

# EDITORIAL & COMMENTARY



A loose goose at Thompson Park, Middletown.

SCOTT LONGFIELD

## IT'S YOUR TURN

### Commentary

#### Maintaining Services, Preserving Finances, Controlling Taxes in Monmouth County

By Lillian G. Burry

Perhaps the most fundamental requirement for anyone seeking public office is a clear understanding of the world around them. This goes far beyond politics. They must understand the economic circumstances. They must understand the evolving needs of the people they propose to serve and know how to most effectively employ the resources of government to meet those needs.

They must also know what the challenges are that have to be dealt with and have the judgment and knowledge necessary to identify those that must be endured and those that can be overcome and turned into opportunity.

In Monmouth County, we must recognize that the era of massive expansion is behind us. In the last decade we added only 15,000 people and land available for future development is rapidly disappearing. While this might be considered to some as a quiet decline, this is not the future I see for Monmouth County. As a member of the county Planning Board I am working hard to turn the focus from the quantitative growth now winding down in towns with remaining developable land to a new era of qualitative growth that will focus attention all across the county with every town having an equal chance to call attention to their unique assets.

In support of this there are three things we must do as a Freeholder board.

First, we must maintain the scope and scale of county services that are the foundation on which our collective lives are built.

Second, we must preserve the financial integrity and stability of the county to safeguard our AAA

bond rating – an increasingly rare and valuable asset that we share with towns and school districts through the County Improvement Authority to save millions of dollars in interest on bonds.

Third, we must continue to hold the line on taxes. While the economy overall may be slowly recovering, many people are still experiencing economic hardship – some from the lingering effects of the recession and others from the physical disruptions caused by natural disasters.

Maintaining services. Preserving finances. Controlling taxes. These are the challenges for the next few years, at least. I remain confident that Monmouth County will continue to see the new value-based growth that is now under way at sites ranging from the Lucent property in Holmdel to the former Blaisdell Lumber site in Red Bank and Commvault International in Tinton Falls.

We are redeveloping and revitalizing ourselves. And we are being rediscovered by new generations that are driving demand for multi-family housing in places, like Asbury Park and Long Branch. This is the world evolving around us. It is our role and responsibility as Freeholders to keep our common foundation strong as this bright new future is built.

It is my personal commitment to the people of Monmouth County to carry this obligation forward.

*Lillian G. Burry is the freeholder director for the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders.*

#### A Pedestrian Pursuit

By Michele S. Byers

In honor of New Jersey's 350th anniversary, Mount Holly resident Bill Bolger plans to walk 150 miles along the original Province Line that divided East Jersey and West Jersey in the late 1600s, when our state first became an English colony.

He's expecting the autumn journey to last three weeks, taking him from the Atlantic Ocean in

Holgate to Tocks Island on the Delaware River.

For many folks, that's a little extreme. But there's a special breed of walker who loves a good, long ramble – and a challenge!

For them, the perfect group has to be the FreeWalkers, dedicated to organizing long-distance walks in New Jersey and beyond. Throughout the year, the FreeWalkers plan interesting treks – kind of like slow-speed marathons – showcasing the state's diverse geography from city sidewalks to paths along historic canals and railway corridors.

You've got to be in shape for these walks, but there's more to it than that. The group is also a social network of the type that existed before the Internet, and the walks encourage both friendship and fitness in pursuit of pedestrianism.

"We encourage everyone to strive for an ambitious personal goal and then plan and motivate themselves to achieving it," said Paul Kiczek, the group's founder and a Morristown resident. "This is not about speed but endurance. Walkers benefit from the exercise, friendships, and the delight of discovering a hidden world nearby."

Among the FreeWalkers' upcoming events:

- The Saturday, Aug. 9 moonlight walk along the Columbia Trail in Hunterdon County, where a rail line once operated. This 12-mile walk starts at the trailhead in High Bridge and goes to Califon Island Park, then back to High Bridge. Although there's a full moon that night, headlamps are recommended!
- The Saturday, Sept. 27 "Endless Summer" walk from Matawan to Asbury Park for those who don't want summer to end but love the crispness of early fall. This walk covers 30 seashore miles from Raritan Bay to the Atlantic Ocean.
- The Monday, Oct. 13 "Lenape 34: The Origins Walk" across Essex County from Millburn to Newark. This tough walk over varied terrain follows the Lenape Trail through four reservations, three public utility access routes, and 15 parks in over a dozen towns!

The FreeWalkers generally travel about three miles an hour, so walks of 30-plus miles mean a long day ... or night. But there's often a support vehicle to help anyone having trouble, and even walkers who choose to cover less than the total distance are welcome.

"People walk part of the distance, they walk with dogs, they walk with their kids, it's all OK with us," Paul said.

For the fourth year, the FreeWalkers are partnering with the East Coast Greenway on the "Cross-Jersey Walking Challenge," which sets a goal of walking 100 miles across the state on the East Coast Greenway at any time during the year. Walkers complete sections on their own schedules and log their progress on the FreeWalkers website.

Celebrate the Garden State's 350th birthday with a long walk, and savor the sights that can't be seen by car!

For more information about the FreeWalkers, including details about how to sign up for upcoming walks, go to [www.freewalkers.org](http://www.freewalkers.org).

And to learn more about preserving New Jersey's land and natural resources, 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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#### When Did I Become Danny Dorn?

By Danny Murphy

For those of you who have grown up in Red Bank and are over 20, you will remember Dorn's Photo Shop. Born in 1910, Danny Dorn Sr. became a projectionist for his filmmaker father at the age of 14 and worked with him when he started Dorn's Photo Shop in 1951.

I believe he was the first to do aerial photography of Red Bank and the Jersey Shore, both in black and white and color. He and his son, Danny Jr., owned a plane and were both pilots. One would fly the plane and the other would shoot the photos through the bottom of the plane.

Dorn's Photo Shop flourished for years being run by Sr., Jr., and eventually his granddaughter, Cathy Dorn. The point of this story is really about the man who became an icon in Red Bank.

He loved the town and for years developed numerous community events. I knew Danny Dorn as sort of a father figure of Red Bank. He was about 5-foot, 8-inches tall with a full stock of gray hair; he told me he used to be 5-foot, 10. He always had a good word of advice for me about the town. He knew the history of Red Bank going back years and had participated in much of that history, promoting the town.

I remember one time I met him downtown in the early '80s; he was a little ticked off at the look of the town. Shaking his head he told me, "These store owners have got to start cleaning the front of their stores and sidewalks. You don't invite people to your home with a dirty front yard, so why would they do that with their businesses?" Great point I thought. Years later we brought in a street vacuum and pressed hard on the store owners to keep their stores and sidewalks clean. With RiverCenter creating the flowerpots on Broad Street, Red Bank now has a great "front yard."

I always had a great love for Red Bank. As a kid I roamed the town and the area around it. Mom was a single parent and worked long hours so the town and the people became my extended family. Years later the town and the people in it are still like a big family to each other and to me.

Like any family, you have a great many people that are great for the town and a few nuts and bolts thrown in for good measure.

I opened Danny's in 1969 and sometime in the early 1970s Lou Viati from Sal's got me involved with the Red Bank Chamber of Commerce. He said: "OK, Murph, I have been doing this for years, it's now your turn." And so began my working with the chamber and on the town over the next 40 years, working on more committees, charities, and political functions than I can remember.

I have become sort of an historian on Red Bank, at least back into the 1950s.

The other day, while walking downtown, I was aware that the sidewalks were clean. I saw my reflection in a store mirror. I used to be 5-foot, 10-inches tall and am now 5-foot, 8 with gray hair ... I wondered at that time at what point did I turn into a Danny Dorn?

*Danny Murphy is the owner of Danny's Steakhouse and Sushi on Bridge Avenue, Red Bank.*



COURTESY DORN'S CLASSIC IMAGES

#### Two River Moment

Swimming at the Highlands beach in 1918 was certainly different from today. Note the bathing costume of the woman in the foreground, complete with black stockings and full skirt, and the boy in the belted knickers suit standing next to her.