

# The Milltown Observer



Focused on Local Issues, Your Concerns

Issue #1 - March 2017

## WELCOME

For 2017, the Milltown Democratic Organization (MDO) resolves to keep Milltown residents better informed of happenings in borough government, in and out of borough hall. This is the first of regular newsletters that will delve into borough issues, de-mystify borough processes and procedures, and introduce key borough employees, elected officials, and volunteers.

## WORDS FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Despite the fact that we seem more connected than ever, it doesn't always feel that way when it comes to issues in our borough. For instance, Milltown residents were shocked to learn that the borough received reports

of excess lead measurements in three borough test sites six months before a public information meeting was called to inform residents of simple, low-to-no cost actions they could take to lessen the impact of lead contamination in their water. This issue is just one example of why the Milltown Democratic Organization (MDO) felt it was important to start this newsletter.

In each issue, watch for information about pressing issues in Milltown and learn about the inner workings of municipal government. You'll also get to know borough volunteers and community members better through our highlights sections. Reach out via our Facebook page if you have questions or a particular topic that you would like to see addressed in the next Milltown Observer.

## PRESSING ISSUE

Borough residents and businesses are encouraged to flush their pipes before drinking or cooking. Six months after three test sites in the borough exceeded the allowable lead levels, councilwoman Doriann Kerber shared information about water quality and populations vulnerable to excessive lead in drinking water. MDO thinks this announcement took too long! Young children, pregnant women, and adults with pre-existing heart or kidney issues are more susceptible to lead contamination than otherwise healthy adults. Run your water for about 60 seconds before using it for drinking or cooking. Only drink or cook from the cold tap – hot water draws more lead from pipes and fixtures than does cold water. People can be tested for lead poisoning and household water can be tested for lead contamination.

For more information on lead in drinking water, please visit: [www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/dw\\_lead\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/dw_lead_factsheet.pdf)



## VISIT AND LIKE OUR FACEBOOK PAGE



Visit the Milltown Democratic Organization Facebook page! 'Like' our page so you will see our newsletters first, as well as receive breaking borough news alerts on time sensitive matters. Use our Facebook page to submit topics for coverage in future newsletters, too!

## DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHT

Milltown Recreation has something for everyone – youth, adult, and senior activities are thoughtfully organized by Milltown Recreation. There are sport programs for kids and adults, as well as a wide variety of fitness programs – from aerobics to Zumba – and everything in between. Did you know that Milltown Recreation also organizes day trips and travel programs? Learn more about this borough department at the Milltown website.



Councilman Randy Farkas is the council liaison to the Milltown Recreation Committee.

Randy can be reached at [rfarkas@milltownboro.com](mailto:rfarkas@milltownboro.com) to address questions or concerns, and to receive feedback and suggestions to improve Milltown's Parks and Recreation.



## VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT



Margaret O'Donnell is a committeewoman in her district, attending MDO meetings to share any feedback or concerns from residents in the 6th voting district. Margaret was recently named editor-in-chief of the new MDO publication – The Milltown Observer. In addition, she has been involved with Milltown Recreation programs for more than 10 years. She currently serves as a volunteer coordinator for two adult volleyball leagues in town. “I thoroughly enjoy my involvement with Milltown Recreation. I am able to help the borough and the program participants by facilitating the registration process, setting up the necessary equipment, and being prepared for any type of emergency. But most of the time, I’m playing a sport I love while enjoying the company and friendship of the participants.”



## MDO MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Peter Vignuolo is the Democratic Committeeman for the 9th District. He resides in the Borough with his wife and four children. He is a partner at a Piscataway law firm specializing in municipal law, land use and real estate law. Peter is a lifelong Milltown resident, who remains actively involved in community – despite numerous professional and familial obligations. He believes that civic involvement supplies a positive role model for his children; while making Milltown a better place for both his family and his fellow residents.



**In our next issue, learn more about the role of a committee person and understand why they are on the primary ballot, but not the general election. Meet more of the committee men and women from different Milltown voting districts, too.**

## MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT 101 WHAT IS BONDING?

We frequently hear that certain municipal projects are being “bonded for.” But what exactly is bonding? A bond is a debt obligation issued by a local government. It is generally used to finance public projects like roads, schools, and infrastructure-related repairs within a municipality. Often bonding is the best way to complete a large-scale project in a timely manner. Repayment of this debt involves the full principal (amount borrowed), plus interest. So, other times bonding can be viewed as unnecessary and expensive, a poor alternative to planning and budgeting wisely.

The current project in Milltown being bonded for is a municipal complex that will house the public works garage, offices, a salt dome, and a new fire house. This is estimated to be a \$10 million project. Each resident will contribute to the repayment via their tax dollars and utility bills. MDO encourages judicious use of bonding to avoid hefty tax and utility rate increases.

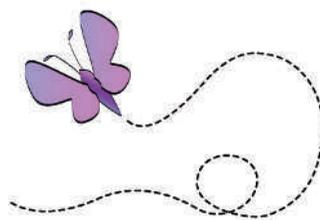
**What else would you like to learn about in the Municipal Government 101 column?**

## THANKS BOY SCOUT TROOP 33!



A butterfly garden is in the works thanks to a life member scout project. The location is adjacent to the borough’s new electrical sub-station and behind the Ice Cream Depot. Plans include a variety of host and nectar plants with overlapping blooming calendars for year-round visual appeal. Informational kiosks will include information about the plants, as well as how to make a butterfly garden in your own yard.

**More information in our next edition – we especially look forward to sharing pictures showing progress of this fantastic project.**



## MILL POND - CLOSED FOR FISHING

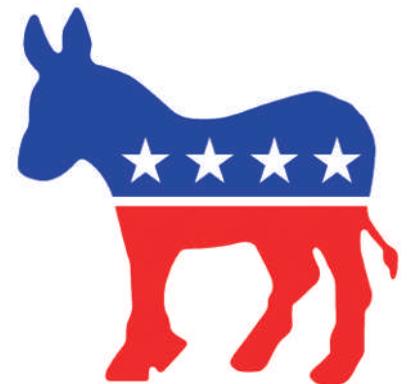
In October 2016, following a PCB toxic oil spill into the Mill Pond, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife issued an emergency closure of an iconic Milltown fishing location. Our recent windy weather has blown the signage away, but at press time, the closure was still in effect. We bring this to your attention because fishermen have been seen casting their lines over the Main Street bridge. It’s very hard to resist, but please be safe and observe this fishing ban until the waterway has been deemed safe once again.

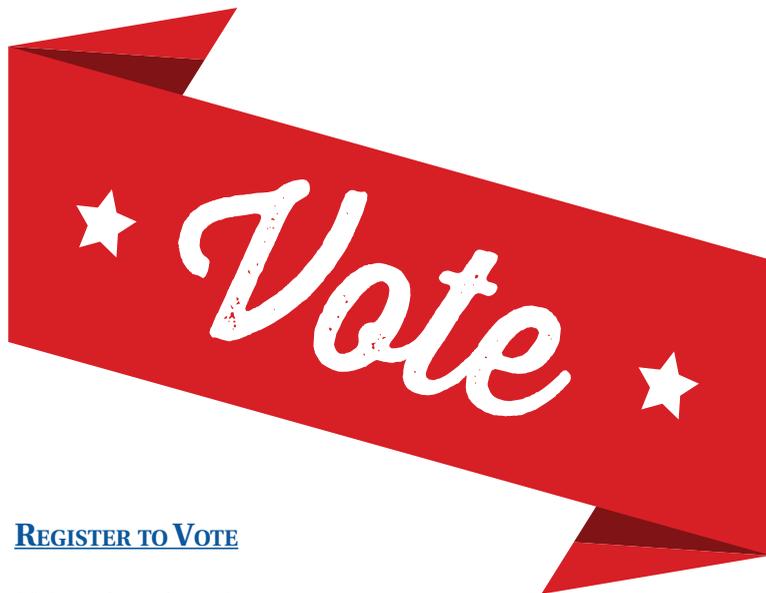


## ATTEND THE NEXT MDO MEETING

The next MDO meeting will be April 4th, 2017 at 7pm in the Milltown Senior Center on Violet Terrace.

UPDATE - next MDO meeting will be Tuesday, May 2nd at 7pm at the Milltown Senior Center





## REGISTER TO VOTE

Get yourself heard and make sure you are registered to vote in the upcoming elections. This year voters are going to shape the future for many generations to come. To be eligible to vote in any NJ state or county primary you must be affiliated with your party of interest.

On our website you can download and print:

- Vote By Mail Application
- Party Affiliation Declaration Form
- Voter Registration Form

**Who May Register to Vote in New Jersey:**

A native-born or naturalized U.S. citizen who is:

- 18 years old by election day
- A resident of the state and county at least 30 days before an election
- Not denied right to vote due to either court adjudication of “idiocy” or “insanity”
- Not serving a sentence, or on parole or probation for an indictable offense

**One must be registered to vote at least 21 days before the next election. Deadline for the next primary election is May 16, 2017. Deadline for the next general election is October 17, 2017.**

**When to Re-Register in New Jersey:**

Registration is permanent but you must re-register if you:

- Change your name: You are entitled to vote only in the next election by signing your registration sheet at the polls with both your previous and new name. After that, you must re-register in your new name.
- Change your residence within the county: By the 21st day before election, file a change of address form go to [www.njvoterinfo.org](http://www.njvoterinfo.org) for more information.
- After the 21st day before election, you may correct your registration on election day at the office of the municipal clerk in your new community of residence.
- Change your residence outside county: By the 21st day before election, you must re-register in new county. If you move after the 21st day before an election, you are permitted to vote in your former election district after signing an “Affirmation of Residency” form.

[www.milltowndemocrats.org/register-to-vote/](http://www.milltowndemocrats.org/register-to-vote/)

## ABOUT MILLTOWN, NJ

Nestled in the heart of Middlesex County between East Brunswick and North Brunswick is “the greatest little town in all the land.” The Borough of Milltown, a 1.6 mile tract with about 7,000 residents, is in a word, America. From our vibrant Main Street shops, churches and homes to our fine schools, parks and pools, Milltown is an ideal environment to raise a family and enjoy a tight knit community where everyone is thought of as your neighbor. Since 1896, Milltown has been a special place to live, work and play.

Milltown is governed under the Borough form of government by a Mayor and a six member Borough Council. The Mayor is directly elected by the voters to serve a four year term of office. Members of the Borough Council serve three year terms on a staggered basis, with two seats up for election each year. Milltown is in the twelfth congressional district and is part of New Jersey’s seventeenth legislative district.

Students enrolled in public school for Kindergarten through third grade attend Parkview Elementary School.

Students enrolled in public school grades four through eight attend Joyce Kilmer Middle School. Students in public school grades nine through twelve attend Spotswood High School in Spotswood as part of a sending/receiving relationship with the Spotswood Board of Education.

## PUBLISHING INFO

The Milltown Observer is published and paid for by the Milltown Democratic Organization

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### *Important Dates*

UPDATE!

**April 10, 2017**

*Borough Council meeting*

April 10th meeting now April 17th due to Passover

**May 8, 2017**

*Borough Council meeting*

Borough Council meetings are always the second Monday, with exceptions for holidays. People who have liked our Facebook page will receive Meeting Reminders, as well as Alerts about last-minute special meetings. MDO encourages residents to attend borough council meetings!

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