

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

### ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

#### **NJ PRIMARY ELECTION NEWS:**

The NJ primary is June 4, 2013. This year there is one Township Committee position which will be up for election. So far, there are 2 Republican candidates that will be running in June's primary, the incumbent Nic Platt and challenger Judy Malloy. No democratic candidates have filed, so the primary will effectively decide the seat. The Civic Association will sponsor a Meet The Candidates Night, tentatively set for Wednesday, May 29 at 7:30 pm at Kirby Hall. We will also run statements from both candidates in the May Thumbnail. Check our website <http://www.hardingcivic.org> for updated information regarding this event.

The **Harding Township Historical Society** will host New Jersey historian Joe Bilby at an event on **April 16, 2013 at 7:30PM** at the Tunis-Ellicks House. He will speak on "Interesting NJ People during the Civil War" Members free; non-members \$5

#### **ART IN BLOOM Sponsored by Friends of Kemmerer Library**

Friday April 19, 2013 6-10pm; April 20-Art Show continues from 9-1  
Gala Biannual Party and Art Show; Christ the King Church; over 60 artists. Information, Carol Conger 973 539 9531; to volunteer, call Bernice Patton 973 539 5168

#### **Annual Meeting of the HARDING LAND TRUST, Tuesday, April 23, 2013**

New Vernon Firehouse, Business Meeting 7:15; Special Program 7:45- Featured Speaker: Nicolas Platt; Please R.S.V.P. 973-267-2515 by April 16th .

For more information, visit our website at [www.hardinglandtrust.org](http://www.hardinglandtrust.org)

***The Harding Land Trust will be holding their House Tour on June 2nd. If you would like a ticket please contact the Harding Land Trust at 973-267-2515 or e-mail [cherbst47@aol.com](mailto:cherbst47@aol.com).***

#### **HARDING TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD**

All residents, along with the Committee and Board Members, are invited to attend the Harding Township Planning Board's Regular Meeting scheduled for **Monday, April 22, 2013**, at 7:30PM at the Municipal Building, Kirby Hall, 21 Blue Mill Road, New Vernon. The purpose is to discuss the draft Reexamination Report on the Harding Township Master Plan & Development Regulations. At that time, the Planning Board will present the draft report and take questions, comments and statements from all participants. This meeting will receive input on the elements of the Reexamination Report *only*. The Master Plan, as a whole, will not be addressed. Copies of the draft Reexamination are available on the Planning Board's website (<http://www.hardingnj.org/boardscommissionscommittees/planning-board.html>) or you may contact Margot Kaye at 973-267-8000, ext. 1951, or [mkaye@hardingnj.org](mailto:mkaye@hardingnj.org).

#### **FROM THE HARDING TOWNSHIP CIVIC ASSOCIATION:**

##### **Memorial Day Parade News**

Once again, the Harding Township Civic Association will be sponsoring the Memorial Day parade on Monday, May 27. We've had a couple of changes that we'd like you to know about. The first is that when forwarding candidates for the Citizen of the Year award, we're changing the qualifications from a lifetime achievement award to the citizen who has stood out over the

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

course of the past year. Submissions for this award may be sent by e-mail to [Parade@HardingCivic.org](mailto:Parade@HardingCivic.org) and need to be accompanied by an essay outlining the proposed recipient's contribution to Harding Township during the past year.

We're also sponsoring a Volunteer Fair at which participating Harding municipal and private committees, boards and special interest groups will have representatives there that will be able to provide information about their organization (what they do, how they do it, ...) and answer any questions that you may have. For inquiries regarding the Volunteer Fair, please e-mail us at [VolunteerFair@HardingCivic.org](mailto:VolunteerFair@HardingCivic.org).

**Bayne Park volunteers** are asking if you can join them in the effort to humanely *control the Canada Geese population* at Bayne Park this summer. **Just sign up to be "on call", at 10AM or 2PM, on any day from May 15<sup>th</sup> thru July 4<sup>th</sup>.** We'll call you minutes before your selected time slot & tell you if geese are present at the park. If so, you will come to the park to join 2 or 3 others to chase the geese away. It will take no more than ½ hour of your time. You will be using proven techniques, under the guidance of a trained volunteer. The birds learn quickly, and after the 1<sup>st</sup> few weeks, they rarely return.

Modest physical effort is required; primarily, the ability to walk across the park at a reasonable pace. All equipment is supplied. Shoes that can get muddy & long pants are suggested. This Township approved effort, so successful the last 4 years, was featured in "Goose Tracks 2008", a nationwide publication of the Humane Society of the US and in the magazine of the NJ League of Municipalities. This precisely timed "harassment phase", for which we are recruiting now, is just part of a longer carefully planned scenario grounded in principles of goose behavior. Come be part of a trend setting project that started here! Contact: Roberta Shields, [r.a.shields@att.net](mailto:r.a.shields@att.net), (973) 267-5673.

### **Wildlife Management Committee**

The Wildlife Management Committee urges residents to take the simple steps necessary to reduce the likelihood of conflicts with wildlife. Key among these is not to feed wildlife, intentionally or unintentionally. Casually storing untreated, unsecured food garbage outside near your home or on screened porches invites trouble. Please always store garbage in tightly sealed containers and put cans out just before collection, not the night before. Tamper resistant containers are available.

Spilled bird seed or easily accessible feeders invite everything from rats and mice to black bears to come for a visit. Especially now through Fall, when bears are most active, birds can get along fine without supplemental feeding. (Seed now on hand can be donated to the Raptor Trust!) Even when our intention is to draw "just small animals" to a site, their larger predators inevitably follow. A dirty barbecue grill invites bears and others to your home. The impact of any of these visits on humans ranges from mere nuisance to a traumatic encounter. With a little effort, both can be avoided.

### **Kemmerer Library**

Spring operating hours: **Monday-Friday: 10-5. Saturday: 10-1. Sunday: 12-3.**

**Children's Programs: Storytime: Tuesdays, 10:30 am.** Children aged 1-4 listen to stories, sing songs and do a craft. **Wednesdays, 11 am: Pre-K Play Group and Lunch Bunch.**

Games, play and bring your lunch. **Baby Play Group: Thursdays, 10:30 am.** Moms and babies, 6 months-12 months of age, meet to play/chat and sing songs.

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

**Children's Special Event: American Girl Doll Party, Wednesday, April 24, 4 pm.** Bring a friend and your favorite doll for a delightful spa event followed by tea time with cookies.

*Registration required, please.*

**Should I Sell My Shore House?** Don't miss this timely talk by Professor Ken Miller of Rutgers University, expert in earth sciences. Professor Miller will discuss the effects of climate change on our beautiful New Jersey Shore. **Tuesday, April 16, 10:30 am.**

**Tech Thursdays, 3:30 pm. Next session April 18: Microsoft Excel II.** If you have mastered Excel basics and would like to move on to more complex operations, this is the session for you. Taught by Alf Newlin. *Registration required please.*

**SAT Lite with Tim Cutler:** Just in time for the SAT test on Saturday, May 4. Tim, a former instructor with Kaplan Test Prep, is volunteering his expertise by offering a series of SAT Lite workshops for prospective test takers. If you missed the introductory session on March, 24, you can still sign up! **6-8 pm. Monday, April 15; Wednesday, April 17; Thursday, April 18.**

*Registration required, please.*

**Yarn Circle Knitting Club, alternate Wednesdays, 1-2 pm. April 10 and 24.** Join us for conversation, inspiration and instruction by the fireplace. Fun for beginners and experienced knitters alike.

**Curl up by the Fire with 56 great books – Borrow a Kindle:** The Library offers pre-loaded Kindles on two-week loan for Harding residents. New titles are continually added to the Kindle collection of best-sellers, classic fiction, non-fiction and more. NEW! Book Club Kindles: If your book club is reading a hard-to-find title, we will be happy to download it for you!

**Celebrate Earth Day with TED: Sunday, April 21, 3 pm.** Photographer Chris Jordan trains his eye on American consumption. His 2003-05 series "Intolerable Beauty" examines **the hypnotic allure of the sheer amount of stuff we make and consume every day:** cliffs of baled scrap, small cities of shipping containers, endless grids of mass-produced goods. This is a TED Talk that will actually make you care about Earth Day!

**Mat Yoga: Mondays at 10:00 am. Gentle Chair Yoga: Mondays at 10:45 am. Wednesdays at 10 am.** MJ Turnbull's classes are good for both body and soul. All are welcome. A donation of \$10 per session is suggested.

**Evening Book Group, Thursday, April 25, 7:30 pm.** April's selection is *Zoobiquity* by Barbara Natterson-Horowitz. The author employs fascinating case studies and meticulous scholarship to present a revelatory understanding of what animals can teach us about the human body and mind.

**Social Bridge, Mondays 11 am. Starting April 22.** Sign up at the Library – via phone, in person, or by e-mail – and we will notify you when a foursome is complete.

**Mah Jongg Club, Thursdays, 12-2 pm:** Beginner and intermediary play. New members welcome. Registration and information at the Library. Modest instruction fee.

**Magazines and newspapers.** The Library is looking to expand its collection of periodicals. If you are the recipient of a "twofer" subscription offer, please consider giving it to the Library. We will be very grateful – and your gift is tax deductible.

The **Harding Township Road Side Clean-up Day** will be held on **Saturday, April 20th**, from **9AM until Noon**. We need your help to keep maintain the rural beauty of our town.

Meet at **Town hall** to get a street assignment where you can go pick-up road side debris. Gloves, safety vests, garbage bags, will be provided. Free tee shirts and refreshments will be provided to all participants (while they last). This is great opportunity for students to earn

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

community service hours. Rain date will be Sunday, April 21st. Please be sure to wear sunscreen and bug spray. **Harding, Clean and Green!** Brought to you by the **Harding Township Environmental Commission** and **Department of Public Works**.

### **HTRA SUMMER DAY CAMP – 2013 ENROLLMENT IS NOW OPEN!**

The Harding Twp. Recreation Association is pleased to offer its Summer Day Camp program this year from Monday July 1 through Friday July 26. (We will however be closed on Thursday July 4<sup>th</sup> in observance of Independence Day). Campers can enroll for as many weeks as they wish. Camp hours are from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.-

The HTRA Day Camp has been operating for over 35 years and offers programs for children from 3-12 years of age. Located at the Harding Township School in New Vernon, the daily activities include Arts & Crafts, Swimming, Sports & Games, Computer Lab and other fun activities. The Polliwog program is offered for 3 and 4 year olds and runs from 9 am – Noon, with the option to enroll for the extended day program which runs till 3 pm. We also offer a science enrichment program for grades 1-4 and swimming lessons for children entering Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade, for an additional fee.

The Camp Director, LuAnn Romano is an Harding resident, Elementary School Teacher for over 35 years and has been with the HTRA Camp for over 35 years.

Enroll early before it's too late! For more information and enrollment forms visit our website at [www.hardingtowshipdaycamp.com](http://www.hardingtowshipdaycamp.com) , email us at [promano59@comcast.net](mailto:promano59@comcast.net) or call us at 973-326-1775.

### **TOWNSHIP NEWS: SPECIAL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING MARCH 18 – BUDGET, TAXES AND SANDY**

At a March 18 special meeting, the Township Committee (TC) on March 18 formally introduced the 2013 budget. This budget will likely be adopted at the regular April TC meeting.

First the punch line. Municipal (not school or county) property tax levy is slated to rise 5.4% -- 0.85% for the general budget and 4.5% for Hurricane Sandy related expenses. The TC is choosing to pay for all of the Sandy expenses (\$246K) this year rather than over time by borrowing. This suggests that 2014 taxes could DROP, unless other increases consume the \$246K outlays that won't be there in 2014 barring a Son of Sandy.

To orient the reader, a brief review of your property tax bill is in order. The largest portion of your property taxes, about 43% in 2012 (\$9.3mm), goes to the Harding School District which is the purview of the Board of Education. Unless the school budget is defeated at the polls (November) the TC has no say in the school finances. The District's budget is calling for a 1.5% increase in property taxes, or \$60, on \$1mm in assessed property value. (The AVERAGE assessed property value in Harding is \$1.257mm.)

The next largest piece of your property tax bill, about 29% (\$6.2mm), goes to Morris County. About 2% of the 29% is for County Open Space funding while the other 27% is for County operations (roads, sheriff, etc). On March 27, the Morris County Freeholders adopted a budget that showed NO increase in taxes. This was accomplished with some headcount reduction but mainly by cutting the Open Space levy – a tax control tactic that was questioned by representatives of several municipalities at their meeting with the Freeholders.

So only the smallest portion of your property tax bill, about 28%, is actually the direct responsibility of the Township Committee. About 3% is earmarked for the Harding Open Space

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

Trust (HOST) while the other 25% pays for municipal services – police, DPW, administration, etc.

HOST has recommended to the TC a reduction in the Open Space (OS) tax. HOST's reasoning is that the final payment for the debt for the Margetts Field purchase was made in 2012. Even with this reduction, HOST's 2013 year end fund balance is still projected to rise to almost \$1.7 million (from \$1.4mm) and all maintenance projects will be funded. The OS tax rate has trended down from 4.5 cents (per \$100 of assessed value) in 2008, to 3.85 cents in 2012 and now 3.5 cents in 2013.

Harding debt (AAA rated) is projected to drop again in 2013 to \$8.758mm. The TC's policy is to continue this pay down. They project a steady drop to \$600K by 2028. This assumes no revival of affordable housing requirements. Affordable housing construction (The Farm at Harding at Kitchell Road and Woodland Ave) accounts for the largest portion of current debt - \$3.7mm, or 40%.

Focusing just on the recurring Municipal Budget, we find an operating budget of almost \$8.9 of which \$5.9 million goes to the 10 departments that provide the municipal services. The Police Department is the largest by far at 48.4% of the total department budgets and 32.3% of the total operating budget. Most (\$2.36mm) of the nearly \$2.9mm in police spending is for compensation and benefits. Retiree Health Insurance of \$334K compares with \$441K for active personnel.

The Department of PublicWorks accounts for just over \$1mm, about 17.2% of total department spending. In descending order the other departments are Administration (8.8% of department spending), Health (7.0%), Finance/Tax (5.6%) Construction (5.3%, now at breakeven with the fees being charged), Legal Services (2.5%), Zoning Board (1.8%), Joint Court (1.4%), Engineering (1.1%), and Planning Board (0.8%).

Hurricane Sandy has an outsized impact on the 2013 budget. The budget funds \$246K for emergency expenses. However the Township expects to receive substantial reimbursement from FEMA for these expenses, though the amount and timing of that reimbursement is not determined. Without Sandy, the 2013 tax levy increase would have been less than 1%, 0.85% to be exact.

The 2013 budget fully funds healthcare and pension costs and is under the State imposed cap on tax levy and spending increases – 2.5%. As well the budget absorbs a 0.06% decrease in assessed property values, as tax appeals and open space purchases have offset new construction. The budget also uses less of the surplus than in 2012. This is a tactic to rebuild the surplus. And as in recent years, Harding gets no funding from the State other than a pass back of our Energy Tax Receipts. In sum, 85% of the municipal budget revenue comes from taxes and surplus (which is usually/mostly replenished annually) while 15% is derived from other sources (fees, grants, fines, energy tax receipts, etc.)

A review of tax history since 2008 on a hypothetical \$1mm assessed property shows where taxes have been rising and falling:

	2008	2013	% Change 5 yr
County inc. Open Space	3200	3030	-5.3%
Harding School	4220	4638	9.9%
Harding Municipal	2490	2830	13.6%
Harding Open Space	450	350	-22.2%

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

The TC highlighted three challenges; (1) PBA contract negotiation, (2) benefit cost increases and (3) uncertainty of State COAH (affordable housing) policy and mandates. Any one of these issues could have significant impact on the budget.

### Planning Board Meeting March 25, 2013

Roll Call: Messrs. Newlin and Schliefer and Ms. Moriarty absent.

The Board passed Resolution 3-13 appointing Margot Kaye Secretary of the Board. The swearing in of professionals was deferred until next month.

Minutes: After some minor revisions, the minutes of the January 23, 2013 were approved.

#### Announcements/Reports/Presentations

- Mr. Saulnier reminded the Board that financial disclosures need to be submitted, and asked Ms. Kaye to send a reminder.
- Ms. DiTosto will replace Mr. Bartlett on the Advisory Review Committee.
- The composition of the Development Review Committee will remain unchanged.
- Ms. Olcott suggested that one of the Board's open alternate positions might be filled by a member of the Environmental Commission.
- The Environmental Subcommittee will be chaired by Mr. Deitz and include Messrs. Edgar, Newlin and Saulnier.
- Planning Board liaisons to all other boards and commissions will stay the same.
- Mr. Saulnier announced that there would be a meeting tomorrow of all board chairs to share priorities and promote awareness. The Board's priorities are as follows:
  - Master plan reexamination
  - Historic preservation, demolition delay ordinance
  - Consider revisions to B2 Route 202 business zone so that it conforms more to B1 downtown zone
- Liaison reports were as follows:
  - Mr. dePoortere reported that CPAC is retooling
  - Ms. DiTosto reported that the Environmental Commission has announced its annual clean-up day.
  - Ms. DiTosto also reported that HOST approved the lowering of the open space tax which was subsequently approved by the Township Committee. Also reported:
    - The County is putting up \$2.075MM for the Frelinghuysen property (Lot 19); Harding must put up \$200K.
    - The GSWA offered to clear a path from Barrett Field into the Primrose property.
    - A subcommittee is being formed to study maintenance on all HOST properties.

#### Discussion

- Mr. Saulnier distributed the 2013 Planning Board budget for review, saying he thought the budget looked OK. It will be approved by the Township Committee in April or May.
- With respect to the Master Plan Reexamination Report, Ms. Kaye has sent the draft to all township boards for review. There was some discussion about the rules that might be used at the public hearing. There was some thought that discussion should be limited to the reexamination report itself (and not the master plan as a whole), while

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

others thought all comments should be welcome. Where comments are detailed, the Board will request they be submitted in writing. The public meeting is scheduled for April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- Discussion continued on the township draft ordinance regarding building area calculations which the Board of Adjustment asked the Planning Board to take a look at. Any accessory structure built before 1945 gets a waiver for building calculation purposes, but there was a sense that people were abusing the waiver in cases where the structures were enlarged, relocated, rearranged, etc. The Board recommends that the ordinance be revised to allow the Board of Adjustment some judgment to void the automatic waiver in cases of abuse, and approved sending such recommendation to change the ordinance to the Township Committee.

### **BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

Roll Call – absent Chris Yates, Terri Eichler, Peter Muratore

Minutes – site inspection minutes for #BOA-01-13 8 Spencer Place – approved. Resolution to approve requested variance approved on-site.

Meeting minutes from BOA meeting held February 21, 2013 approved.

#### Pending applications

#BOA-23-10: 501 Tempe Wick Road, Block 33, Lot 9, Zone RR: Cell Tower

Since all testimony and public comment have been completed, all that's left on this application is a motion and vote. There was not a quorum on the Board, the applicant requested that a special meeting of the Board in April, 2013. A motion was presented and passed at the site inspection for Hurstmont for a special meeting to conclude the Cell Tower application on Tuesday, April 23, 2013 at 7:30 pm.

#BOA-02013: 57 Village Road, Block 10, Lot 44

C variance for emergency generator installation front yard variance approved.

#BOA-11-11: 53 Blue Mill Road, Block 19, Lot 11

The accessory residence's brick chimney is structurally unsound and needs to be removed for safety reasons. Since this structure is considered to be historic and was previously before the Board, application to the Board to replace the chimney is required. Replacement of brick chimney is approved as presented.

#BOA-22-11: 679 Mount Kemble Avenue, Block 27, Lot 2, Zone RR

The first part of this bi-furcated application was completed at the March meeting. A site inspection was approved for Saturday, 4/6/2013 so that the Board could re-familiarize itself with the site. All but 1 height variances has been addressed for one of the cupolas. The Board's concern about future changes to the site plan(s) subsequent to possible application approval was addressed by the applicant, who stated that the contents of the construction documents currently presented to the Board for approval represents the maximum size of proposed structures on the site. The Board confirmed its condition that should the application be approved, its approval is contingent upon "substantially identical as-built conditions."

The second part of this application, for the subdivision, was started. Town Engineer Paul Fox had prepared a memo which contains a checklist of 11 issues which would need to be addressed by the applicant and reviewed by the Board prior to hearing evidence. They are: Board of Health approval of drawings; Morris County Planning Board application; current HT tax payments; NJ state soil and sediment control plan and erosion certification; digital submittal of

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

drawings for the application to the Board; HT Tax Assessor approval of proposed Lot numbers; 100 foot X 100 foot designations of building envelopes noted on drawings for application; DEP wetlands transition areas (waived); steep slope considerations (approved at meeting); proposed landscaping plans (to be provided prior to April meeting).

### New applications

#BOA-03-13: 7 Orchard Drive, Block 17, Lot 29

Drawings for proposed additions of a 12kw emergency generator and garage were submitted. Setback variance requested for the additional garage. Next door neighbors expressed concern about size of proposed garage. Board expressed indecision on consideration of setback due to location of lot at the end of a cul de sac. Site inspection held Saturday 4/6, no vote taken.

#BOA-04-13: 11 Gleneagles Drive, Block 48, Lot 5.02

Proposed family room extension over the existing deck was approved. The lot has existing non-conforming coverage of 12.55% but since the proposed work will not affect neighbors and additional coverage is not sought, application was approved.

#BOA-05-13: 555 Spring Valley Road, Block 9, Lot 15

Application is to close in an existing screened in porch. Since no change in structure's footprint, application was approved as submitted.

#BOA-06-13: 17 Youngs Road, Block 47, Lot 11.01

This application is based on drawings submitted for proposed work on an existing non-conforming front setback, existing under-sized lot (2 acres) and for additional coverage. The home renovation would "normalize" the exterior of the front and side, while a driveway is requested to be installed from Youngs Road to an existing barn/garage (could potentially increase impervious lot coverage from 8.66% to 11.94%). A motion was approved at a site inspection held 4/6/2013 which stipulated that the application is approved pending resolution of new driveway requirements for width.

### HARDING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL

#### **Highlights - Board of Education Meeting – 7:30pm, Monday, March 25, 2013**

The Public Hearing for the 2013/14 School budget was held as a first order of business, with the Superintendent giving a comprehensive overview. There were no questions from the audience. This budget, now approved, will be posted on the Harding School website by the end of March.

One HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying) case occurred since the last Board meeting and was acted upon as reported by Dr. Anemone. This is the student's second occurrence, apparently for name calling. It resulted in out-of-school detention and an intensive remediation program, including a presentation to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class. Harding School takes the HIB program very seriously.

The search for a new principal/director of curriculum has been narrowed to two candidates who will be interviewed on Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. The successful candidate, after approval by the Board, would be expected to begin work on July 1<sup>st</sup>. For the intervening period, the Board approved the hiring of Ms Thea Spina to act as interim principal. She is a recently



# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

retired principal from a nearby district who, aside from being a great benefit to provide continuity and assist in the transition, should be able to give us an “outside look” at our school program.

Construction the tennis courts will begin as soon as the weather improves. During the summer the windows and univentilators for the Board office wing of the school will be replaced as part of the capital program. Next year similar work will be done for the classroom wing.

Four 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in the TSA (Technological Student Association) annual competition for a science/engineering design & build project. This was our second year of competition and one of our students placed fourth among over 400 contestants.

### **Highlights - Board of Education Meeting – 7:30pm, Monday, April 1, 2013**

The results of our “School Performance Report” were briefed to the Board by the Superintendent. This state evaluation replaces the previous NJDOE “Report Card”. Schools are grouped by socio-economic demographics for comparison since there is such a wide disparity between performance levels throughout the state. HTS (a single-school district) is in a group of 30 comparable schools. Generally we rank in the 80+ percentile among all school districts and in the 40+ percentile among others in our peer group. In all cases, HTS met 100% of all its target areas. Since this was a new reporting format, there was good discussion regarding a meaningful interpretation.

The Directors of a Culture & Climate Assessment Program developed by the United Way and the College of St Elizabeth described its history, details, and benefits, giving an example of its application for a school in Madison. Since some type of climate assessment is now mandated by the state, the presenters hope that other schools in our area will take advantage of their effort. Although more complex with links to outside resources, it was similar to Harding’s own Climate Assessment conducted last winter.

The Board continued its discussion about how best to interpret the various measuring tools such as test results, Climate Assessments, and School Performance Reports as a means of forecasting how well our graduates will do in high school and beyond. To that end, the Board welcomed the comments of a parent of two HTS graduates who are now in Madison HS. She noted that her children had difficulty with writing skills and suggested that more written exercises rather than multiple choice or short answer questions could be helpful.

*(Note: the purpose of these brief reports is to help Harding residents connect with the School by highlighting the significant items addressed by the Board. The “meeting minutes” are filed by the Board Secretary and placed on the Harding School website for all to view, generally about a month after the meeting date.)*

### **NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT, Alex Anemone**

Now that the warm weather is (finally) here, Harding Township School is heating up with activities that complement our core instruction. Our second, fourth and eighth grade students were able to enjoy professional quality residencies with the Morris Arts Council. These residencies were sponsored by the Harding Township Education Foundation (HTEF) and took place at HTS over a two week period in March. Later that month, HTS hosted the annual Senior Citizens Breakfast. Guests were treated to a catered breakfast and performances from the HTS Chorus, the HTS Jazz Band as well as the cast and crew of *Fame, Jr.*, our most recent musical performance. The seniors in attendance also played “HTS Trivia” and took a tour of our state of the art Science Lab. Our next community outreach program will be *Intro to Twitter* and will take place at the Kemmerer Library at 3:30 on Thursday, May 30. This is a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Program. Participants will have the opportunity to learn how to register for twitter, how to select a username, how to search for information and how to send information. We hope to see you there.

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 2013

We are also proud to announce that two of our teachers - Carol Cochran and Sue Englesman - have been selected to participate in the prestigious 2013 Honeywell Educators @ Space Academy (HE@SA) program at the United States Space and Rocket Center (USSRC) in Huntsville, Alabama this summer. HE@SA is a professional development program designed for teachers who want to learn new and innovative techniques to inspire and educate their students about science and math. This summer, more than 200 teachers will participate as the HE@SA's Class of 2013, becoming part of an impressive network of the more than 1,765 graduates from 52 countries & territories and 50 U.S. states that have participated since 2004.

Lastly, by now you have received a copy of the *2013-2014 Budget Connections*, which was mailed home in March. The highlights of the newsletter revealed that the school tax levy increase in Harding is only 1.50%! This equates to \$6.00 per \$100,000.00 of assessed value; for a home assessed at \$1,000,000.00, the school tax will increase only \$60.00. We believe that the 2013-2014 Harding Township School budget is efficient, cost-effective and provides for the diverse learning needs of all our students.

### ***Civic Association News and Announcements***

***Civic Association:*** The DEADLINES FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are May 3 and June 14. The June issue publishes late, as the issue following June is September, which appears after Labor Day.. Send questions or comments about Thumbnail to editor, **email address: [hesnaj@verizon.net](mailto:hesnaj@verizon.net)**, or the Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976. The Civic Association website, [www.hardingcivic.org](http://www.hardingcivic.org), is updated frequently; we post events sent to our e-mail address: [submissions@hardingcivic.org](mailto:submissions@hardingcivic.org).

### **TOWNSHIP RECYCLING**

**The Hours of operation are every Wednesday** from 7AM. to noon (7– 9AM self service); and every other **Sat.: 9AM to noon April 20; May 4 and 18; June 1, 15, 29.**

**Commingled Recyclables:** consists of all aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles, and only plastic bottles and containers with the Recycling symbol #1 #2, and 4, 5, and 7. 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); Automotive and light truck tires, (on or off rim) and Propane tanks (BBQ size only) **Computers, monitors, laptops and televisions cannot** be put into household trash. However, they **can** be brought to the Harding Twp DPW recycling center at the regular hours of operation. Tracy Toribio of Harding Twp DPW will answer your recycling questions 973 267 2448, Mon- Fri 8:30 am to 3 pm.

### **DATES TO REMEMBER, meetings as noted.**

Environmental Commission (1 <sup>st</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM
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
Hist Preservation Comm (1stThursday)	7:30 PM
Board of Health (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday)	7:30 PM
Board of Education (1st and 3rd Monday)	7:30 PM
Board of Adjustment (3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday)	7:30 PM
Township Committee(3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed)	7:30 PM
Harding Open Space (2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed)	7:30 PM
Harding Twp Civic Association 3rd Wed)	7:30 PM