

A Tradition of Spirit & Friendship

# OLD TAPPAN NEWS APRIL/MAY 2007



See page 4  
for a message from Mayor Polce  
about the 2007 municipal budget



The annual Easter Egg Hunt was held for the first time at Oakes Park this year. Although the weather was less than Spring-like, many people came out and the event organized by Recreation Director Gloria Wiesner and Social & Cultural Affairs Committee chairperson Cathy Aanonsen was a huge success!

## SAFETY AWARDS

Last month, Old Tappan was one of only two municipalities honored with the Gold Award at the Municipal Joint Insurance Fund Safety Breakfast, and we also received the Most Consistent Award.

There are 38 municipalities in the Fund and, year after year, Old Tappan has one of the best lost-time accident safety records. This is no coincidence. This is the result of the constant safety focus of our Borough employees. With the assistance and support of our Risk Manager, our department heads have instilled a "safety first" approach and attitude in all of our employees. We are proud of their continuous efforts to make safety a top priority.

All photos,  
except where noted,  
by Borough Photographer  
Jamie Cohen

## MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONIES AT OAKES PARK THIS YEAR

See page 5  
for details and parade route

## FIRE DEPARTMENT BATTLES BLAZE AT SENIOR CITIZEN COMPLEX

Shortly after 6:00 pm on March 5, a bitterly cold day with sub-freezing temperatures, the Old Tappan Volunteer Fire Department was called to 32 Russell Avenue, site of the Borough's Senior Citizen housing, and found one unit fully involved in fire, with extension to the dwelling next to it. Police removed a trapped occupant from the residence adjoining the original fire and brought him to safety. The heavy volume of fire and intense heat required firefighters to knock down the main body of fire in the original and the adjacent units before searches could be conducted throughout the structure. No other victims were present. Damage was confined to the two units. All other residences in the complex were undamaged and habitable at the conclusion of firefighting operations. Radiating heat from the fire damaged the automobile of one of the residents.



From the relative safety of Tower Ladder 63's bucket, firefighters prepare to vent the roof and give the firefighters inside the structure relief from the pent up heat, smoke, and toxic gases. *Photo courtesy Ed Sakayama*



The devastating results of a fire *Photo courtesy Bill Auth*

Tower Ladder Truck 63 was deployed due to the advanced stage of the fire and the truss roof construction of the building. The roof of the dwelling subsequently collapsed, so the use of the tower ladder apparatus for even a one-story structure was a potentially life saving decision.

Requests for additional assistance from the Pascack Valley Firemens' Mutual Aid Association resulted in a Firefighter Assistance and Search Team, an additional Engine Company at the fire scene, and a relocated standby Engine Company in Old Tappan's firehouse in the event of another fire. We thank them for their help.

The firefighters greatly appreciated the efforts of the Department's Ladies Auxiliary. They know from experience that extremely cold weather and firefighting make a brutal combination. Under the able direction of their president, Diane Broderick, they provided hot coffee and doughnuts at the fire scene and hot food in the firehouse. They have never let the Department down!

## HOME FIRE DANGER INCREASES FOR OLDER AMERICANS

According to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), adults between 65 and 74 face twice the risk of dying in a home fire as the rest of the U.S. population. That number increases to four times for people between 75 and 84 and to more than five times for people ages 85 and older.

Careless smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths for older Americans. Heating is the second leading cause of fire death. There are more home fires during December, January and February than at

any other time of the year. Space heaters and wood stoves can be particularly dangerous. Cooking ranks third as a cause of fire deaths for those 65 and over. The kitchen can be one of the most hazardous rooms in the house.

The USFA, a division of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, offers the following tips:

- ◆ Never smoke in bed.
- ◆ Put your cigarette out at the first sign of drowsiness while watching TV or reading.
- ◆ Use deep ashtrays. Put your cigarettes all the way out.
- ◆ Don't walk away from lit cigarettes or other smoking materials.
- ◆ Never leave cooking unattended.
- ◆ Always wear short or tight-fitting sleeves when cooking. Keep towels, pot holders and curtains away from flames.
- ◆ Never use the range or oven to heat your home.
- ◆ Double-check the kitchen before you go to bed or leave the house.
- ◆ Keep fire in the fireplace by making sure you have a screen large enough to catch flying sparks and rolling logs.
- ◆ Keep flammable materials at least three feet away from heaters.
- ◆ When buying a space heater, look for a feature that automatically shuts off the power if the heater falls over.

**The Old Tappan Fire Department**  
is celebrating our...



**75th Anniversary**  
**June 16th, 2007**

**COME JOIN US!**

**BBQ & Carnival 1 - 5 PM**  
Rides and Games,  
Complimentary Food and Drinks

**Tent Dance 7 - 11 PM**  
Must be 21 or older to attend Tent Dance  
Beer, soda and set-ups provided  
BYOB - Bring Your Own Snacks

**RAIN OR SHINE** **\$20.00 PER PERSON**



# MESSAGE FROM MAYOR POLCE

As detailed in our separate "2007 Municipal Budget" mailing, the Council and I have, once again, prepared a municipal budget with no increase in the municipal tax rate. This portion of your overall taxes, amounting to approximately 13% of your overall property tax bill, provides for all of your municipal services, from police protection to maintenance of parks, streets and the Old Tappan Golf Course, to all aspects of Borough administration. Only by steadfastly sticking to our fiscally conservative principles are we able to continue to maintain one of the lowest municipal tax rates in Bergen County. In fact, it was the second lowest in 2006 behind Alpine. This is an accomplishment that every single resident should be proud of, as it has a positive impact on your ability to sell your home when you are ready. Finally, it should be noted that municipal tax rates in area towns are commonly two or even three times as high as the rate in Old Tappan.

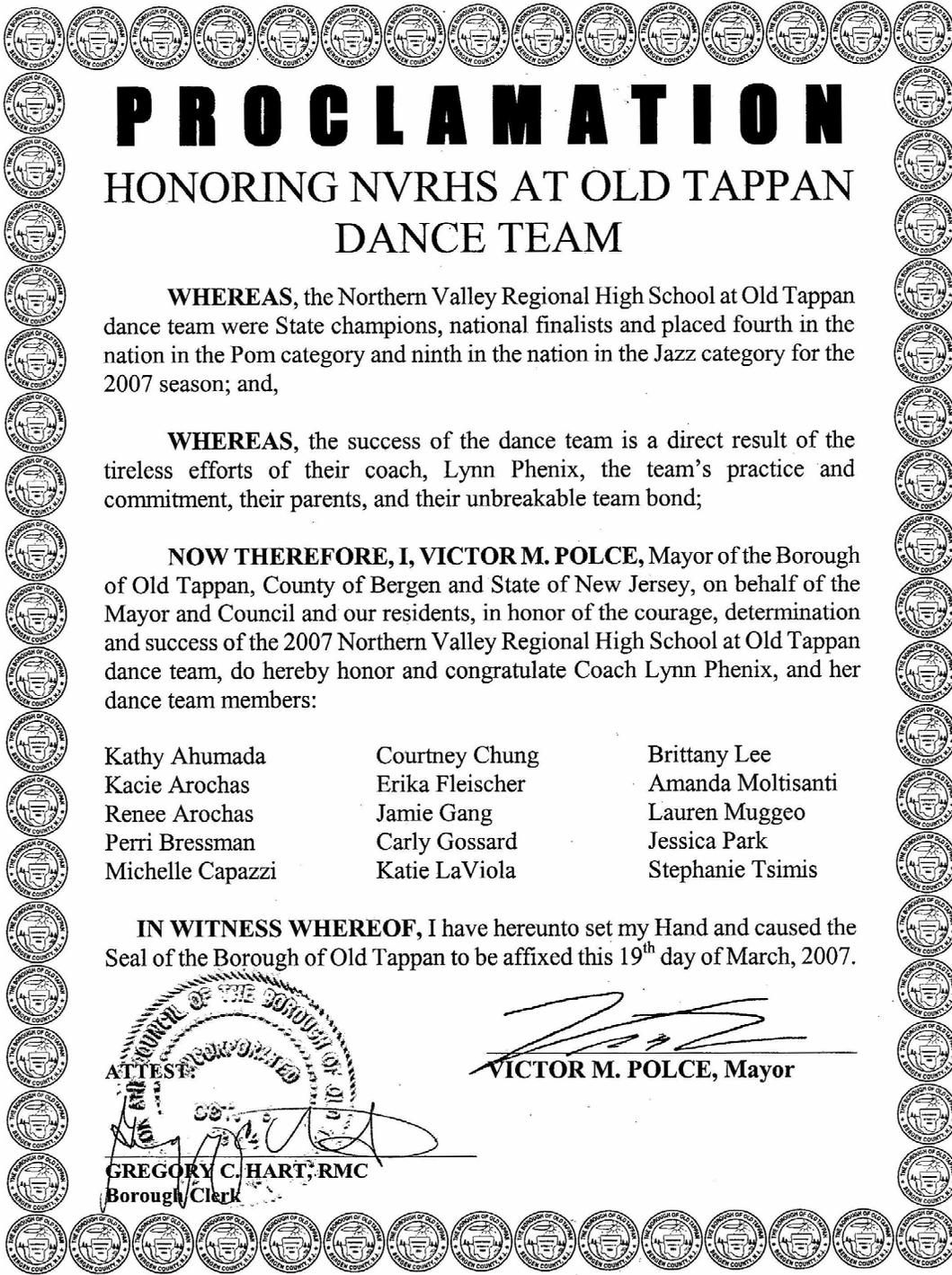
While minimizing property taxes is a primary objective in striking a prudent budget, we also must assure that we continue to meet the demands of our residents for first quality services. In each department of the Borough, we strive for consistent service excellence. Every day our Police Department protects and serves our community admirably. Our Department of Public Works keeps our parks beautiful. Stone Point Park and Oakes Park are truly showcase parks! Like every year, if you needed to drive on our roads after a snowstorm this past winter, our DPW seems to know how to clear roads and keep them clear better than any other town around. The Old Tappan Golf Course is spectacular because of the expertise, work ethic and training of our Golf Course employees. While other towns continue to struggle with providing emergency fire and medical services, our Fire Department and First Aid Corps are always at the ready to meet our emergency needs. Come join in the Old Tappan Fire Department's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on June 16. The Council and I have provided the Borough Hall with technological tools to increase efficiency in the administration of the Borough, and the customer service focus of the Borough Hall employees is unparalleled. Across the board, our Borough departments, as well as our boards, committees and commissions, make the most out of each budget dollar and provide exemplary services. Finally, the Mayor's Wellness Program will kick off this Spring to assist our residents in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

We are moving forward on several projects. We are beginning to plan how to best make the Bonnabel property (3+ acre wooded parkland on Old Tappan Road by the bend towards Rivervale Road) benefit our residents. The Hike 'N Bike project, held up by the State for a protracted period of time so that monies could be allocated, is now underway. This project, funded almost entirely with grant monies, will make Old Tappan substantially more accessible to walkers and bikers. We are looking to continue with the next phase of our sidewalk improvement project, including a link which will provide safer pedestrian access to Northern Valley Regional High School. Finally, we are finalizing plans and going out to bid on our new police station, to be located adjacent to Borough Hall. Remember that the police station is being funded through a \$1.5 million bond done in 2004 at historically low interest rates and the recent sale of BOROUGH OWNED property on Leonard and Maple Streets. We are working with our architect to ensure that this project comes within the cost parameters that we have set forth.

With Spring now in the air, I remind you to get outside and enjoy the outdoors. Walk along the Old Tappan reservoir or in one of our several parks. It is a special time in our special little town. Let me know how you are doing and how the Council and I can make your Old Tappan even better. We invite you to attend our meetings and witness how your elected officials manage the affairs of the Borough: positively, in a disciplined and totally transparent manner. Send me an email ([mayor@oldtappan.net](mailto:mayor@oldtappan.net)) or send in your comments through the website ([www.oldtappan.net](http://www.oldtappan.net)) to any of the Borough's many departments or boards, committees, and commissions. Enjoy the season!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name of the Mayor.





# PROCLAMATION

## HONORING NVRHS AT OLD TAPPAN DANCE TEAM

**WHEREAS**, the Northern Valley Regional High School at Old Tappan dance team were State champions, national finalists and placed fourth in the nation in the Pom category and ninth in the nation in the Jazz category for the 2007 season; and,

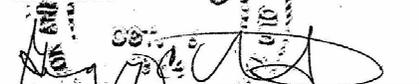
**WHEREAS**, the success of the dance team is a direct result of the tireless efforts of their coach, Lynn Phenix, the team's practice and commitment, their parents, and their unbreakable team bond;

**NOW THEREFORE, I, VICTOR M. POLCE**, Mayor of the Borough of Old Tappan, County of Bergen and State of New Jersey, on behalf of the Mayor and Council and our residents, in honor of the courage, determination and success of the 2007 Northern Valley Regional High School at Old Tappan dance team, do hereby honor and congratulate Coach Lynn Phenix, and her dance team members:

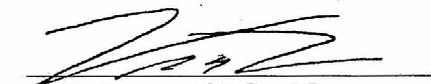
- |                  |                 |                   |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Kathy Ahumada    | Courtney Chung  | Brittany Lee      |
| Kacie Arochas    | Erika Fleischer | Amanda Moltisanti |
| Renee Arochas    | Jamie Gang      | Lauren Muggeo     |
| Perri Bressman   | Carly Gossard   | Jessica Park      |
| Michelle Capazzi | Katie LaViola   | Stephanie Tsimis  |

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my Hand and caused the Seal of the Borough of Old Tappan to be affixed this 19<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2007.

ATTEST



**GREGORY C. HART, RMC**  
Borough Clerk



**VICTOR M. POLCE, Mayor**





The new skating rink at Stone Point Park was a big hit in its first year of operation.

Hockey players and recreational skaters all enjoyed the new facility.

*Photos courtesy Old Tappan Borough*

Old Tappan Boy Scout Troop 132 hosted a Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, March 24, 2007, at the O.T. Fire House on Old Tappan Road. The breakfast was a huge success and all the proceeds will benefit the scouts directly by allowing the replenishment of troop funds which are used on camping trips and equipment.

*Photo courtesy Troop 132*



## RECENTLY ENACTED ORDINANCES

Ordinance No. 932-07 Amendment to Fees  
Changes to annual license fees for the sale or distribution of alcoholic beverages, a copy of a vital statistics record, dog and cat licenses, and various golf fees.

Ordinance No. 933-07 - Handicapped Parking  
Updates the listing of parking spaces designated as restricted for the use of handicapped persons.

Ordinance No. 934-07 - Facilities Usage Fees  
Updates the conditions for usage of athletic fields by non-profit, religious, charitable or educational organizations or institutions.

Ordinance No. 935-07 Construction Board Appeals  
Eliminates the local construction board of appeals in favor of using the County board.

Ordinance No. 936-07 - Non Smoking Ordinance  
Promotes the health and safety of the youth of Old Tappan by prohibiting use of tobacco products by individuals under the age of 18 within 1,000 feet of a school within the Borough.

Ordinance No. 939-07  
Sale of Borough Property - Leonard Drive



Have you had a chance to visit the temporary headquarters of the Old Tappan Library at 184 Central Avenue? It is a perfect facility for the Library, with lots of space and plenty of parking. The Library Board of Trustees, Library Director Susan Meeske, and all Library employees have done an excellent job in making the transition.



Borough of Old Tappan  
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NEWSLETTER