



# Kingwood Chronicle

## March, 2010 Edition



### Mayor's Greeting

A little over five years ago when I first took office my main focus was the preservation of farms and open space within Kingwood Township. Since then the citizens of Kingwood have supported the efforts of the Committee to use and leverage the open space tax monies already being collected to preserve several farms and many hundreds of acres. I want to make it clear that all of these preservation efforts, including the service of loans for preservation, have been funded solely through the designated open space monies.

Committeewoman Niemann, Deputy Mayor Lubitz and I have worked diligently in the effort to preserve our precious farms, our natural resources and our way of life. We will continue to partner with nonprofit organizations, and county and state agencies to bring back your fair share of preservation tax dollars.

You will also be seeing a new solar array being installed on the roof of the township's public works building. Along with a grant from the BPU for \$115,000 and energy tax credits, the system will pay itself off in approximately 5-6 years. From that point on there will be no cost for electricity consumed at the public works, saving the taxpayers over \$7,000 per year.

The Committee has also pursued many other grant opportunities available to New Jersey municipalities. Recently we were awarded a grant from the Delaware River Joint Toll Commission for \$377,000 for the repaving and guardrail system for Tumble Falls Road. (By the way, I had nothing to do with the selection of Tumble Falls for those of you who know that's the road I live on.) We are in the process of applying for more Toll Commission funding for the other roads in our Township that intersect Route 29 and the river.

We lost a long-time friend and resident of the Township, Helen Gergar, in 2008. Helen generously donated the preserved Gergar family farm of over 100 acres to the Township in her will. We recently took possession of the farm, which will be farmed in perpetuity by the Leon family. Kingwood is a wonderful American community in which I have lived and raised my children. With your help, we will keep it so for theirs.

-James E. Burke, Mayor

### Celebrate Spring With a Hike- Save the date and join us!

The members of the Kingwood Township Open Space Committee have organized our second spring hike to be held on **Saturday, April 24, 2010**. We will hike the **Kugler Woods**, a 220 acre preserved property that offers a walk through mature woodlands and views of the Delaware River from the Kingwood bluffs.

Located off Route 29, the property has been preserved since 2001 and has a history of providing timber for boatbuilding from pre-revolutionary times.

**Meeting and Parking:** We will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the D&R Canal Parking area off Route 29 south just past mile marker 28. If you find yourself at Byram, you have gone too far. The event will be cancelled in the event of steady rain. All are welcome and there is no charge.

**Location:** Kugler Woods

**Date:** Saturday, April 24, 2010

**Time:** 10:00 am-12:00 (approximately)

**Hiking level:** Moderate, steady climb

**Trail conditions:** Rocks in trail and rustic.

Wear sturdy shoes, bring along water. No restroom facilities.

**Wanted:**

Smaller municipalities run more efficiently than larger municipalities and our success in this regard can be summed up in one word: VOLUNTEERS! We are fortunate to have many residents of our township who are willing to give their time and skills for our benefit. We are currently seeking assistance with the following positions:

**Board of Adjustment**-One vacancy-Alt #2

**Housing Board**- One vacancy

**Commercial & Industrial Comm.**- One vacancy

**Citizen Advisory Panel-Park/Rec**- One vacancy

**Planning Board**- One vacancy- Alt. #2

**Sustainable Kingwood**- Unlimited opportunities, limited-scope/duration projects available

Please contact either Cindy Keller, Deputy Clerk, or Mary MacConnell, Twp. Clerk, at 996-4276 if you want more information.

**Recycling News:**

Township Recycling Coordinator Cindy Niciecki wants to thank all of the residents and businesses of Kingwood who are recycling. Whether you are using curbside recycling pick up or bringing your recyclables to the township's recycling depot, you are to be commended for your efforts towards helping us achieve our goal of recycling 50% of the waste we generate.

For those of you who are not recycling, Cindy encourages you to start now, it is simple. Set all of your newspapers, magazines, office paper, junk mail and cardboard boxes, bottles, cans and plastic containers aside for recycling. Before you know it you will be filling your recycling bins faster than your trash can.

Recycling isn't just good for the planet and our future generations, it is also the law. Our township ordinance requires that all of the aforementioned items be recycled. Before you throw anything away, think about recycling.

**More on Recycling...**

The more we recycle, the more money we get from our "tonnage grant", so your participation helps us to continue to do more.

*We are open from 7:30-3:00, M-F and the second Saturday of every month, 9:00-12:00 at 255 Union Road, at the Dept. of Public Works building.*

**Parks and Recreation**

As always, this committee has been hard at work on planning wonderful events for all of the residents of Kingwood Township. The next event coming up is the annual Easter Egg Hunt on 3/27 at 1:00 at Kingwood Park.

Movie nights will be continued in the upcoming spring and summer months, starting on Friday, 5/14 with a double feature: Night at the Museum and NATM: Battle of the Smithsonian.

Additional movie nights: 6/11- Cars, 7/9- Bedtime Stories, 8/13- Where the Wild Things Are, and 9/3- Up.

For a schedule of upcoming activities, please check the township website, [www.kingwoodtownship.com](http://www.kingwoodtownship.com).

Welcome to our new park director team, Lisa Marie and Jamie Weinschenk. As always, please call 996-0448 to reserve the pavilion or any other part of the park for events. If you have questions you would like to refer to the Park and Recreation Committee contact Secretary, Cindy Keller at 908-996-4203.

**Township Records Archiving/Storage**

By the time you receive this newsletter we will have had the kickoff for our township archiving project. We joined with the county in applying for a records management grant and we are taking this opportunity to dedicate some of our time to organize our archives, eliminating duplication and enhancing our ability to be responsive to requests for information in a timely manner. The county was awarded the grant and we look forward to using our share of the proceeds to improve the availability of Kingwood Township records as well as reduce the retention of multiple copies of similar documents.

**Ways to give locally and make a difference:**

**Our pets:**

The newly formed nonprofit, West Hunterdon Animal Welfare Foundation (WHAWF) has officially been awarded nonprofit status from the state of NJ and accepts donations at P.O. Box 7, Baptistown, NJ 08803. They need foster families, mainly for cats, and monetary donations. If you would like to volunteer or know someone who would, please contact them at info@whawf.org or visit their website at www.whawf.org for more information.

**Our heritage:**

The Oak Summit School Historical Society restored and maintains our only remaining one room schoolhouse in its original state. To arrange for a tour, please call Irene Leon at 996-4633. Donations are always welcome!

**Emergency services:**

Kingwood Twp. Volunteer Rescue Squad and the Kingwood Twp. Volunteer Fire Dept. are both always seeking more volunteers and they appreciate your donations. Our residents can count on these selfless volunteers to help them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, when a crisis arises. Don't forget to thank these folks and offer to help, if you can.

**Environmental Commission**

***Arsenic in well water:***

We all rely on private wells for water. Recent studies have shown that the most common problem for well water in Kingwood Township is arsenic contamination. Between 2002 and 2007, out of 194 wells tested in Kingwood during home sales, 79 of them (41%) exceeded the safe drinking water level for arsenic. Arsenic must be taken seriously, as it is a known carcinogen and increases the risk of many diseases. The source of arsenic is the weathering of natural minerals within our bedrock aquifers.

The Environmental Commission will be setting up an easy and affordable testing opportunity for arsenic in your water in the coming months. Please check the township website for further information.

***Underground Storage Tank Remediation Grant***

***Opportunity:*** Any of you who may have underground fuel tanks at home can access the following website for information on funds available to help you with tank removal and remediation:

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/srp/finance/ustfund>

Please use this resource! A township resident is employed in this department and has graciously offered to help anyone in Kingwood Township who needs assistance with removing/remediating an underground storage tank. Please call the township office to get more information.

*To review the EC's 2010 Objectives, please visit [www.kingwoodtownship.com](http://www.kingwoodtownship.com).*

**Land Use Survey:** Thanks! We received about 350 completed surveys from the mailing we did at the end of the year. We are compiling the data and we look forward to sharing the results with you in the next edition.

**Census 2010**

Please be sure to return your census form in a timely manner. Any census forms not returned will require follow up phone calls and visits from census employees, adding to the cost of conducting the census. Thank you for making all of us in Kingwood Township count, and please be sure to call 866-872-6868 or visit [www.census.gov/2010census](http://www.census.gov/2010census) if you have any questions or if you need assistance in completing the form.

**Other Community News:**

*Kingwood Merry Mixers-* The Kingwood Merry Mixers senior citizens' club meets the third Thursday of each month from March to December for a brief meeting, chit-chat and refreshments. Bylaws spell out the club's operations, and each member pays an annual due of \$10, which offsets the costs of trips and outings. We have a coordinator who plans bus trips to dinner theaters, etc.

Other activities throughout the year are planned by the club president which includes a pot luck luncheon, a picnic at Kingwood Park and a Christmas party. In the summer months the club meets at different restaurants for lunch.

Speakers are invited to talk about timely and important subjects of interest and we encourage anyone who would like to come and speak and also anyone, 55 years or older, who would like to become a member, to contact our president at 806-7286.

## Open Space Preservation Update:

**Open Space:** Kingwood’s largest preservation initiative in its history, the property on Horseshoe Bend Road, known to some as the old Clinton Farm and to others as Equestrian Village, is scheduled to close by early May. Please keep an eye on the township website for updates.

Please join us at the lively joint meetings of the Open Space and Agriculture Advisory Committees, first Thurs. of the month at 7:30 pm to learn more about preservation efforts in the township.

As always, a “shout out” to Liz Schmidt, our volunteer Open Space Coordinator, for her commitment to helping farmers and large landowners learn about their preservation options.

## Affordable Housing Mandates

You may recall from our last newsletter that Kingwood Township is participating in litigation challenging the validity of several of the components of COAH’s rules. We have no news for you on this front, but at this point we continue to have to operate on the premise that “third round” compliance is necessary.

You may notice that perc tests will be taking place at the site of the Ukarish Farm on Union Road in the upcoming weeks. The Township has entered into a contract with Habitat for Humanity to construct up to 8 affordable housing units on the 7+ acres subdivided off of the Ukarish Farm. The actual number of units will depend on the septic and well testing results.

## Sustainable Kingwood Team

A nonprofit group called “Sustainable Jersey” was formed and we have officially joined the effort as “Sustainable Kingwood”. For more information on the program, visit [www.sustainablejersey.com](http://www.sustainablejersey.com). On the top of our list is applying for a grant to conduct a municipal energy audit. We are also planning a roadside clean up campaign in April.

## Ethics Training Comes to Kingwood:

For those of us in New Jersey, it seems that issues of ethics are in the newspapers on an almost daily basis. Each time a headline announces a prosecution or indictment for ethical lapses by a local government official all public servants bear the brunt of the actions of those who are “ethically challenged”. In this environment it is essential that local government be proactive in creating an ethical environment where all employees and officials are trained in ethics in order to regain the public’s trust.

On February 3, Kingwood Township hosted an ethics seminar for elected officials, volunteers and municipal employees of the towns represented in the Del Val sending districts. More than 30 people came together for a workshop at the township building presented by Susan Jacobucci, Esq, Director of the NJ Division of Local Government Services. Ms. Jacobucci is regarded as one of New Jersey’s preeminent authorities on government ethics and has lectured widely throughout the state.

Ms. Jacobucci reminded us, “Whether one realizes it, everyday everyone makes ethics decisions. Training to apprise employees and officials of ethical dilemma possibilities and challenges in everyday decision-making are essential to help create an ethical culture.”

Ms. Jacobucci praised Kingwood for being proactive in holding this training and for involving such a broad cross section of individuals who are involved in public service in the township.

“All too often I get called in after an incident has happened.” Ms. Jacobucci commented.

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**Open Space/Recreation Survey:** Please stop by the township office or go to [www.kingwoodtownship.com](http://www.kingwoodtownship.com) to give us your guidance on our update of this element of the Township’s Master Plan.

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## Meals on Wheels in Hunterdon:

Meals on Wheels needs volunteer drivers in Kingwood Township. Please serve housebound seniors in our area a hot noontime meal. The commitment to drive is only once a month, which takes an hour or two to complete. Please call 908-284-0735 to get more information or sign up to help.