

CROSSROADS

NEWS FROM THE VALLEY OF "THE PONDS"

SPONSORED BY THE BOROUGH OF OAKLAND



SPRING 2015

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Mayor's Message



Oakland Mayor
Linda H. Schwager

We have a new *Crossroads* Editor, Peter Tuohy. I want to thank him for volunteering.

Thank you also to Peter Kikot, who was editor for the past three years providing Oakland residents with a creative and informative newsletter.

WOW! What an exciting year we had. The past year was an exceptional year for everyone in town working together. Our town received many awards and recognitions. This is not a surprise. Rather it is a confirmation of what we, the residents of Oakland, all know: Oakland is an outstanding town to live in and raise a family.

The Borough of Oakland was named as a best town in New Jersey to raise a young family. We were also recognized for our recreation program naming our girls' softball program as tops in the state. More recently, we were listed as one of the top 10 best small cities in New Jersey with a population between 10,000 and 60,000 people.

We are ranked the 6th best small town in New Jersey out of 127 municipalities. I represented Oakland in accepting two awards for our town. The first award was

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CODE ENFORCEMENT—*SPRING REMINDERS*

As spring arrives so does property cleanups from the winter. Property owners are reminded that yard debris should be bundled or put in containers for pickup. Check the Oakland website, <http://www.oakland-nj.org/>, for collection dates. Dumping on vacant land or public property is illegal and may subject you to fines and require you to remove illegally dumped yard debris.

Property owners who have generators are advised to periodically start the unit as per the manufacturer's schedule. Failure to do this may void your warranty and result in starting problems when the generator is needed. Regular maintenance is recommended and should be done by an authorized company representative. Please make sure

that leaves and vegetation are kept clear of the generator to operate properly.

Once again property owners are reminded that "contractors" who come to your door and tell you that work must be done on your property should be reported to the police. Contractors selling door to door are unusual and no one should tell you, "you have to do repairs". If you are advised that your chimney or other part of your house "has to be fixed now" please get another estimate first. Don't give anyone money first and make sure that the contractor can show you his or her home improvement contractor's license. As a homeowner, you always have the final decision on what is done to your property.

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OAKLAND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

The Environmental Commission (OEC) and Green Team have launched a new combined website: MyGreenOakland.org. This website has the most up to date information on local environmental events and news. Meeting minutes and photos are also included.

A FLOW Green Fair was held at Ramapo High School on March 7th. There were demonstrations, information, and vendor displays along with children activities.

The second annual FLOW Green Film Festival is planned for Thursdays in May. A different environmental film will be shown each Thursday evening followed by a panel discussion. The films will be shown at the Wyckoff Library beginning at 7pm.

The Oakland Police Department has a prescription drug drop off container in the lobby. Stop by anytime to dispose of unwanted pills and capsules. By doing this simple step you are preventing drugs from getting into our groundwater and preventing them from getting into the wrong hands. Prescrip-

tion painkiller overdose now kills more people in the U.S. than heroin and cocaine combined.

A "Know the Bear Facts" presentation is planned for 7:00pm, April 14th at the Senior Center. The NJ



Source: animalwonder.com

Division of Fish and Wildlife will provide historical and biological information on black bears and how to live safely with them. Tips will be given on how to protect your property and what to do if you encounter a bear.

The OEC and Green Team welcome your comments, ideas and involvement and can be reached at:

info@mygreenoakland.org or visit us at: www.mygreenoakland.org



Code Enforcement

(Continued from page 1)

Make sure that permits are obtained from the Building Department if needed, before any work starts. If you are unsure please contact the Building Department. at 201-337-1644.

Property owners that are in the floodplain or interested in flood information should check the Oakland website for coming events and meetings. Construction in the floodplain requires DEP and Planning Board approval prior to construction. Information on flood construction is available on the web at: FEMA at <http://www.fema.gov/>, or by contacting the Oakland Building Department.

Residents are reminded that current ordinances regulate the installation of air conditioners and sheds. There are new setback requirements and accessory structures are limited to fifteen feet in height in residential zones.

For further information please contact Michael Tabback, Oakland Zoning

Official, zoningofficer@oakland-nj.org.

A Continued Certificate of Occupancy (CCO) is required prior to the sale of a property or upon the change of tenant. This applies to residential and commercial properties.

Sellers should be aware that open permits and work on property without

obtaining permits will delay the CCO inspection process. Inspections for CCOs should be scheduled at least two weeks prior to closing date. If permits are open or work was done without permits, a CCO inspection cannot be scheduled and the two week period will not apply until permits are processed, paid for and inspected.

www.oaklandflood.com

Please visit the Oakland Flood Commission's website for updated information regarding:

- **CRS application**
- **Preliminary Flood Base Elevation Maps**
- **Links to River Restoration Project**
- **Meeting dates for Oakland Flood Commission along with up to date Meeting minutes**
- **National Flood Insurance programs and brochures**



NEW FRIENDS OF THE OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY—*CONCERT SERIES*

The New Friends of The Oakland Public Library (NFOL) has an exciting series of events planned for spring!

On **April 19th at 4:00 PM** the NFOL Sunday Afternoon Concert Series presents a classical music concert for Cello and Violin at the Presbyterian Church of NJ at 222 Ramapo Valley Road in Oakland. This venue is wheel chair accessible. The 2014/2015 Sunday Afternoon Concert series has been a great success. Thank you to everyone who has supported this concert series.

On **April 24, 25 and 26th**, the Annual Art Exhibit and Sale takes place at the Oakland Library. We will feature 35 artists, many from the Oakland area, and display more than 125 works. Paintings in acrylic, oil and watercolor, as well as drawings in pen and pencil will be shown.

Admission to the Art Exhibit is free. A portion of the proceeds from the art sale will be used to sponsor free cultural programs offered to the community by the Library such as the Sunday Afternoon Concert Series, Museum passes, Adult Programs and the Summer



Reading Clubs.

The NFOL is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. NFOL would also like to thank the generous donation from Jann Dobkin Rudd and Ronni Dobkin, in memory of their parents, Earl and Nina Dobkin. They have donated their parents' beloved grand piano.

Nina Dobkin taught on this piano in their home in Bayonne, NJ for over 60 years and it was donated in remem-

brance of her love of music and her students. Her beloved piano will continue to bring enjoyment to future generations.

The NFOL looks forward to the use of this exquisite piano in future concerts.

For details and information, contact the library at [201-337-3742](tel:201-337-3742) or check the Friends' webpage at:

www.oaklandnjlibrary.org/friends

OAKLAND LIBRARY—*NEW DIRECTOR, PETER HAVEL*

Spring is here and a host of programs and activities are blossoming at the Oakland Library. Topping the list of exciting happenings is the arrival of Mr. Peter Havel as the new Director of the Oakland Public Library. Peter, who started at the Library on March 16th, came to Oakland following a very successful career as Director of the Cedar Grove Library. He brings a wonderful array of talents to the position with exceptional library management skills, outstanding people skills, and creativity and enthusiasm which will serve to create the perfect climate for the continued growth and progress made in our library in recent years.



Through the generous support of the New Friends of the Oakland Library (NFOL), the Library offers programs that range from the very popular Museum passes, to Organizing, to Summer Shakespeare in the Park, to morning and evening monthly music programs for families with preschool children to our Summer Reading Clubs.

The NFOL will be presenting a Classical Concert on **April 19** and the Annual Art Show on **April 24, 25, and 26th**.

The Children's Department offers ongoing preschool Story Times for Oakland families throughout the year with 2 sessions for 3 & 4 year olds on Mondays, 2 to 3 year olds each Friday and The Tots Library Club for children birth to 24 months every Thursday. The times are listed on our website.

With spring comes the time for

Oakland Kindergartners to get their own Library Cards! Miss Debbie, the Children's librarian, will visit the schools in April to begin the process and finishes up with a field trip in May to the library. Just in time for the children to take part in the 2015 Summer Reading Club which begins on Monday, **June 22**. The theme this year is "Every Hero Has a Story!"

Tweens and Teens will have their own Summer Reading program and we won't forget the Grownups!

The Oakland Library website is www.oaklandnjlibrary.org. There you can find more information on upcoming programs, registration for programs and a sign up for our monthly newsletter.

The Oakland Library is now on Facebook!! www.facebook.com/oplnj. Like us for timely updates and program information.

Oakland Public Schools

Dogwood Hill, Heights, Manito Elementary Schools

Since returning from our holiday recess, there has been a "flurry" of activity at each of our elementary schools. On January 13th and 14th, each of our schools welcomed many new and familiar faces to a very well attended Kindergarten registration event.

Although it was postponed because of two snow days, elementary students finally celebrated the 100th day of school on February 12th. Students in Kindergarten through Grade 2 participated in a variety of interdisciplinary activities and completed special projects to acknowledge the importance of the ever-important hundreds place.

Each school also celebrated the season with beautiful winter concerts that featured our fourth and fifth grade students. Congratulations to our talented young vocalists and musicians for an outstanding concert in each of our three schools. We also thank our very talented and dedicated music department for the wonderful work they do to prepare the children for these events.

As a part of our character education and anti-bullying programs, students across the district studied the importance of fairness and trustworthiness during the months of January and February, respectively. Teacher implemented lessons across content areas to proactively reinforce the importance of each Pillar of Character. In addition, each school held PTO-sponsored assembly programs that afforded students another opportunity to learn character-based lessons in a unique and creative manner.

Students in the upper elementary grades have been taking advantage of using our new Chromebooks to complete interdisciplinary projects that foster 21st Century skills including collaboration, communication, critical thinking, innovation and media fluency. Most importantly, the children love using them, and many of them are having so much fun they forget that they're actually learning! Teachers also enjoy the new technology because it enables them to monitor student progress and provide instant constructive feedback.

Finally, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to our PTOs for their continued commitment to planning innovative programs for our students and for organizing outstanding fundraisers that ultimately benefit all of the children of Oakland.

IXL Recognizes Valley Middle School

Miss Holton's students have been participating in a three week IXL math contest in which students practiced for a total



top 10 IXLers: Ian Viegas, Jen Kunz, Lydia Park, Betsy Willis, Paige Desiderio, Kunal Trivedi, Anne-Marie Daly, Emma Capiello, Carlen Boggio and Julia Roessler.

of 264 hours on IXL (on their own time!) and mastered a total of 976 skills in sixth grade. They have recently been recognized for their achievements by IXL with a certificate honoring their practice for the entire school year of answering over 135,000 math problems! The classes will also be highlighted on the IXL website including the recognition of the following

Foldscopes at Valley Middle School

Dr. Manu Prakash of Stanford University contemplated an idea focused on democratizing science by developing scientific tools that can scale up to match problems in global health and science education. Foldscope, a new approach for mass manufacturing of optical microscopes that are printed-and-folded from a single flat sheet of paper, akin to Origami.

So what happens to the world if every single kid carries a microscope (Foldscope) in his or her pocket? Unexpected microscopic wonders exist everywhere, in the food you eat, the paper you write on, the trees in your backyard and in a puddle of water. His team wants to inspire everyone to appreciate science at a new level and strengthen a global scientific workforce.

Dr. Prakash and his team of 6 embarked on a worldwide Beta program to improve access to microscopes around the globe. In the Spring of 2014, Dr. Prakash made public an application to encourage teachers, doctors, scientists, industry workers to apply for the Beta Program. 10,000 participants were chosen from 130+ countries worldwide to help grow the idea of exploring the micro-cosmos. Mrs. Valdes a 7th grade science teacher from Valley Middle School was one of the participants chosen. Her students will have the opportunity to test out the Foldscopes, bring them home explore their environments and the secret existence of the microscopic world. As part of Dr. Prakash's vision an open book - "A Book of Curiosities" will be created to document the experiences.

For further information about Foldscope, please visit: <http://www.foldscope.com/>

For more information about Oakland Public Schools visit: <http://www.oaklandschoolsnj.org/>

OAKLAND FIRST AID SQUAD — *NEEDS YOUR HELP!*

AGING. It happens to everyone, and everything. Even to the Oakland First Aid Squad as we celebrated our 60th year of service to the town of Oakland. Over all these years, we have treated many residents and non-residents.

In 2013, The Oakland First Aid Squad answered 807 calls; in 2014 we answered 915 calls. Although our town has many young families, a lot of our residents are aging; our town is growing and our call volume continues to increase every year.

With all of this, our expenses have increase as well. Our building needs some major updates and repairs. One ambulance needs to be replaced this year and a second one within the next two years.

The squad is proud to have recently sworn in new officers for 2015: Chief Jeff Marcheso, Asst. Chief Shirley Hutsebaut, 1st Lt. Kevin McMackin, 2nd Lt. Joe Ventrella, 3rd Lt. Paul DeLorenzo, and Treasurer Joan Check. Collectively, these officers have a total of 110 years of experience and service among them as well as many more years of experience with our

member volunteers who donate their time to answer calls and maintain their training.

Over these years we have gained and lost many members. Over these years, some of our members have either retired or have passed on. Over the years, we have reached out to the community and continue to recruit new and young members.

Please consider helping us in some way. Our fund drive is coming up. When you receive our letter in the mail **PLEASE** make a donation, which will be put to good use. And if you have time to volunteer, whether to train as an EMT or to help with our building repairs, let us know!

Thank You for your support and have a safe 2015!



THE OAKLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Oakland Historical Society enjoys working to maintain records of the past—both people and events that have led Oakland to be the wonderful community it is today. Reconstruction is now going on for the Van Allen House and the Stream House at the intersection of Ramapo Valley Road and Franklin Ave. and we are looking forward to having open-houses and events again at the House. Plans are already in the works for a display of historic cars, trains and other modes of transportation when the reconstruction is completed at the end of May. This Transportation History Day will be part of a Northwest Bergen County Historical Coalition event that will include early American buildings in Wyckoff, Mahwah, Allendale, Ho-Ho-Kus, Ridgewood, Glen Rock, and Upper Saddle River. Please keep watch for further details on our website www.oaklandhistoricalsociety.org. Also a good source for local news and events is the Oakland, NJ Facebook page started by Debbie Sarcone, former Oakland resident and local news page www.theOaklandJournal.com edited by Caryn McCormick. These sites both serve to document the continuing history of Oakland, NJ. We invite everyone to join in the blogging, sharing of past memories and old photos that keep Oakland's history fresh. There are plenty of good times to remember. The 3rd Sunday in June is Fathers' Day and we hope to have a special event in honor of the day at the Van Allen House. Watch for signs in the yard of the House for further details.

Mayor's Message *(Continued from page 1)*

from Sustainable New Jersey. Oakland was recertified as a bronze certified community. Sustainable New Jersey (<http://www.sustainablejersey.com/>) is a certification program for municipalities in New Jersey that want to go green, save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term.

The bronze level of certification requires the establishment of a mandatory Green Team, implementation of 2 out of 11 priority actions and a total of 150 points. Actions must be completed in 6 of 17 categories. In 2014, 111 applications were received and Oakland was one of 81 towns to be certified. THANK YOU to all our members of the Oakland Green Team and Environmental Commission.

Additionally, I was proud to be with our Borough Engineer, Kevin Boswell, when he accepted an award from the New Jersey Society of Municipal Engineers for the Ramapo River Bank Stabilization Construction Project. Mr. Boswell's award winning design/construction was an achievement recognized throughout the entire state of New Jersey

Until next time,

Mayor Linda H. Schwager

OAKLAND RECREATION—*GREAT OAK PARK*

After three decades, 300+ volunteers, fundraising, donated services and four years of committee work, 40 acres will be returned to the residents of Oakland in the form of a beautiful new park and playground. The final step in allowing people safely into the park will be the addition of a 100 car parking lot. The site of the old *Pleasureland* pools will become the new gravel lot. Visitors will be able to enter and exit the dawn to dusk park from Doty Road by pulling directly into the parking lot. Keep an eye out for an announcement to Great Oak Park's official opening this spring.

Once in the park everyone will be free to walk, hike, explore the areas of future development, fish or enjoy nature. There are 40 acres in the park, and when all the plans are completed barely 4 of those acres will change from their present state. The 35 acres will be a habitat for animals and plants, all available for people to explore and enjoy. New birdhouses will eventually dot the park inviting the return of many varieties of indigenous wildlife. The Park Committee has been working with other volunteer groups to remove invasive species of plants, dispose of years of dumped trash and clear away dead destructive brush.

Come join your neighbors on Saturday April 25th as the committee organizes the next "Great Clean-Up of Great Oak Park". To find out how to help as well as be informed on the park's progress please visit www.NewOaklandPark.com. There is still work in front of us as we complete the job that is uniquely Oakland; creating an oasis behind Ramapo Valley Road where people and nature live and play together.



Great White Oak In Winter (Photo courtesy of Jim Folkerts)

Volunteers Needed

In preparation of its Grand Opening - The Great Oak Park Committee is sponsoring a clean-up of the Great Oak Park on
Saturday April 25th starting at 10:00 am.

If you or your organization are interested in participating, please contact:

Steve Saliani at steve.saliani@gmail.com or
Mark Ostapczuk at ostapmark@verizon.net

OAKLAND RECREATION—*TRIPLE PLAY*

While Oakland spent the winter buried in snow, the Alexander Potash Recreation Complex underwent a major make-over. The old, obsolete, broken and poor-functioning lights were replaced with brand new state of the art computer generated efficient lights. New poles, fixtures and wiring were installed throughout the complex. Included in this upgrade are lights for fields 7 and 9; fields that never had lights previously. The new lights will make recreation, the carnival and all other events at the recreation complex run more smoothly, efficiently and timely. The entire project comes with a 25 year warranty, where any future issue and every burned-out bulb will be replaced by Musco Lighting for no additional charge.

The next project underway is the much anticipated walking path. The path broke ground last month and should be completed any day now. The .65 mile loop around the complex will take an already great complex to the zenith of New Jersey recreation centers. The path is wide enough to be ADA complaint, made of asphalt and will be open all year

round. Its location is right next to the senior center and a stone's throw from the middle school. This path will be a favorite place for people to meet, stroll or jog. What started as an idea 8 years ago, was put into motion over the last 3 years while everyone took part in making it a reality. Enjoy a nice walk this spring Oakland, you deserve it!

The final project to complete the triple-play is the new lightning detection warning system. Detectors with alarms will be placed at all three recreation fields; Wells Field, Truman Field and the recreation complex. Guess work will be removed from the decision making process as safety continues to be recreation's priority.

Accompanying the detection system will be a downloadable app. that anyone can install on their smart phone. This will enable everyone to link in to the system and be warned before you leave your home.

The Recreation Commission has been working hard to bring Oakland the best sports programs, summer camp and recreation infrastructure in the state!

Oakland Health Department—*The Dangers of Radon*

According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Radon Potential Map, Oakland is in the Level 2 Tier for Moderate Potential.

Radon is a colorless, odorless and tasteless radioactive gas that naturally occurs in the ground in some areas. It decays into radioactive particles that can get trapped in the lungs and could damage lung tissue. Long-term exposure can lead to lung cancer. Radon is the number one cause of lung cancer in non-smokers and number two in smokers after cigarettes.

Radon enters buildings through open-



**HAVE YOU TESTED
YOUR HOME FOR
RADON LATELY?**

ings in contact with the ground such as cracks in the foundation, sump pits and around pipes. Testing for radon is simple and self-test kits can be purchased in most hardware stores at a cost of \$15 to \$50.

Most homes are tested for radon when sold and, when found, mitigation for levels above four picocuries per liter is recommended. Mitigation costs can range from \$500 to \$2,500 for a venting system to draw the gas out of the house. To obtain additional information about radon, contact the Oakland Health Department at 201-337-9254. Residents may also call the NJDEP Radon Information line at (800) 648-0394 or go the NJDEP website: www.njradon.org

Oakland Police Department—*Spring Update*

After enduring another hard winter, spring is finally upon us. The Oakland Police Department would like to issue a few reminders to our residents.

With the warmer weather arriving, there will be an increase of pedestrians and bicyclists on the roadway. Please be aware that some of these people use music devices that have headphones and they can't always hear cars coming so use care when you see them.

Spring time is also when our bear population becomes active. They awaken from their hibernation and start foraging for food. It is important to keep your garbage sealed tight or even inside of a garage until pick up day. Another thing to

remember is that approaching a bear, especially a cub, is very dangerous. Mother bears are never too far away from their cubs and are very protective. If you do see a bear, please call the station so we can keep track of where they are and to warn other residents of their whereabouts.

Finally, it has come to our attention that there has been an increase of speeders throughout the town. We have stepped up our enforcement of these areas and will be conducting radar details to attempt to curtail this. Please obey all the speed limits in town. The speed limit sign indicates the highest speed that is safe for travel of that area. Most residential areas are marked as 25 MPH zones.

The Oakland Community of Commerce

2015 marks our third year as Oakland's only development and advocacy organization for businesses in Oakland. Over the past two years, more and more Oakland residents and business owners have answered the call to join our group, and our membership has continued to grow as a result. Our monthly meetings provide a unique one on one opportunity for our members to network and build lasting relationships with other business leaders in our community and to stay current with other community events that we will help to promote, organize and support in various ways. We continue to be committed to creating a healthy and vibrant economy while protecting and advancing the interests of



our members and the Oakland Community as a whole.

Our goal is to continue to expand on our community involvement through mutually beneficial partnerships with other community based groups like the Oakland Public Events Committee and Oakland Recreation to organize wonderful community based events like the

Spring Fever Pitch Event, the Oakland Carnival and The Fall Classic Car Show.

However, none of this is achievable without YOU! We are asking that Oakland residents and business owners consider becoming members; to join us at our regular meetings held the first Tuesday of every month at the Oakland Public Library, so that we can continue to work together to cultivate our wonderful new group and support our beautiful Community.

You are encouraged to contact Oakland Community of Commerce Chairman Peter J. Kikot at (201) 556-7412, to visit our website: www.oaklandcofc.org or email us at oaklandcofc@gmail.com for more information.

OAKLAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mayor Linda H. Schwager

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© OAKLAND COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

SWIFT*911™*EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION****Have you signed up?**

In our efforts to provide more reliable communications with Residents and Businesses in the borough, we have implemented SwiftReach Networks, Inc. an Emergency Notification Provider.

Swift911™ is a system that makes phone calls or send text messages to specific people or areas in the event of an emergency or for sharing important information.

All the calls you receive will have the Caller ID of "Oakland Borough" or "Oakland Police Department".

If you are not receiving these calls, please visit our town's web site at <http://www.oakland-nj.org> and fill out the form to add or update your contact information. You may also remove yourself from our lists.