requirements. As expected, the new COAH requirements which will create a fiscal burden on Harding. A subcommittee is researching the detail and the precise impact of the new requirement. (The May 19 meeting of the Planning Board has been cancelled; next meeting is June 21.)

HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Board of Education has named Dr. Timothy Purnell, principal of the Frank Antonides Middle School in West Long Branch, as its new Superintendent replacing Dr. Dennis Pallozzi, who is retiring. Dr. Purnell worked for five years in school administration, including in the District of the Chathams (Lafayette School), and for five years as a teacher in the Montclair Public School District. He is also the recipient of a number of awards, including the Governor's Teacher Award and the Geraldine Dodge School Leadership Award. An Observer-Tribune article about Dr. Purnell can be found at:

<http://www.recordernewspapers.com/articles/2008/04/24/observer-tribune/news/doc4810a54a408f1244663669.txt>.

At its April 14, 2008 meeting, the Board of Education honored the late Margaret Lamb, who was Harding's librarian for many years. Over 40 members of the public were present, including members of Ms. Lamb's family. John Keating of the Harding Township Education Association presented a new award, named the "Margaret Lamb Library/Media Recognition Award," which will be given annually to an 8th grader. This year's recipient was Olivia Weeks. Patricia Alexander introduced the Margaret Lamb Collection. A \$200 annual stipend (\$500 this year) will be used for buying library books related to opera, the performing arts, Rome and other subjects in which Ms. Lamb was interested. Dee Klikier presented a plaque dedicated to Ms. Lamb which will be affixed to the library/media center and which reads: "She inspired our students to be lifelong readers."

Board of Adjustment, April 17, 2008

Resolutions - Approved

Timothy O'Connor and Terry Strada, 88 Lee's Hill Road, Block 49 Lot 12

Madeline Devine, 157 Lee's Hill Road, Block 51 Lot 12

George and Marianne Hanley, 55 Youngs Road, Block 48 Lot 7

Pending Application

Jeffrey and Tracey Flanagan, 6 Meyersville Road, Block 12 Lot 13 "C" Variance.

Part 1 – Mud Room/Deck, previously approved; Part 2 – Barn, Objected to based upon height. New plans limiting height to be consistent with surrounding properties – 17 feet is the new height and the old height was 24 feet. New plans are responsive to Board comments. No heat or water in the barn are a requirement. Recommended for approval.

Daniel and Samantha Anderson, 613 Van Beuren Road, Block 5 Lot 7.09 "C" Variance. One month adjournment granted.

New Applications

Barbara and Michael Tighe, 496 Spring Valley Road, Block 11 Lot 4 "C" Variance. Setback variance needed to build a rear deck with railing and stairs. Existing home is non-conforming. The new deck will have a 3 foot setback instead of 4 feet. The existing patio is being removed. Previous variances were granted on property for other owners. Recommended for approval.

Kenneth A. Gruskin (Applicant), Steven and Beverly Rubenstein (Owners), 19 Wildlife Run, Block 51 Lot 22.04 "C" Variance. Front yard setback variance is requested - already non-conforming. Building area variance is requested - already non-conforming. Maximum lot coverage – already non-conforming. Height variance will match existing non-conforming height. Sideyard setback variance needed for swing set. A site visit will be required. Board is concerned about house becoming more non-conforming. House when built conformed to the law, but does not conform under current law. Neighbors appeared and voiced concerns primarily about water runoff and the size of the proposed driveway. June 5 at 6:00pm will be the site visit. The application will be carried until June 19, 2008.

John and Joyce Murray, 63 Lake Trail East, Block 43 Lot 15 "C" Variance

House is existing non-conforming. The proposal is for a new garage over the existing subterranean garage. Building height will be conforming and there will be no access to the house from the garage. Board requests that bulk consideration be given to the garage. In addition, the existing side stairs and setback will be validated for needed variances. Recommended for approval.

Harding Open Space Trust (HOST) Committee Meeting – April 23, 2008

Initial meeting discussions centered on the continuing community debate

regarding the proposed “Mt. Kemble Recreation Center” off US Rte. 202 and the role of HOST in that debate. (There were also compliments about the informative article about the proposed sports complex in the April issue of the Thumbnail). Additionally, the Committee noted the recent acceptance of the Open Space Plan element and the retention of the current Open Space tax rate by the Township Committee.

Although not a direct HOST question, the Committee discussed the impact of the definition of “open space” in the calculation of the Harding obligations related to NJ COAH (NJ Council on Affordable Housing) regulations. A clear definition of what constitutes vacant land as a basis for the obligations requires clarity and possible correction. It was suggested that Harding challenge the current bases for determining our COAH obligations, perhaps joining with other neighboring municipalities.

Projects – the Lancor- McShane property (approximately 10 acres off Cherry Road) has experienced some ongoing water run off and drainage issues causing delay of the closing settlement of all financials. Potential solutions were discussed including engineering fixes while trying to understand the roles of the County and State in any possible solutions.

John Murray then presented a summary of Green Spaces and Taxes authored by Mr. Leonard Hamilton of Rutgers University. The conclusions of the in depth study built the case for open spaces:

- there is broad positive support for open spaces preservation across the US and New Jersey
- all NJ counties and many municipalities have open space taxes
- open spaces taxes and preservation increase land values and decrease the need for public services
- the benefits of open space preservation are often undervalued
- any investment in open spaces (currently 910 acres in Harding) is very positive financially as well as for recreation and quality of life.

The Committee then accepted volunteers to create an information brochure regarding land preservation and open space efforts for distribution across the Township. This educational piece will be developed jointly with the Harding Land Trust. The Committee also agreed to a site visit of a 37-acre property for possible acquisition. The walk through will be to determine if the property meets to criteria for purchase and will be coordinated with the Morris Land Conservancy. Additionally, the Committee continues to work (in executive session) to evaluate, structure, negotiate and partner on an attractive new land acquisition for Harding Township.

Wildlife Management Report Bear sightings continue. You can help prevent bear damage by keeping garbage, pet food and bird food in secure locations. Never feed or

approach bears. Please report to Harding Police, 973 455 0500, and to NJ Wildlife research Unit, 908 735 8793.

**Harding Township Historic Preservation Commission,
Harding Twp Environmental commission, no reports this month**

Civic Association News: Thank you to all who helped provide information regarding changes to the Harding Township Directory, recently mailed to residents. The Directory is published by the Harding Township Civic Association as a public service. The **DEADLINE FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are June 13 and SEPTEMBER 2** respectively. **After the June issue, the next issue is September. Any really early September announcement might not get out as the mailing realities mean delivery about September 9 or 10. We can post such announcements on the website if so requested.** Current and past issues of Thumbnail, as well as the Directory are posted on our Website: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>. Send questions or comments about Thumbnail to editor, **email address: hesnaj@verizon.net**, or the Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976.

TOWNSHIP RECYCLING

Commingled Recyclables: consists of all aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles, and only plastic bottles and containers with the Recycling symbol, and #1 or #2. Try to crush plastic bottle to conserve space. Please remember no plastic or paper bags.

Commingled Mixed Paper recycling; consists of all paper, cardboard, newspaper, office paper, magazines, and books. Please put loose or shredded paper in paper bag. Please flatten all boxes or fill with other paper products.

Other accepted items; Batteries; automotive (car) and household (rechargeable accepted); Computers and all related peripherals, i.e. printers and monitors; Automotive and light truck tires, (on or off rim) and Propane tanks (BBQ size only)

The Hours of operation are every Wednesday from 7AM. to 12noon (7– 9AM self service); and **Saturdays:** 5/24, 6/7, 6/21, 7/12, 7/26, 8/9. 8/23.

DATES TO REMEMBER, meetings as noted.

Municipal Court (1 st and 3 rd Tuesday)	3 PM
Municipal Court (2 nd and 4 th Friday)	11AM
Environmental Commission (1 st Monday)	7:30 PM
Seniors (2 nd and 4 th Thursday)Chrst KingCh	11 AM
Planning Board (4 th Monday)	7:30 PM
Hist Preservation Comm (1stThursday)	7:30 PM
HOST (Open Space Trust) (4 th Wed)	7:30 PM
Board of Health (2 nd Thursday)	8 PM
Board of Education (2 nd and 4 th Monday)	7:30 PM
Board of Adjustment (3 rd Thursday)	7:30 PM
Township Committee(1 st and 3 rd Wed)	7:30 PM
Shade Tree (2 nd Monday)	3 PM
Harding Twp Civic Association (1 st Monday)	7:30 PM