

# EDITORIAL & COMMENTARY



Red Bank Elks Club Flag Day Ceremony, Riverside Park, June 14.

SCOTT LONGFIELD

IT'S YOUR TURN

## Commentary

### Work on County Roads, Signals to Recycling

By Thomas A. Arnone

Traffic signals are of great significance in that they help to control the flow of traffic as well as helping to ensure the safety of our residents.

Recently, there was a traffic signal activation ceremony held on the corner of Locust Avenue and Parker Road in the Borough of West Long Branch. This project came about as a result of Mayor (Janet W.) Tucci requesting that the county study this intersection to allow better traffic flow from Parker Road onto County Route 15 (Locust Avenue) and to improve safety and access for the Frank Antonides Middle School and the West Long Branch Community Center.

Based on the county's study, our in-house county engineers designed this state of the art traffic signal, which has dedicated turn lanes, improved crosswalks and push-button control pedestrian signals. The traffic signal uses LED lights that cost less to operate and are eco-friendly.

In addition, the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders will be awarding contracts for the construction of intersection improvements at County Route 40A (Memorial Drive) and Evergreen Avenue, in the boroughs of Neptune City and Bradley Beach to the lowest bidder, Green Construction, Inc. from South River.

These improvements consist of minor realignment of the intersection, an installation of a new traffic signal and railroad warning devices. The intersection has been identified by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority as a location with excessive frequency of right angle crashes that are correctable by the installation of a traffic signal.

I am very pleased that this very much needed safety improvement project will be awarded, and construction of the improvements will commence shortly. I am particularly pleased to see this coming to fruition as it is a project I began working on while serving my time as mayor of Neptune City along with the great freeholder board at that time.

Since then, and now serving as a freeholder on the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders, I have had the good fortune of being able to continue to work on this project with the current Neptune City Mayor Robert Brown and the council.

Additionally, I have received the full support and cooperation from my fellow freeholders on this project. Being able to be part of this project from its inception through completion has been a rewarding experience for me, as this is something I have worked very hard on getting done to help ensure the safety of our residents.

Lastly, the freeholders just approved a \$500,000 grant application to the state Department of Transportation (DOT) for a Foamed Asphalt Cold-In-Place Recycling pilot project at a location to be determined in the county. I received a letter from Cherry, Weber & Associates, PC regarding the consultant's prior use and successful completion of a project for the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission using this foamed asphalt technology at the New Hope-Lambertville Toll Bridge. I reached out to Honorable David M.

DelVecchio, mayor of Lambertville, to discuss this project. Based on his recommendation, I asked our engineering division to evaluate its potential use on Monmouth County roads.

Foamed Asphalt Cold-In-Place Recycling is a "green" technology that incorporates the reuse of the existing asphalt pavement when we reconstruct our county roads. Recycling and reusing the existing asphalt materials has many advantages, including the reduction of waste millings which end up at our landfill; significant reductions in construction truck trips on roadways; shorter required durations of work; and significantly lower project costs (approximately 60 percent less than traditional methods).

Although its use is still relatively new to the U.S., this technology has been used successfully in other parts of the country, and is now being investigated for use in New Jersey by the DOT.

Thomas A. Arnone is a Monmouth County freeholder.

### Go Local in the Garden State

By Michele S. Byers

The Garden State is living up to its name!

Following a frigid winter and cool spring, crops like spinach, lettuce, asparagus and strawberries are ready, and Jersey tomatoes, blueberries, corn and peaches are coming soon.

Now's the perfect time to go local.

"Farm to table" eating means fresher, tastier and healthier foods. It keeps New Jersey farmers in business and supports local economies. And don't forget all the fuel that's saved when produce isn't trucked for hundreds or thousands of miles!

In New Jersey, you don't have to travel far to find farmers markets, roadside stands, community supported agriculture enterprises and pick-your-own opportunities.

What's the difference?

Farmers markets give farmers a chance to sell produce directly to consumers. These markets are often found in central locations like parks and train station parking lots, and some are packed with dozens of farmers providing an incredible variety of foods. New Jersey has nearly 150 farmers markets, including many in densely populated counties like Essex, Bergen, Hudson and Camden.

At roadside farm stands, farmers sell the produce they've grown on-site. The Garden State has more than 500 roadside stands, ranging from a single table piled with freshly picked produce to big barns filled with fruits, veggies, flowers, dairy products, baked goods, meats, honey and other agricultural products.

Community-supported agriculture enterprises, or CSAs, rely on a cooperative agreement between farmers and customers. The customers "buy in" before the growing season, providing farmers with capital to invest in seeds and equipment. In return, they receive weekly shares of the produce during the growing season. There are about 50 CSAs, large and small, in New Jersey – including one of the nation's largest, Honey Brook Farm in Pennington.

Picking your own produce is another great option, especially for families who want to have fun while teaching children how their food grows. Prices may also be lower for those willing to do the bending, stretching and pulling. More than 150 farms offer pick-your-own crops.

This year, the state Department of Agriculture's Jersey Fresh program and the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey are making it easier than ever for consumers to connect with local farms and fresh foods.

On the Jersey Fresh website – <http://jerseyfresh.nj.gov> – you can search by county for farmers markets, roadside stands, CSA farms and pick-your-own farms. You also can check out New Jersey wineries, agri-tourism events and recipes.

Maybe this is the year to go organic!

Organic foods are produced without synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, genetically modified seeds, or hormones and antibiotics in animal feed. Organic farming methods are also kinder on the soil ... and on the bees and other pollinators that make farming possible.

Check out the Northeast Organic Farming Association – NOFA-NJ for short – for a comprehensive listing of organic farms at [www.nofa.org](http://www.nofa.org). In addition to its annual Food & Farm Guide, NOFA-NJ has a searchable database of organic foods and agricultural products.

Eat local and support New Jersey's farmers!

And for more information about preserving farmland, open space and natural resources in New Jersey, visit the New Jersey Conservation Foundation website at [www.njconservation.org](http://www.njconservation.org) or contact me at [info@njconservation.org](mailto:info@njconservation.org).

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COURTESY DORN'S CLASSIC IMAGES

### Two River Moment

This 1955 photo shows Stadler's Boats and Riverside Hotel on the banks of the Navesink River in Red Bank. The photo appears to have been taken from the Coopers Bridge that carries Route 35 over the river between Middletown and Red Bank.

Michele S. Byers is the executive director of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation.