

Mayor's Message

June 2008

As many of you are likely aware, this year Governor Corzine has proposed drastic cuts to the financial aid that many towns, including Lincoln Park, receive from the state. There has been no additional property tax relief provided by the governor, which means that any decrease in state funding must be made up solely by each one of us through local property tax increases. In addition to the anticipated decrease in state aid, we are faced with state mandated increases and rising insurance and fuel costs which force our expenses to mount. The final budget from the state will not be available until sometime later this month. Until the state budget is finalized, we are unable to formally pass our municipal budget and your next quarter taxes will be estimated. I and many of the mayors throughout the state are lobbying the Governor to restore municipal funding and provide much needed real property tax relief so that we may avoid the large tax increase we would otherwise be faced with this year. I hope to have more information on both the state's and our budget for you by the time you receive next month's Journal or your tax bill.

On a brighter note, summer returns to the Borough of Lincoln Park and it ought to be a great one. There are many events and programs to keep residents of all ages entertained and informed throughout the summer.

Most notable with regards to the beginning of summer, is the early opening of the Community Lake this year. The lake will be open on weekends beginning Memorial Day weekend. Once school is closed, the lake will be open daily. This year there is an increase of the fees for lake use. Although more than the last several years, the fees are still less than when I was a kid (yes, way back when) spending my summers at the lake. Past thinking had been that lower the fees would increase resident usage of the lake. We have found, however, the best way to get more people to use this great asset is to provide something worth using. The Recreation Department, Dept. of Public Works and Health Department are working to improve the cleanliness of the beach and the water quality. New chairs and umbrellas...and palm trees!...are in place. Additional activities and parties for children and adults are planned. The fee increase will help to offset these new things which will make the lake a great destination for all of our residents this summer. For those of you planning on a "staycation" this year, please come down and take advantage of this great town benefit.

On the topic of the lake, I would like to extend a "Happy Anniversary" to our Lincoln Park Dolphins Swim Team. The dolphins are celebrating their 40th year of individual and team competitive swimming. Many people over the years have helped to make the Dolphins one of the best swim teams in the area. Congratulations on achieving this milestone, and best of luck in the upcoming swim season!

The onset of summer also means that there will be more children (and adults) outside. When driving around town, please always be aware of playing children, pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcycles. The sayings "Look Twice, Save a Life" and "Keep Kids Alive, Drive 25" should be in the forefront of every driver's mind.

To help improve safety, the borough is endeavoring to create a pedestrian safety zone in the areas around Main Street and the Municipal Complex. The police department is working to get speed limits reduced in this area and additional signage to encourage safe walkways. This will supplement our participation in the Mayor's Wellness Campaign which encourages residents of all ages to get out and become more physically active. Look to see some changes in this part of town in the near future.

I wish you all a happy, healthy and safe summer!