

# CROSS ROADS

PUBLISHED BY THE OAKLAND COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
SPONSORED BY BOROUGH OF OAKLAND AND OAKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FALL, 2003  
Vol. 7, No. 3

*Focus On ...*

## Oakland Recycling Explained

The Borough of Oakland needs the cooperation of all its residents to make our recycling program effective and beneficial for everyone.

### PAPER AND CARDBOARD

- Do not put plastic bags out with paper and cardboard inside. Using plastic bags to hold and carry paper bags creates a huge problem if left at the curb for pickup since plastic bags contaminate the load.
- You can also use your recycling barrel for paper collection.
- Cardboard boxes should be flattened and tied in a bundle with twine.
- Do not leave any Styrofoam, plastic or trash inside cardboard boxes; this is strictly a paper and cardboard collection.

### CO-MINGLED

- Do use the recycling barrel or an open container without the lid, so the recycling truck can see what is in it. The Borough sells the 20-gallon recycling barrel for \$7.00, available at the Department of Public Works.
- Do not use plastic or paper bags to put co-mingled recycling in. All kinds and colors of plastic or paper are prohibited.
- Mirrors, household windows, auto glass, light bulbs and ceramics are not recyclable.
- Also, oil or antifreeze containers, paint cans, pots and pans and general household items are not recyclable.
- Do recycle all #1 and #2 plastic. Just look at the bottom of the container to find out what number it is. Any plastic containers with #3,4,5,6 or 7 are prohibited and not recyclable.

## THE MAYOR'S MESSAGE ...

In just a blink of an eye the cool weather of the fall is upon us. It seems like yesterday I advised you that our schools were out and to drive safely watching our children at play. Even though the summer passed quickly, the Borough has been very busy with many events and projects.

I hope that you enjoyed the Town Carnival in June put on by the Public Events Committee. I personally thank Chairman Bob Fabrizio and all the volunteers who spent a great deal of time making this a very successful event, culminating with a great fireworks display.

We took receipt of our new fire truck and christened it in good fashion at the wet down in August. I am sure that you will join me in wishing all the firefighters that travel to our emergencies on this engine, always a safe return.



Mayor Robert Piccoli

I have been immersed in many of the final details of the Army Corps Flood Control Project. I am pleased to report that just about all of the punch list items have been completed. Several larger trees that have fallen into the river since the project has been completed will be removed and hopefully, by the beginning of October all the remaining punch list items will be completed, with the exception of the boat launch. The Army Corps have come up with a new design (you will actually be able to launch a boat with this design) and will be completing this as soon as they can bid the work out. The bids for the second phase of this project to install the new gates in the Pompton Lakes Dam were just returned and are about to be awarded, with construction to follow.

We finally started the upstream work with the cleaning around the Lenape Lane Bridge. I have met with Boswell Engineering, the DPW and our River Experts and the remaining upstream work will begin shortly, to be completed this fall (weather permitting). This work will include removal of several shoals and many areas along the riverbank that will be de-snagged and cleaned.

The Doty Road Bridge project is also coming to an end with the completion of the final 30 punch list items this month as well.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## LIBRARY UPDATE

As you have noticed, progress is being made with the construction project at your library. The exterior walls are up and the roof installation is nearing completion. Trustee President Ronnie Levine says that the date for the completion of the new children's department is early 2004.

Various fundraising events are planned for the enjoyment of you and your family.

On October 25, the Library Growth Foundation of Oakland is sponsoring two "Young Peoples Music Concerts," which will be held at Indian Hills High School. The earlier session, geared to the younger music lover (ages 4 to 9), will feature age-appropriate classical music, as well as the popular story of Tubby the Tuba, narrated by Oakland's own "Mr. K," former Superintendent Larry Ksanznak. The second concert is for middle school

children. This program will include the music from Star Wars, among other classical pieces that will delight the audience, as well as a narrated version of "Godzilla Eats Las Vegas." Godzilla will be narrated by former Oakland student, Matt Cerrato. The earlier performance for the younger children will take place at 1 p.m., while the second concert will begin at 3 p.m.

Music will be provided by the New Jersey University Symphony, conducted by Nicholas Cerrato. Mr. Cerrato, who was the former conductor of the Broadway musical, "Cats," is a professor of music at the University and is well known to Oakland residents.

Children under 12 should be accompanied by an adult. Tickets are \$5 for children and \$10 for adults. Those purchasing five tickets or more will have their names inscribed in a book in the library.

On October 29, the Oakland-



Franklin Lakes Rotary Club will be hosting a Beefsteak Dinner at Portobello's, with proceeds going to help the Oakland Public Library, as well as other community projects. The "Fabulous 50s Dinner" will include music by The Specialists, a dance contest and a silent auction. Both the Library and Rotary would welcome your support, so come and enjoy great music, great food and great neighbors.

For information about either event, please contact the library at 201-337-3742.

## Burik Named Senior Center Director

On August 20, the Borough Council moved forward to unanimously appoint Rose Burik as the new Senior Center Director. Rose has worked for the Borough of Oakland for four years. She started as a part-time employee in the Oakland construction offices. Rose liked Oakland so much that she hoped to gain a full time position.



Rose Burik (left) with liaison Donna Kurdock

In a short time, Rose became a full time Utility Clerk in the Oakland Water Department. "I really like working with people, and I found Oakland residents to

be very friendly," Rose said. In addition to working full time in the Water Department, Rose offered to become secretary to the Environmental and Flood Commission in the evenings.

When the position of Senior Director became available in June, Rose jumped at the chance. "I saw this as a real opportunity to advance myself and a chance to do what I really like to do, which is to work with people and make a contribution to the community," she said.

Councilwoman Donna Kurdock, liaison to the Oakland Senior Center praises Rose's skills. "It is a perfect fit. Rose brings extensive experience to the Oakland Senior Center, both from her previous work experience in Bloomingdale and from her long history of volunteer work in her hometown of Ringwood."

Rose served in Bloomingdale on the American Red Cross Mayor's Advisory Council. As Administrative Assistant to the Bloomingdale Borough Administrator, Rose served as the special events coordinator and as the outreach community liaison. As a member of the Office of Emergency Management Team in Bloomingdale, Rose served during the Hurricane Floyd emergency.

Rose Burik is a resident of Ringwood, but says "I have two hometowns, Oakland and Ringwood." Rose has two children and has been married for 31 years.

— Donna Kurdock, Councilwoman, Senior Center Liaison

## Recreation, DPW and more...

**On the fields** The Oakland Recreation Commission succeeded in bringing our youth a terrific Summer Recreation Camp. The program was a huge success, one that will be made even better next year as the Commission devises a way to provide activities even in inclement weather.

I had the honor of speaking at the Football Program Kickoff, where Commissioner Mike Milich has put together a very robust program of dedicated boys (and girl!).

Football is just one of the terrific programs offered by the Commission — Tennis, Cheerleading, Basketball, Roller Hockey and Soccer are but a few of the programs offered.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants have been received and will be put to good use in building a lighted basketball court and enhancing the safety of our recreation complex. Thanks to Planning Board and Environmental Commission member Nick Dilandro for bringing to our attention a \$100,000 grant for recreation equipment. It is the cooperation and input of the public that helps us on the Council as well as our Commissions be even more responsive to your needs.

**In the town** As liaison to the DPW, I found out quickly how dedicated our staff really is. Asst. Superintendent Marcucilli is doing a fine job and ensures every issue is taken care of

expertly, whether it is a deer in the river (thank you, Foreman Ray Fuller!) or making sure the fields are ready after a big event like the Town Carnival (thanks, Foreman Joe Ferrarella). Currently, the DPW is preparing for the winter and the additional responsibility of plowing the six miles of roadway in the Ramapo River Reserve.

**Municipal Alliance** Chairman Jack Tauber and the Alliance members continue to dedicate themselves to programs that increase awareness of the dangers of tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse. Programs like DARE, professional speakers in the schools and supporting ordinances like teen drinking and limiting smoking at the recreation fields are some of the issues they have brought to our attention.

**Fire Department** With the anniversary of September 11th passed by the time you read this, we are reminded of the sacrifices all our emergency services make to ensure our safety.

On a brighter note, the Fire Department has placed in service its new Pierce Pumper, replacing a 28-year-old firetruck that has been donated to the Fire Academy in Mahwah for training. As this will be Chief Ed Tryon's final year as Fire Chief, please join me in congratulating him for a job well done. Chief Tryon's success is due in no small part by the very professional

and dedicated department that has done a wonderful job of protecting our community.

As always, I am available to discuss any issue, not just these responsibilities above, so please call me at 337-6359 or email at [mcquire@oakland-nj.org](mailto:mcquire@oakland-nj.org), and do not forget to drive safely.

— Councilman Leo McGuire

## Shady News

The Oakland Shade Tree Committee would like all residents to remember that the new ordinance recently enacted by the Borough Council requires that all residents who wish to remove a tree over 12 inches in diameter (measured four and a half feet about the ground) must apply for a permit. This can be done at Borough Hall in the Building Department. Failure to obtain a permit can result in substantial fines.

Additionally, there are several other types of trees that are specifically delineated within the ordinance that also require a permit.

Please note that normal tree care, and pruning in accordance with ANSI-A300 Standards does not require a permit.

A complete copy of the actual ordinance containing complete details is available on-line simply by clicking on [www.oakland-nj.org](http://www.oakland-nj.org), or by obtaining a copy at Borough Hall.

The Shade Tree Committee is available to meet with any resident to help evaluate the best way to accomplish whatever landscaping plans you may have. Help us keep the Borough of Oakland green and to preserve its natural beauty. If you would like to contact the Oakland Shade Tree Committee, we can be reached by leaving a message at Borough Hall with your name, address and best time to contact you.

— Your Shade Tree Committee

## School's In, Drive Carefully

The Oakland Police Department would like to remind motorists driving in or through the Borough of Oakland that schools are open and children are walking to and from school both mornings and afternoons.

The officers of the Oakland Police Department will be closely monitoring the flow of traffic in and through the borough and will, in the furtherance of public safety, be issuing motor vehicle summonses to motorists observed to be in violation of the New Jersey motor vehicle laws. — Chief James R. O'Connor

## Mayor's Message

*(Continued From Page 1)*

During the summer months we completed the Seminole and Rt. 202 Sidewalk Project. Both of these projects went extremely well and were completed in record time. While we did have some traffic buildup on Ramapo Valley Road over the summer, we felt that it was important to get this project done before school started. I hope that you are as pleased with the outcome as I am.

As we all are aware of the fatal accident that occurred in our town this summer, we have reviewed the intersection as well as several others with our Borough Engineer and Traffic Safety Officer. We have added some reflective signs, as well as "intersection ahead" signs, and will be submitting a request to the state for approval for a four-way stop sign intersection. I will keep you all advised of the progress as I am updated.

After almost a year at the Planning Board, the Finale Project was approved. This project is on the corner of West Oakland Avenue and Rt. 202, where Tony Brothers is located. While Tony Brothers will remain, the other buildings will come down and a bank, several retail stores and a two-story professional office building will take its place. This development was approved with only one sign variance, and met with the Master Plan for Retail Establishments. In addition to being a new business tax rate, the developer agreed to pay for and install over 2000 trees and bushes, paver block sidewalks and street lighting that will be eventually continued into the center of the town. I am attempting to get a small-scaled drawing that we can post on the Borough website for your information and review.

While there was a concern for increased traffic at this corner, I have spent many hours with the NJDOT in

Trenton and the Bergen County Planner on the latest Downtown Realignment and Beautification Project. By adding track-sensing devices on the Railroad tracks we can align West Oakland Avenue with Yawpo Avenue at Rt. 202 with just one intersection. The new right turn lane will remain; however all other turns would now be completed at this one new intersection. This should ease traffic congestion as well as save approximately \$2 million in construction costs. Once these new plans are approved by the state, the county will be in a position to fund just about all of the project with only minor cost to the Borough on the beautification part, for which we will be seeking grants. We will also try to get this on the Borough website for your information as well.

Many of you have asked about the Library Project and the progress that we are making towards completion. We did lose some time with the rainy weather; however this has only pushed the project back a few months, and the contractor is hoping to gain back this time as the building is now water tight and interior work begins. We have bi-weekly construction meetings to ensure that progress continues at a brisk pace.

This summer we have also taken advantage of many grant opportunities. We have received approval for a \$15,000 matching grant for the Statewide Livable Communities Grant. We have submitted for \$57,000 in Recreation Grants for repairing our ball field fences and dugouts and expect to receive approximately \$43,000 shortly. We have applied for another Statewide Community Grant for \$80,000 for dugouts and lighting on Field No. 9. In addition to the \$700,000 Grant that we originally received for the Library Project we have applied for a new \$75,000 Municipal Library Project Grant to offset some of the new carpet, computer

and furniture costs. We are awaiting responses on these grants. Finally a hefty grant request for \$4 million was submitted to the Bergen County for Open Space Trust that will be heard the end of September. This would be a matching grant and I believe will require a great deal of Council debate as to how the remaining funding will be realized.

Recently I was very pleased to have been able to work with the Shade Tree Committee that I formed in May. We were able to recently introduce a Shade Tree Protection Ordinance to the Borough. This ordinance is available currently on the Borough website for all to read. I believe that this is a good first step in enabling us to keep Oakland green by requiring a permit to cut down a tree larger than 12 inches in diameter. This normally means that a tree is substantial in size, and many years old. There are many exceptions to the permitting process and while originally enacted with a tree replacement fee, I believe that the Council may wish to suspend this portion until it can be analyzed and deliberated fully.

With the completion of the Capital Budget we are in the process of awarding our Road Resurfacing Project. Each year we spend approximately \$250,000 re-paving our oldest roads in the Borough to maintain our high quality infrastructure.

As always, I am available to discuss any item that concerns any resident in Oakland. Many of you have stopped me at the ball fields, the Shop-Rite, and other places in town. I am always available and more than happy to answer questions, and enjoy your comments and thoughts both positive and negative. I can also be reached at 201-651-0408 during the day, 201-337-3328 in the evenings, as well as e-mail on the Borough Website.

— Mayor Bob Piccoli

## Seniors Need To Join In Roster Program

In an effort to create an effective emergency response system, the Bergen County Law and Public Safety Department has strongly recommended that each Municipality in its jurisdiction, in coordination with its Emergency Management Team, develop and keep an updated roster of all its Senior Citizens. This roster would include not only the addresses of all seniors but would also indicate any special needs such as handicapped, bedridden, or those elderly citizens with special medical needs.

Approximately 600 seniors are or have been attendees of our Senior Citizen Programs, but more than double that number may also live within the Borough.

We all remember the recent black-out. We were fortunate that it lasted only six hours or so. Loss of our air conditioning, television and, in many cases, radio and telephone contact were just some of the inconveniences we experienced. Had it happened in the dead of winter and lasted longer, many of our homes would have been without heat and our seniors would have been put into a situation that could have required outside help.

I am reaching out to all our seniors to fill out the attached roster sign up form, so that in case of an emergency, the Oakland Emergency Management Team would be able to assist anyone in need. All information would be held in the strictest of confidence!

Please cooperate by filling out the attached form and dropping it off at Borough Hall or you can mail it to my attention at Borough of Oakland, One Municipal Plaza, Oakland, NJ 07436. — *Councilman John P. Biale*

### PROTECT YOUR HEALTH ... FLU AND PNEUMONIA SHOT PROGRAM

The Oakland Board of Health, in conjunction with Valley Health System, is offering a free adult influenza and pneumococcal vaccine injection program on Thursday, November 6, from 1-2:30 p.m. The program is open to Oakland senior citizens, age 65-and-older, and Oakland residents, age 18-and-older, with chronic disease. In-person pre-registration is required and Medicare card must be presented. Register at the Oakland Senior Center on Thursday, October 9, from 1:30-3:00 p.m. For further information, call the Oakland Board of Health at (201) 337-9254.

---

### PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND SUBMIT TO BOROUGH HALL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Seniors at Residence \_\_\_\_\_

Local Family Contact (Name/Phone) \_\_\_\_\_

Out-of-State Contact (Name/Phone) \_\_\_\_\_

## High Expectations For The School Year

Following a summer of reflection, planning and preparation, the Oakland School District opened its doors to more than 1650 children in preschool through eighth grade in early September. I am pleased to report to the Oakland community that, after extended interviewing during July and August, our District is fully staffed with highly qualified teachers who are committed to inspire each child to be the best student she or he can be.

In addition to challenging our students to realize their academic potential, our schools are committed to helping all children to become the best people that they can become. To this end, each of our schools has developed a goal to raise students' awareness that differences among people should be respected and appreciated. This goal coincides with the intent of the New Jersey Department of Education's requirement that local boards of education adopt specific anti-bullying policies, and it supports the recently adopted Oakland Board of Education policy that prohibits harassment, intimidation, bullying and hazing in our schools.

Underlying our initiative are the beliefs that every person should be valued and each individual is entitled to study and grow in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. These beliefs, which have been forever a part of the Oakland School District, are now ensconced in a policy that is a concrete symbol of our commitment to the individuality of each person.

The effectiveness of our students' learning of these values, however, can be enhanced when all who interact with children share the same commitment and when children hear the same messages from all adults in their lives. Therefore, we

are requesting that respect for others and an appreciation of the uniquenesses of the human family permeate all parts of our community. If the same behavioral standards are expected of children in school, at home, on the recreation fields, at community dances, in our houses of worship, and in our neighborhoods, we will achieve greater success in helping our community's youngsters to become the best people that they can be.

It has been said many times that children are the future, and, indeed, they are. Through skilled teaching, a state-of-the-art curriculum and parent/community support, our schools are helping Oakland's students to develop essential academic skills that will enable them to be productive members of society. Equally important, all of us need to cooperate in assisting them to develop those attitudes and interpersonal skills that will lead to building



Dr. Richard Heflich  
Superintendent  
Oakland Public Schools

sound character, and the construction of a respectful, caring society. Undoubtedly, this commitment to the building of children's character will, also, be reflected in our future.

Please join us in having high expectations for all of our community's young people, and join us on our journey to achieve excellence in all that we do with children. Thank you.

— Dr. Richard G. Heflich  
Superintendent of Schools

## Louis Pepe Appointed As Business Administrator

The 2003-2004 school year began with a new School Business Administrator/Board Secretary serving the Oakland School District. Mr. Louis J. Pepe was appointed by the Board of Education to begin employment on August 25.



Formerly the Business Administrator/Board Secretary in the Rochelle Park School District, Mr. Pepe also had similar professional experience in the Montague Township School District. He holds New Jersey Certification as a School Business Administrator and as a Qualified Purchasing Agent.

Mr. Pepe earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Ramapo College of New Jersey, and he is currently

completing a Master of Business Administration in Finance at William Paterson University.

The District welcomes Mr. Pepe to Oakland.

## OAKLAND SCHOOLS REPORT

### TEACHING TOLERANCE AT VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Beginning a new school year is always exciting for a variety of reasons, but especially because every child has the opportunity to decide how he or she will make the next ten months a positive, rewarding, and enriching experience. It is truly empowering for children to realize that many decisions in areas typically associated with school, including academics, work habits and co-curricular activities, are entirely up to them.

Perhaps even more important is the notion that each child has the power to make a decision about the type of person he or she wants to be. While that crucial decision is up to each student, it is the joint responsibility of the home and the school to provide children with the tools to make informed, responsible decisions about their character.

Valley Middle School's theme for the 2003-2004 school year is Dream, Plan, Achieve. Part of our "dream" is to emphasize the importance of good character in a variety of ways. More specifically, our goal is to help students "develop strategies to raise their awareness of tolerance and to accept their peers regardless of color, race, gender, sexual orientation, popularity, athletic ability, appearance, intelligence, religion or nationality."

Our "plan" to "achieve" our goal is a truly multifaceted community effort. After all, effectively teaching tolerance to children cannot be accomplished by any one entity. As is the case with most successful endeavors, tolerance education requires teamwork — the combined efforts of the school and the home.

During this past summer, a

Tolerance Pledge for Parents was sent home so that all parents would have the opportunity to discuss the importance of tolerance, respect and kindness with their children before the school year began. Valley Middle School teachers received a similar pledge. By signing the pledge, teachers have dedicated themselves to maintaining a positive social climate at school — both inside and outside the classroom.

During the year, teachers will be weaving lessons of character education into the fabric of a curriculum already rich in promoting civic virtues. Special programs and assemblies have also been planned for December and January in an effort to reinforce those life lessons taught in the classrooms.

The most crucial players, however, in the quest to eliminate all

forms of intolerance are, of course, the children. During the second week of school, Dr. Lane and I conducted special class meetings with each grade level, where we explained the rationale behind the school's goal and informed students of their rights and responsibilities in maintaining a positive atmosphere throughout the school year.

Students were asked to sign the tolerance pledge if they supported the message it espoused. Given our uncertain and unsettling global environment, it is especially important at this time that we all continue to do everything we can — as a community — to maintain a school climate where every child can feel safe, secure and valued.

— Adam Silverstein  
VMS Vice Principal

### A STUDY OF OUR SPECIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS

The New Jersey Department of Education regularly conducts a review of each district's special education programs and services. The monitoring activities for the Oakland Public School will be conducted during the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years.

The intent of this monitoring is to ensure continued quality education for all children. A public meeting to elicit community participation in the process will be announced in October. Additional information on this initiative can be obtained by contacting the Department of Student Personnel and Special Services at (201) 337-4442.

## OAKLAND SCHOOLS REPORT

### BEST WISHES AND...

The 2003-2004 school year opened without some very familiar faces in our classrooms as four veteran teachers began their retirement from the teaching profession. **Ms. Anna Lee Dorsa**, Language Arts and Social Studies teacher; **Mr. John Van Antwerp**, Instrumental Music teacher; **Ms. Nita Klaskow**, Special Education teacher; and **Ms. Sarah McHugh**, classroom teacher, all decided to retire from the Oakland Schools. To each, we send our very best wishes for a long and healthy retirement, and we thank them for their

commitment to the children of Oakland.

The district also congratulates **Mr. Frank Buono**, Board Secretary and Business Administrator, on his retirement from Oakland.

Leaving Oakland to pursue other career opportunities were **Ms. Betsy Crocker**, VMS Guidance Counselor; **Ms. Lisa Blackman**, Elementary Guidance counselor; **Ms. Christine Zimmermann**, Workshop Program teacher; **Ms. Dorothy Quigley**, Special Education teacher; **Ms. Anette Bulmer**, Special Education teacher; and **Ms. Jayne Tanis**,

Language Arts teacher. We gratefully acknowledge their contributions and send them our best wishes.

### ... A WARM WELCOME!

The Oakland School District welcomes the following individuals who have joined our staff for the 2003/2004 school year:

- Business Administrator – **Mr. Louis J. Pepe**
- Dogwood Hill School teachers – **Ms. Sarah Goodell**, **Ms. Kelly Wilson**, **Ms. Marianne Agner**, and **Ms. Lauren McGuire**
- Heights School teachers – **Ms. Kathryn Tobin**, **Ms.**

## An Essential Skill for Life: Writing

During the 2003-2004 school year, the District will continue its emphasis to develop each student's writing skills.

Recognizing the importance of a child's ability to communicate through written language, each school has developed a school goal that focuses on an essential area of the writing process that will lead to skill improvement. This District emphasis is aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in Language Arts Literacy.

In our classrooms, teachers will be helping students to see writing as a multi-step process. In the initial, or brainstorming phase, children are encouraged to think of various ideas for inclusion in a specific written piece. Students, then, begin to create their work by developing topic sentences and supporting details. The revise and edit stage follows their first draft,

and requires a student to possess knowledge of grammar and spelling. During this stage, peer editing and collaboration with others occurs as the writing piece is refined. While composing the final draft, the student completes his/her writing, which should result in a "publishable" composition.

While developing writing skills, students need to learn to write different types of compositions, including those that address controversial issues, compare/contrast situations, problem/solution events, cause and effect positions, and persuasive points of view. Writing, therefore, needs to have a cross-curricula emphasis and needs to occur in every subject that a student studies. Students, then, will learn to express views on a variety of subjects as they appear during their academic career.

Parents are encouraged to join us in helping their children to develop this life skill. Specific methods that can be employed in the home include encouraging children to write for different audiences and purposes, such as thank you notes, letters to organizations and companies requesting information, letters to a newspaper editor, letters to friends and family, and writing travel journals. We ask parents to encourage students to revise and edit their work and to highlight how subsequent drafts improve the written piece. Parents are also urged to discourage reliance on the computer "spell or grammar check" as a substitute for an individual's learning grammar rules and correct spelling.

Further information about our writing program may be obtained from our District Coordinator of Reading and Language Arts, **Ms. Karen Rockefeller**, who may be reached at 201-337-4040.



**Melissa Moscato, Ms. Susan Crowe, Ms. Kelly Groenwall, Ms. Michelle Krill, and Ms. Erin Skelley.**

• Manito School teacher – **Ms. Angela Esposito**

• Valley Middle School teachers – **Ms. Bronwin Baumgardner, Ms. Kristi Chase, Ms. Elizabeth Connolly, Ms. Ruth Kokkinakis, Ms. Marissa Pizzano, Ms. Lara Salib, Ms. Jennifer Wallace and Ms. Patrice Zotos.**

• District teachers – **Ms. Faryn Kates and Ms. Jeanne Schulze**

We extend a warm welcome to our newest members of the staff! To help each to become familiar with our District, new teachers were invited to participate in a three-day orientation program during the last week of August. Included in the orientation were presentations on the District and its curriculum, as well as specific workshops on teaching reading and writing, instructional skills, a technology program overview, and bloodborne pathogen training.

Undoubtedly, this instructional

### In Memoriam

**Thomas T. Evans, Jr.**

Dedicated Teacher of the Language Arts In The  
Oakland Public Schools  
1965 -1992

With fond remembrance.

program will enhance their classroom teaching and provide for a smooth transition into our District. We wish them much success with Oakland's students.

## From The School Board President

I would like to welcome everyone back in anticipation of another great school year. Despite the rain, I hope you all had a terrific summer. I am pleased to report that school opening day went very smoothly. The Board thanks all the teachers, administrators, maintenance staff and parents who helped us get off to such a great start.



The past year proved to be a great challenge for us on the Board. We found ourselves in the difficult position of having to balance the high expectations of our community for our schools against the significant lack of State aid to support our programs. Despite a substantial rise in fixed costs beyond the control of the District due to increasing enrollment in regular education, escalating special education costs mandated by State and Federal law, spiraling health insurance and energy costs, State aid from Trenton has

remained flat for the second year in a row. This has forced the Board to make difficult decisions in cutting and delaying new programs in order to be fiscally responsible to the community. The good news is that, despite what amounts to cuts in State aid, savings achieved through prudent fiscal management has enabled us to implement a number of initiatives for this year.

To enhance the safety of our children on school buses, transportation aides were hired for the month of September. This has helped maintain order on the buses for the beginning of school and proven particularly effective with the kindergarten children who require a little more assistance in getting acclimated to their new school routines. Thanks to the elementary school PTO's and PTA and the hard work of our librarians during the summer, the library automation project is propelling our school libraries into the 21st century. World languages will be introduced into Grade 4 this year. The art, music and science curricula have been aligned to meet revised

Core Curriculum Standards for the coming year. And, despite the lack of State aid, we have maintained the District's class size policy and all current education programs. Know, also, that the Board is presently working on a Long Range Facilities Plan to deal with future space needs resulting from our growing enrollment.

School is now in session; therefore, for the safety of our children and all members of the community, please be careful driving around town and particularly around the schools. The life you save may well be a child's.

Finally, in preparation for the new school year, the Board has passed an extremely important Anti-Bullying Policy that has been distributed to all student families. This District has a zero tolerance policy towards bullying and strives to teach tolerance and appropriate methods of conflict resolution. However, tolerance and appropriate behavior is best taught at the home and begins with the family. We ask that you review the policy with your child and share in our vision of Oakland as a learning community committed to excellence.

— John P. Szabo, Jr., President,  
Oakland Board of Education

**DISTRICT PTO/PTA COUNCIL**

Our schools are enriched by the active support of our parents and community. We appreciate the time and commitment of so many, and especially, the members of our  
2003-2004 District PTO/PTA Council:

Ms. Sadie Quinlan, Dogwood Hill PTA President  
Ms. Dawn Milich, Heights School PTO President  
Ms. Nancy Costa, Manito School PTO President  
Ms. Lynne Tanner, Valley Middle PTO President  
Ms. Diane Guthrie, Board of Education Liaison  
Ms. Marybeth Visconti, Board of Education Liaison

**OAKLAND  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Mayor Robert Piccoli  
James A. Geraghty **Council President**  
Council Members  
John A. Biale • Donald T. Burns •  
Donna Kurdock • Leo McGuire •  
Betsy Stagg

.....

**OAKLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Superintendent Dr. Richard G. Heflich  
Board of Education Members  
John P. Szabo **President**  
Marybeth Visconti **Vice President**  
James Gaffney • Diane Guthrie •  
James Mulcahy

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 31  
Oakland, NJ

POSTAL PATRON  
OAKLAND, NEW JERSEY 07436