



Middlesex County Officials Help Advance Truck Ban Ordinance in Monroe

The County Concurs with Municipal Truck Ban; Sends Report to State DOT

Monroe Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro announced that Middlesex County officials are recommending that the state approve a popular ordinance that bans heavy tractor-trailers from three residential roads along the Cranbury town line in Monroe.



The ordinance banning heavy trucks was unanimously approved by the Township Council in October with more than 300 residents attending a public hearing in support. Review by the New Jersey Department of Transportation is the final approval needed to begin the statutory process to remove tractor trailers weighing more than eight tons from Cranbury Station, Prospect Plains and Cranbury

Half Acre roads, west of Applegarth Road.

To advocate for the ordinance, Mayor Tamburro met with Middlesex County Freeholder Director Ronald G. Rios and Middlesex County professional staff.

“I am pleased to see this truck weight restriction moving forward at my urging,” Mayor Tamburro said. “I appreciate that county officials were so quick to review our truck study and recommend to the state that the ordinance be

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Mayor Tamburro to Launch Public Review of Master Plan

Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro announced that the Township will be re-opening the municipal Master Plan this summer and will launch a full public engagement and community-wide program to gain feedback.

“A thorough review of Monroe’s Master Plan is our community’s opportunity to voice what we all believe is the future of our hometown,” explained

Mayor Tamburro. “This is our time to explore ways to control development, invest in traffic improvements and gain momentum on our march toward 50% preserved open space in the township for our residents and our future.”

The township will be reopening and updating the following elements of our Master Plan beginning this summer: land use plan, transportation plan and

recreation and open space plan. As a prelude to that effort, the Planning Board this spring will review a reexamination report to highlight the current status.

“This process will allow us to understand, amongst other items, the current state of our Supreme Court-ordered affordable housing requirements,” Mayor Tamburro said. “This court order makes up

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Coming this Summer: **A Master Plan Review**

We need your input on:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Open space

Public meetings will be scheduled this spring. Visit MonroeTwp.com for updates.



TOWN HALL

1 Municipal Plaza • Monroe Township, NJ 08831
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ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor:

Gerald W. Tamburrogtamburro@monroetwp.com

Council President:

Miriam Cohenmcohen@monroetwp.com

Council Vice President:

Elizabeth Schneidereschneider@monroetwp.com

Council Members:

Stephen Dalinasdalina@monroetwp.com

Leonard Baskinlbaskin@monroetwp.com

Charles Dipierrocdipierro@monroetwp.com

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Township Main Number(732) 521-4400

Animal Control(732) 521-0222

Construction Office(732) 656-4585

Court Administrator(732) 521-4020

Township Engineer(732) 605-9440

EMS & First Aid (non-emergency) (732) 521-1880

Health Department(732) 521-4400 ext. 192

Environmental Protection .(732) 521-4400 ext. 118

Monroe Township Library(732) 521-5000

Utilities Department(732) 521-1700

Office of Senior Services(609) 448-7140

Parks Department(732) 723-5000

Police (non-emergency)(732) 521-0222

Public Works(732) 656-4575

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Traffic Safety(732) 521-0222 ext. 126

Transportation(609) 443-0511

From the Mayor's Desk

*A Look Ahead for 2020 and Beyond
Public Input Sought for Master Plan
Review*

As you may be aware, I took the oath of office to begin my second term as Mayor of Monroe Township at the Township Council's reorganization Meeting at the Senior Center on January 1.

I would again like to express my appreciation to my family, friends, dignitaries and residents in attendance and thank all residents for entrusting me with the honor of serving as your Mayor. I was both humbled and excited to take the oath of office as your Mayor — an oath I hold very dear. I have worked each and every day to live up to the faith and confidence that you have bestowed upon me and I intend to do the same in 2020 and beyond.

During the reorganization meeting, the Township Council also unanimously elected Councilwoman Miriam Cohen as Council President and Councilwoman Elizabeth "Betty" Schneider as Council Vice President. This decision marks the first time in the Township's history that two women lead the Council in their respective roles.

I would like to take a

moment to acknowledge Councilman Stephen Dalina for his years of outstanding service to this council and our community as council president. Thank you.

Together, as a community, we have accomplished important achievements, including the second lowest tax rate in Middlesex County, the lowest water and sewer rates in the region, a AA+ bond rating, significant progress toward open space preservation goals and the safest community in Middlesex County.

I pledge to continue with a plan of low debt and superb services while acknowledging the great challenge created by state court ordered affordable housing mandates resulting from the Mount Laurel court decision. This represents 96 percent of the new construction in Monroe over the next five years.

We invite you to attend a presentation detailing the state's Mount Laurel decision and its impact on our community. Residents can attend a public presentation on this important subject by Township Business Administrator,



Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro

Alan Weinberg. The presentation is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Town Hall.

As I announced at a recent meeting of the Monroe Township Planning Board, we also will be re-opening the municipal Master Plan this summer and will launch a full public engagement and community-wide program to gain your feedback.

This spring, we will announce the details of this comprehensive public outreach campaign for the Master Plan, including community-wide surveys and public workshops. I sincerely hope that all residents embrace this process and participate in shaping the future of our community.

I love Monroe and we have so much to be proud of. All of our success is the result of your support and dedication to our Township. ■

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business and post office box in Monroe.**



Township of
Monroe NEWS

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Meet the Mayor and Council

Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro was sworn in on January 1, 2020 for a second four-year term. He was elected in November 2001 as the second ward Council Representative, and served as council president for eight years prior to being elected Mayor.

Council President Miriam Cohen, At-Large, has been serving on the Township Council since 2017. She previously was a member of the Affordable Housing Board, headed East Brunswick's League of Women Voters and currently serves as president of Whittingham Home-

owner's Association in Greenbriar at Whittingham.

Council Vice President Elizabeth Schneider, Ward 1, has been serving on the Township Council since 2013. Prior to being elected as a Council Member, she served on the Township's Zoning Board of Adjustment. She also served 20 years as a member of the North Brunswick Township Board of Education.

Councilman Leonard Baskin, Ward 2, has been serving on the Township Council since 2017. He is a founding member of the Monroe Township Com-

munity Garden and is a member of the Monroe Shade Tree Commission. Councilman Baskin is the Council Liaison to the Historical Preservation Commission and the Open Space and Farmland Preservation Committee.

Councilman Charles Dipierro, Ward 3, has been serving on the Township Council since 2018. He previously served on Monroe's Industrial Commission, that later became the Economic Development Commission. In 2004, he was elected as a Commissioner for Fire District No. 1, where he



(l-r) Councilman Stephen Dalina, Council Vice President Elizabeth Schneider, Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro, Council President Miriam Cohen, Councilman Leonard Baskin and Councilman Charles Dipierro.

served as Chairman for the past several years.

Councilman Stephen Dalina, At-Large, has been serving on the Township Council since 2011. He formerly served as Chair-

man of both the Monroe Township Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Recreation Advisory Board. He is a past member of the Monroe Township Baseball Association Executive Board. ■

It's Time, Again, for the U.S. Census

The United States Constitution mandates an official count of every United States resident every ten years. The first Census was conducted in 1790.

The information derived by the U.S. Census Bureau determines the number of seats each state is allocated within the 435 member House of Representatives (New Jersey currently has fourteen members) and to re-draw legislative districts. In addition, Census information is used to allocate federal grants. New Jersey receives an estimated \$22.7 billion in federal funds annually based on the count.

All responses are confidential.

By April 1 every household will be invited to respond to the Census online, by mail, or by phone.

From May - July Census Bureau enumerators will be visiting all non-responding households.

Please note that if you reside in Florida on April 1 or another location you must submit your information as a resident of that location.

Contact the Monroe Township Public Library at 732-521-5000 for additional information. ■



Monroe Township High School Wrestling Team honored at the March 2 Council Meeting for winning the Greater Middlesex Conference Wrestling Championships for the first time.



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New Jersey Supreme Court Decision Requires Towns to Build Affordable Housing

Here's How Monroe Officials Minimized the Impact of the State Mandate

In hundreds of towns across New Jersey, there are many questions about state-mandated affordable housing and its goal to ensure housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. Exactly what does this requirement mean for municipalities like Monroe and what has Monroe done, like similar towns, to manage this state court housing requirement?

It is important to explain how this all began. In 1975, with the now-famous “Mount Laurel” decision, the New Jersey State Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional for municipalities to enact zoning that excludes low-and moderate-income citizens.

Nine years later, in the 1980's the court issued “Mount Laurel II,” which allows builders to sue municipalities if they can prove the host towns are ignoring the original Mount Laurel decision. As you can imagine, Mount Laurel II prompted a flurry of lawsuits across New Jersey and a subsequent building boom, as municipalities had no choice but to approve development beyond what they envisioned or deemed appropriate. You can see much of that high-density development when you travel into surrounding towns.

Furthermore, in 1985, the state Legislature joined in the effort to create more affordable housing with its passage of the Fair Housing

Act. This law created the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH), a controversial body that was designed to determine the fair share of affordable housing obligation for each town in the state.

What is affordable housing?

While it is often confused with federal Section 8 housing, this state requirement is for affordable housing for low-and-moderate income persons or families. It is based on household size and household income. For example, for a family of four, their income must be between \$35k and \$94k annually. Some of these affordable units are for purchase and some are rental.

Three Rounds of Affordable Housing

1987-1993

(Round #1 Obligation)

In Monroe, to help meet our obligation, the municipality was able to send resources to other towns using Regional Contribution Agreements (RCAs). This minimized our impact, but RCAs were eventually eliminated by the legislature.

1994-1999

(Round #2 Obligation)

Stratford and Monroe Manor

Round II developments were approved in Monroe in mid/late-1990s and included the Stratford Community and Monroe Manor. In order for developers to build affordable housing units as part of

these developments, COAH rules allowed developers to build four market-rate units to generate the profit to build one affordable unit.

While the zoning was put in place in the mid-1990s – it has taken more than 25 years for these developments, including the Round II affordable housing obligations, to be completed. Monroe Manor is now complete. Stratford will likely be completed in the next several years. You can see the late stage of this construction next to the Senior Center on Halsey Reed Road off Applegarth. The market determines how fast the homes are built, but it can take decades, even though the court requires that the zoning be put in place.

1999-2025

(Round #3 Obligation)

From 1999 to 2015, COAH failed to establish affordable housing quotas and guidelines for municipalities, so the Fair Share Housing Center sued the “State.” The NJ Supreme Court ordered that state courts take over that responsibility in 2015.

As such, in March 2015, the state Supreme Court required trial courts to determine the fair share for each municipality for the period of 1999 through 2025, approve compliance plans and encourage resolutions through mediation, as opposed to expensive,



time-consuming lawsuits between builders and municipalities.

Fair Share Housing, a coalition of affordable housing advocates that intervened in Monroe's efforts to obtain court approval of its compliance plan, claimed in court that Monroe Township should be required to accommodate 2,323 affordable housing units for Round 3, which included 9,292 market-rate dwellings through the ratio of 4:1, as part of their proposal. If they had prevailed, that would have allowed for a total of 11,615 units.

Monroe vigorously fought this calculation of 2,323 affordable units, arguing that it was unrealistic to build these units and would have a significant negative impact on our Township. However, developer-intervenors who

owned property zoned “highway commercial” or “age restricted” joined the Fair Share lawsuit and offered to build affordable housing on land they owned that was not zoned for market-rate housing. These developers owned property on Route 33 in the Applegarth area and the southern area of Spotswood Englishtown Road.

Monroe aggressively defended its plan and fought the developers and Fair Share Housing, resulting in much lower numbers: 850 affordable housing units, of which 283 units (maximum amount allowed) can be age-restricted. The remaining 567 units must be constructed for affordable housing for families. The remainder of housing (4:1) could be market rate as well.

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Monroe Congratulates Retirees



Luann McGraw

Monroe Township's Tax Collector, Luann McGraw, began working for the township in October 1999 as deputy tax collector. She held that position until June 2008 when she was appointed to the Tax Collector's position.

During Luann's 20-year career in Monroe Township, she implemented many new upgrades to our methods of tax collecting. With the advancement of technology, automated methods of collection increased the efficiency within the department and improved collection rates.

McGraw says she has really enjoyed meeting many of the township's residents who are now considered friends.

Most importantly, she is proud of the friendships that have been nurtured among the municipal staff.

"I will miss them all tremendously," she said.

In her retirement, Luann McGraw plans to enjoy her 10 grandchildren and their hobbies, as well as gardening, skiing, learning to sail, training for the 50th New York City Marathon and, of course, the beach!



Tammy Aarseth

Monroe Township's Bookmobile driver, Tammy Aarseth, began working for the township in 1992, assigned to the senior center.

In 2003, Tammy became the driver of the Bookmobile; its only driver for 17

years. Tammy's tenure with the Library has allowed her to directly connect with the community and bring joy to many avid readers.

In her retirement Tammy plans on moving to North Carolina to spend time with her first grandchild. Of course, she looks forward to enjoying some great books. ■

Monroe Welcomes New Employees



Leah Wagner

Congratulations to Leah Wagner on being named Director of the Monroe Township Library. Leah has been with the library since the beginning, when it was just a card table in the basement of the municipal building. Leah is credited with arranging the first children's area back when the library was first getting started. She has watched the facility grow through the past 30 years. It now serves more than 1,500 patrons a day and offers a slew of programs for community members of all ages.

Leah currently serves as president of the New Jersey Library Association.



Cindy Malkin

Cindy Malkin, MSW, LCSW is joining the Office of Senior Services to fill the position of Supervisor of Social Services. Cindy has

her Master of Social Work in gerontology and more than 30 years of social work and counseling experience.

"We are delighted to welcome her to the Senior Center," said Karen Theer, Director of Senior Services. "Cindy brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the team."



Samantha Schween

Samantha Schween, MSW, LCSW, is also joining the Office of Senior Services to fill the position of Senior Outreach

Professional. Samantha is a proud graduate of Monmouth University, where she earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees. She has been working with the senior population since 2013.

"The Senior Center is lucky to have someone like Samantha working with us," said Karen Theer, Director of Senior Services. ■

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MTPD Promotions & New Members

Lieutenant Sergeis Jangols and Sergeant George Olynyk were administered a ceremonial Oath of Office and Officer Michael Steele was sworn in during the Feb. 3 Township Council meeting.

Congratulations to all and thank you to our entire police force for your commitment to making Monroe Township the safest city in Middlesex County!



Lieutenant Sergeis Jangols



Sergeant George Olynyk



Officer Michael Steele

Monroe Police Officer Lauded as “Traffic Safety Specialist”

Monroe Township Police Officer Jason Cohn has the distinction of being one of only 26 police officers from across the state who earned the Traffic Safety Specialist (TSS), Level – 1, Leadership Award through the New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association.

The TSS program was regionally established in Maryland to recognize police officers who have notable experience, educa-

tion, training and proficiency in Highway Safety Enforcement methods and procedures.

Level 1 requirements include three years of independent patrol experience, speed detection device certification, standard field sobriety certification and 30 points of earned electives. One elective point is awarded for each year of military service and points are provided for documented college work.

“We salute Officer Cohn for his commitment to the law enforcement profession, as well as his important work in traffic safety,” said Mayor Tamburro. “We know that through his work in Monroe that he is saving lives and preventing serious injuries. Officer Cohn is a key member of our fine police department and we congratulate him on this important distinction.” ■

Fire District 3 to Open a New Firehouse on Schoolhouse Road

Monroe Township Fire District 3 will soon have a new firehouse at 359 Schoolhouse Road.

According to Chief Peter Gasiorowski, District 3 has 32 career firefighters, 16 assigned to each station in four shifts, plus a chief administrator. The house is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

District 3 firefighters respond to about 1,000 calls

per year, handling both fire prevention and serving as a resource to EMS.

The new 13,000-square-foot one-story firehouse, to be open this fall, will consist of four bays, an office for the on-duty shift commander, a small conference room and a ready room. The new living quarters for firefighters will include dormitories, a dining room and kitchen. It will also include space for township EMS, to provide

services in that neighborhood.

The new facility will have a further setback and will provide firefighters with ample space to pull out of the firehouse safely and allow them to safely do checks and inspections. Township officials said the \$4.57 million project, as well as the recent purchase of a fire truck, is being completed without the need to raise taxes. ■



Monroe Awarded \$475K for Roadway Improvements to Camelot Neighborhood

Monroe is receiving a \$475,000 municipal aid grant from the New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) 2020 Municipal Aid Program to improve the roadway and pedestrian access in the Camelot neighborhood.

"This latest award brings our state aid total to \$1.63 million for pedestrian and roadway improvements," said Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro. "These local roadways

serve significant vehicular and pedestrian traffic."

Tamburro expressed the Township's gratitude for Senator Linda Greenstein and Assemblymen Wayne DeAngelo and Dan Benson for securing these funds.

Roadway and pedestrian improvements will include the full length of Forman Avenue, Nathaniel Street, Florence Drive and Holly Road.

These local roads in the Camelot neighborhood provide residential access and connect to Schoolhouse Road.

The project includes restoration of the roadway, milling, paving, curb, sidewalk replacement, installation of ADA compliant curb ramps, detectable warning surfaces, crosswalks, signage and minor drainage improvements. ■

Meet Monroe's Human Relations Commission

The purpose of the Human Relations Commission (HRC) is to foster—through community efforts—goodwill, cooperation, respect and conciliation among diverse groups of residents within Monroe Township.

The HRC makes recommendations to the

Township Council toward the development of policies regarding educational programs that will aid in eliminating discrimination based on, but not limited to, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, ethnicity, health, age, marital status, sexual orientation or gender, or the perception of

these qualities.

All are invited. The Commission meets the second Tuesday of every month at 4:30 pm in the Monroe Township Municipal Building. There is no meeting in July or August. Please check the Township's calendar for possible changes. ■

Truck Ban Ordinance *Continued from page 1*

approved. I want this truck ban enacted as soon as possible for our residents and I am fully committed to ensuring this ban is finalized by the state."

It is important to note that weight restrictions are enacted on some of these county roads in Cranbury,

recognizing concerns with truck traffic. Monroe is simply seeking the same protections for its residents.

Mayor Tamburro vowed to keep residents informed as this tractor trailer ban progresses through state review. "We are eager to get these trac-

tor trailers off our residential streets, once and for all," the mayor added. "This is all about improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Our residents deserve quiet, safe streets in front of their homes. That is the sole driving force behind this ban." ■

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On Monday, December 16th, the leadership team of Parker at Monroe nursing care residence celebrated their 5th anniversary. Parker Health Group, Inc. is a leader in the transformation of traditional long-term care practices to person-centered living. The campus consists of six "small homes" and a community center. Sixteen residents with similar needs live together in each small home. Parker at Monroe provides nursing care and memory care services for people with all stages of dementias, who may also have complex physical needs.

Eagle Scout Achievements



Theo Blume - For the past year, Theodore "Theo" has been working on his Eagle Scout project, an 84-minute documentary titled "Veterans' Voices" featuring stories from the American Legion, Jewish War Veterans and Korean War Veterans. The film was shown at the Monroe Township Library on November 17.



Michael Saju - For his Eagle Scout project, Michael constructed and installed three benches in Veteran's Park. The benches provide a lovely place for community members to sit and relax at the park.



Dominick Joseph Maglio - Dominick's Eagle Scout project focused on Monroe Township's Historic Dey Farm. He worked on the cleanout, painting and refurbishment of the cement block garage. The project also included the creation of a tractor and agricultural equipment display.

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Cultural Groups wanting to participate should contact **Kam Attwal-Kaila** at kattwal@itbd.net or **Eileen Biennas** at ebiennas@monroetwp.com

Registration Deadline is Friday, April 3



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Recycling Tonnage Grant From DEP

Monroe Township was informed in late December that it is receiving a \$114,965 tonnage grant award from the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP.) Intended to further enhance local recycling efforts, the grant is based on the municipality's 2017 recycling performance, which earned the fourth highest award in Middlesex County and among the top 25 in the state.

Recycling tonnage grants are awarded through the State's Recycling Enhancement Act and are funded through a \$3 per-ton sur-

charge on trash disposed at solid waste facilities statewide. The NJDEP then allocates funds back to municipalities based on how much recycling each community reports accomplishing during a particular calendar year.

"I am pleased to report that our community's ongoing commitment to recycling is further underscored by our performance in the 2017 award distribution. Through constant education and positive reinforcement, our entire community has embraced recycling as part of daily routines," said Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro. ■

Review of Master Plan

Continued from page 1

96 percent of the future housing growth in our Township over the next five or more years."

Mayor Tamburro said the Master Plan reopening this summer will focus on municipal land use zoning, road, sidewalk and transit improvements. It will set a vision for future open space acquisitions, as well as new parks and recreations plans.

"Our goal is to identify, with the help of the public, ways in which we can improve the quality of life in Monroe," Mayor Tamburro said. "In this era when towns across New Jersey are forced to allow thousands of affordable housing and market-rate

units to comply with state mandates for providing affordable housing, we must be strategic with our land use zoning. And we must ensure that every resident possible is involved in helping to plan for our future."

The Mayor will be announcing this spring a comprehensive public outreach campaign for the Master Plan, including but not limited to community-wide surveys and public workshops.

All relevant documents will be posted at monroe-twp.com, for public review as the process moves forward. ■

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A Conversation with Recreation Superintendent Mary Lange



Mary Lange

The Monroe News recently sat down with Recreation Superintendent Mary Lange to chat about the many programs

and services available to township residents through our very popular recreation department.

Monroe News (MN): So, Mary, what does the recreation department do?

Mary Lange: The purpose of recreation is to offer a fantastic array of sports and activities to residents of the community that are affordable and fun. We are immensely proud to provide the best facilities for sports and equipment.

MN: How can residents receive the latest information about the many programs and activities that are coming up in the spring and summer.

Lange: The best way to access the latest news and information about our recreation programs is available on our website, in our lobby, in our newsletter and through Community Pass.

MN: How does someone become a member of the Recreation Center?

Lange: It's really easy; we want all Monroe residents to become members! You just need to visit www.monroerec.com to access the Community Pass. If you need assistance, please call us at the Recreation Department at 732-723-5000. We are happy to help.

MN: There are so many popular programs that you offer. What would you say are the absolute, most-popular programs for our community's large number of active senior citizens?

Lange: That's a tough question; we have many Senior Programs that are available to our senior population and all are very popular. On a daily basis we have both of our gyms used for pickle ball and table tennis. All of our various Mayor's Cup events are always filled to capacity. We also have a bocce league, bowling league and co-ed softball. Anyone interested in any and all of

our programs are urged to stop by and participate.

MN: What are the various recreation sports offered for children?

Lange: There is so much that we offer! Monroe children are heavily involved in cheerleading, football, wrestling, ice hockey and so much more. All of our sports have a no-cut policy and everyone – regardless of ability – is encouraged to join in the fun. You can see a full list of youth sports at www.monroerec.com.

MN: Are there programs available for special needs individuals?

Lange: Special needs children are welcomed to join any of our sports programs. It is completely at the discretion of the guardian or parent. Children who need a "buddy" in order to participate in sports may join our Special Sports program. The Special Sports program has volunteers who assist on a one-on-one basis. For more information about the program and contact information, visit the website or give us a call.

MN: In your personal opinion, Mary, what would you say are the most popular events that the Recreation Center hosts throughout the year?

Lange: No question, our most well-attended events are the Holiday Egg Hunt, July 4th Fireworks, Halloween Party and Costume Parade, and

Octoberfest Street Fair.

MN: We can't believe summer is around the corner. Is it too early to ask you about upcoming summer camp?

Lange: Not at all. We spend the entire year crafting an amazing, memorable camp experience for Monroe children. Our summer camp program maintains a steady roster of approximately 1,000 children. Every year we offer new adventures, trips and creative art classes - all at very affordable rates. Registration is scheduled to begin sometime in April. We'll let you know at monroerec.com

MN: It's a new decade! Any plans to kick off the Roaring Twenties with some new fun?

Lange: You bet. New for 2020 will be corn hole and trivia tournaments. Many other programs and ideas are in the planning stages right now. We are looking to expand the use of our existing parks in new ways. Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks and months.

MN: Where can new residents find the Recreation Center? When can we stop by?

Lange: Visit us at 120 Monmouth Road. We are open 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day of the week. In July and August, the weekend hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ■

Cultural Arts Events Calendar

- March 29** Slow Hands: The Music of Eric Clapton
4:00 pm
Monroe Twp. High School PAC
- April 6** Chamber Music Concert Series, presented by the Princeton Symphony Orchestra
1:00 pm, Monroe Twp. Public Library
- April 26** Princeton Symphony Orchestra (full orchestra performance)
4:00 pm
Monroe Twp. High School PAC
- May 30** Duke Ellington and the Harlem Renaissance, presented by the NJ Tap Ensemble
7:00 pm, Monroe Twp. High School PAC
- July - Aug.** Summer Concerts
Popular bands and ethnic heritage music
Thursdays at 6:00 pm
Thompson Park, Monroe Twp. Outdoor
- October** Annual Juried Art Show
Monroe Twp. Public Library

State DOT Adds Left-Turn Arrow at Route 33, Applegarth Road and Butcher Road

Long-Sought Project Completed

Monroe Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro announced that a major road improvement project on Route 33 is completed and fully operational.

“We have heard and responded to residents about the need for left-turn arrows on Route 33 at Applegarth Road and Butcher Road,” Mayor Tamburro said. “Because Route 33 is a state highway, we went to our state legislators and asked them to intervene and fast track

the project with the state Department of Transportation.”

Mayor Tamburro expressed his great appreciation to Assemblyman Benson, Chairman of the Assembly Transportation Committee, and his colleagues representing the 14th Legislative District: Sen. Linda Greenstein and Assemblyman Wayne DeAngelo, who helped move this major intersection improvement project to completion.

“Working with our state and county leaders who serve Monroe, I am extremely pleased to report that work is finished on a much-needed dedicated left-turn arrow on both sides of Route 33,” Mayor Tamburro said. “This project is very important to our residents and I can’t thank our legislators enough for getting this project to the top of the pile at the state transportation department.”

“Improvements to this



intersection were very much needed and I am pleased that this project has been completed expeditiously,” said Assemblyman Benson. “Local motorists and area residents should now experience safer and easier travel through the area.”

The project began in

late September, following an agreement between the State of New Jersey, Middlesex County and Monroe Township. Last year, at the urging of Mayor Tamburro, the state added a left turn signal at Route 33 and Perrinneville Road as part of the completed project. ■

Affordable Housing *Continued from page 4*

The Impact

Monroe was able to decrease its overall housing obligation by 62% from Fair Share Housing’s number of 11,615 units to 4,379 units for a mix of both market-rate and affordable housing. Monroe was one of the few towns able to get non-housing development, including 625,000 square feet of commercial/retail space as part of these negotiations. In the end, the fight reduced the municipal obligation by 7,236 units fewer than what was proposed by Fair Share Housing. Other towns, like South Brunswick and West Windsor, continued to battle in court and ended with Court decisions requiring many more units than Monroe. Furthermore, in the

absence of an agreement, builders can come in with “builder remedy lawsuits” in those towns and get approvals for high-density housing in unplanned locations, effectively bypassing the municipalities’ zoning power.

When Does Round 3 Get Built?

To comply with the settlement, the Monroe Planning Board was required by the court to put in place zoning that would allow the units to be built. To be clear, the settlement establishes zoning to meet this affordable housing settlement, but it does not require developers to build. We have seen that it takes time (up to three decades) for affordable housing developments to be constructed because they are based on

market forces. If there is no market demand for housing, then builders delay construction. We all continue to see construction in Monroe – based on this settlement – but it is not all being done at one time.

Again, as a reminder, the development known as “Stratford at Monroe” was approved in the 1990s for affordable housing. Twenty-five years later, it is still being built out, based on 25-year-old approvals. Similarly, “Monroe Manor” which was also approved in the 1990s; finally completed construction last year.

Holding Developers Accountable

We continue to hold developers accountable to their court-ordered agreements. When the so-called

eagle developer on Route 33 (on the East Windsor border) tried to change its plan and increase housing density from what was previously approved by the Court, the Zoning Board rejected the plans. The Township and the Mayor were sued by the developer, and the case is currently in Superior Court.

And when the developer at Mounts Mills and Spotswood Englishtown Road decided to build more market-rate units before completing the required affordable housing, Monroe stepped in to deny new building permits and hold the developer to its agreement. The developer has sued the Township for this action, and the Township is defending itself in

Superior Court.

Development of the Next 5 Years

Looking forward, 96% of new housing construction over the next five years will be tied to the court-ordered COAH/affordable housing requirements outlined above. We will continue to monitor developers to ensure they stay within the court agreement.

We hope this explanation helps clarify a complicated issue with significant impact on our community. We will hold public forums on this issue so residents can ask questions and voice concerns about this issue, current litigation and the current state of developments. Visit the Township website for more details. ■

Join Us for Strategic Planning Session for the Monroe Township Schools

March 23, 2020 - Design the District's Destiny – Goals and Objectives (snow date March 30, 2020)

Time: 7 pm

Location: Monroe Township High School
200 Schoolhouse Road

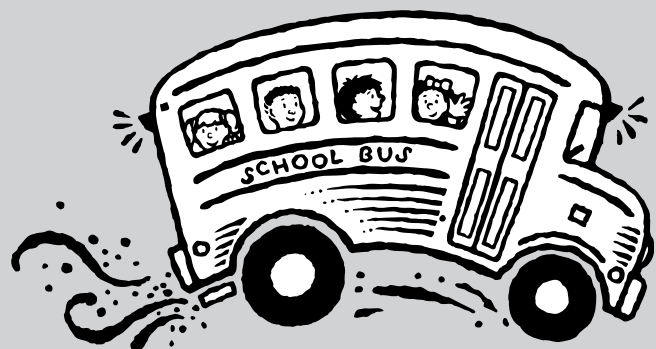
The Board of Education invites you to participate in a Strategic Planning initiative, along with your neighbors, community members, friends, teachers, and school district administrators, to create a shared vision for the future of Monroe Township School District.

This process will be facilitated by New Jersey School Boards Association. Planning meetings are being held with district stakeholders to create the essential elements of a strategic plan: vision, goals, and objectives.

We will be discussing the strengths of the district and the challenges that we face. We will be creating a shared vision for the district, and developing ways and goals to tackle those challenges.

We are inviting staff members, parents, students, community leaders and other interested members of the public to contribute their thoughts, ideas and hopes – so that we can effectively plan for the future of our students.

Please plan on attending these important meetings. ■



Monroe Township School News

By: Dr. Dori Alvich, Superintendent of Schools



Dr. Dori Alvich

I began my new position as Superintendent of Schools last July, and I am thrilled to be leading such a dynamic and vibrant group of professionals who teach, support, and enrich our students. While I am new to the role of Superintendent, I am not new to our district. I began working with the staff and students of Monroe Township in 2004 as the Assistant Principal of both Mill Lake and Woodland Elementary Schools, and in 2008 I became the principal of Brookside Elementary School, where I served for seven years before becoming Assistant Superintendent of Schools in 2014. Prior to my time in Monroe, I taught in both the Robbinsville and Freehold Township School Districts in grades one to

eight. In addition to the work that I do with our school district now as Superintendent, I am also a member of the New Jersey Leaders to Leaders program where I mentor new principals and assistant principals throughout the state.

One of my priorities as superintendent is to support students through social-emotional learning. I am a member of a national cohort of school administrators promoting social-emotional learning focused on implementing strategies to support all students. As superintendent, one of my tasks for this school year will be to develop a strategic plan for our district, a process that will include community input. At the 2019 Summer Administrator Workshop, a vision of where we see our district in the future was developed; however, it is only a part of the overall strategic plan. I encourage anyone interested in contributing to the strategic plan to contact me to become a part of this process. The goal of the strategic plan is to develop a vision to guide the

district, set goals, and objectives. We began this process on January 14, 2020 with our first public meeting, yet if you missed that meeting, feel free to attend any of the next two meetings. See below for more information on how you can become involved in this process.

Last September, Dr. Adam Layman was approved as the new Assistant Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Layman began working in Monroe Township 17 years ago as a teacher, advancing to assistant principal, and principal. I am excited to welcome him to the central office administrative team.

Communication from the district will be available through many outlets including the district website (<https://www.monroe.k12.nj.us/>), the district Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/monroe.k12.nj.us/>), and the district Twitter account (@mtsdfalcons). Be sure to follow us for up-to-date information. If you would like to sign up to receive our district newsletter, *The Monroe Pulse*, please go to our website. ■



Academy Learning Center Hosts a Day of Collaborative Friendship

Woodland Elementary Students Visit for an Annual Day of Fun and Activities

There are only a few things in life more important than friendship.

That's why – 14 years ago – life-long friends Melissa Macwhorter, an Academy Learning Center (ALC) teacher, and Abbe Fleming, a fifth-grade teacher at Woodland Elementary School, created a special day to bring together two schools from Monroe Township.

As part of the Education Services Commission of New Jersey (ESCNJ), ALC offers comprehensive programming for pupils with autism or multiple disabilities.

The day is always filled with friendship-building activities that help create relationships among the diverse group of students.

"We've had such an incredible friendship over the years and now we can help foster other incredible friendships between our

students," said Macwhorter.

During their most recent visit, students played a variety of games and activities together - including badminton with balloons. They also created art projects entitled, "It's Snow Cool to Make New Friends," in which each student decorated a snowman with a word that reminded them of friendship.

Words such as "nice," "thoughtful" and "kind" were suggested, among others. They ended the day with a group lunch, eating, chatting and learning about each other.

"All of these activities are designed to encourage communication and interaction between the students," added Macwhorter.

Creating friendships is only one important part of this day. The other important aspect of this joint meeting is raising awareness around autism. That

is why a brief orientation is given to the students by ALC Principal Dr. Erik Solberg, with a candid discussion about autism and multiple disabilities.

After the yearly visit, Woodland students become "Autism Ambassadors" and educate other students in their grades 4-5 school during Autism Awareness Month in April.

"Our visits back and forth are always such a rewarding experience," said Fleming. "We are so grateful to the Academy Learning Center for welcoming us each year, and teaching us the importance of tolerance, compassion, and the true meaning of friendship."

ALC students will soon visit Woodland School for another fun-filled day of activities. ■



Photo Credit: ESCNJ

Mill Lake Celebrates Veteran's Day



Ms. Papandrea & Mrs. Pandolfi's first-grade students met with members of the American Legion Post 522. The students had the opportunity to share a musical and informational presentation. The American Legion members shared their experiences and showed the students how to fold the American flag.

Unified Program Visits Our Elementary Students



On December 12, the Monroe schools held the second-annual Winter Fest for our special education students and Falcon Pals. It was a great success!

Senior Services



April 2020 Center Activities

Pre-Register for All Programs.
> REQUIRED EACH MONTH! <

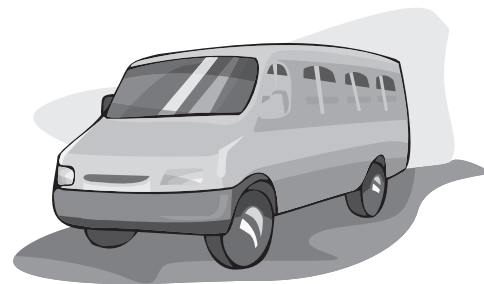
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"Township of Monroe"

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>Holistic Wellness Fair</p> <p>Saturday, April 25, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.</p> <p><i>Awaken Your Body, Mind, & Spirit with Free Demos & Helpful Tips.</i></p>	<p>Walking Club</p> <p>Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays at 8:30 a.m.</p> <p><i>Take the Center's Walking Trail to Good Health.</i></p>	<p>1 9:00 <i>Healthy Bones Grads</i> 9:00 Total Toning (\$) 9:30 <i>Beginners Mah Jongg</i> 10:15 Bodies in Motion (\$) 10:30 Healthy Bites 11:15 Breathe & Stretch (\$) 1:00 <i>Games// Beg. Bones & Parkinson's Support Group</i> 1:30 David Aaron Presents</p>	<p>2 9:00 Chair Yoga (\$) 9:30 <i>Ceramics (Make Up)</i> 10:30 Sprains & Strains 10:15 Body Works (\$) 12:15 <i>Duplicate Bridge</i> 12:30 Mixed Watercolor (\$) 1:30 TOP TV SHOWS</p> <p><i>Evening Classes Start Tonight & Saturday A.M. this Weekend</i></p>	<p>3 9:00 Zumba Gold (\$) 9:30/10:00 <i>Games & Canasta</i> 10:00 Dabble & Do Art (\$) 10:00 Boot Camp (\$) 10:30 To Cable or Not 10:30 <i>Harmonica</i> 10:30 Qi Gong (\$) 12:30 Watercolor Exp. (\$) 1:00 <i>Table Tennis</i> 1:30 Fake News or Not</p>
<p>6 9:00 Shape It Up 9:30 <i>Drop-In Bridge</i> 10:00 Move & Groove 10:00 Facial Yoga (\$) 11:15 Tai Chi/ 12:15 Beg. Tai 1:00 <i>Yarn It / Games /Tennis</i> 1:00 <i>Beg. Mah Jongg</i> 1:30 Trivial Pursuit 3:00 <i>Travel Club</i></p>	<p>7 9:00 <i>Chorus/ Mat Yoga</i> 9:15 Body Works 9:30 <i>Game</i> 10:00 <i>Beg. Meditation</i> 10:15 Triple 15 10:30 Status of Earth Day 11:15 <i>Pilates-Barre</i> 12 <i>Chess-Mates/ 1 T. Tennis</i> 12:00 <i>Brain Injury Support</i> 1:30 Fred Miller Presents</p>	<p>8 9:00 <i>Healthy Bones Grads</i> 9:00 <i>Total Toning</i> 9:30 <i>Beginners Mah Jongg</i> 10:15 <i>Bodies in Motion</i> 10:30 ARC Citizen CPR 11:15 <i>Breathe & Stretch</i> 1:00 <i>Games/2:00 Cribbage</i> 1:00 <i>Beg. Bones</i> 1:30 Garden State Blooms</p> <p> Happy Passover!</p>	<p>9 9:00 <i>Chair Yoga</i> 9:30 Ceramics (\$) 10:30 <i>iPhone Basics</i> 10:15 <i>Body Works</i> 10:30 Nail & Skin Disorders 12:15 <i>Duplicate Bridge</i> 12:30 <i>Mixed Watercolor</i> 2:00 Music with Matt</p>	<p>10 OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p></p> <p>Good Friday</p>
<p>13 9:00 <i>Shape it Up</i> 9:30 <i>Drop-In Bridge</i> 10:00 <i>Move & Groove</i> 10:00 <i>Facial Yoga</i> 10:30 Judge for Yourself 11:15 <i>Tai Chi/ 12:15 Beg. Tai</i> 1:00 <i>Yarn It / Games /Tennis</i> 1:00 <i>Beginners Mah Jongg</i> 2:00 Sunset Boulevard</p>	<p>14 9:00 <i>Chorus/ Mat Yoga</i> 9:15 <i>Body Works</i> 9:30 <i>Games/10:00 Meditation</i> 10:15 <i>Triple 15</i> 10:30 Author Tips 10:30 <i>Between the Covers</i> 11:00 <i>Green Thumbs</i> 11:15 <i>Pilates-Barre</i> 12 <i>Chess-Mates/ 1 T. Tennis</i> 1:30 Tony Award Winners</p>	<p>15 9:00 <i>Healthy Bones Grads</i> 9:00 <i>Total Toning</i> 9:30 <i>Beg. Mah Jongg</i> 10:30 TED Talk 10:15 <i>Bodies in Motion</i> 11:15 <i>Breathe & Stretch</i> 1:00 <i>Beg. Bones // Games</i> 2:00 Chef Lori Demo 2:00 Center Cast 2:30 <i>Diabetes Support</i></p>	<p>16 9:00 <i>Chair Yoga</i> 9:30 <i>Ceramics</i> 10:15 <i>Body Works</i> 10:30 Say What? 12:15 <i>Duplicate Bridge</i> 12:30 <i>Mixed Watercolor</i> 1:30 Lower Manhattan</p>	<p>17 9:00 <i>Zumba Gold</i> 9:30/10:00 <i>Games & Canasta</i> 10:00 <i>Dabble & Do Art</i> 10:00 <i>Boot Camp</i> 10:30 <i>Qi Gong/ Harmonica</i> 10:30 Floral Frames 12:30 <i>Watercolor Experience</i> 1:00 <i>Table Tennis</i> 1:30 CBD Facts 7:00 Neil Diamond Tribute</p>
<p>20 9:00 <i>Shape it Up</i> 9:30 <i>Drop-In Bridge</i> 10:00 <i>Move & Groove</i> 10:00 Fun with Yiddish (\$) 10:00 <i>Facial Yoga</i> 10:30 Pelvic Floor Health 11:15 <i>Tai Chi/ 12:15 Beg. Tai</i> 1:00 <i>Yarn It / Games /Tennis</i> 1:30 Lee's Surrender</p>	<p>21 9:00 <i>Chorus/ Mat Yoga</i> 9:15 <i>Bod. Works/9:30 Games</i> Skin Cancer Scr., By Appt. 10:00 <i>Beg. Meditation</i> 10:15 <i>Triple 15</i> 10:30 <i>Bereavement Group</i> 11:15 <i>Pilates-Barre</i> 12 <i>Chess-Mates/ 1 T. Tennis</i> 1:30 1930's Germany 1:30 <i>Cancer Support</i></p>	<p>22 9:00 <i>Healthy Bones Grads</i> 9:00 <i>Total Toning</i> 9:30 <i>Beg. Mah Jongg</i> 10:15 <i>Bodies in Motion</i> 10:30 Watersheds & You 11:15 <i>Breathe & Stretch</i> 1:00 <i>Games/ 2:00 Cribbage</i> 1:00 <i>Beg. Bones</i> 2:00 Michael & Ted Present 2:00 <i>Caregivers Support</i></p>	<p>23 9:00 <i>Chair Yoga</i> 9:30 <i>Ceramics</i> 10:15 <i>Body Works</i> 10:30 Shock Your Chakras 12:15 <i>Duplicate Bridge</i> 12:30 <i>Mixed Watercolor</i> 1:00 Phantom on Stage</p>	<p>24 9:00 <i>Zumba Gold</i> 9:30/10:00 <i>Games & Canasta</i> 10:00 <i>Boot Camp</i> 10:00 <i>Dabble & Do Art</i> 10:30 <i>Harmonica/ Qi Gong</i> 12:30 <i>Watercolor Experience</i> 1:00 FRIENDS BINGO (\$) 1:00 <i>Table Tennis</i> 1:30 Jerry's Travels</p>
<p>27 9:00 <i>Shape It Up</i> 9:30 <i>Drop-In Bridge</i> 10:00 <i>Fun with Yiddish</i> 10:00 <i>Move & Groove</i> 10:00 <i>Facial Yoga</i> 10:30 Allergies' Affects 11:15 <i>Tai Chi/ 12:15 Beg. Tai</i> 1 <i>Yarn It / Games / T. Tennis</i> 1:00 Life's Support 2:00 Joe & Ted Comedy</p>	<p>28 9:00 <i>Gentle Mat Yoga</i> 9:00 <i>Chorus</i> 9:15 <i>Bod. Works/9:30 Games</i> 10:00 <i>Beg. Meditation</i> 10:00 Ice Cream Glassware 10:15 <i>Triple 15</i> 10:30 Plate with MyPlate 11:15 <i>Pilates-Barre</i> 12 <i>Chess-Mates/ 1 T. Tennis</i> 1:30 Buddy Gale Big Band 1:30 <i>Science Today</i></p>	<p>29 9:00 <i>Healthy Bones Grads</i> 9:00 <i>Total Toning</i> 10:15 <i>Bodies in Motion</i> 10:00 Art of the Masters 10:30 Keep This, Toss That 11:15 <i>Breathe & Stretch</i> 1:00 <i>Games/ Beg. Bones</i> 1:00 Sundae Social</p>	<p>30 9:00 <i>Chair Yoga</i> 9:30 <i>Ceramics</i> 10:15 <i>Body Works</i> 10:30 Maya Angelou 12:15 <i>Duplicate Bridge</i> 12:30 <i>Mixed Watercolor</i> 1:00 IL Divo</p>	<p>If You are Unable to Attend a Program, You Must Call 609-448-7140, ext. 216, to CANCEL.</p> <p>Waitlisted Members Will Appreciate It!</p>

Transportation Calendar

For trips with a fee, please either register online thru Community Pass and pay with a credit card or in-person and pay by check payable to "Township of Monroe" or exact cash. You must be a registered member of the Senior Center and have a cell phone number on file prior to signing up for trips.

- For free trips, you can register online, in-person, or by calling Transportation at 609-443-0511.
- Please keep in mind that not all trips are wheelchair/scooter accessible. Therefore, please call the office prior to registration day to determine which trips are accessible.
- If you are unable to participate in a trip, you must call 609-443-0511, to cancel.
- All trips leave from the Transportation Office unless otherwise noted.



Wed. April 1	Thurs. April 2	Tues. April 14	Wed. April 15	Tues. April 21
"Cabaret" at Bristol Riverside Theatre Bristol, PA Cost is \$66 p.p. Township Bus 10:30 a.m. Lunch at King George Inn & Show. <i>You must be able to climb stairs.</i> Home approx. 6-6:30 p.m.	Columbus Flea Market Township Bus 9:30 a.m. Home approx. 1:30 p.m.	Rice's Flea Market Township Bus 9:00 a.m. Home approx. 2 p.m.	Delaware Art Museum Wilmington, DE Charter Bus 9:30 a.m. Home approx. 5 p.m.	"Sherlock Holmes Returns" Hunterdon Hills Township Bus 10:15 a.m. Home approx. 5 p.m.
Thurs. April 23	Wed. May 13	Wed. May 20	Thurs. May 21	Tues. May 26
"Springsteen: His Hometown" Monmouth County Historical Society Township Bus 9:45 a.m. Home approx. 1-1:30 p.m.	Maryland Zoo Cost is \$15 p.p. Charter Bus 8:15 a.m. Includes bus & admission. The Carousel & Train Ride are additional charge. <i>A lot of walking is required for this trip.</i> Rain date: Thurs., May 14 Home approx. 6-6:30 p.m.	"I'm Not Rappaport" Bucks County Playhouse New Hope, PA Cost is \$39 p.p. Township Bus 10:30 a.m. Home approx. 6 p.m.	Armed Services Salute Doolans in Spring Lake Cost is \$53 p.p. Includes: Township Bus 10:30 a.m., Lunch and Show Home approx. 4:30-5 p.m.	Longwood Gardens Kennett Square, PA Cost is \$18 p.p. Includes: Charter Bus 9:00 a.m. & admission <i>Walking is a must for this trip.</i> Home approx. 4:30-5 p.m.



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Visit us on the web at
www.midstate-realty.com

Summer Camp Employment

Deadline for Summer Rec Camp employment and Counselor in Training applications is March 31st. The deadline for MTSEPA Camp employment applications is April 30th.

Applications can be found online at www.monroerec.com or by stopping by the Community Center at 120 Monmouth Road.



Monroe Township Pets

REMINDER:
Animal license renewals due by March 31. \$10 late fee applied after deadline.

For more details, contact the Monroe Township Clerk's office at 732-656-4574.




Providing Comfort

On January 8, Assistant Library Director Karen Klapperstuck and Teen Services Coordinator Emily Mazzoni from the Monroe Township Library distributed 40 completed fidget quilts to patients at the Parker Adult Day Center.



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