



**Mayor's Message**  
January 2017

## The Mayor's Address – January 1, 2017

The Borough Council members have met the year's challenges with diplomacy and with the dignity that would be expected from such an experienced Council. I applaud each of you for the contributions you have made on behalf of the residents of Rumson.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to every Borough employee, committee member and professional for their support and assistance throughout the past year.

I also want to thank Tom Rogers, the Municipal Clerk/Administrator for the leadership he provides each and every day. Thank you, Tom.

This year we welcomed Gary Casazza to the Council, replacing Shaun Broderick who resigned on November 30, 2016. Shaun's years of dedicated service included serving as a member and Chairman of the Finance Committee, and member of the Emergency Services Committee. He served on the Council since 2005, and prior to that was a member of the Zoning Board. His successor Gary formerly served as Vice Chair of the Planning Board and was a member of the Planning Board since 2006. Councilman Joseph Hemphill and Councilwoman Laura Atwell were re-elected in November to another three year Council term. On behalf of the Council members and myself, it is our honor and privilege to serve our community as your elected representatives and we appreciate your support.

### Success with Shared Services Continues

Last year the Borough continued its commitment toward creative cost cutting solutions through its shared services programs with Fair Haven and Little Silver. Namely, the Borough re-committed to its the long-running Inter Local Service Agreement with Fair Haven on brush disposal, parks and grounds maintenance, street sweeping, catch basin cleaning and engineering services.

In 2015, Little Silver merged its Building Services Department with Rumson, seeking to lower costs and improve services. Recall that 9 years ago, Rumson and Fair Haven similarly combined their Building Services Departments, with Rumson servicing both towns from our Borough Hall. This allowed residents in both towns to enjoy access to full-time Building Department Services, while eliminating redundancies. With the addition of Little Silver's resources last year, each of the three towns have benefit due to additional investments in office technology and staff, while any incremental costs are spread across all three towns in accordance with each town's usage. The result has been an increased level of service and a significant cost savings to taxpayers in all three towns.

### Infrastructure Improvements

With the successful completion of last year's road improvement program, the Borough utilized significant cost savings to resurface Oak Tree Lane and North Park Avenue all while keeping within the original project budget. The Borough also offered replacement street trees to all residents within the program. This program allowed impacted residents the opportunity to select a tree in return for agreeing to water and care for the tree. An excess of 40 property owners participated in the program with trees planted this past fall.

There are various infrastructure projects on going. Underground fuel storage tanks located at the DPW station are being removed so that new above ground fuel tanks and dispensers can be installed. The Borough is also relining sanitary sewer pipes to reduce groundwater intrusion. Over the past year, the Borough has applied for numerous federal and state grants totaling over \$4 million requested to offset major capital project costs.

### Resiliency

The Borough maintains unparalleled emergency response during catastrophic events. Since Superstorm Sandy, the Borough has also taken steps to foster a more resilient community. The Borough has been awarded nearly \$400,000 in state grants to develop, update, and implement sustainable planning initiatives throughout Rumson. The most recent initiative is the enrollment in a FEMA sponsored program, which can result in reduced flood insurance premiums to our residents. Again, this initiative is fully funded through the state grant.

The Borough is also installing emergency backup power generators at four sanitary sewer pump stations, and upgrading alarm and monitoring equipment at all eleven sanitary sewer pump stations. This is a 90% FEMA funded Hazard Mitigation Project to improve the Borough's resiliency, totaling over \$300,000.

### Major Community Events

Rumson is a small, close-knit town with a big heart and a lot of spirit. As such, there are numerous community events throughout the year that bring our residents together for fun and, often, to benefit a good cause. Some are sponsored by the Borough and others by independent entities, but all add to the feeling of community and togetherness long enjoyed by our residents.

**The Fourth Annual Rumson Saint Patrick's Day Parade** was celebrated in Rumson on Sunday, March 13, 2016 with floats, bands, Irish step dancers, veterans and military groups, novelty acts and representatives from local civic groups and area businesses in the mile long parade. Residents and guests lined River Road awash in green pride – a day everyone is Irish, enjoying the festive display. The Parade raises thousands of dollars to benefit local charities.

**The Rumson Annual Baseball Parade** that was scheduled for Saturday April 9th was unfortunately canceled due to weather this past year. The plan for the future is to move the parade later in the season and to also utilize this day to hold the MLB sponsored Pitch, Hit and Run event for all the kids to participate in.

**The Kelleher Kids Triathlon** held its 7th annual event at Victory Park on Sunday, June 12, 2016. This treasured family event had over 250 children, ages 14 and under, participating in the Swim, Bike, Run, while hundreds of parents, supporters and volunteers cheered them on. The event raises funds for Rumson EMS and Rumson Recreation, two organizations dear to former resident Bob Kelleher, in whose memory the event is held each year.

**Movies in the Park**, jointly sponsored with Fair Haven Recreation and held in Victory Park, were greatly enjoyed by local families this summer. The movies included Star Wars: The Force Awakens and The Good Dinosaur.

**The Seventh Annual Rumson Boat Race** featuring the Governor's Cup took place in late September on the Navesink Riv-

er. Local families provided housing for 150 visiting collegiate athletes and coaches from Army, Drexel, Rutgers and Villanova. These disciplined athletes provided inspiration and camaraderie to our RFH High School Rowing Team. Proceeds from the Boat Race support the RFH Rowing Program.

**The Rumson Halloween Parade & Carnival** took place on Sunday, October 30, 2016 at Forrestdale School Field. Hundreds showed up in their costumed finery, with a costume contest for each age group and best group costume. RFH High School and Forrestdale School volunteers ran game booths and the Rumson Seniors judged the costume contest and helped at the bead making station. Several Rec Commissioners and Councilwoman Laura Atwell also pitched in to make the event a success.

**The Veterans Day Service** at Victory Park on November 11 highlighted by guest speaker, Rumson resident and retired US Navy Officer, John Blackstock. He reminded us all of the sacrifices made by the men and women who have served our country. Many thanks to Rabbi Dov Goldberg from Congregation B'nai Israel for leading those present in prayer, and to the Scouts from Troop 201 for the posting of the colors. Scout Owen Doherty performed a moving rendition of the National Anthem.

**The Traditional Christmas Tree Lighting** in Victory Park on December 4th was a wonderful way to begin the holiday season – perfect weather, delicious snacks, and heartwarming holiday favorite sing-a-long songs. The Deane-Porter Third Grade Chorus kicked off the event with their lively carols, followed by Tim McLoone and The Shirley's, and select members of Holiday Express, who entertained the crowd until almost 6.30pm. Santa's arrival with Rudolph and Frosty the Snowman added to the festive atmosphere. The Rumson Christmas Tree Lighting is truly a highlight of the Rumson Community Calendar.

## **Ordinances**

All Borough Ordinances can be viewed on line by logging onto our web site at [www.rumsonnj.gov](http://www.rumsonnj.gov).

## **Police Department**

Our outstanding Rumson Police Department greatly contributed to the safety and well-being of our residents in 2016.

Michael V. Berger was hired as a full-time patrolman, and graduated from the Monmouth County Police Academy on December 15, 2016. In addition, Special II Officers Jessica Caffey and Thomas Hughes were hired as full time Special II Officers/Dispatchers.

We would like to congratulate several members of our Police Department for their impressive achievements in the past year. Lieutenant Christopher York and Sergeant Peter Koenig each completed Graduate degrees. Patrolman James Fenn and Michael Berger each received their Bachelor's degrees, and Detective Sergeant Christopher Isherwood received his Associates degree. Patrolman Fenn also joined the Monmouth County Fire Marshal's Arson Task Force. Detective Sergeant Isherwood completed another successful year on the Monmouth County Serious Collision Analysis Response Team, where he assisted in investigating several motor vehicle accidents which were either fatal or involved serious bodily injury.

Police Chief Scott Paterson participated in the Polar Bear Plunge to raise money for the Special Olympics last February, and in the coming year hopes to surpass his 2016 donations by raising \$15,000. We would like to thank Scott and his supporters for their efforts on behalf of this worthy cause.

The Rumson PBA Third Annual Bike Rodeo was a huge success. Cyclists were able to run through obstacle courses and races for fun while learning bicycle safety lessons. The 10th Annual Rumson PBA Crab Tournament was held in August. The tournament raised money for Monmouth County Ducks Unlimited and Wetlands Conservation, as well as the 2017 Polar Bear Plunge.

The officers of the Rumson Police Department have worked honorably, and in many cases heroically, demonstrating great team work that the entire community appreciates.

## **Rumson EMS**

The Rumson First Aid Squad has dozens of volunteer members, many of whom have completed the rigorous, 250-hour Emergency Medical Technician course.

In addition to answering calls within Rumson, these volunteers frequently respond to emergency calls in Sea Bright, Fair Haven, Atlantic Highlands, Highlands and Middletown for mutual aid assignments. Using new state-of-the-art equipment, the squad has responded to many serious incidents this year. In January, 9 First Aid Squad members received a Life Saving Award for successfully reviving a victim in cardiac arrest. Those EMS members honored included EMS Captain Darren McConnell, Lauren Kammerer, Mary Nichols, Rob Eyerluss, Bob Nichols, Joan Cambria, Will Gilbert, Pete Stajk, and Megan Klem. First Aid Squad volunteers also participated in extensive training drills throughout 2016 including classes in CEVO driver training, active shooter response, vehicle extrication, incident command, and autopulse CPR.

The residents of Rumson should take pride and comfort in knowing that their First Aid Squad is ready, 24-hours per day, to respond to every medical emergency. Rumson EMS receives funding from the Borough, the Rumson Community Appeal, the EMS Fund Drive and the Kelleher Kids Triathlon. EMS is always looking for additional members, including Cadets starting at 16 years old. Please contact Borough Hall for an application.

## **Rumson Fire Department**

The Rumson Fire Department responds to numerous fire calls in the Borough and in surrounding towns and is staffed solely by trained volunteer members. The Department was ably led by Fire Chief Ron Immesberger and Assistant Fire Chief Mike Trivett.

The Oceanic Hook & Ladder Company congratulates Robert Anderson for obtaining his "life membership." Robert has completed 25 years of continuous active service, and we thank him for that. We also thank all of the volunteer officers and membership that continue to support our Borough Fire Department.

In addition, Oceanic welcomed new active member Avery Irwin. Sadly, Ex-Chief Edward J. Duffy, 59 year member, and Andrew Hoyt, 50 year social member, passed away in 2016. They will be missed and we are grateful for their devoted service.

Rumson Fire Company welcomed new member Jacob O. Burns. Unfortunately, three longtime members passed away: Herbert E. Bush, 69 year member, Joseph J. Sorrentino, 52 year member, and Robert J. McAllister, 20 year member. We thank them for their many years of service.

The Rumson Fire Department is supported in part by resident contributions each year and they would like to offer their sincerest thanks for your support. Volunteers are always needed and Borough residents are encouraged to apply and learn about how they can assist with the Borough's fire protection. Applications for the Fire Department can be obtained through Rumson Borough Hall.

## **Department of Public Works**

Rumson's Department of Public Works continues to operate a robust and successful Recycling Program. In May and October, Rumson Recycling conducts Green Day events, in which electronics and books may be recycled and materials shredded. This year, DPW collected 11,180 pounds of shredding, 17,689 pounds of electronics, and 7440 pounds of books. Green Day is funded by a Recycling Tonnage Grant.

We offer a note of sincere appreciation and best wishes to James Mellish, Assistant Foreman and Recycling Coordinator,

who joined us in 1987 and retired in February. We'd like to welcome Kyle Buckland, who joined the team this year as a full time DPW Laborer.

Residents are reminded to please stop dumping cooking grease / cooking oil down their drains. This costs the Borough thousands of dollars to clean out the infrastructure. In addition, residents are requested not to flush baby wipes or other "flushable" wipes, as these clog the drains and pumps.

### **Department of Public Works Toy Drive**

The Department of Public Works Toy Drive in early December was a great success. The Toy Drive brought in 460 toys, which were distributed to Family and Children's Services and the Salvation Army in Red Bank and will benefit local children in need. Thanks to everyone for your generous gifts, and to our Public Works employees who donated their time to help. Once again, you have made Santa's job a little easier.

### **Historic Preservation Commission**

The Rumson Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) launched their website in 2015, and as of October of 2016 the website had received over 19,000 hits. In 2016 the Commission dedicated their efforts to enhancing the website, as well as updating the property inventory. There are now over 260 properties included in the inventory.

The Borough of Rumson wishes to recognize the efforts of those involved in preserving our unique architectural resources. Historic structures contribute to the identity of our community, and sensitive treatment of these resources ensure future residents and visitors will experience the same community character.

In 2016 the Commission implemented a new Awards Program. Each year the Rumson Historic Preservation Commission may honor a project(s) and/or individual(s) for their contribution to the preservation of our historic resources. The details of the new Awards Program and Nomination Forms can be found on the HPC website (<http://www.rumsonnj.gov/rhpc>). The Nomination Form can be completed and submitted online.

The Commission continues to act as a resource for historic property owners. The Borough is fortunate to have this dedicated group of resident volunteers and recognizes their efforts in preserving the history of our community.

### **Shade Tree Commission**

The Shade Tree Commission (STC) had its most productive and successful year, fulfilling its goals in many areas.

The Borough celebrated its 25th Anniversary being recognized as TreeCity USA. This is a prestigious honor and only 35 other municipalities in the state have been awarded the designation of 25 or more years. The Commission also received State approval on its second Five Year Community Forestry Management Plan. The plan provides the Borough with additional tree related liability protection as well as future grant opportunities to fund Shade Tree projects.

A primary objective of the Commission is public outreach and education, which is achieved in several ways. The Borough's April newsletter was dedicated to the STC, and the Commission published several tree-related articles in The Journal. At the STC's yearly lecture, Dr. Neil Hendrickson, PhD from Bartlett Tree spoke on "Trees in Sacred Spaces," in what was a very interesting and moving presentation about the planning and preparation of planting over 500 trees at the 9/11 Memorial Plaza.

The Commission prepared an informational brochure to help residents with small yards select the most appropriate tree for their property. Furthermore, the STC recently completed its own website, sharing its mission and goals, as well as tree-related information. Please visit the site at [Rumsonnj.gov/STC](http://Rumsonnj.gov/STC). The brochure and website were expertly prepared by Councilman Ben Day, who graciously volunteered

his time and enthusiasm to complete.

The STC is an advisory board; partnerships with other Borough departments, community groups, and organizations are vital to fulfill its mission. The STC has had a long standing relationship with the Rumson Garden Club and the Borough's DPW, who maintain the trees along our streets and in our parks. This year a new partnership was created with the Rumson Public School Administration and PTO, and a wildly successful fundraiser was held for an Arbor Day celebration. Students collected funds to plant 20 large trees on campus. The trees were graciously planted by two resident-owned landscape companies. The event culminated in an Arbor Day Celebration. This was truly a memorable event and the new trees will have an impact on the campus for years to come.

Several other tree planting projects occurred this year in the Borough. After a large red oak in Victory Park was lost during an August storm, 5 large caliper trees were planted to replace it in the fall. The STC also facilitated the planting of 7 trees in Meadow Ridge Park for the Recreation Commission.

### **Parks & Recreation**

Rumson Recreation offers over 20 programs annually enjoyed by more than 4500 residents of all ages. Activities include a variety of recreational youth sports and non-sports programming, summer camps, as well as featured family events and holiday parades. Rumson Rec also offers rowing programs for high school and middle school students, seasonal job opportunities for local teenagers, and provides support to the Rumson Senior Citizens Club.

Rumson Rec utilizes over 300 volunteer coaches each year and provides volunteer opportunities for local teens and seniors. These volunteers are the cornerstone of our programs' success. The Rumson Recreation Commission would like to thank all our Rec volunteers for their time and devotion to the benefit of our children and our community. We would also like to thank our parents and participants for their support.

Maintaining the highest quality parks and recreational spaces is a high priority for the Borough. As such, grass playing fields are periodically closed for rest and maintenance and the DPW is regularly checking our facilities to ensure maximum safety. As part of our on-going park maintenance, the Borough renovated the infields of both Riverside and Piping Rock baseball fields. The Borough also decided to add Pickleball lines to the tennis courts at Victory Park to allow people to play either sport on the recently renovated courts.

In October the Recreation Commission welcomed two new advisors to the board, Margot O'Connor and Dorothy Whitehouse. Each brings a unique perspective to the Recreation Commission and promise to continue to be very active in the community through recreation programs and special events.

On November 16th longtime Recreation Commission Chairman, John Lembeck announced his resignation from the Recreation Commission Advisory. John Served for 15 years on the Recreation Commission and the last 6 as the Chairman. During his time the town has seen a massive increase in recreation programs and he overseen the renovations of many of the parks in town. His leadership and guidance will be sorely missed.

### **Tax Assessor**

In 2016, 26 new or rebuilt homes were completed in Rumson, contributing significantly to the approximately \$30,000,000 in added rateables for the year. Renovations and additions added an additional \$5,000,000 in rateables.

The Borough continued participation in the Monmouth County Assessment Demonstration Program. Twenty percent of the properties in Rumson were inspected last year, bringing the total to date since program inception to 60%. Over a five year period, 100% will have been inspected and the cycle will begin again. The program goal is to keep all properties at current market value assessment each year and thus each home-

owner paying their fair share of property taxes. All properties in the Borough have been considered in the annual assessment.

### Rumson Endowment Fund

The Rumson Endowment Fund, Inc., a 501(c)3 organization formed in 1997, is the financial backbone of many projects and events throughout the Borough, such as the Rumson Christmas Tree Lighting, Veterans Day, park upgrades, emergency vehicle and other public safety equipment purchases, to list a few.

Once again two individual generous donations funded the annual upkeep of Bingham Hall and the George H. Moss Rumson History Room on the third floor of Borough Hall. We are grateful to those contributors.

Donations to the Rumson Endowment Fund, Inc., are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Please contact the Borough if you would like to make a donation. Your charitable donation is greatly appreciated and truly makes a difference in our community.

### Borough Staff & Commission Volunteer Updates

We appreciate our Borough's municipal staff, which continues to provide the best and most courteous service to our residents. Borough Hall employees provide the high level of services our residents expect, as they work within the budget and regulatory constraints set forth by the State of New Jersey.

In addition to those previously mentioned, the Borough experienced several changes in its staff. After 18 years of dedicated service, Jane Hartman retired from her position as Deputy Municipal Clerk and Registrar of Vital Statistics in May. Tamila Bumback subsequently stepped in as Deputy Municipal Clerk. After receiving certification from the State, Therese Wollman serves as Registrar of Vital Statistics, and

Melissa McGuire serves as Deputy Registrar. We also welcomed Linda Strub as Administrative Assistant last January.

In April of 2016, the Borough hired David Marks, the first full-time in-house Borough Engineer. David brings a versatile municipal engineering experience to the Borough with over ten years of service to the Borough through his former employment. With David on board, we have experienced construction projects completed faster and more cost-effectively, ultimately resulting in a savings to the taxpayer.

Personally, I would like to extend a special thank you to the Chairs and Members of all the various boards in Rumson. Each one of you volunteers a considerable amount of time attending meetings and reviewing issues important to this community. Your personal commitment is Rumson's most valuable asset and is greatly appreciated. Your spirit of volunteerism is exemplary.

Our Police Department, volunteer Fire Department and First Aid Squad are to be commended for their unconditional commitment to the safety and welfare of our residents, addressing every emergency with courtesy and respect. We appreciate your service, thank you.

On behalf of all our Council Members and myself, I want to wish everyone a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

*May God Bless us all and God Bless America.*

Sincerely,  
John E. Ekdahl  
Mayor

### Did you know...

- Rumson Rec Spring 2017 registrations for baseball, softball, t-ball, and girls lacrosse will be open as of January 1st. The open registration period runs through January 31st. A late fee will be applied on February 1st. We will now use our new League Apps registration system. Please familiarize yourself with the new system and create your new family page at [www.rumsonrec.org](http://www.rumsonrec.org).

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