

Harding Township Civic Association

THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

OCTOBER 2010

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW VERNON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT Soup Contest:

It's time again for the Auxiliary- sponsored "Home-made Soup Contest"

Date: **Sunday, October 17**

Time: 5:00PM - 6:00PM

Place: Fire House, Village Road

Cost: \$6.00 for soup, bread, coffee

Homemade desserts and soda will be available for sale. Vote for your favorite soup. Prizes will be awarded. If you would like to enter a soup in the contest, admission is free. Please call Pat O'Reilly (973 301-2151) or Connie Cherrillo (973-539-9383) to let us know you will be entering a soup.

The Annual Children's Halloween Parade will be held **Saturday, October 30th at 5PM** at the firehouse on Village Road. All town residents are invited. There will be refreshments and fun for everyone. Prizes will be awarded!

HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF HEALTH FLU CLINICS:

The Harding Township Health Department has scheduled their annual **influenza immunization clinics** for **Tuesday, October 19, 2010**, and **Tuesday, October 26, 2010**, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The flu shots are available free of charge to Harding Township residents who are at least 65 years old and residents who are at high risk for flu due to chronic disease as defined by the CDC criteria. For more clinic information, please call the **Flu Hotline at 973/267-8000, extension 190.**

PNEUMONIA VACCINATION: Residents, 65 years and older, who wish the pneumonia vaccine **must** call the Health Department at 973/267-8000, extension 148 to make an appointment. The Harding Township Health department will be **collecting non-perishable food items** at both flu clinics. All food donations will be sent to the Inter-Faith Food Pantry in Morristown.

RABIES CLINIC:

Harding Township, in cooperation with the New Jersey State Department of Health and the Morris Township Health Department, will again offer a **FREE** Rabies Vaccine inoculation for cats and dogs at the **New Vernon Fire House**, 22 Village Road,

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New Vernon, NJ on **Saturday, November 6, 2010**, from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.
DOGS whose **rabies vaccination expires before October 31, 2011**, must receive a booster vaccination before a license can be issued for 2011.

HARDING ALLIANCE AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE: *A Red Ribbon Panel of Experts* kicks off Red Ribbon (substance abuse awareness) Week on **Friday, October 22 at 7:30 PM** at the Harding Township School. We will be exploring issues surrounding prescription drug abuse and underage drinking. Our new municipal judge, the Honorable Judge Troxell, will be on the panel, as well as Frank Iannarone III, RPh, Madison Pharmacy, Detective Mark Castellano, Morris County Prosecutor's Office and Marc A. Payne, VP Novartis Corporation. Sergeant Thomas Downs of the Harding Township Police Department will be making a special presentation. This forum will be open to the public, so bring lots of questions and your friends, neighbors or relatives.

Community service opportunities- Students, we have a limited number of jobs to do that would be appropriate for community service requirements. Please contact Judy Malloy, Chairperson at Judymotown@comcast.net.

Our mission is to provide education and resources to promote healthy decision-making and to avoid substance abuse and risky behaviors. Harding Alliance members are concerned citizens, police, health and school professionals. Please come and let your voice be heard. Our next meeting is **January 19, at 8:30 AM** in the Guidance Office of Harding Township School. Check out our new website for further information about Harding Alliance at <https://sites.google.com/site/hardingalliance/>. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Judy Malloy, Chairperson, at judymotown@gmail.com.

THE HARDING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY is holding the 27th Annual Antique Show at the Tunis-Ellicks House, Village Road, New Vernon, on **Saturday, November 6th** from 10 am to 5 pm and Sunday, November 7th from 11 am to 4 pm. Admission is \$6.00. The show will feature over 20 dealers with furniture, china, silver, glass, rugs, prints and many other interesting antique items. For further information, please contact The Harding Historical Society at (973) 292-3661.

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The **HARDING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL** would like to announce its annual Holiday Bazaar and Pancake Breakfast which will be held on **Sunday Nov 14th, 9am -1 PM**, in the school gymnasium; Breakfast 'til noon, school cafeteria. The PTO is looking for vendors that would like to be a part of this community event. Anyone interested in information about the bazaar should contact JoLynn Moran jolily2@verizon.net or Toni Congedo tmmmk@comcast.net. The Holiday Bazaar is a great way to get a jump start on your holiday shopping and the Pancake Breakfast is a yummy way to mingle with people in our beautiful community. Hope to see you there!

THE LIBRARY

New Director...The Board of Trustees is pleased to announce a Director for the new Kemmerer Library: **Mary Witherell** of Montclair, a woman with substantial management experience and a passion for public libraries, currently working toward her MLS at Rutgers. The Trustees and Harding Township owe a big thank-you to the Search Committee—Diane Berger, Mary Ann Crutchlow, Elaine Grillo, Anne Thomas, and Kim Zsitvay. We will bid farewell to outgoing Director **Anne Thomas** on 1 November as she completes 20 years of service to the community.

New! FREE Yoga for Seniors: Monday mornings at 11:30 beginning Nov 8, taught by M.J. Turnbull. Wear comfortable clothing. Stretch, relax, enjoy!

Toddler Time: Mondays at 10:30 am for ages 1-3. Children will hear stories, sing songs, and create a small craft. Themes for the month: October 18, *Pumpkins*; Oct. 25, *Bears* (led by Elyse Makowsky); November 1, *Occupations*; Nov. 8, *Pajama Time*; Nov. 15, *Stories by Kevin Henkes*; Nov. 22, *Turkeys*; and Nov. 29, *Fairy Tales*.

Moms and Tots: Wednesdays at 10:30 for ages 4-24 months, singing and stories.

Lunch with the Librarian: Mondays at noon. Children's lunch and listen to stories.

Halloween Party! Thurs, Oct. 28, 4 p.m Children all ages, stories, snacks, a craft.

Crafternoon at the Library: Nov. 4 from 1-3:30 p.m. Create a turkey-themed craft!

Teen Advisory Group: Nov. 18 at 4 p.m. Discuss new programs and books

4th- and 5th-Grade Book Group: Thurs, Nov. 4 at 4 p.m. Books will be distributed at this meeting to be discussed next month.

Santa's Workshop: Nov. 20 from noon until 2 p.m. Children and teens are invited to the Library to make a special holiday gift.

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Evening Book Group: Wednesday, October 27 at 7:30 p.m. This month's title is *The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox* by Maggie O'Farrell. The novel will "blaze in the reader's memory" long after reading the last page (*Booklist*). Everyone who enjoys a spirited book discussion is welcome to join the group.

Library Hours: M, W, F 10-4; Tu, Th, 10-8; Sat 10-2. Check hardinglibrary.org, our website, for holidays and closings; also learn about Library programs and upcoming events. **Note:** a new link to the NJ State Library for online tutoring and career help.

Homework Help NJ offers *free* online tutoring from Tutor.com. Professional tutors in Math, Science, Social Studies, and English help students in grades K-12, students taking introductory college courses, or adults returning to school. **Tutors are available seven days a week, from 2 until 10 p.m.**

Notes from Your First Aid Squad (NVVFAS)

After a particularly hot summer, an excellent approach to getting back in shape is to *walk*. We are fortunate to nearby trails with varying degrees of difficulty. Our country roads also present beautiful vistas. When using roadways, however, be sure to face the traffic and walk single file. Wear comfortable shoes, highly visible clothing, and, if possible, a reflective vest. Walking may be more effective as conditioning than more strenuous activities; covering a mile in 15 minutes will burn as many calories as running the same distance in 8½ minutes. The use of hiking poles for balance is helpful to some.

Have you thought about joining the New Vernon Volunteer First Aid Squad? You will find it one of the most rewarding volunteer activities you will ever do. Please call Sue Sameth at 973-267-0552 or Rachel Matthews at 973-425-0343 for details.

From the Civic Association:

Our appeal for annual dues will be coming to your home soon. We appreciate all your contributions that help our efforts to produce high quality reporting of civic events.

You help us achieve our goals by joining as a dues-paying member.

The Harding Township Civic Association serves an unusual role in the community. The goals of the Association have been to foster public interest in government, and to assist in achieving and maintaining ***good mutual understanding between citizens and public officials, to promote knowledge and appreciation of public problems through non-partisan publicity and to inform, arouse and lead***

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public opinion toward the solution of public problems. To these ends, and for over 50 years, the Civic Association is staffed by volunteers who attend and report on many of the official doings of the Township government. Volunteer members also organize the Memorial Day Parade, the Civic Association website www.hardingcivic.org, the new neighbor welcome kits, and provide the Harding Township annual directory. These reports appear in The Thumbnail, the monthly newsletter which you are reading.

Although the Civic Association asks you, and everyone living or working in the Township to join the Civic Association as a dues-paying member, the Thumbnail is mailed to every home in Harding Township, regardless of whether or not you contribute.

As you make your schedules for the fall, consider joining the Harding Township Civic Association. To learn more, email Steve Balog at stephenjbalog@gmail.com or just come to next meeting, which is the Oct 13, 7:30PM at Kirby Hall in the small conference room. Next meeting dates are the 2nd Wed: Nov 10, and Dec 8.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Black bears are fattening up for the winter and will be more actively foraging, perhaps in Harding Twp. Black bears should never be fed (Note: in New Jersey, it's illegal to feed black bears, and violators face a penalty of up to \$1,000 for each offense) or approached. If a bear comes into your yard, make the bear aware of your presence. Do not feed the bear! Make sure the bear has an escape route. Yell, bang pots and pans or use an air horn to scare the bear away.

Significant damage, nuisance coyotes or aggressive and non-yielding bears can be reported to the NJ state Wildlife Services Section at (908) 735-8793, the Harding Police Department at (973) 455 0500 and the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife at (877) 927-6337. It is very important to report these incidents as the Division will take action only if there is a history.

TOWNSHIP NEWS:

Township Budget Process Now Includes Benchmarking

At the September Township Committee (TC) meeting, committee person Regina Egea showed the first installment of a new analytical technique, benchmarking, that will be used to "identify relative cost efficiency and opportunities to learn from 'best practices'". Benchmarking is commonly used by the best firms in the private sector. Benchmarking

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compares Harding's spending on a particular functional department to that of other similar neighboring towns. The differences are analyzed to determine why HT deviates (either higher or lower) from the others. The objective is to uncover potential savings. The comparable towns used in the analysis were Chatham Borough, Chatham Twp, Mendham Borough, Mendham Twp, Madison, Morris Twp (not Morristown), Bernardsville Borough and Bernardsville Twp. Data sources used were (1) the 2010 Municipal Budgets (for the spending), (2) the GIS System information (for the road mileage and area), and (3) the U.S. Census (for population). *For a look at the graphs, which added a lot of impact to the presentation, please see the Civic Association website: www.hardingcivic.org. The results are startling.*

It was noted that while "benchmarking analysis provides a quick overview and indication for cost efficiency, the level of detail is very limited. Thus, a further detailed analysis will be completed by each department before making any final determination". It was further stressed, that at this point "no judgment" is being made. Rather, the data is simply laid out to catalyze further analysis and aid in the ultimate decision making. Lastly, since Harding has the lowest population (3,180) it can be expected to be "at the edge" because of the obvious inefficiency of Harding's small scale relative to the other towns where populations ranged from Mendham Borough at 5,097 to Bernards Township at 24,575.

The first installment of the analysis covered the Police Department, Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Health Department. For each department the cost per capita was calculated and compared to the other towns and displayed graphically. Harding's spending for Police Department was highest per capita basis at just over \$450 versus the other towns which between \$200 and \$350. Harding's spending for Public Works at about \$220 was in the middle of the group, which ranged from about \$160 to just over \$250. And Harding's spending for Health Department at \$90 per capita was very significantly above the other towns, which were between \$10 and \$30 per capita.

Because of the nature of their work, the Police and DPW budgets were also analyzed on a cost per square mile and cost per road mile basis. Harding's spending for Police is the lowest of the group at less than \$50K per square mile. Most other towns were in the \$200-300K range while a couple were almost "off the chart" at or near 7 figures. Recall that a very large fraction of Harding's 21 square miles (the second

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largest area in the group) is the Great Swamp and Jockey Hollow. Likewise, Harding's DPW spending per sq mile was the lowest in the group.

Harding's spending for Police was the lowest on a per mile basis at less than \$20K per total mile. (Harding has 77.8 miles of total roads to patrol, the second highest in the sample). Mendham Township's figure was close to Harding's while the rest ranged from \$30K to \$50K to almost \$90K. Our DPW spending per mile (municipal roads only -- not county or state) was tied for the lowest at \$20K. Recall that the DPW was reduced from 8 to 6 this budget cycle.

Over the next four months, the TC will delve deeper into these budget issues:

Oct 20th: discuss analysis of the Police and Health departments. Explanation of differences and best practices. Recommendations for 2011 budget. The projection for the 2010 budget.

Nov 17th: discuss the DPW benchmarking data, the 2011 preliminary budget and any gap/surplus, and the 5 year revenue trend.

Dec 15th: depart budgets review Admin, Finance, Planning, Zoning, Health, Court, Construction.

Jan 19th: review continues. Capital Plan and Open Space examined. Budget options explored

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT Aug- Sept

51 Lake Trail West : William and Joan Haynsworth granted a variance from the maximum building area limit of 2,100 sq. ft. to permit construction of a new residence with a building area of 2,324 sq. ft. for property at Block 41 Lot 20.

69 Blue Mill Road :Patricia and Richard Clew granted a variance to allow enlargement of their nonconforming residence by construction of an addition to the rear and right side; variances are granted to permit construction of an addition with a minimum right side setback of 55' (52.5' for a proposed door) and a relocated hot tub with a minimum right side setback of approximately 61'; a temporary variance is granted to allow relocation of an existing play equipment structure to a location to the rear of the residence having a minimum left side setback of 73.5' for property at Block 19 Lot 10.

66 Sand Spring Road: Michael and Maria Simoff granted a variance from the 100' front setback requirement to authorize construction of a one story addition to widen the garage with a minimum front setback of 93.13'; a variance is granted to allow

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enlargement of the applicants' nonconforming residence by construction of additions and related improvements for property at Block 20 Lot 1.

5 Willow Acres Lane: Janice Rizzo granted a variance from the 25' minimum rear setback requirement to authorize construction of a swimming pool in the applicant's rear yard with a minimum setback from the rear lot line of not more than 16' for property Block 25 Lot 18.

15 Bockoven Lane: Michael and Maria Ubertaccio granted a variance from the 25' minimum rear setback requirement to authorize a patio in the applicants' rear yard with a minimum setback from the rear lot line of not less than 17.2' for the main area and not less than 15' for a fire pit bump out for property at Block 25 Lot 31.

PLANNING BOARD PRESENTATION TO TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE- 9/15/10

Alf Newlin, chairman of the Planning Board (PB), made the annual presentation to Township Committee (TC) on 9/15/10. The PB, staffed by citizen volunteers, is responsible for administering the township's Master Plan which governs overall land usage and is updated every six years. The Master Plan is available on-line. As well, the PB gives advice and makes recommendations to the TC on land use ordinances. The lack of major subdivision activity made 2010 a relatively slow year for the PB.

Work completed this past year included: Energy Structure Setback Ordinance requiring energy structures, such as solar panels, comply with the usual setback regulations; a Build Out Analysis was completed showing 200-250 additional housing units could be built in Harding; a requirement that new subdivision applicants document existing conditions of the land covered by the Conservation Easement; a Fertilizer Ordinance was discussed complying with state mandated regulation of fertilizers; and in regard to Land Use Fees, the PB advised on increase in these fees.

The PB has projects underway in these areas: a Waiver Procedure - would allow PB to hear waiver requests (on drywells and steep slopes) rather than having the applicant go to TC; in regard to Conservation Easements, considering changes to the forms to support the Township's objective to monitor these easements to ensure that the easements are not violated over time; Deer Fences – preliminary discussion regarding changes to fencing regulations; and Route 202, preliminary discussions underway on the health of Rt 202 business zone.

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Other projects that may be tackled in the future but have not been prioritized are lighting, adjustment of lot coverage limitations for large lots or lots with large conservation easements, cell towers (a special Cell Tower Advisory Committee is working on this and will advise the PB), "downtown" New Vernon, and Patriot Path and other walking paths. During discussion, resident Mike Meade asked Newlin and members of the Township Committee what became of the New Vernon downtown revitalization committee. Newlin's reply was that the board did not have a sense of the priority of the matter to the public, and needed input from the public. Bartlett commented that the committee could be reactivated.

Keying off the mention of Route 202 business, it came out that a complaint was received from a business owner that the Halloween activities at Wightman Farm created a 15 minute traffic jam on weekends. The Police Department will be contracting that business owner to investigate.

Also, the construction of Rt 202 Bridge (at Old Mill Inn) has been delayed until 2012.

Other Township news: There was a large fire in an unoccupied house (formerly McShane) on Cherry Lane Sept 28. The structure was left uninhabitable by the blaze, which was concentrated near the rear of the building. A contractor working on a nearby property called to report the fire, police said. The cause of the fire remains under investigation by local police and the Morris County Prosecutor's Arson Unit. Built in 1939, the property sold for \$1.15 million in 2005, according to tax records, and the land subdivided. The property is assessed at \$2.5 million currently, and located between two homes under construction. (article courtesy the Bernardsville Observer).

OPEN SPACE ISSUES:

In an article reprinted from the Observer, Sept 21, reporter Mike Condon wrote:

"Maintenance costs of open space parcels is something the Township Committee is attempting to get a handle on, but in the meantime, the bills keep coming. When the Township Committee met on Sept. 15, the committee agreed to pay the latest bill, in the amount of \$1,065, for maintenance costs at the Von Zuben property, a three-acre parcel at the corner of James Street and Blue Mill Road.

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“Committeeman Louis Lanzerotti said, however, that it would be the last time he would approve a maintenance bill for an open space parcel without a formal maintenance plan adopted. ‘I won’t vote for something like this again,’ he said. ‘We must have a management plan. We own the Von Zuben property 50-50 with the Harding Land Trust,’ he said. ‘We are co-owners and we need a management plan. We need to know what the costs are going to be going forward.’

“Committeeman Ned Ward said the committee is continuing to traverse a slippery slope, without a uniform plan for each open space parcel. ‘I have severe reservations about that,’ he said. One issue, Ward said, is that horse droppings need to be picked up frequently on the parcel.

“Committeeman Nicolas Platt said he and Tina Bologna of the Harding Land Trust met recently to discuss the issue. ‘Two people who we had doing the cutting and mowing there had problems with the machinery getting hurt,’ Platt said. ‘It’s a slag pile essentially but there are parts that are not cut, and there a few trees in the way.’ Platt said the land is mostly red shale. ‘There is very little top soil there, so it’s hard to maintain,’ he said. ‘The plan may turn out to be that we only need to cut it twice a year, and otherwise leave it alone. But, the problem is that right now, the mowers are being torn up, and we can’t have that. We need a plan, or we won’t be able to get anybody up there at all,’ Platt said.

“Resident Mike Meade said Von Zubens is just one of many problems. And then he brought up the phrase the Township Committee loathes to hear. ‘What about Glen Alpin? We have owned that property since 2004. It’s six years later and we still have no maintenance plan there either,’ Meade said. ‘We have no financial plan to maintain that property. We have no usage plan for that property, and we are now about \$3 million into it. We spent \$1.2 million on a new roof, and we have at least three to \$3.5 million into it. I was told it was going to be tax neutral,’ he said.

“Platt said the township has not been sitting idly by. He said he personally cut and mowed the Von Zubens property recently. ‘We have cut our DPW employees. We don’t use our DPW employees to cut grass on open space parcels,’ he said. ‘Glen Alpin looks horrible. We have had to let it go. Our DPW is not going to Glen Alpin to do the cutting. We have completely cut the DPW out of the open space projects.’

“Platt said the Harding Land Trust and the Harding Open Space Trust know that DPW workers are off limits for property maintenance jobs.

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“Meade continued to press about Glen Alpin and asked why, after six years, there is still no viable maintenance plan. Platt said the proverbial plug has been pulled on spending any more money on Glen Alpin. ‘It’s best, it was decided, just to let Glen Alpin sit there, given our cutbacks,” he said. “We aren’t spending any more money on Glen Alpin. We pulled the plug on the air conditioning system. There is no electric power there. It won’t be heated this winter at all.’ He added that for a recent event, the Glen Alpin Conservancy had the lawn cut, not the DPW.”

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, no report this issue

Civic Association News and Announcements

Civic Association: The DEADLINE FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are NOVEMBER 12 and December 10, respectively.. Current and past issues of Thumbnail, as well as the Directory are also 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. The Civic Association website, www.hardingcivic.org, is updated frequently; we post events and announcements sent to our e-mail address: submissions@hardingcivic.org.

TOWNSHIP RECYCLING

The Hours of operation are every Wednesday from 7AM. to noon (7– 9AM self service); and every other **Saturday: 9AM to noon, Oct 23, Nov. 6, Nov 20, Dec 4 and Dec 18.**

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)

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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)	8 PM
Board of Health (2 nd Thursday)	8 PM
Board of Education (1st and 3rd Monday)	7:30 PM
Board of Adjustment (3 rd Thursday)	7:30 PM
Township Committee(3 rd Wed)	7:30 PM
Harding Twp Civic Association (2 nd Wed)	7:30 PM