



MAYOR'S CORNER

Most of you are aware that the third round of proposed rules and regulations for the low and medium income Mount Laurel (COAH) obligation have been drafted and are published for public comment. The Mount Laurel court decision made New Jersey's 566 municipalities share a constitutional obligation to provide housing opportunities that are affordable to households of modest income. Our community has met the first two rounds of obligations.

The proposed regulations represent a significant departure from the first two rounds of methodologies; for as opposed to being assigned "fair share" housing obligations based on a complex formula that considered projected growth and a distribution of the regional need. Municipalities will now be required to produce affordable housing based on actual growth, which we should be able to manage.

Our third round of obligation numbers will be generated for the period 1999-2014 by actual development in the Borough. The proposed formula would require one affordable unit for every nine housing units built in the Borough starting next year. In addition, one affordable housing unit must be provided for every new thirty jobs created in the Borough.

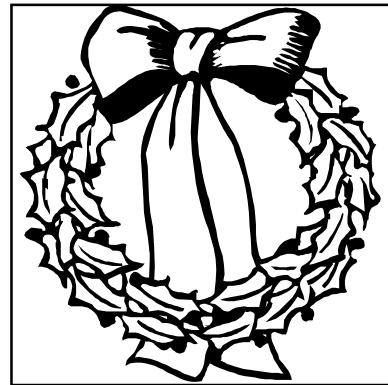
I have had numerous conversations with our Borough Planner and Dr. Suriano, our Land Use Chairman in order to determine what, if any, suggested revisions we should make. We determined that the Borough can manage growth through smart Borough planning and preserve the Borough's future. This is a sensible approach known as SMART growth share and on balance bodes better for our community than the previous two rounds of numbers. In addition, it gives us a significantly greater control of our own destiny.

Not perfect...but better!

Meaningful Holiday Thoughts

The onset of the holiday season presents us with many opportunities. For example, it gives us the time to be with our families, to reflect on the events of the past several months and to consider the many challenges and possibilities of the coming New Year.

At Gill St. Bernard's, as well

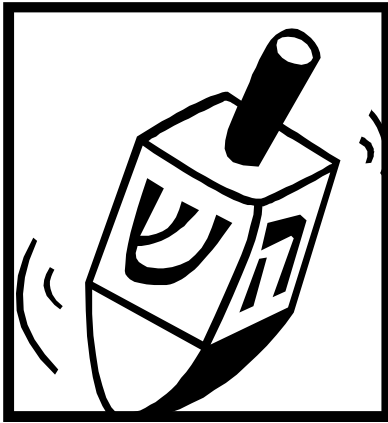


as at many of our area schools, students participate in various community service activities throughout the year. These services become especially meaningful during the holiday season. As well as providing needed services, activities such as collecting

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food for the area food bank, volunteering at a senior citizens' center or working at a nearby soup kitchen are critical learning experiences for our children. The full list of these endeavors by all our students is truly amazing.



Like many people, my one wish at this time of year is that the spirit of the season - the joy of doing for others - will last throughout the year. By supporting the various community service projects in our local schools, this wish can be fulfilled.

So when you encounter a young man or young woman who lives in town and is actively involved in such an endeavor, please extend your thanks and encouragement for his or her efforts to make a difference.

My best wishes to all this holiday season. ❖

S.A. Rowell
Headmaster,
Gill St. Bernard's School

GFWC Peapack-Gladstone Woman's Club, Inc.

The GFWC Peapack-Gladstone Woman's Club meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the 1st floor conference room of the Municipal Building. For information call Gretchen Lynch, President (908) 234-9087 or Patty Whitehouse, Membership Chairman (908) 234-2522. New members or guests are always welcome.

PLANTERS

The planters along Liberty Park, which were purchased and decorated for summer by the Club under the supervision of Helaine Hess-Chairman, will have a holiday theme. We hope that you'll enjoy them.

An origami decorated wish tree will be in the Gladstone Post Office for the benefit of Somerset County Seniors. A needy Senior will greatly appreciate your participation.

For the benefit of the Peapack-Gladstone Library, twenty-four books, prettily wrapped, of various titles will be available at the Library for a donation.

BACKPACKS

One hundred backpacks were purchased for the benefit of the Somerset Headstart Program and delivered by Nanette Paterson, Chairman.

Patty Whitehouse, Past President of the NJSFWC Peapack-Gladstone Woman's Club, Past Vice-President of the Tenth District, General Federation Membership Mentor, one of six in the Nation, has been nominated by the NJSFWC Peapack-Woman's Club for 3rd state Vice President. This position will lead to State President. Our best wishes to Patty in her new challenge. ❖



Campaign Now Underway To Fund New Library

As the end of the year approaches, the fundraising committee of the Friends of the Peapack-Gladstone Library is intensifying its efforts to make sure each household in the Borough is not only aware of the capital campaign, but also the importance of each individual pledge, no matter what size.

According to Allen Crossett, who is chairing the project, about a million dollars is needed to complete the proposed \$1.5 million project. The Friends hope to raise as much of that as possible in order to reduce or eliminate the impact of a new library on property taxes. Just as important, he explained, is having most of the households in the Borough participate at any level.

PLEDGES

“At this time, we are asking for pledges,” he said, “and each pledge functions in a very real way like a vote in a referendum. The support of the community is vitally important to the success of this project.”

Serving with Crossett on the Steering Committee are Friends President Diane Deutsch, Library Branch Director Janet Castelpietra, and Girardy. Members Neighborhood committee include VanderBeek, Kath and Nandita Dastidar. Ralph Bill Muller lead the Committee. Work-Leadership Gift are Cathy Hoskin-Henderson, Bonnie Tom Dill. Mark Callahan, and Mistretta lead the Communications committee.



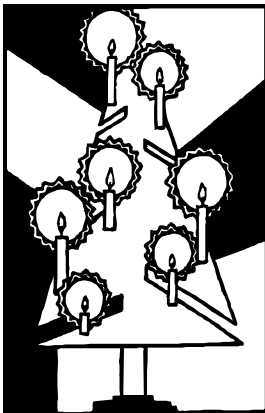
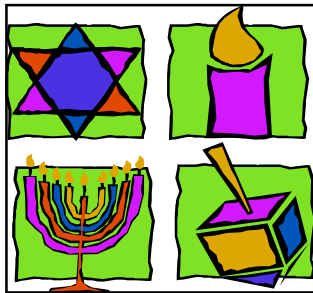
Mayor Vin of the Campaign Florence DiParisi G h o s h - Tursini and Finance ing on the committee son, Lily Tursini, and Verni, Joanne Kathleen

There is room at all levels and on all committees for additional volunteers. Any resident who is interested in helping, or any resident who has not yet received information about the proposed new library, should call Allen Crossett (234-0216), Diane Deutsch (234-9125), or the Library (234-0598). ❖

Youth Art Contest

Beval Saddlery is hosting a Peapack and Gladstone Youth Art Contest. The theme is “Holiday and Horses”. Pictures can be made with crayon, markers, oil paints or watercolors but can be no larger than 16” x 20”. Art will be judged according to four different age groups: 5 years and under, 6 to 9 years, 10 to 14 years, 15 to 18 years. Gift certificate prizes will be awarded to 1st through 3rd place winners in each age group. The deadline for submissions is January 31, 2004. All art must be dropped off through Beval Saddlery, 10 Park Ave,

HAPPY
HOLIDAYS
TO
ALL



Open Space Advisory Committee

The Borough's Open Space Advisory Committee announced last week that the NJDEP Green Acres Planning Incentive Grant Program awarded open space funding totaling \$400,000 to the Borough. This funding was applied for last March, with the help of the Morris Land Conservancy.

Open space progress continues on several fronts, including a new project area along Pottersville Road. The Borough anticipates closing on the acquisition of an 11+ acre open space parcel on Pottersville Road by the end of the year. These successes will help preserve the green 'gateway' to the Borough and help protect the character of the community.



The Committee, with the help of the Morris Land Conservancy and the Borough's Agricultural Committee, is now launching a landowner outreach program in hopes of interesting more of the Borough's land owners in preserving their land. Sandy Urgo, a Land Preservation Specialist with the Morris Land Conservancy, said that she is looking forward to working with the Open Space and Agricultural committees on this important new program. Urgo congratulated the Borough on its proactive approach to preservation and its Green Acres award. "The State planning incentive grant program is a versatile funding mechanism that allows towns access to State funding when it is most needed. Only communities with active open space programs, like Peapack-Gladstone, tend to be awarded this funding," she added. ❖

GAZETTE COMMITTEE

Publisher – Vincent A. Girardy, Mayor
 Editor – John Sweeney
 Design/Layout – Brooke Goode

The Peapack-Gladstone Library

Mon, Fri: 10 a.m.–5:00 p.m.;

Tue, Wed, Thur: 10 a.m.–9 p.m.;

Sat: 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Library homepage: <http://www.somerset.lib.nj.us>
908-234-0598

The Peapack Gladstone Library is located in the Borough Municipal Complex. It is one of seven branches in the Somerset County Library System. All libraries are networked and serviced by a courier to deliver interlibrary loans Monday through Friday. The collection includes recorded books on tape *and* CD, music CDs, videos and DVDs, magazines, and even *books*. The library offers free Internet access. Library cards are free to anyone who lives, works or owns property in the Borough.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Storytime with Jenna (Ages 2-1/2 to 5)

Fridays at 10:15 a.m. and 1:45 p.m.

January 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th

February 6th and 27th

Kids' Club (Grades K to 2)

Join Jenna for stories, crafts and fun.

Tuesday, January 13th at 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 17th at 4:30 p.m.

NEW PROGRAM!!

Storytime in Spanish with Marcella (Ages 2-1/2 to 5)

Enjoy stories and songs in both English and Spanish.

Please call the library to register for this program.

Mondays at 10:30 a.m.

January 26th and February 23rd

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

"Bremen Town Musicians" presented by the Trilogy Repertory Company (Ages 4 +)

Saturday, January 10th at 1:30 p.m.

Program will take place at Greene Hall at St. Luke's Church

Please call the library to register.

Winter crafts with Irene Mortko (Ages 5 +)

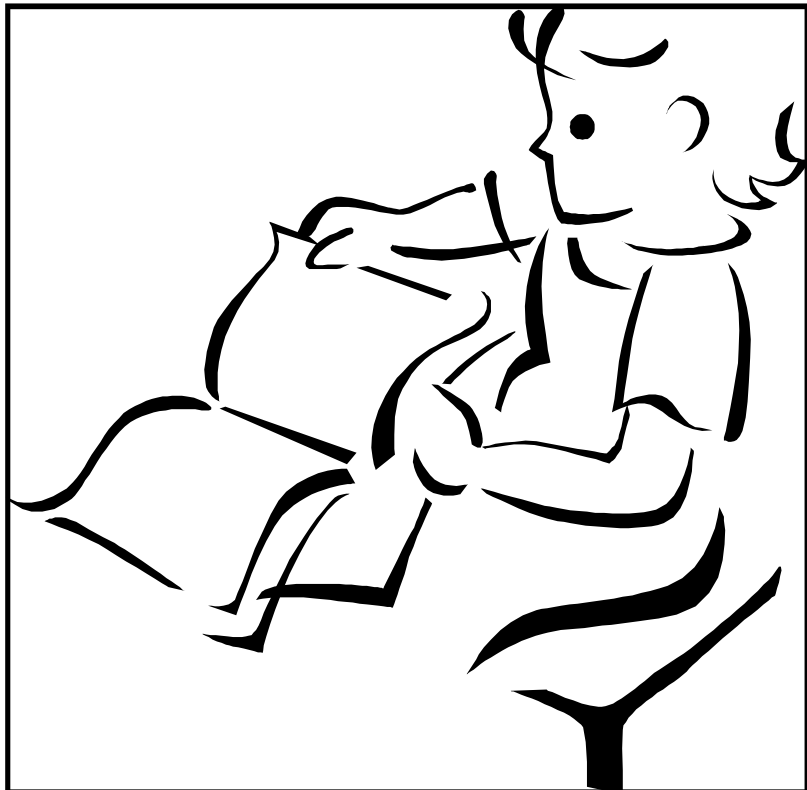
Date and time to be announced.

Please call the library to register.

Valentine's Day crafts with Jenna (Ages 5 +)

Wednesday, February 11th at 4:30 pm

Please call the library to register. ❖



New Jersey Property Tax Relief Programs

NJ SAVER Rebate

Who is Eligible: Residents who owned a home in New Jersey that was their principal residence as of October 1, provided that property taxes are paid on the property for that year.

What is the benefit: The rebate is based on equalized home values (up to \$45,000) and the effective

school tax rate for the municipality. Amounts vary by municipality.

How to File: Call 1-877-658-2972 (toll-free within New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland) or 609-826-4288. Applications can also be filed on the Division's Web site at: **www.njsaverrebate.com**

When to File:
By June 30.*

Homestead Rebate

Who is eligible: Homeowners

and tenants who pay property taxes on their principal residence in New Jersey, either directly or through rent, and whose gross income does not exceed \$100,000 (\$40,000 for homeowners who are not 65 years of age or disabled).

What is the benefit: Rebate ranging from \$90 to \$775.**

How to File: Form HR-1040 (and Form NJ-1040, if required), or Homestead Rebate Application section of Form NJ-1040EZ, or of a return filed electronically using NJ

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Board of Health

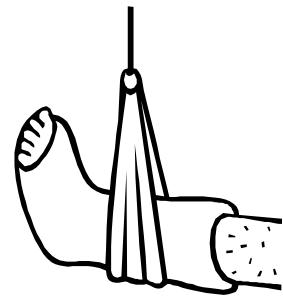
Bernards Township Health Department is contractual public health agency serving Bedminster Township, Bernards Township, Bernardsville Borough, Far Hills Borough, and Peapack & Gladstone Borough in Somerset County, and Chester Borough, Mendham Borough and Mendham Township in Morris County.

Well-Baby / Childhood Vaccinations

Held the second Tuesday of each month at St. James R.C. Church, 8:30-11:00 a.m. in cooperation with the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills. Call 766-0180 for an appointment.

Blood Pressure Screening

Available through the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills, 12 Olcott Avenue, Bernardsville. Call 766-0180 for an appointment.



Low-Cost Screening Mammography Program

Conducted in conjunction with ED Imaging of Bedminster and The Radiology Center at Harding, this program is offered to women with no insurance or a high deductible. To receive a voucher, call or stop by the health department.

Rabies Clinics

FREE Rabies Clinics will be offered at the Bernards Township Public Works Garage on Saturday, January 10, 2004, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. ❖

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Web/PC File, NJ TeleFile, or approved vendor software.

When to File: By April 15 (or extended due date).*

Property Tax Reimbursement

Who is Eligible: Homeowners, including owners of mobile homes located in mobile home parks, age 65 or older, or receiving Federal Social Security disability benefits, who paid property taxes on their principal residence in New Jersey either directly or through mobile home park site fees. Applicants must be New Jersey residents for at least the past 10 years, have lived in the home for which reimbursement is claimed for at least the last 3 years, and meet certain income limits. Applicants must meet all requirements for both base year and reimbursement year.

What is the benefit: Reimbursement of the difference between the amount of property taxes paid for the base year and the amount paid for the reimbursement year.

How to File: Form PTR-1 for residents who did not receive a prior year's reimbursement or Form PTR-2 for residents who did receive a prior year's

reimbursement.

When to File: By March 15.*

Property Tax Deduction/Credit

Who is Eligible: Homeowners and tenants who paid property taxes on their principal residence in New Jersey either directly or through rent during the year.

What is the benefit: Either: (a) Deduction from taxable income of the total amount of property taxes paid on principal residence (for tenants, 18% of rent) or \$10,000, whichever is less; or (b) \$50 refundable credit.

How to File: Form NJ-1040, form NJ-1040EZ, a return filed electronically using NJ Web/PC File, NJ TeleFile, or approved vendor software, or form HR-1040 if not required to file an income tax return.

When to File: By April 15 (or extended due date).*

Other:

Senior Citizen's Annual Property Tax Deduction:

Annual deduction of up to \$250 from property taxes for homeowners age 65 or older or disabled who meet certain income and residency requirements. This benefit is administered by the local municipality.

Veterans' Deduction:

Annual deduction from taxes due on real or personal property paid to qualified war veterans and their unmarried surviving spouses. The deduction is \$150 for 2001, \$200 for 2002 and \$250 for 2003 and thereafter. This benefit is administered by the local municipality.

* When a due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the application or return is due on the next business day.

**This maximum benefit will be adjusted annually to reflect changes in the cost of living. ❖



The Somerset Hills School District

*To the residents of Pea-
pack Gladstone:*

As your representatives on The Somerset Hills Board of Education, we want to thank you for your support in passing the Building Referendum on September 30. The enthusiasm for this project has grown and plans are underway for all facets of construction. To keep the community apprised of developments as they occur, we are posting a weekly update of the Construction Project Log on our website (www.shsd.org).

Since the day after the Referendum, we have been moving at a rapid pace to insure that deadlines are met and all issues are taken into consideration. We currently have the following team up and running on our projects: 4 architects (2 more will join the project in 2-3 weeks), 4 mechanical engineers, 2 site engineers, and 1 structural engineer. After meeting with our bond attorney, the bond sale was scheduled for November 20. We had \$41,000,000 in our accounts by December 3,



2003. As the adjacent diary indicates, forward momentum is the order of the day.

ANY CONCERNS?

Please feel free to contact

us with any concerns you may have. Once again, on behalf of The Somerset Hills Board of Education, we thank you for your continued support and we look forward to continuing our tradition of excellence.

Sincerely,
Lou Palma,
Vice President, Board of Education
Deborah Hawkins
Board of Education
Pete Miller

Diary: After the Referendum

October 1, 2003 (One day after the Referendum)

Spiegle Architects held an immediate evening team meeting to initiate our project. Ray Krov, School Business Administrator, worked with our council to put the sale in motion. Council was instructed to expedite the sale.

October 13, 2003 (2 weeks after the Referendum)

Pete Miller, Superintendent, and Ray Krov met with the architectural team for about four hours. The following schedule was established for the Bedwell and Middle School projects:

- * February 2004 - Have final plans ready for state approval.
- * May 2004 – Both projects will go out to bid.
- * Late June, early July – Begin Construction.
- * September 2005 – Both projects completed.

The High School timeline will be available soon.

October 22, 2003 (3 weeks after the Referendum)

Revised set of Middle School plans were delivered and reviewed with the Middle School principal and staff. Suggestions discussed and meeting with architect took place on October 23.

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October 30, 2003 (4 weeks after the Referendum)

Chapter One of the bid specification documents for Bedwell and the Middle School were delivered by Spiegle. After attorney review, Pete Miller and Ray Krov will also review it. Revised plans for the Middle School were also received. The plans were reviewed at a Facilities & Operations (F&O) committee meeting and principal and related staff have also at a general session to the full Board. The Middle School reviewed the revised plans. Ray Krov has developed the bond payment schedule with the bond council and our financial advisors. Pete Miller has reviewed it in detail.

November 7 (5 weeks after the Referendum)

Pete Miller and Ray Krov met with Epic, our construction management firm, and are very close to finalizing a proposal to present to the board. The first chapter of the high school bid specification has been received from Spiegle and has been passed along for attorney review.

November 14 (6 weeks after the Referendum)

Revisions made to Middle School Plans:

First Floor

- * Move offices from bottom floor of new addition to classrooms adjacent to nurse's office.
- * Change office space in new addition to classrooms.
- * Move nurse's office to new addition.
- * New ramp eliminated from entrance; shrub buffer to cover nurse's office entrance.
- * In Nurse's office examination room and bathroom, addition of one-way glass in doors and windows.
- * Add PE storage room.
- * Relocation of coaches bathroom/shower adjacent to PE storage area.
- * Add sink and storage for custodians in mechanical room.
- * Outside bathroom in storage area cut due to cost.
- * Sound-proof walls in new lobby.
- * Decrease size of conference room in main office and increase size of office.

Second Floor

- * Expand office space into small group instruction room.
- * Expand janitorial storage room.
- * Media Center.
- * Shorten wall behind Librarian's desk.
- * Create stations for 12 computers (8 on original plan).
- * Remove sink and cabinets. ❖

Overnight Parking Restrictions

It is that time of year again when the Borough's overnight parking restrictions take effect. The purpose of this ordinance is to assist the Department of Public Works in having clear roadways for snow removal.



Parking is prohibited between the hours of 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. from November 15 until April 1. If you need to park your car on the street



over night be sure to call the Police Department to see if it is permissible to do so. ❖

At Work: With The DPW

With the winter months upon us, and to insure good passable roads, the Department of Public Works would like to remind residents of the following:

* During snow season, please keep recycling and garbage cans on curb and remove as soon as possible after pickup.

* Remember overnight parking is prohibited on all Borough streets during the winter months.

* Watch for the skating permitted sign at the pond.



In addition to plowing the roads during the winter months, the DPW will be busy sewer jetting and photographing sewer lines and laterals, brush cutting along the roadways, painting and maintaining the inside of our buildings.

The Department will install

new gabion baskets for a retention wall in the municipal parking lot at Main Street and Willow Avenue.

In November, the Sewer Department received a new sewer jetter to replace the 17-year-old sewer jetter which has served us well cleaning sewer lines and storm drains.

This replacement will improve our sewer operating capabilities.

Finally, you may have noticed our coyote and goose on the island at Liberty Park. We are happy to report that this experiment has deterred a number of geese from the pond. ❖

Safety First: Peapack-Gladstone Police Department

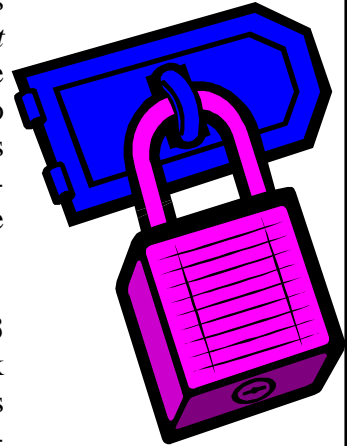
Free Gun Locks

The Police Department is participating in *Project ChildSafe*, a nationwide program to distribute gun locks to gun owners. Any resident who owns a gun may come to Police Headquarters to receive, free of charge, the gun safety locks.

We will provide a maximum of 3 locks to each household. Each lock has its own key. If a person owns more than 3 weapons, we recommend they purchase a gun safe.

The Police Department also recommends that residents store their weapons, unloaded, in a gun safe or with a gun lock attached. Ammunition should be stored in a separate, secure place. These safeguards will minimize the risk of children or other unauthorized people from having a tragic accident with the firearm.

Residents are welcome to stop by Police Headquarters anytime to pick up their free gun locks. If no one is in Headquarters, use the pay phone outside Headquarters (or cell phone) to call and an officer will stop by to assist you. ❖



Greener Pastures: Peapack-Gladstone Environmental Commission

The Peapack Gladstone Environmental Commission is reviewing the Village Street Tree Inventory prepared by Paul Cowie Associates and made possible by a Community Stewardship Incentive Grant. We would like to share some of the more interesting data in that report.

*There have been 802 trees inventoried in the village area of which 412 trees are between 0"- 12" caliper, 307 trees are between 13"- 30" caliper and 81 trees are greater than 30" caliper.

*There is an interesting variety of species composition :

- 134 Sugar Maple,
- 142 Norway Maple,
- 68 Norway Spruce,
- 52 Black Walnut,
- 34 Colorado Spruce,
- 30 Hemlock,
- 24 White Pine,
- 18 Little Leaf Linden,
- 16 Red Maple,
- 16 Honey Locust,
- 13 Douglas Fir,
- 9 American Sycamore,
- 23 Callery Pear,
- 21 Flowering Dogwood,
- 17 Flowering Cherry,
- 13 Crabapple

The remaining species vary from native black cherry, green and white ash, gray birch, red cedar and mulberry which tell a story of our town's agricultural heritage.

*Of the total trees inventoried, 206 were found to be in good condition, 391 in fair condition, 143 in poor condition, and 8 on their way to compost.

*Those figures comprise 88.5% tree cover with only 10.5% vacant planting sites and 1% stump removal sites.

*52.5% of our street trees do not conflict with utility wires.

This data is very important to determine how to protect our tree resources in the future. While we may have good forest cover, many of our trees are in a state of decline. The Environmental Commission has been charged with the protection and replacement of these resources. To that end, we have created a Tree Subcommittee within our Commission **that needs your help**. One of the projects we continue to work on is a Tree Ordinance, and while we are already half way there, we cannot do it alone. If you are interested, please contact us through the Borough Clerk's office. ❖



Resident Box Holder

THE PEAPACK-GLADSTONE
BOROUGH GAZETTE
Municipal Building
School Street
Peapack, NJ 07977



BULK RATE
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 6
PEAPACK, NJ

**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**

