

Harding Township Civic Association

THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

“Keeping Harding Informed Since 1949”

www.HardingCivic.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

September 2020

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Meet the candidates for the Harding Township Committee

October 5 at 7:30pm

Event will be hosted online

Details to view and pose questions will be posted on the Harding Civic Association website

NEW VERNON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

STEAK AND LOBSTER DINNER CURBSIDE PICK UP NEW VERNON VOLUNTEER FIRE

DEPARTMENT: Due to popular demand, A Curbside Pick up Steak and Lobster Dinner will be held SATURDAY, September 26, 2020 from 5pm to 9pm or when the food runs out!!! Your favorite dinner selections will include Steak, Lobster, Chicken and Hamburgers. All dinners include Salad, Roll, and French fries. Steamed Clams, Corn on the Cob and Dessert selections are also available. Please go to SAL.NVVFD.org for pre-ordering, pick up time slots, and for more information. All Proceeds go to the New Vernon Fire Company and First Aid Squad.

Due to the current pandemic environment THE ANNUAL COUNTRY AUCTION is cancelled for 2020. We will not be accepting donated items for the ANNUAL COUNTRY AUCTION this year, so please do not drop off anything at the Firehouse. We are considering an online auction later this year. More information on this to come. Without the ANNUAL COUNTRY AUCTION the NVVFD has a significant budget gap. The NVVFD is completely independent and raises all its own funds without tax support. Please check your mailbox for a special appeal from the NVVFD and consider making an additional donation to help us close that gap.

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

Township Committee - Menorah, Walking Trail, Tennis Courts

Regular TC meeting was held on August 10, via internet hookup.

The first item was a request by Rabbi Shalom Rubin of the Chabad of Southeast Morris County, to allow a Chanukah Menorah to be placed on municipal property, likely Bayne Park. The rabbi said that the menorah symbolized “light and learning” - appropriate for a “dark world”. He said holiday season menorahs are common and are displayed at the State House in Trenton, the White House in DC, and many towns in Morris County. The rabbi said that the only Morris County municipalities not displaying a menorah are ones that have not been asked. Mayor Yates said the TC will take the request “under advisement” and will discuss.

The TC discussed proceeding with an application for a grant from Morris County for \$30,000 to extend walking trail at Bayne Park. The grant carries a requirement of a 20% match from Harding. A lively discussion, that included members of the public, ensued regarding the best route that the path should take.

The need for maintenance of Harding’s Traphagen Tennis courts was discussed at length. The courts were resurfaced and made usable again in 2014 with a gift of \$125,000 from the Traphagen family. The courts have been a popular addition to the assets of the town and get a lot of use. However, the years and weather have been unkind. Maintenance has been deferred, perhaps unwisely. The cost of the repair is just over \$31K. The funds were approved and will be taken from the Harding Open Space Trust.

In addition, the TC approved \$40K to buy a bit of real property from NJ Dept. of Transportation, reappointed two Class II special police officers to one-year terms, approved alcoholic beverage licenses for the Fire Department and Mt Kemble Lake Country Club, and bumped up the authorized amount for a few contracts.

PLANNING BOARD

Planning Board Notes for Summer 2020

The Planning Board met over the summer and considered two applications. The first was Application PB# 02-20 which was for a three-lot subdivision with variances for front setbacks and accessory structures at 579 Van Beuren Road. The two new lots would be towards the front of the property, and all three lots would be at least five acres. The drive to the current house in the rear would serve the two new lots. The location of the pool in the new lot of the current house would be non-conforming and require relief. This application will be considered further on August 24th.

The second was Application PB# 03-20 which was for improvements at the “Farm” housing development to meet the town’s Fair Share housing obligation. An additional four affordable housing units would be built along with a small office building and a garage/recycling enclosure. Initial plans were revised to improve building separation and distance from wetlands. Still to be provided are an upgraded drainage analysis and a landscaping plan. The Board approved a draft resolution approving the application, and a sale from Harding to the buyer is expected to happen in early September.

HARDING LAND TRUST

5th Annual Celebrate Harding Photo Contest

Sponsored by Harding Land Trust, Kemmerer Library, and Madison PhotoPlus, Harding Township students grades K through 12 from any school are invited to submit photos of landscapes, flora, fauna or wildlife (no pets) for our annual Celebrate Harding Photo Contest to photos@hardinglandtrust.org. We invite participants to submit photographs between October 15th and October 31st. The winners will be announced at a reception on November 12th (location TBD). Rules and submission instructions will be posted on the Harding Land Trust and Kemmerer Library website at www.hardinglandtrust.org and www.hardinglibrary.org. Photos will be displayed at the Library and posted on the Harding Land Trust website and Instagram and Facebook accounts after the contest. Winning photos will be on display at Kirby Hall.

HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board of Education meeting highlights: July 27th, 2020

This meeting was held by teleconference because of Covid.

Dr. Matthew Spelker, the superintendent, presented the Semi-Annual Student Safety Data System/Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Report. The school remains a very safe place, with zero incidents reported of violence, vandalism, or any other serious offenses, and zero reports of bullying (an improvement over last year, which had 2). The school has a number of safety initiatives, including a school safety plan, character education on Tuesdays, a culture and climate initiative (in collaboration with United Way and the College of St. Elizabeth), and L.E.A.D. (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) throughout the various grades of the school. Anti-bullying initiatives include SAFE Schools Training on Suicide Prevention and Health and Safety topics for faculty, staff, and the administrative team, bullying training for faculty and staff, and a character education curriculum.

The superintendent’s salary has been renegotiated early because mandatory salary caps have been removed throughout the state, over one year ago. To be fair and respectful to the superintendent’s experience, his contract, which would have expired in 2022, will now run from 2020 to 2025, at an annual base salary of \$206,500.00. The Board

unanimously supported the new superintendent contract, and is eager to retain an excellent administrator.

The superintendent reported on an anti-racism initiative being spearheaded by recent alumni of the school (graduates from 2013 and earlier). They want to work with the administration and school community to improve upon racism education. They were given an update on current school anti-racism education, and will be meeting again.

The HTS Promotion ceremony took place outside on July 13th. While hot, it went very well. The virtual ceremony was already recorded so it will go out to graduates, as well.

HVAC installation in the Elementary Building is scheduled to be completed by the beginning of the school year. The STEM lab project is 90% completed. Most furniture is in, and lab equipment will be added slowly, as part of a careful learning process. A letter thanking the Khubani family, who generously gave money for the STEM lab, was read aloud, as was a thank you letter to the Lanzerotti Family who endowed an annual science award for the 8th grade.

Reopening plans will follow state guidelines. A general framework for socially distanced full attendance, with a modified schedule, has been developed. HTS has large buildings and large classrooms, so 6 feet of distancing can be achieved with full attendance (class size is 15 on average). The gym and the STEM lab may be used for the middle school. Students and staff will only be allowed to attend if they have no symptoms and no fever. Once school opens, there is a built-in review for early October to re-evaluate the plan.

The Reopening Plans were sent to parents on July 31st. The teacher's union is being consulted to see what teachers are comfortable with, and parents will be surveyed about whether some of them plan to have their children attend remotely

Madison will be reopening on an A/B schedule (i.e., hybrid), and they will start on September 8th.

On September 14th there will be a welcome back and introduction to new faculty, and on September 28th there will be a district goals update.

HARDING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Harding Township Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the history of our town. We are living through a momentous and somber time in our history. We would like you to help us document what is going on in your homes, your businesses, and our community. Documenting the daily struggles of our citizens, our students, our first

responders, and our businesses will tell our story to future researchers, scholars, and future Harding residents.

These questions are made available to inspire you when writing about your time in quarantine.

- How did you learn about the virus and what to do about it?
- What adaptations did you have to make?
- What plans for the future did you have to change?
- What did you miss?
- How did this change your relationship with your family?
- How did you adapt your social activities to the quarantine?
- How did you entertain yourself?
- Did you learn anything new?
- Were you lonely and how did you handle it?
- How did your job change during quarantine?
- How did school change during quarantine?
- What do you think it will be like in the upcoming winter?
- What do you think it will be like in the future?
- What changes do you think are permanent?
- Did you learn anything from being in quarantine?

Mail answers to PO Box or email HardingArchives@gmail.com.

FIRST AID SQUAD

First Aid Squad and Isaias

Some residents of Harding suffered power outage for over a week, but we all had much to be thankful for. No lives were lost and though there was property damage, no serious injuries were reported. Isaias was described as the fourth-worst storm in New Jersey history as far as power outages go. Considering our relative size, the restoration of full power here in Harding in 8 days can only be ascribed to the work and tenacity of all of our OEM agencies. Immediately after the storm, 23 roads in Harding were blocked by down trees and wires, making it virtually impossible to travel from one side of Harding to the other. Some neighborhoods were completely closed off to emergency services.

During the storm and for the week after the storm, the New Vernon Volunteer Fire Department was dispatched 28 times, more than triple their normal call volume. In addition to responding to the normal fires, motor vehicle accidents, commercial and residential fire alarms, of which there were plenty during the power outage, the Fire Department handled 8 Carbon Monoxide calls, in some cases venting homes to eliminate the threat of carbon monoxide poisoning to the residents. While they were handling all of these 28 calls, the Fire Department dispatched its personnel and vehicles along with the First Aid Squad on each of First Aid Squad calls to make certain that there was a passable

way to reach residents requiring the First Aid Squad. As in past storms where snowmobiles were used to reach residents on blocked roads, the Fire Department provided 4-wheel drive Gators to reach inaccessible residents during this storm.

The Police Department kept its vehicles on the road responding to their normal emergency calls and identifying all of the blockages from downed trees and wires. When the generator in the Municipal building failed due to a blown water pump, alternative arrangements were quickly made and the Police Department moved to the Fire Department building where they were able to keep emergency services going. Throughout it all the Police Department kept an online map, updated in real-time, to identify blockages and provide routes for the Fire Department and First Aid Squad to get to sites of dispatched calls as quickly as possible. Chief Heller, along with other Township officials, kept pressure on JCP&L to identify and de-energized downed wires so that Harding's DPW and the tree companies brought in by JCP&L could clear the blockages and allow the free movement of emergency vehicles and later, routine traffic throughout the Township. Once the clean-up began in earnest, Chief Heller prioritized the opening of major arteries to facilitate the movement of emergency service vehicles in Harding.

Before the storm, the DPW did its job to make sure the Township was ready for the storm. They cleared storm sewers, had equipment serviced, and prepared for all eventualities. When power went down at the municipal building and the generator failed, they quickly made arrangements to provide alternative power and arranged for parts to repair the generator. Even before the work crews from JCP&L showed up to begin opening roads and clearing blockages, the DPW was out clearing trees where wires weren't entangled in the downed trees.

With the aid of all these other agencies, the First Aid Squad was able to respond to the calls it received. While Isaias put additional strain on both its response times and ability to respond, the First Aid Squad timely responded to the 9 calls it received during and after the storm. We thank and praise our sister agencies during a storm that tested all of Harding resources. We also wish to thank the Chatham and Madison First Aid Squad who provided mutual aid assistance for those sections of the Township we could not service immediately after the storm.

While there will be, as there has been in the past, complaints about the restoration of power, residents should be thankful that their emergency services continued to operate well during this emergency. The direction of the Township's administrator, Bob Falzarano, the Fire Department's Chief, Peter Finkle, the Police Chief, Erik Heller, the DPW's Tracy Toribio, and the First Aid Squad's Lotte Newlin are responsible for the way these agencies responded. If you see them please thank them.

GREEN VILLAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Community Shred Fundraiser

Sunday, September 20, 2020 at noon until 3:00 pm

Hosted by the Green Village Fire Department Auxiliary

On Sunday, September 20, the Auxiliary of the Green Village Fire Department is hosting a community shred from noon until 3:00 pm. All are welcome to bring their personal and business documents for shredding. Sensitive information will be destroyed on-site by a truck-mounted shredder provided by Absolute Shredding, LLC of Hackettstown. Not only will this fund-raiser protect privacy and help avoid identity theft, it will also help to protect the environment as all the shredded paper will be recycled into other paper products.

The cost will be \$5 per file box/brown paper grocery bag. Larger containers will be priced accordingly. No newspapers, magazines, books or binders please. All proceeds from this fund-raiser will benefit the Auxiliary for fire scene relief, training and community outreach. This event will take place at the Green Village Fire House, located at 529 Green Village Road in Green Village 07935 and will be held rain or shine.

HARDING TOWNSHIP RECREATION ASSOCIATION

Soccer Registration is Open!

Calling all HTRA Soccer players for Pre-K, 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades! Players will learn skills through soccer drills and end each session with a practice 'game' to reinforce skills learned. Soccer will start on September 12 and end on October 31. We plan for 8 weeks with a potential 9th Saturday for makeup days.

Soccer clinics will be outside at Harding Township School. Regardless of cancellations due to weather, we can only do 1 makeup session. Coaching is provided by an adult professional along with player assistants.

To register and for additional Covid-19 guidelines, please see our website, www.HTRA.info

Field Hockey Registration is Open!

HTRA Field Hockey clinics for grades 3 through 8 will begin Saturday, September 12 and run through November 7 (no clinic on Sept. 19). All clinics will be outside at Harding Township School. Regardless of cancellations due to weather, we can only do 1 makeup session on Nov 14.

To register and for additional Covid-19 guidelines, please see our website, www.HTRA.info

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Whether you are starting the school year with a laptop or backpack, we would like to offer you a blessing on **Sunday September 6th at 10 am**. Students of any age, parents, teachers, and friends are all welcome! Children are invited to bring their backpacks or devices; parents could bring work bags or diaper bags. You are also invited to bring a donation of school supplies for one of our charities, *Children on the Green*, such as: crayons, glue sticks, markers, and hand sanitizer. PLEASE NOTE: Participants will remain in their cars for the entire event. Any donations will be collected by volunteers from car trunks.

The *Sunday Speaker Series* will launch its new season on **September 13** with a presentation by Jennifer Santori, *Self-Care: In Times of Parenting and Beyond*, at 11:15 in Fellowship Hall. Jennifer tells her transformative story of successful corporate leader turned novice mother of two, turned striving entrepreneur working to build community, change parenting paradigms, and redefine self-care for family members. She is founder of the local HomeBase, offering parent support, education and wellness programs to help create a nurturing, safe, and love-filled home. If it proves impossible to host this program in person, arrangements will be made to film it for online viewing. Watch for the full season brochure coming in the mail.

KEMMERER LIBRARY

New Operating Hours: Monday to Friday 10am - 2pm
 Thursday extended hours to 5pm
 Saturday 10am - 12pm

We are open for curbside pickup of items requested via the online MAIN catalog (on our website www.hardinglibrary.org), by phone (973 267 2665) or by email to desk@hardinglibrary.org. We are also happy to make selections for you! All materials are quarantined and sanitized in between borrowers.

Browsing in the library is also available 'by appointment'. Please call to let us know when you would like to come and be aware that certain safety measures must be adhered to.

To keep informed about what's new on our shelves and program announcements, please ask to have your name added to our email list (by request to desk@hardinglibrary.org).

We request that all overdue library materials be returned to our book drop, at the front of the library building, as soon as possible. Fines will come back into effect on September 8.

As we have since our temporary shutdown, the **library continues to offer virtual services including:**

eLibrary materials - eBooks, eAudiobooks and eMagazines
Zoom Programs for children and adults
Zoom Meeting Space for Harding-based organizations

eLibraries

If you have a library card, the Library offers eBooks and eAudiobooks for borrowing via Libby (our exclusive collection for Harding cardholders) and Cloud (shared with other Morris County libraries). These books can be downloaded for reading on your tablet, iPad, phone, computer or Kindle Fire. Libby eBooks can also be downloaded to regular Kindles. We continue to significantly expand our Libby collection.

Visit www.hardinglibrary.org and click E-LIBRARY to get started!

If your library card is misplaced, or has expired, you've forgotten your PIN, or are not sure how to download digital content, please email desk@hardinglibrary.org and we will assist you. We can also offer instruction by phone or videoconference if you need it.

Library Programs

Virtual library programs use Zoom with easy to use links on our website (www.hardinglibrary.org). Please also see the website for updates as programs may become available in-person.

Outdoor Gentle Yoga, Mondays (weather permitting) at 10 am

Gentle yoga with MJ on the Library lawn. Please bring your own mat and block. You will be asked to sign a new waiver before participating and, please, keep your distance.

Zoom Storytime, Tuesdays at 10:15 am, from September 1

Stories and songs for pre-schoolers and their caregivers.

We are looking for a volunteer to help with Toddler Storytime! Please email alison.maxwell@hardinglibrary.org if interested.

Zoom Adult Book Group, Tuesdays, September 8 and 22, 1:30 pm

Our lively book club is now meeting every 2 weeks. Join us on September 8 to discuss 'The Vanishing Half' by Brit Bennett. All are welcome! Copies of selected titles are available on the eLibrary and on pre-loaded library Kindles by request to

desk@hardinglibrary.org. For September 22 title, please see our website.

Virtual Meeting Space

If you have a Harding club or resident group that needs a virtual meeting space, the Library is offering use of a Zoom account. Please email desk@hardinglibrary.org.

HARDING TOWNSHIP CIVIC ASSOCIATION:

Thumbnail & Website News and Announcements

If you have a submission for the **October 2020 Thumbnail** please email to: htca@mail.com by **Friday, September 18th, 2020**. MS Word is the preferred format, thank you!

Current and past issues of the Thumbnail, as well as the Directory are available on our Website: www.HardingCivic.org. Send questions or comments about *Thumbnail* to editor to: HTCA@mail.com or PO Box 72 New Vernon, NJ 07976

HARDING TOWNSHIP RECYCLING

During the ongoing State of Emergency declared by Governor Murphy, operations at the DPW have curtailed.

Hours of Operation:

Mondays & Wednesdays: 7 am - Noon

From 7am to 8am is senior (residents 60+) recycling only. Full assistance will be provided to seniors during this period.

From 8 am until noon, recycling for all residents. No assistance will be provided during these hours.

Social distancing must be observed at all times.

Commingled Recyclables: Consists of all aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles, all plastic bottles and containers with the Recycling symbol, and #1, 2, 4, 5 & 7. Try to crush plastic bottle to conserve space. Please remember no plastic or paper bags.

Commingled Mixed Fiber: 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), Propane tanks (BBQ size only) and fluorescent bulbs (tube and compact).

E-Waste items accepted: Computers, monitors, laptops and televisions cannot be put into household trash. However, all E-waste items including printers, copiers, fax machines and all computer peripherals can be brought to the Harding DPW recycling center at the regular hours of operation.

Recycling Questions: Please contact Tracy Toribio at Harding Department: 973 267 2448, Mon- Fri 8:30 am to 3 pm.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Environmental Commission
Seniors: Christ the King Church
Planning Board
Historical Preservation Committee
Board of Health
Board of Education
Board of Adjustment
Township Committee Executive
Township Committee Public
Harding Open Space
Harding TWP Civic Association

Meetings as noted

1st Wednesday
2nd & 4th Thursday
4th Monday
1st Thursday
2nd Thursday
1st & 3rd Monday
3rd Thursday
2nd Monday
2nd Monday
2nd Wednesday
2nd Tuesday

Time

7:30 PM
11:00AM
7:30 PM
7:30 PM
7:30 PM
7:00 PM
7:30 PM
7:30 PM
7:30 PM
7:30 PM
7:30 PM

DATED MATERIAL

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