

CROSS ROADS

NEWS FROM THE VALLEY OF "THE PONDS"

SPONSORED BY THE BOROUGH OF OAKLAND & THE OAKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Mayor's Message
- School Safety Tips
- New Rec. Website
- Halloween Parade
- **Spotlight**—Boy Scouts
- Voter Registration
- Get Your Flu Shot

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FALL MAYOR'S MESSAGE

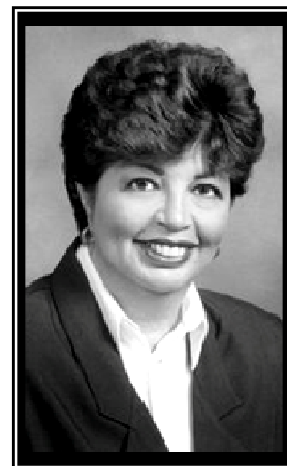
For the past 9 months since taking office as Mayor of Oakland, I am happy to report that all around town the spirit of Oakland is returning. There is a resurgence of volunteerism. People are again excited about working together on new and creative projects.

As promised, I am happy to report that we realized a zero percent municipal tax increase this year. I ran for election as a fiscal conservative and I remain true to my word. The Borough of Oakland sat with several trust funds—money to be held for a rainy day. This year, as your Mayor, I argued that

for many of us, it is pouring outside so it is time to use that money now to avoid a tax increase. I repeatedly stated at public meetings that our local government is not a bank.

Another positive change for our town is our new recycling procedures. Isn't it terrific to be able to recycle everything, every week? For the first time, Oakland residents can mix comingled recyclables (metal, plastic, glass) with paper for weekly pickup.

Very soon you will be able to pass by the Van Allen House and notice physical



Oakland Mayor
Linda H. Schwager
Continued on Page 7

improvements. The Borough signed a lease with the Ramapough Conservancy who will manage the property and make improvements without taxpayers dipping into their pocket-books. As a charitable



**ARE YOU REGISTERED TO
VOTE?**

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE

The last day to register to vote for the General Election will be Tuesday October 16, 2012. The Borough Clerk's office will be open that day from 8:30 am to 9:00 pm. The General Election will take place on Tuesday November 6, 2012. Polls will be open from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm.

NEW FRIENDS OF THE OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Supporting special programs and services for the library, the Friends group offers exciting activities for Oakland.

Museum Passes – Take the family for a special outing courtesy of the Library's Friends – from dinosaurs to the space shuttle Enterprise at the American Museum of Natural History and the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum.



THE OAKLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Oakland Police Department wants to remind drivers that it is very important to obey the posted speed limit and pay close attention to their surroundings at all times.

Within a school zone, it is especially important to be alert, drive carefully, and follow the directions of the crossing guards.

When approaching an intersection where a crossing guard is in the crosswalk with a Stop Sign raised, motorists may not cross or turn into that crosswalk until the crossing guard has completely left the crosswalk.



Safety Tips for Parents, Motorists, and Children

- You should expect delays near schools. Know your route, start early, and drive the posted speed limit.
- Motorists not involved in dropping off or picking up students should consider adjusting their route or schedule in order to avoid arrival and dismissal traffic in front of schools.
- Park only in lawful areas. Parking within 25 feet of a crosswalk is against the law and can obstruct visibility for both pedestrians and motorists.
- Unload school children onto the sidewalk or right side of the vehicle. Unloading school children into a traffic lane could put a child in harms way.
- Instruct children to remain alert and look left, right, and then left again before crossing the street. All pedestrians should not use cell phones to talk or text, nor wear headphones when crossing.

New Jersey Move Over Law



"Motorists approaching stationary flashing lights, whether an ambulance, police, fire or tow truck, must heed the warning and safely move over to another lane, or slow down below the posted speed limit," "Remember, emergency responders are there to help. Give them the space they need, so they can work safely." **If you make the move, others will follow.**

New Jersey Cell Phone Law

New Jersey law makes using a hand-held communications device a primary offense. Authorities will issue a **\$100 fine** to any driver caught violating this law, although no points will be issued to the license. Although it is discouraged, drivers may use a hands-free device if it does not interfere with standard safety equipment. "Use" of a wireless phone and any other hand-held communication device includes, but is not limited to, **talking or listening** to another person, **texting**, or **sending and receiving electronic messages**.



NEWS FROM THE OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Children: Fall story times start in October. Programs include the Tots Library Club (infant to 2 years) and story times for 2 & 3 year olds and 4 & 5 year olds. Monthly music for preschoolers starts in October and Tail Wagging Stories gives older kids a chance to practice reading to a special audience – a therapy dog!

Teens: The summer volunteer program that gives teens an opportunity to develop service experience while having fun continues through the school year.

Sunday Afternoon Concerts start October 28th – **Jazz Meets Broadway** with Ray Marchica on drums, Don Rebic on piano, Jeff Ganz on guitar, and Nina Hennessey vocals.



Thursday Programs for Adults

- Deer-Proof Your Trees & Shrubs – October 11 (7 pm)
- College Admissions 101 – November TBD
- Tech Gadget Seminar – December 6 (7 pm)
- Business Intelligence, Competitive Information for Small Businesses – November 8 (7 pm)
- Networking for Job Seekers – every Thursday morning at 10:30 am with Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

Computer Classes: Introductory computer classes start mid-October.

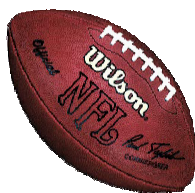
Please call the Library for details on time and locations at 201-337-3742 x200.

RECREATION COMMISSION WELCOMES AUTUMN!

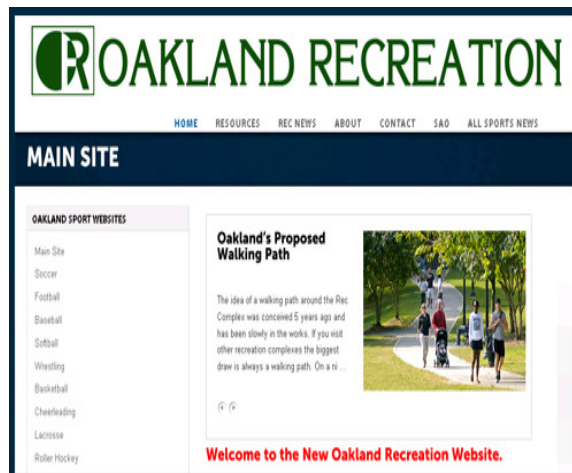
The sounds of buses, school bells and laughter can only mean that Oakland's children have returned to school; not to be out done are the sounds coming from the recreation fields which get louder in September with the return of Oakland's fall sports. Soccer, Football and Cheerleading all began their sports seasons on the weekend of September 7th.

The soccer program is proud to announce they have 50 teams and 700 children in their program, which runs from kindergarten through high school. Supporting the program are over 100 volunteers! Look for a symbol of unity during the month of October while the travel teams will be wearing pink socks in honor of breast cancer awareness.

The football and cheerleading programs sport 5 full teams, which run from 2nd grade through 8th grade. The football program also fields a fun flag football program for our younger players. There are a couple of BIG football and cheerleading annual events coming up. First, a fundraiser raffle will begin in September and second, will be the annual beefsteak which will be held at the Knights of Columbus on November 3rd. Through the support of these fundraising efforts ALL football and cheerleading equipment has been upgraded over the past 2 years. Thank you for your support!



Winter sports sign-ups will begin very soon. Please visit our new and improved website at www.OaklandRec.org. All sign-up information, "three easy steps to become a coach", field closing and much, much more can be found on the website. See you at the field!



WHAT TO DO AROUND OAKLAND

NEWS FROM THE OAKLAND PUBLIC EVENTS COMMITTEE



The Public Events Committee has some exciting activities and events planned for the fall and winter seasons. Mark your calendars and enjoy the festivities this committee has in store for you.

Oakland's First Annual Art in the Park, Saturday, October 6th (rain



Left - Tracy DiTolla, Right - Scott Scarpelli
and Bottom - Tom Shelton

date, Oct 13h); adjacent to the Farmer's market, from 10 AM – 1:00 PM

Art in Park is as much an art happening as it is an exhibit, open to painters, illustrators, photographers and sculptors. Some of our Oakland artists who will be exhibiting their work include: Tracy DiTolla, Scott Scarpelli, Tom Shelton, Dennis Moster, Jim DeLillo, Tim Geist and Ted Richards. Artists interested in showing or selling their work still have time to contact Tracy DiTolla at dittolalove@gmail.com for information. Art in the Park is sponsored by the Oakland Public Events Committee and the Oakland Farmers' Market. Come help us celebrate National Arts and Humanities month in Oakland during one of the most colorful months of the year.



Annual Halloween Parade, Saturday, October 27th Gathering at 10:00 AM in front of Valley Mid-

dle School and begin parading at 10:30 AM. All children 9 and under are welcome to participate.

We will end this traditional celebration with some craft activities and refreshments for the children. Costumes are preferred.



Annual Holiday Tree and Menorah Lighting, Sunday, December 2nd, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

This year, the Public Events Committee is expanding the traditional tree and Menorah lighting to include an indoor holiday show. Stay tuned for details as they are currently busy making preparations.



LOTS OF FUN AT THE SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB ICE CREAM SOCIAL

On August 9th, dozens enjoyed a sweet time during the ice cream social sponsored by the Senior Citizens Club. This annual event was held after the Senior Club's monthly meeting. The event was FREE for members! Look for notices posted at the Senior Center for the next ice cream social.



Pictured L-R: Leta Smolen, Peg Schad, Nancy Dugan, Councilman Pat Pignatelli, Liaison to the Oakland Senior Center, Eleanor McWilliams, Josefina Berkowicz and Alice Smith.



BOROUGH OF OAKLAND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

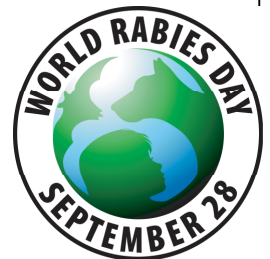
The Oakland Senior Flu Shot Program is being held Thursday, 11/1, from 1 PM to 3 PM, at the Oakland Senior Center, 20 Lawlor Drive. Flu season is just around the corner and senior citizens are encouraged to get their flu shots to ensure they're protected. Shots are free for residents with traditional Medicare Part B and no HMO coverage. Residents with Medicare Part B and supplemental HMO coverage will be charged \$27.00 and are encouraged to see their private physician for their free flu shot. Pneumonia shots are available to those eligible. Pre-registration is required. Call The Valley Hospital Dept. of Community Health at 201-291-6090.

**"BE A
RESPONSIBLE
PET OWNER!"**

BE A RESPONSIBLE PET OWNER. *"My pet has never bitten anyone before.", "My dog was attacked.", "It was an accident."* and *"My pet accidentally escaped."* are statements commonly heard by Oakland's health inspector when investigating an average of 45 animal bites/scratches that occur each year in town. Rabies is endemic in our area, and vaccinating your pet for rabies protects not only your pet but also everyone else with whom your pet may come in contact, indoors and outdoors. State law requires all cats and dogs to have a current rabies vaccination and Dog/Cat License. Licenses will expire on 12/31.

To obtain a 2013 Cat/Dog License, your pet's rabies vaccination must be current through 11/1/2013.

The Oakland Free Rabies Clinic is being held on Sat., 11/3, at the Oakland Recreation Storage Building, 24 Lawlor Drive. Cats will be vaccinated from 1 PM to 2 PM and dogs from 2 PM to 3 PM. *Bring written proof of pet's previous vaccination or a one-year vaccination will be administered. Cats must be in carriers and dogs on leashes.* (For additional free clinics, go to www.tycoanimalcontrol.com and click on "Upcoming Events".) For more information, call the Oakland Health Dept. at 201-337-9254.



OAKLAND BUILDING DEPARTMENT



The Building Department reminds residents that permits are required for home improvements. If you want to know if a permit is needed please contact us for additional information. The Building Department also reminds residents that home improvement contractors must be registered with the State. If your contractor does not have a registration or does not include his registration number on your contract, ask for one. This is for your own protection.

The Fire Prevention Bureau wants everyone to have a safe and fire free holiday season. Remember that when we change the clocks, its time to change the smoke detector batteries. If you are putting your grille away for the winter, please do not store your propane tank near flammables or furnaces. Keep propane tanks covered and outdoors if possible. Keep you house numbers on your house and visible from the roadway, emergency personnel need these numbers for emergency identification.

Oakland Building Department 201-337-1644 (Mon-Fri 8:00am to 4:00pm)
Oakland Fire Prevention 201-337-9616



SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA IN OAKLAND

For over a century, the Boy Scouts of America has helped build the future leaders of this country by combining educational activities and lifelong values with fun. The BSA believes that helping youth is a key to building a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society.

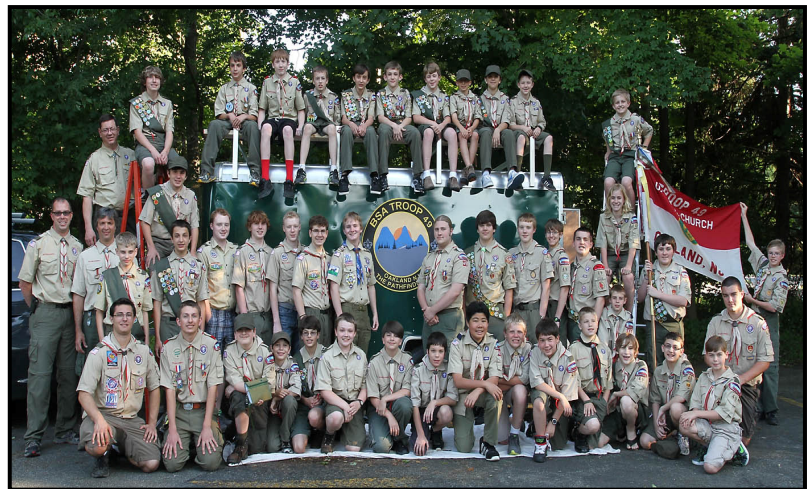
Oakland has three Cub Scout packs for boys from the 1st grade to 11 years of age; Pack 49 chartered by Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Pack 307 chartered by the Oakland Elks and Pack 369 chartered by Messiah Lutheran Church. The two Boy Scout troops in Oakland are for boys ages 11 to 18; Troop 49 chartered by OLPH and Troop 369 chartered by Messiah Lutheran Church.

The Cub Scouts learn about their community by visiting businesses and municipal buildings. They serve their community in a number of ways including the annual Scouting for Food where they collect food for the Center for Food Action. Cubs

learn about science, art, and sports along with many other topics. Outdoor activities such as day hikes and overnight camping trips are also a part of the Cub Scout program.

Boy Scouts offers the unique opportunity for Scouts to lead Scouts in challenging outdoor experiences. They have learned how to be prepared for life and to work as a team. Going on 50 mile Adirondack canoe treks for five days each summer is something that scares parents yet builds self-esteem and confidence in the Scouts. Hiking the

historic trails of Gettysburg, Valley Forge, and Boston builds a deep understanding of American history. Scouts also give back to the community performing Eagle Scout service projects around town maintaining trails and park space, repairing church rooms, or work at the Van Allen house. The Scouts and their families appreciate the support of the chartered organizations and the community.



REMEMBER TO RECYCLE YOUR MATERIAL TOGETHER WITH SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING

Due to a recent change in the Borough's garbage and recycling contract, recycling is easier than ever. You can now put all curbside recyclable materials unsorted in the same recycling barrel for pickup. Cans, bottles and plastic are recycled together with all paper and cardboard. Materials will continue to be picked up every Wednesday.

Recycling properly greatly reduces your volume of trash. It helps the environment and helps save money as well. For every ton of material that is recycled, instead of being sent to the land-fill, the Borough receives \$35.00 and avoids paying \$69.45 per ton in garbage disposal fees – a difference of \$104.45. Every barrel counts.

If you are in need of a new recycling barrel, the D.P.W. sells a 32 gallon barrel with lid for \$15.00. If you have any questions regarding the recycling program please call 201-405-7732 or send an e-mail to recycle@oakland-nj.org.



MAYOR'S MESSAGE—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

non-profit organization, Ramapough Conservancy will be able to apply for grants and raise funds as needed. Congratulations to Ramapough Conservancy and Judith Sullivan as the recipient of the Brotherton Foundation Grant for exterior repairs. What a great beginning!

Another exciting project is the property formerly known as Pleasureland. Thank you to Mike Guadagnino, recreation commission chairman, for initiating this project with the help of the environmental commission and shade tree commission. Volunteerism is at its best with everyone working together for a common cause.

It is a go! Under my leadership, the Borough signed the contract to purchase 277 Ramapo Valley Road for senior housing. The location is ideal. After many years of planning, senior housing is set to become a reality.

The river bank erosion repair and prevention project is now underway. We are waiting for all the residents involved to sign releases so we can enter their property as necessary.

We are diligently trying to help the victims of flooding. I hear the frustration of the residents affected by flood waters and I do understand your frustration. However, as a government entity we have certain

legal procedures which must be followed. I pledge to the affected residents that you are not forgotten.

How can I write a mayor's message without writing about my baby—the "Oakland Farmer's Market." Kudos to Jane Graham and the Oakland Farmer's Market Committee for creating and maintaining a successful inaugural year. The committee was able to find a variety of vendors, schedule events and star attractions. For example, one week there was a young woman who is a recognized children's book author and illustrator who grew up here and is a product of the Oakland schools. Produce Pete from NBC television appeared and participated in a book signing. On October 6, 2012, in conjunction with the Public Events Committee we have Oakland's 1st Annual Art in the Park on the lawns adjacent to the Farmer's Market.

To summarize where we are, with permission I am proud to reprint an email recently received:

"Hi there, I just wanted to drop a note to say that my husband and I are seriously considering moving to Oakland from the Hudson Valley and that your Farmer's Market is a major selling point as we look at the northern NJ area. To us, a thriving farmer's market (not to mention all the art and yoga affiliated with it) is a sign of the kind of community we would be excited to join. I am even

more impressed now that I see on the website that this market is a brand new venture and clearly a labor of love for the organizers. Whether or not we ultimately end up in Oakland (there are so many moving parts in a decision like this), I just felt moved to reach out to say congratulations on creating this fabulous asset for the Oakland community. All my best, Erica S."

"The river bank erosion repair and prevention project is now underway."



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
DR. RICHARD G. HEFLICH

Dear Members of the Oakland Community:

Summer was an extremely busy season in the Oakland School District with summer school courses for students, curriculum committees, recruitment for vacant positions, and various buildings and grounds projects.

The 2011/2012 school year had barely concluded, when our numerous opportunities for our students to continue learning began. Many students who had just completed Kindergarten or Grade 1 had the opportunity to continue their learning of reading, writing, and math in our Summer *Threshold Program*. Our entering Kindergartners participated in the various safety education activities in the District's annual *Safetytown* Program. Elementary school students in need of language arts reinforcement attended a supplemental *Reading Program* that utilized the Orton Gillingham multisensory methodology. Our preschoolers continued their learning in *Preschool Summer School*; and, students in Grades 3 through 8 availed themselves to courses that further developed their interests and skills in the District's *Summer Enrichment Program*.



As students continued to learn, administrators diligently conducted interviews for available certificated positions. As a result of the recruitment process, the Board appointed new teachers to vacant positions and selected Mr. Desiderio as Principal and Ms. Christiano as Vice Principal of Valley Middle School. As August came to a close, the hiring process concluded and our schools opened completely staffed.

Simultaneously, District teachers worked hard to revise curriculum to meet the State's requirements of the new Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and in Mathematics. Additionally, New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards were recently revised for other content areas, and teachers addressed these changes with revised curricula.

With the implementation of the Common Core requirement this year, students in Grades 3 – 5 will study Mathematics utilizing new instructional materials from the Math-In-Focus program that emphasizes a *Singapore Math* methodology. District teachers in these grades participated in two days of training this summer to learn how to best use this teaching approach with students. This program introduction in Grades 3-5 will build upon its highly successful implementation in Grades K-2 last year.

Teachers began the complex process of incorporating the English Language Arts Common Core requirements in our curriculum. Not only will the changes affect how we teach Reading and English in the Oakland Schools, but it will also integrate the new standards into Social Studies, Science and other technical subjects. This revision process will continue well into the 2012/2013 school year.

This summer, our District revised our Technology curriculum and integrated new content requirements in this rapidly changing content area. With technological advances occurring with incredible rapidity, it is important that schools continue to prepare students for a work world that is so dependent upon technology tools. As part of the changes in this area, the District prepared for a new iPad initiative in our schools. With the funding awards of the schools' PTOs and the Board of Education, iPads will be a learning tool this year. Project leaders have been selected for this new initiative. These teacher volunteers have committed to deepening their knowledge base of how the iPad can be used effectively to enhance student learning. They, in turn, will serve their colleagues as "turnkey trainers" and will share their knowledge by demonstrating best practices.

In the new school year, our school libraries will enter the modern era as our schools more fully utilize the new *Destiny* library management system. This technological tool will now permit students "to browse" library collections from remote locations. Hence, a student will soon be able to review library books at home, using a computer, and reserve a book that they choose to read. Additionally, students will be able to write reviews of their reading selections and post them on *Destiny* for others to consider. This creative approach to book selection promises to engage students more fully in reading and further develop their skills. An additional benefit of this library management system will be for our teachers to be able to track the reading histories of students and identify those students who need to read more.

As all of these program changes were being planned, our buildings and grounds teams were preparing our schools for the Opening and addressing important facilities' needs, which are detailed in one of our *Crossroads* articles. Of particular note, however, was the renovation of Business Office space and its conversion to a classroom. Because of the ever-expanding enrollment at Valley Middle School, a serious classroom shortage exists. As school opened, 662 middle schoolers were in attendance, and additional classrooms are sorely needed to properly educate these students. Even with this one additional classroom that was recaptured for instructional purposes, we have needed to schedule classes in the school's Library and in the Band Room. The Board continues to research options to address this school overcrowding issue.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS—CONTINUED

At a time of change and challenge in education, our District is well-prepared for our mission of educating students for the 21st century, and, in Oakland, we continue to be committed to being *a learning community committed to excellence*. As we begin a new school year, we thank you – our residents – for your support of our schools and for your help in encouraging our students to become the best that they can be.



Sincerely,
Dr. Richard G. Heflich
Superintendent of Schools



(Left to Right): Mr. Steven Cohen, Ms. Brittany Tamaro, Ms. Eileen Aquino, Ms. Brittany Zielinski, Mr. Stephen Bontempo, Ms. Christie Choman, Ms. Mallory Griffith, Ms. Alexandra Parlamas, Ms. Casey Eichler, Ms. Melissa Ballaera, Ms. Ashley Holten, Ms. Carolyn George, Ms. Lauren Russo, Mr. Matthew Martyniuk, and Ms. Stacy Kasper (Not Pictured: Mr. Gregory Hansen)

O A K L A N D A H I G H P E R F O R M I N G S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

Every three years, the State's Department of Education evaluates public school districts. The Oakland School District's performance review occurred in June, and this summer the State issued its findings. Our District has been designated as "high performing."

The Quality Single Accountability Continuum, or more simply known as QSAC, assesses five areas of district performance; instruction and program, fiscal management, operations, personnel, and governance. County office personnel verify a district's self assessment through a review of documents and an on site visit. District placement scores in these areas were rated as follows with 100% being the highest rating:

• Instruction and Program	-	96%
• Fiscal Management	-	100%
• Governance	-	100%
• Operations	-	100%
• Personnel	-	100%

As a result, on September 5, 2012, the State Board of Education certified the Oakland School District "for a period of three years as providing a thorough and efficient education, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-14."

The Oakland Board of Education, administration and staff are very proud of these results, and we are very grateful for the support for excellent education that is provided by the Oakland community.

KEEPING OUR SCHOOLS SAFE & HEALTHY



During the summer, Buildings and Grounds staff, together with the skills and assistance of private contractors, undertook several projects that will enhance safety in our schools.

At Dogwood Hill School, additional drainage capacity has been created in order to alleviate flooding issues within the school when excess rainwater entered the school and saturated classrooms on the first floor. After the heavy September rains, the project was deemed a success when there was no seepage into the school.

“As usual, their work (The Custodial Staff) made our schools “sparkle” for the students’ entry.”

Additionally, at Dogwood Hill School, years of earth settlement caused the front sidewalks to sink, creating a safety hazard for pedestrians. This summer, the sidewalks were replaced and expanded, thus providing more space for students to wait during parent “pick-up.”

The classrooms and common spaces of Dogwood Hill now have window blinds that are safe and much lighter than the deteriorating, heavy metal blinds that were installed in 1965 and were a safety hazard.

At Valley Middle School, new lighting was installed in the front parking lot, thus illuminating areas of the parking lot furthest from the school. Additionally, lighting was installed on the access road leading into the school. Both enhancements protect both pedestrians and drivers.

Also, at Valley Middle School, a classroom was recaptured from office space, and much-needed

instructional space for students was created.

Another Valley Middle School project that is still underway is the renovation of the gymnasium locker rooms, together with the replacement of the 1970 lockers. New ceiling and floor tiles, as well as additional lighting, have further updated the locker areas.

In addition to these projects, the custodial staff conscientiously prepared the schools for the opening with a “deep cleaning,” necessary painting, and general maintenance. As usual, their work made our schools “sparkle” for the students’ entry.

In the waning days of summer, annual boiler inspections revealed the necessity of replacing a Dogwood Hill School boiler that is original to the school. This time sensitive project will be undertaken this fall, and the Board is currently seeking contractors to complete this work.

SCHOOL NUTRITION

School children tend to mirror the health status of the American public. Our School Nurses are dedicated to ensuring that each child is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. Our Nurses aim to serve as role models in order to improve the state of our health and the quality of life. If this can be achieved, students will benefit and as a nation, all will benefit.

The Oakland Board of Education is committed to:

- Providing students with healthy and nutritious foods;
- Encouraging the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, low fat milk and whole grains;
- Supporting healthy eating through nutrition education;
- Encouraging students to select and consume all components of the school meal;
- Providing students with the opportunity to engage in daily physical activity.

As a result of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, many changes will be taking place in our cafeterias. It will be the first time in 30 years that real reforms to the school lunch program will take place. Improving good nutrition will be our goal. The School Nurses look forward to sharing these changes with your family throughout this year.



A POWERFUL TOOL

As everyone knows, one of the most powerful communication tools that society possesses is that of language. Language gives human beings a sense of belonging to a specific culture, community or group. It allows for social interaction and provides for one of the most important ways in which to communicate with others.

Within a special needs population, language is the one tool that has often suffered delays. These delays may be due to the physical ability to produce speech that involves coordinating movements of the teeth, tongue, lips and palate to form sounds and words.

They may also be due to hearing impairments. Sometimes damage to the language areas of the brain can cause problems in developing language thus preventing the ability to plan and process speech. Finally, the ability to interact with others socially aids in speech development. When a child interacts with others he/she is able to learn new words, phrases and meanings. However, without social interaction, some children are unable to learn social cues and then experience language deficits.

Over the past two years, the Oakland Public Schools have been fortunate to acquire iPads that are utilized in our Language and/or Learning Disabilities classes. Those who experience language delays are being assisted by applications that can reinforce, review and motivate the most reluctant child. Through a variety of applications, students are now able to make their voices heard. As some students follow Daisy the Dinosaur who dances across the screen while they identify and repeat the vocabulary necessary to read a short story other students are able to listen to a pop-up text about alligators while manipulating language to form sentences. In addition, students are able to create their own sentences with the touch of a finger using the Sentence Maker application. The introduction of iPads has and will continue to open many doors to our language delayed students.

Another recent acquisition by the District is the *Destiny* Library Manager. This innovative software can provide not only a means of locating books across our school libraries, but it will also allow students to reserve a book, post a review, and build their knowledge of language. Research has shown that children who read not only gain in knowledge but build their vocabulary and increase their chances for future success. Thus, *Destiny* can give students another means in which to practice their skills.



With the existence of iPads and *Destiny*, the power of language for all students will not only be improved, but will provide the positive self-esteem that accompanies the knowledge gained from language. To that end, if students are enabled to become competent, independent thinkers and communicators then the ultimate goal of our District has been accomplished.

***"the power of language for
all studentswill provide
positive self-esteem !"***

HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSIONS

The Oakland School District has adopted a new policy concerning the Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and other Head Injuries.

Parents of all students in the Oakland Public Schools have received a copy of the Board Policy that contains very specific guidelines that our Nurses will be following.

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head or body. In order to ensure the safety of student-athletes, it is imperative that athletes, coaches, and parents/guardians are educated about the nature and treatment of sports-related concussions and head injuries. Allowing a student-athlete to return to play before recovering from a concussion increases the chance of a more serious brain injury that can result in severe disability and/or death.

Educating, parents, teachers, coaches and students is very important; therefore, the State is requiring coaches and nurses to participate in concussion training.



O U R N E W V M S L E A D E R S H I P T E A M :
P R I N C I P A L D E S I D E R I O &
V I C E P R I N C I P A L C H R I S T I A N O

In August, the Oakland Board of Education appointed Mr. Gregg J. Desiderio as Valley Middle School's new Principal. Mr. Desiderio has been Vice Principal at Valley Middle School since February, 2008, at which time he returned to the Oakland School District after having served as Assistant Principal at Indian Hills High School. Mr. Desiderio began his career as a teacher at Valley Middle School in 1994. In 1999, he was appointed to the position of School Counselor, in which he served Oakland's middle school students until he went to Indian Hills in 2005. In total, Mr. Desiderio has served the students of Oakland for 18 years, and, currently is a resident of the Borough.



(Left to Right) Valley Middle School Vice Principal Ms. Jacqueline Micari-Christiano and Valley Middle School Principal Mr. Gregg J. Desiderio outside of school.

Mr. Desiderio earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Susquehanna University. He also has earned two graduate degrees: a Master of Arts degree from Montclair State University in School Counseling, Human Services, and Guidance, and a Master of Arts degree, also from Montclair, in School Administration and Supervision. He holds New Jersey Department of Education certifications as Principal, Supervisor, Student Personnel Services, and Elementary School Teacher.

Mr. Desiderio has a deep understanding of the nature and needs of the middle school child, as well as a commitment to help each child be successful. Additionally, he has a deep understanding of how a middle school should be structured to meet the needs of its students. Further, with his knowledge of and experience at Indian Hills High School, Mr. Desiderio and the staff will be able to ease the transition of our students into the regional high schools.

Also, in August, the Oakland Board of Education appointed Ms. Jacqueline Micari-Christiano to the position of Vice Principal at Valley Middle School. Ms. Christiano joins the Oakland School District after having served as a seventh grade science teacher and as a Literacy Coach in the Paterson School District. Previous experiences, also, include Assistant Principalships at Long Valley Middle School and Haskell Elementary School.

Ms. Christiano earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Johnson & Wales University, her teaching certification from Ramapo College, and a Master of Arts degree in Administration and Supervision from Montclair State University. Ms. Christiano shares Mr. Desiderio's child-centered philosophy and understands well the importance of middle school education. She is eager to work with our middle school youngsters and become acquainted with the Valley Middle School community.

The Board of Education is proud of its new leadership team at Valley Middle School, and knows that both Mr. Desiderio and Ms. Christiano will inspire our students to even greater achievement in their studies.



**Valley Middle School Staff
Participate in the 1st Annual
Challenger 5K Run on
September 16, 2012**

MANITO WELCOMES STUDENTS BACK TO SCHOOL

Manito School began its 51st year on Wednesday, September 5 by welcoming over 300 students and staff members back from summer break. With several new programs and initiatives being introduced, this is certain to be a busy and exciting year for teachers and students alike.

Programmatically, during the summer months, teachers participated in seminars to prepare for the implementation of the Math In Focus program in Grades 3-5. After experiencing a very successful year implementing the new Singapore math program in Grades K-2, our upper-elementary teachers are anticipating an equally successful and exciting transition to the new program. Committees of teachers and administrators also worked on the rigorous process of revising our language arts curriculum to reflect the new mandated Common Core State Standards. These rigorous new standards are designed to ensure that all children are prepared for college and career. While both may seem like a long way off, the foundation of such preparation begins at the elementary level. An essential element of the new standards is the emphasis on critical thinking and interdisciplinary connections. As such, both reading and writing will be emphasized in content areas such as science, social studies, and technology.



To assist students with the latter, Manito students and teachers will now have i-Pads available to them so that they can experience everything the educational app universe has to offer. Teacher training will take place throughout the year, and sign-up for classroom use of the i-Pads will be coordinated to ensure that our students have an equitable opportunity to use them. Many thanks to the Manito PTO and the Oakland Board of Education for funding this initiative.

Several new teachers will be joining the Manito family this year. Ms. Casey Eichler, Ms. Christie Choman, and Ms. Brittany Tamaro will be joining our special education team. While Ms. Eichler and Ms. Choman will join Ms. Brogan in the resource center, Ms. Tamaro will be instructing students in a combined Grade 1 and 2 classroom. In addition, the Manito family is pleased to welcome Ms. Cynthia Parr to the Grade 1 team, Ms. Brittany Zielinski to the Grade 3 team and Ms. Jean Marie Schindler to the Physical Education staff. Mr. Stephen Bontempo also joins the Manito family as a long term substitute, teaching mathematics in Grades 1-5. He will be replaced by Manito's new Math Specialist, Ms. Kim Salacki, when she returns from Family Leave in early February. Prior to her appointment as the new Math Specialist, Ms. Salacki taught mathematics at Valley Middle School for several years.

The summer was also a busy and productive one for our custodial staff. In addition to their routine maintenance, the Manito custodial staff worked diligently to update one of our primary classrooms with a variety of instructional amenities so that the students in a new special education class would feel at home on the first day of school.



MANITO SCHOOL AWARDED BCUA ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS CHALLENGE GRANT



Manito School just got a little greener. Last spring, the faculty advisors to the Manito Student Council, Ms. Jennifer Grella and Ms. Heather Meyers, applied for a \$1000 Environmental Awareness Challenge Grant from the Bergen County Utilities Authority (BCUA). This past June, Mr. Robert Laux, Executive Director of the BCUA, informed Manito School that its efforts were successful!

In his letter, Mr. Laux states that this important program is, "designed to benefit the environment of Bergen County while educating children of the importance of environmental stewardship. This program is funded entirely by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection grant funds specifically allocated for recycling and environmental education."

The Manito Student Council will use the funds to purchase new, child-friendly recycling containers for the cafeteria, in addition to a scale that will be used to help track the progress of our students' recycling efforts during the course of the year. By raising awareness about recycling and the importance of conservation, we hope that the weight of our daily trash will decrease, while the amount of our recycling increases. Members of the student body will serve as recycling helpers throughout the year, thereby helping to make this a truly student-centered initiative.



HEIGHTS—SUCH AN EXCITING TIME....

It's hard to believe that the September equinox is just around the corner and with it, the end of the long summer days. Our Oakland Schools opened beautifully beginning with a professional development day to welcome back our teachers on September 4.

Returning to Heights after child care leaves are Kelly Chapman, Resource Center teacher, Jean Marie Schindler, Physical Education teacher, and Emily Thompson, Grade 3 teacher. We were fortunate to have Marianne Fredericks continue in her position of Grade 2 teacher for the 2012 - 2013 school year. Thank you to our Board of Education who reinstated our Class Size Policy in our elementary schools.

New to Heights School is Ms. Mallory Griffith, a graduate of Penn State University. Ms. Griffith comes to Heights with a Masters Degree in Special Education and will be teaching in our Grade 4 Resource Center.

A tradition at Heights is to have our entire student body and staff come together around our flagpole, as a school community, to begin the school year. We raise our country's flag, salute it, and then have our Student Council representatives from the previous year read the School Creed and an excerpt from Dr. Seuss' "Oh, The Places You'll Go." Following that, Ms. Ciambra, Principal, gives a welcoming speech and the school year is officially open.



BUILDING AND GROUNDS WORK HAS DOGWOOD HILL SCHOOL READY FOR SEPTEMBER

The summer weeks were busy in the Oakland School District. Nowhere was this more evident than at Dogwood Hill School where a variety of projects were undertaken.

The sidewalk that wraps itself around the front of Dogwood Hill School and around the side of the multi-purpose room was replaced. The original sidewalk, from 1964, settled so that over time there was a lip along the curb that was a potential tripping hazard. The new sidewalk was completed in the last week of August. Not only does it remove the tripping possibility along the curb, it is also wider in the front of the school. This, also, is a safety factor for the children, creating more space for children to utilize as they are dismissed from school.



***New sidewalk being installed at
Dogwood Hill School in August.***

A second major project completed was a new drainage line outside of the classroom wing and down the back past the kitchen. During the past year, there have been a number of torrential downpours that were too heavy for the existing drains to handle. On a number of occasions, rainwater would leak into three classrooms along the ground floor. This new line eliminates that possibility, keeping the classrooms, and the children who use them, safe and dry through the rainiest days.

Another welcomed project was the replacement of blinds through Dogwood Hill School. Like the front sidewalk, the blinds were original to the school. Weighing close to eighty pounds per set, they were challenging for some teachers to raise. Coupled with that were a number of sets whose mechanisms would not keep them raised. Still others had dented and damaged blinds. Now the classrooms have new, safe units. Instead of two sets of blinds, each classroom has six small sets, giving the teachers greater choice of which to rise and much greater ease of use.

Along with the wonderful custodial work that went on through the summer, Dogwood Hill School was certainly ready, both inside and out, to greet the children on the first day of school.

HEIGHTS – SUCH AN EXCITING TIME . . . CONTINUED

We would like to thank our amazing custodial staff - Mr. Kesenheimer, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Alvarado, and Mr. Hans - for all of the hard work to make our school clean and inviting for our children and staff.

Thanks also to the teachers who spent countless hours preparing their classrooms so that they would look beautiful as the children entered the school on the very first day of the 2012 - 2013 school year. We are grateful to our secretaries, Ms. Medaska and Ms. Milich, for taking care of all those forms and orders that have to be put into place to ensure a smooth school opening.

Our PTO, under the leadership of our new PTO President, Ms. Trish Gannon, is busily preparing for our annual Tricky Tray, which will be held on November 14, at The Tides. This special event is always well attended and raises funds for the purpose of enriching the academic and cultural programs at Heights School. We appreciate the strong home/school partnership that exists at Heights and look forward to continuing this relationship.

We welcome the new challenges and opportunities for growth that each school year brings as we watch our children learn, have fun and grow. It's such an exciting time!

***"It's such an exciting
time!"***

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George Washington and his officers stayed at the Van Allen House on July 14, 1777, on their way north to join more of their forces near West Point, when the troops and supply wagons got bogged down on the muddy trail that was the Ramapo Valley Road of those days. The troops camped down along the Valley Road. Washington wrote two letters addressed from the Van Allen House, of which we have copies at the House. History has recorded that General Washington led his troops up and down the 'Valley Road' on other occasions also, and stayed at other Old Dutch Houses in Mahwah, Wayne and Ho-Ho-Kus as well as Morristown. In honor of General Washington's visit in Oakland (The Ponds), we make a point of celebrating his birthday here each year.

EXCERPT COURTESY OF THE OAKLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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