

EDITORIAL & COMMENTARY



Queen Anne's lace, Dorbrook Park, Aug. 28

SCOTT LONGFIELD

IT'S YOUR TURN

Letters to the Editor

Updating the Progress at Fort Monmouth

To the Editor:

Amidst a summer awash in bad news, there is a very good news story I'm pleased to share regarding the redevelopment of Fort Monmouth; a topic I am asked about frequently.

Since the fort was closed by the U.S. Army in 2005, I have been a member of both public-private agencies, led by the state, that first planned, and is now executing plans to transform the fort into a hub of recreation, commerce, technology, innovation, education, residential and retail use. Tangible results emerged last year and continue to increase this year. More are on the near horizon, bringing jobs, ratables and opportunities for the public to enjoy new open spaces and recreational options within the borders of Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls.

As the county's representative, first on the Fort Monmouth Economic Redevelopment Planning Authority (FMERPA) and currently on the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority (FMERA), I identified certain facilities and spaces for county use early on. Last year, the Monmouth County Department of Public Works and Engineering took over, refurbished and is now utilizing the fort's former motor pool, bringing critical services including snow and storm damage removal closer to that region. The county park system now runs the former teen center and pool, a beautiful facility. Programs initiated there last year have been well attended and growing. This year, we opened the pool for classes. The reception and

attendance have been outstanding. We hope to increase programs at the pool next summer. That's just the beginning.

Also:

- The fort's marina has been leased by a private firm and opened for boating. A year 'round public restaurant there is being refurbished after Superstorm Sandy damage.
- The Sun Eagles Golf Course is operating while being upgraded and better maintained.
- A new, state-of-the-art headquarters for the CommVault data firm is nearing completion, bringing thousands of jobs.
- AcuteCare is renovating the former Patterson Clinic into a healthcare facility.
- Tinton Falls will convert the former Child Development Center into a school.
- Princeton University wants to create a driverless car testing facility on the fort.

Other firms are negotiating contracts or in talks for facilities, including Russell Hall, the fabrication units, the chapel, the firing range, officers housing and more. We are working diligently to create a full-service veteran's community on fort property and are committed to that goal.

About 850 acres of the 1,128-acre fort have not yet been placed under contract.

As the U.S. Army still technically owns the fort, all transactions must follow stringent, lengthy procedures and regulations subject to Army approval. Signing of final transfer papers between the Army and New Jersey is expected later this year.

To hasten and streamline the redevelopment of Fort Monmouth, I recently proposed Monmouth County purchase the remaining fort property through the Monmouth County Improvement Authority (MCIA). Representatives from the state

Economic Development Authority (EDA), FMERA, the county and the MCIA are actively pursuing the idea.

Time is of the essence regarding prospective future fort tenants. A county-state purchase of the property would eliminate time-consuming bureaucratic obstacles to redevelopment and see the fort occupied and bustling with jobs and activity once again.

To keep abreast of FMERA progress and activities, visit fortmonmouthredevelopment.com.

Lillian G. Burry
Director

Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Heart, Stroke Association Supports CPR in Schools

To the Editor:

The American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association is very grateful for the enactment of legislation enabling New Jersey to become the 19th state to require CPR education as part of the high school health education curriculum.

With nearly 424,000 people suffering cardiac arrest outside the hospital each year and only a 10.4 percent survival rate, the American Heart Association urges everyone to learn CPR in order to be prepared in case of an emergency.

Early CPR and defibrillation are the only ways to revive a cardiac arrest victim. If the victim does not receive CPR within the first 5 minutes, the chance of survival drops dramatically. Studies show that immediate bystander CPR can double or triple a cardiac arrest victim's chance of survival.

Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when the electrical impulses in the heart become rapid or chaotic, causing the heart to suddenly stop beating at any time. Many cardiac arrest victims appear to be healthy and have no known heart disease or other risk factors.

Many thanks to bill sponsors Sen. Diane Allen and Assemblyman Angel Fuentes as well as Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno for supporting legislation that will equip a new generation to respond in the face of an emergency.

The life-saving lesson can be incorporated into existing school curriculum and may take just 30-minutes to complete. In less than an hour, students will learn a skill that can literally save lives.

New Jersey youth will join more than 1 million students from across the country this year, learning the basics of CPR, which will include hands-on practice.

By teaching high school students CPR before they graduate, New Jersey will put thousands more lifesavers on New Jersey's streets every year.

The American Heart Association/American Stroke Association is proud to support the training of a new generation of lifesavers.

Why is it so important to teach our youth the skills of CPR?

Life is why.

Courtney Nelson
Regional Director
American Heart Association/American Stroke
Association, Robbinsville

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75 West Front Street Red Bank NJ 07701
732-219-5788 • Editorial Fax: 747-7213 • Advertising Fax: 224-0806
Email editor@tworivertimes.com Website www.tworivertimes.com

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Letters To The Editor

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Sea Bright Sea Wall Not Very Bright

To the Editor:

Seawalls do not work. They give false hope and leave people vulnerable for the next storm.

History has shown us that sea walls, like the one in Sea Bright, fail.

Every time there's a major storm, the water goes over the wall or the wall itself gets knocked down by the storm, causing more flooding.

We are better off with a holistic approach that moves people out of harm's way, mitigates for sea-level rise and restores natural systems like dunes.

Gov. Christie does not believe in climate change and denies that sea-level rise is a real threat.

New Jersey is doing nothing to mitigate for sea-level rise climate impacts. Instead, we take millions of dollars and waste those funds on walls that will not work will not protect people or property.

A Sea Bright sea wall is not very bright!

Jeff Tittel
Director

New Jersey Sierra Club

Protecting Women's Rights to Health care Decisions

To the Editor:

Every woman deserves the right to make her own health care decision.

Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) says he knows of at least five people who think bosses should decide whether employees have insurance for medical care like contraception – unfortunately, the five are all Supreme Court Justices.

The impacts of three recent Supreme Court rulings are devastating for women. First, they struck down a Massachusetts law that required protesters to stay 35 feet away from health centers and gave anti-women's health protesters permission to stand between patients and their doctors.

Then, in the Hobby Lobby case, they gave employers the power to deny women the birth control/family planning benefit in the Affordable Care Act.

Then, they gave a religious college an exemption from providing the same benefit.

Apparently, we cannot rely on the courts to protect our rights. We must educate ourselves on issues that concern us, vote for people who support us and hold elected officials accountable for their votes. We must be energized and not let our hard-earned right to safe, affordable, accessible health care be lost.

Ruth Blaser
Fair Haven



COURTESY DORN'S CLASSIC IMAGES

Two River Moment

This aerial photograph from 1954 is the property that became Deep Cut Gardens. While the Monmouth County Park System was founded in 1960, it wasn't until 1978 that Deep Cut Gardens opened as part of the system. The park, which is now 54 acres and dedicated to the home gardener, was founded with the gift of 20 acres in 1977 from the Wihl family estate. Another 20 acres of parkland was purchased with Green Acres Funds. The park is located at 152 Red Hill Road in Middletown.