In this issue: 2010 Mayors Summit in Photos

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CONFERENCE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Issue IV 2010

Bringing It All Together

Governor Christie Attends Mayors Fall Summit

Featured Articles:

Interest Arbitration Legislation Status

Hot Topics, Cool Mayors

Business Council Update

A More Affordable New Jersey

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President's Message

By: Mayor Thomas Arnone, NJCM President

Fellow Mayors,

As we inch closer to 2011, I look back at the last ten months and acknowledge that although the financial state of New Jersey is despondent at best, there are individuals out there that have taken the proverbial "Bull by the Horn" and are taking drastic measures to make changes that need to be made to turn the tide of our state. I also look at our organization, now in its 48th year and see just how far the NJCM has come along with providing Mayors great opportunities to step forward and reach out to the decision makers of our state.

The success of the 19th annual Mayors Fall Summit substantiates the importance of your NJCM membership. The bringing together of Governor Chris Christie, Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno, members of the Cabinet and State Legislature to personally meet with and discuss important issues effecting your municipalities was an opportunity that was revered by all Mayors in attendance. We appreciate the Governor's willingness to speak directly with the Mayors, listening to the issues effecting you as Mayors, your municipalities, and taking these key points of discussion back to his desk. You as Member Mayors have an open channel of communication to the Governor, Cabinet and Legislature right here within the NJCM!

The NJCM also recently sponsored and attended several "Mayors Day" events held at the State House. The Governor again met with the Mayors one on one, afterwards inviting them to meet with, and discuss issues with his Cabinet Members on hand.

We need to remember that it is so critical these days to maintain unity and it's often not just about the NJCM, nor is it about being a Democrat or Republican. This is about coming together and working together as a collective force - The NJCM Mayor Members regardless of party affiliation, the Governor, the Governor's staff communicating and working together to make the changes that need to be made for our municipalities.

There are still many issues to address for 2011, the Toolkit, Interest Arbitration, Shared Services, COAH Reform, and Best Practices Checklist to name some. We continue to be at the forefront, taking your feedback and bringing it upstream to the decision makers across the street. Through our Legislatures, Executive Board Members and staff we have a strong voice in the State House.

Thomas Arnone, NJCM President is also the Mayor of Neptune City

New for 2011, we will be hosting quarterly events through our NJCM Business Council right here at our offices in Trenton. Beginning with another New Mayors Training Seminar to be held early in 2011, these events will be informative, productive and are sure to be excellent networking opportunities. We will have featured guest speakers, and discussions about critical issues facing us all as we proceed towards the 2% cap.

The times have changed from challenging to downright frightening. With more layoffs pending and more cuts to be made, it is vital to remain united and keep the "com line" open. Communication is key, and never before has there been a more open line of communication between the NJCM Mayors, the Governor, Cabinet and State Legislature. Let's embrace this opportunity and let our voices be heard so we can make the tough decisions we need to as informed and as efficient as they can be for our municipalities and citizens.

On a lighter note, I would like to take a moment to thank those of you that have made and continue to make the NJCM the success it is. Thanks to the Executive Board for their continued support and efforts. A special thanks to all of the Mayor Emeritus who graciously give us their time and support at our events and in the office. You are always there when we need you. A thank you goes out to our Business Council Members for your continued support in our organization and a special thank you to Governor Christie, Lieutenant Governor Guadagno, Cabinet Members and Legislators for making themselves more available to us during these times than ever before.

Sincerely,

Thomas Arnone

Mayor Thomas Arnone
President - NJCM

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Interest Arbitration Legislation Status Update

By: Steven S. Glickman, Esq., NJCM General Counsel

The New Jersey Legislature is moving ahead with implementing Governor Christie's "toolkit". However, progress with interest arbitration legislation is not progressing in a fashion that will provide municipalities with the "protection" needed.

Proposed legislation includes: (1) modifying the process for selecting arbitrators; (2) returning to "fair and final" as the terminal procedure; and (3) have arbitrators "consider" the tax levy cap or have arbitration awards or settlements capped at two (2.0%) per cent.

In the past, in response to escalating salaries, the Legislature has put "band aids" on interest arbitration legislation, reiterating and enhancing the requirements placed upon interest arbitrators to consider financial statutory limitations on municipalities. Legislators must realize that these "quick fixes" have failed to stop arbitrators from granting excessive salary increases considering the size of these salaries and the "caps" placed upon both expenditures and municipal tax increases. The combination of the "caps" and interest arbitration awards have hastened and heightened layoffs in numerous municipalities.

The only viable option left for legislators is to place more stringent restrictions on the interest arbitrators while continuing to require municipalities to "make their case". The New Jersey Conference of Mayors has put forth a position to both sides of the aisle for modifying the interest arbitration legislation in a way to allow municipalities to function within their statutory budgetary limitations.

- Any legislation modifying the selection process for arbitrators is acceptable so long as the parties maintain the right to mutually agree upon the arbitrator.

- Changing the terminal step from its current process to "fair and final" would be acceptable, although "fair and final" was the process used previously. Municipalities' objections to "fair and final" led to amending the interest arbitration law to include the present process.

- Procedural amendments which would lead to substantive change must place tangible restrictions and conditions upon arbitrators and must provide a viable appeals process.

- With respect to the appeals process, the appeal should be to the Local Finance Board as opposed to a panel of arbitrators or the Public Employment Relations Commission. Since the Local Finance Board is more neutral and removed from the arbitrators and also has the greatest expertise is deciphering the budgetary impact of an arbitrator's award, the Local Finance Board is the most logical entity to handle these appeals.

Steven S. Glickman, Esq., serves as Labor Relations Counsel for the NJCM, a position that he has held since 1992. He is also a partner in the firm Ruderman & Glickman.

- All too often arbitrator's awards have required municipalities to utilize available revenue for public safety salary increases while freezing the salaries of non-public safety employees. Legislation should require an arbitrator's award to insure that sufficient revenue remains to provide salary and benefit increases for all employees equal to the salary and benefit increases granted to the employees affected by his or her award without exceeding the public employer's two (2.0%) percent statutory tax and appropriation limitations.

- All too often, arbitrators ignore the impact of their awards on ancillary benefits such as longevity, step increases, overtime, etc. Legislation should require arbitrators to calculate the impact of such ancillary benefits when issuing their awards without exceeding the public employer's two (2.0%) percent tax and statutory appropriation limitation.

- Legislation should provide that municipalities should be required, if possible, to demonstrate that if the interest arbitrator awards a salary or benefit increase greater than the position taken by the municipality, reductions will be required in other line items, potentially creating the need for a reduction in staffing and/or services. If the municipality can substantiate its position as indicated above, arbitrators must be required to award the municipality's position.

The New Jersey Conference of Mayors continues to advocate on your behalf. Only true and substantive change in the interest arbitration legislation can provide municipalities with the "tools" needed to continue to function within their statutory budgetary obligations.

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A Commonsense Step Toward A More Affordable NJ

By: Assemblyman John J. Burzichelli

Many undoubtedly remember the great fanfare that surrounded the creation of the Council on Local Mandates way back in 1995.

Voters and mayors had rightly had enough with unfunded state mandates being shoved upon them, but this new council – with its absolute decision-making authority – was going to make major strides toward combating that problem.

State government was, from now on, going to have to pay for its mandates, and property taxpayers would ultimately benefit.

Well, so much for that idea.

Since its creation 15 years ago, the Council has rendered only 11 decisions, five of which were in favor of municipalities. That's less than one decision per year.

That's not to say the Council hasn't been valuable.

In one case, the council blocked the Department of Education from forcing school districts to pay to test classrooms for radon gas. Testing schools for radon gas is certainly a valid public policy concern, but the state had to fulfill its own obligation.

Most recently, the Council struck down then-Gov. Corzine's attempt to force 89 rural municipalities to pay for state police coverage, a decision that would have adversely and abruptly impacted property taxpayers throughout our state.

The problem has been that only the governing body, directly elected chief executive of a county or municipality or a local school board can file complaints with the Council.

Often times it's just too costly for one group to go it alone against state government. Meanwhile, groups with the expertise and authority to advocate on behalf of multiple entities were shut out of the process.

This hopefully will soon change.

Along with Assemblymen Fred Scalera and John McKeon, I've sponsored legislation (A-3204) that would allow more groups to file complaints against unfunded state mandates. The bill passed the Assembly in September and only needs final Senate approval before going to the governor.

This is a sensible step toward a more affordable New Jersey.

John J. Burzichelli represents the 3rd Legislative District (Salem and parts of Cumberland and Gloucester counties) in the General Assembly. He also serves on the Assembly Budget Committee and is Mayor of Paulsboro.

Allowing more groups to challenge these mandates will lead to a more accountable system that hopefully will lead the state to think twice about the cost of some of these costly regulations. That can only help keep property taxes in check.

The current system has proven unwieldy. Allowing more parties to file challenges will provide a stronger check against unfunded state mandates, hopefully keeping local government costs and property taxes under control.

The bill would allow the New Jersey Conference of Mayors, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, the New Jersey School Boards Association, the New Jersey Association of Counties, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, the New Jersey Association of Fire Districts, the New Jersey Career Fire Chiefs Association, the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police and the New Jersey First Aid Council to file a complaint with the Council concerning a potential unfunded mandate.

These are valid and respected groups with good standing to challenge unfunded mandates.

All too often we've seen unfunded state mandates drive up property taxes

on already overburdened taxpayers. The Council on Local Mandates is a viable place to go to seek relief, but the system is unworkable for too many municipalities.

Quite simply, this is a smart change that when combined with other property tax reform efforts–including by the way a bill to make the rules for updating master plans less burdensome for mayors – will go a long way toward helping control property taxes.

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Mayor Emeritus Active in Support of the 2010 Mayor's Fall Summit

By: Jack Morrissey, Chairman NJCM Mayor Emeritus Advisory Council

This falls New Jersey Conference of Mayors Annual Summit held at Drumthwacket in Princeton, NJ featured Governor Chris Christie, Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno, and Cabinet Members addressing and interacting with hundreds of NJCM Member Mayors. Once again, the volunteer members of the NJCM Mayor Emeritus Advisory Council were on hand to extend their full support of the event.

The Mayor Emeritus assisted at the registration table, monitored and controlled the admittance of invited guests to the grounds, managed and controlled parking at Drumthwacket and the Bristol Myers Squibb overflow parking lot. They also greeted and directed guests to their respective gathering location to meet with the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Cabinet Members in attendance and provided general information to the attendees.

Special thanks go to these volunteers who provided their support at Drumthwacket, namely, Elwood and Elena Hampton, Tony Beatrice, Augie Longo, Bea Cerkez, Carol Hoffman, Cathy Frank-White, Barry Lefkowitz, Charlie Pritchard, Ted Wardell, and yours truly, Jack Morrissey. These MEAC volunteers were recognized and profusely thanked for their efforts and support by NJCM President, Mayor Tom Arnone and NJCM Executive Board Officers during the event – Thank you, it was much appreciated.

The Mayor Emeritus were also present and extended their full support at the NJCM booth at the 2010 League of Municipalities Conference at the Atlantic City Convention Center in November. Helping out at the booth were the following Mayor Emeritus: Bea Cerkez, Tony Dicicco, Elwood and Elena Hampton, Angelo Corradino, Augie Longo, Charlie Pritchard, Mike Kay, Barry Lefkowitz and Jack Morrissey. Information concerning the April 2011 NJCM Annual Conference coming April 27-29 was provided to Mayors and attendees visiting the NJCM booth. Mayors were also presented with surveys to be completed requesting information on issues impacting the Mayors and their Municipalities membership status. Also, NJCM Mayors that confirmed their 2011 membership dues, or those who signed a voucher at the conference received their Mayors gift, a black coaches stadium jacket with the NJCM logo and word 'Mayor" printed on the front.

Jack Morrissey, Chairman NJCM Mayor Emeritus Advisory Council, Executive Officer and Board of Directors Member, NJCM Former Mayor, 18 years, Merchantville, New Jersey

There are many other Mayor Emeritus who give freely of their time, experience and support at the NJCM Annual Conference, and Annual Golf Classic held in April each year. The Mayor Emeritus provide support to every aspect of the Annual Conference, whether it be from mailings to putting together legislative panel sessions to everything in between. It is a huge effort and always well done with their support. If you care to join the NJCM Mayor Emeritus Advisory Council, please call the NJCM office in Trenton at (609) 989-9216 for a membership application form. Membership provides you with a membership certificate, NJCM car decal, membership card, NJCM Mayor Emeritus lapel pin and information on how to acquire an NJCM Mayor Emeritus license plate and the opportunity to lend your time and support as a volunteer.

From Left to Right:
Elwood Hampton, Janet and Jack Morrissey, Augie Longo

Hon. Elwood Hampton managed the distribution of the Mayors' windbreakers

Hon. Bea Cerkez greeted all visitors to the NJCM Booth with a smile

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Getting The Greatest Value From Your Health Plan

By Michael Munoz, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, AmeriHealth New Jersey

New Jersey municipalities – like everyone else – are more mindful than ever about managing the cost of health care. But, busy municipality staffs are typically so focused on ensuring that their benefits programs meet applicable "equal to or better than" standards, that they often overlook the numerous opportunities to extract greater value from their health plans on many other fronts.

Yet, identifying these opportunities – which can range from wellness-related discounts to more tailored benefits programs – generally requires little effort, certainly when weighed against the potential for increased savings. Further, municipalities stand to gain more satisfied employees and more satisfying relationships with their carriers.

While the opportunities to gain greater health plan value can be as varied as the needs of the municipalities these plans cover, following are guidelines – based on AmeriHealth New Jersey's experience representing dozens of municipalities statewide – that can help any New Jersey municipality maximize the value of its health plan. Some of these recommendations overlap to a degree, underscoring how few steps are actually necessary to create better plan value:

Get to know your broker and carrier

Mid- to large-sized municipalities should make it standard policy to meet regularly with their broker and carrier. This sort of three-way dialogue is common with commercial (private-sector) employer groups, but is rarely pursued by municipalities.

Tailor your health plan

The chief reason for these regular, three-way meetings is that carriers are in a far better position to recommend more efficient programs and practices when they better understand the unique needs and requirements of the municipalities they represent.

Many municipalities don't require their employees to complete Health Risk Assessments, which go a long way toward enabling carriers to better tailor municipality health plans. They also fail to take full advantage of the comprehensive disease management programs that several carriers offer because they've never met with their carrier to learn about them.

Include union leadership

Municipality health plans frequently include benefits that aren't applicable or relevant to the employee base. It makes sense for municipality and union leadership to meet jointly with their broker to assess whether every benefit in the current health plan is worth paying for.

Mike Munoz is Vice President of Sales and Marketing for AmeriHealth HMO, Inc., and AmeriHealth Insurance Company, collectively AmeriHealth New Jersey.

Understand your carrier's discount programs – and promote them

Carriers offer meaningful discounts for many kinds of wellness-oriented activities and programs, such as gym memberships, and weight management and smoking cessation programs. Further, carriers sometimes offer discounts on wellness-related equipment such as bicycle helmets. However, municipalities often don't take full advantage of these discounts or promote their availability to their employees.

Bring carriers on site to meet employees

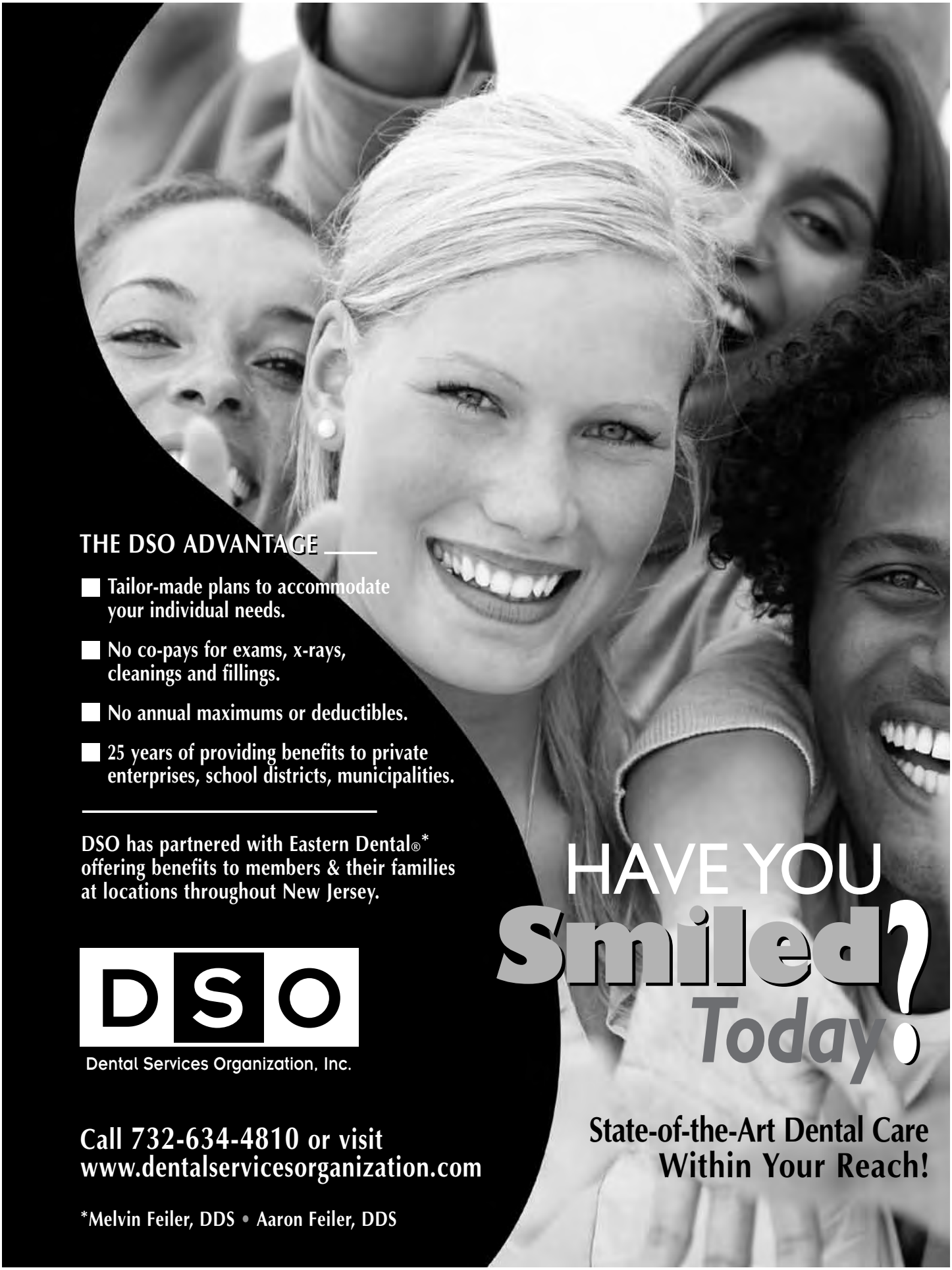
Mid- to large-sized municipalities should ask their carriers to come on-site as frequently as quarterly to conduct service visits and health fairs – giving employees an opportunity to interact directly with their health insurance carrier. The value to employees can range from learning more about the nuances of their coverage to taking advantage of the free screenings (such as blood pressure and cholesterol testing) that typically accompany health fairs.

Smaller municipalities that aren't in a position to host these sorts of events should work with their carrier to identify other small, nearby municipalities also working with that carrier; there may be an opportunity to join forces to host a joint health fair.

Become on-line savvy

Most carriers today offer on-line portals that enable municipality employees to personally assess their benefits, review and make changes, and have access to the carrier's promotional materials. Yet, relatively few municipality employees take advantage of this resource, typically because they don't know it exists. Stronger carrier relationships rectify that.

In the end, as time-constrained as municipality staffs are, taking the time to meet with their brokers and carriers can pay significant dividends, potentially in the form of increased savings, better plan design and usage, and overall enhanced value.



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Hot Topics, Cool Mayors

By: Amy Osborn

Name: Matthew McHale
Town: Borough of Dumont, Bergen County
Years in office: 15
Profession: Small Business Owner
Political Party: Democrat
Political Role Model: Harry S. Truman
Most admired Mayor on the other side of the aisle and why: Tied between Cresskill Mayor Ben Romeo and East Rutherford Mayor James Casella. Both Mayors exemplify bipartisanship, innovative leadership, and fierce advocacy for their communities.

Name: Ziad Andrew Shehady
Town: Township of Springfield, Union County
Years in office: 1
Profession: IT Consultant & 2nd Lieutenant (Infantry), U.S. Army
Political Party: Republican
Political Role Model: Andrew Jackson
Most Admired Mayor on the other side of the aisle and why: Mayor Cory Booker. Mayor Booker is a refreshing face in Newark and a smart, talented young civic leader who is pushing the boundaries of modern politics in a way that is engaging residents to become participants in their local government. He challenges the status quo and is successful despite resistance from his many opponents.

Osborn: What inspired you to get involved in politics and decide to run for Mayor?

McHale: Being raised by a single father, I benefited greatly from our network of family and friends in Dumont. They took the time to invest in me and I wanted to give back to them and to the town that made me the person that I am.

Shehady: I love public service in every sense! In 2001, I was chosen to attend the American Legion Boys' State program and it instilled in me a sense of civic responsibility and appreciation for the sacrifice of our nation's veterans. I didn't fully appreciate or understand how to apply these lessons until I returned from my own Army deployment. I won't sit on the sidelines. I interned for the late Assemblyman Dr. Eric Munoz and the experience moved me to become more proactive in my own community.

Osborn: What has been your greatest achievement as Mayor?

McHale: When I took office in 2005, Dumont was in the midst of a financial crisis. We had a deficit of $1.6 million from severe mismanagement, growing costs, and a lack of competent administrative professionals. We were on the verge of collapse. Fortunately, Governor Codey and former DCA Commissioner Susan Bass Levin worked with Dumont to address this problem by putting the Borough under state oversight for three years. Within two years Dumont was released from receivership; a significant surplus was created, and major infrastructure improvements were underway. Today, Dumont is on solid fiscal ground and recently received an upgrade to a "AA" bond rating by Standard & Poor's.

Shehady: There are many specific and easily identifiable accomplishments that I am proud of, such as the launch of our local television station or our new Do-Not-Knock registry, but the greatest achievement is the change in atmosphere of municipal government in Springfield. Through my e-newsletter, open office hours, changes to our meeting procedures and increased dissemination of information, residents feel that their government is accessible, transparent and responsive to their needs.

Osborn: What traffic and/or transportation issues are you experiencing in your community and what are your proposed solutions?

McHale: Located in northeastern Bergen County, Dumont is accessible by a network of two lane thoroughfares. These roads often become congested during rush hour. Working with Bergen County Executive Dennis McNerney, we were able to provide a major upgrade to the intersection of Washington, New Milford, and Virginia Avenues. This project required the coordination of local, county, and state government and several key property owners. It was no easy task. We literally moved roads but in the end the project worked. Safety was increased and congestion reduced. All too often government is reactive and not proactive. When it comes to traffic and transportation it needs to be the latter.

Shehady: Springfield is carved up by major highways, such as I-78, Route 22, Route 24, Route 124, in addition to heavily trafficked county roads. We have bus service but don't have rail service. The result is tremendous congestion, speeding, and accidents as a result of vehicular circulation. To offer residents relief from the traffic issues on their local roads, I drafted a "traffic calming study & petition" ordinance to codify the process by which they can request the installation of traffic calming devices. I proclaimed May as "Pedestrian Safety & Awareness" month in Springfield and worked with our Police Division to concurrently launch a "pedestrian decoy"

continued on Page 39

Amy Osborn is a Business Development Consultant and owner of Capitol Concepts. Ms. Osborn serves on the Selective Service Board and has worked with the U.S. Department of State, Defense and Labor, nationally and internationally. You can visit her website at www.capitolconcepts.com

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Clandestine Labs-If you see something, say something

By: Brendan Tobin

In our work as municipal employees, we encounter a variety of things each day as we work in and around the various systems we maintain. It is in our daily interactions that we might spot what seems like an oddity, but it could turn out to be the warnings signs of some very dangerous situations.

Two of the largest threats we may encounter include clandestine laboratories, places set up to create illicit drugs or, worse yet, to make homemade explosives. These can be found in apartments, houses, outbuildings, and wooded areas.

In our post-9-11 world, it is up to all of us to be educated and aware about potential threats to our safety and that of our friends, family, and our customers, the taxpayers who employ us. By being aware of what to look for, we can alert authorities and stop potential problems. Stories abound about problems that have been thwarted by average citizens who reported what they saw when something simply didn't look right.

Let's start with homemade explosives. After the failed subway and Times Square attacks, media outlets fell all over themselves to give out homemade bomb-making formulas, acting more like a friend of the terrorist than a watchdog for free citizens. Note that we will not divulge those steps here, but rather include those chemicals in a list of things to look out for when you go about your day.

Large volumes of certain items piled in the trash or dumped in the woods or the sewer system are a warning that something bad is afoot. Additionally, clandestine labs themselves pose similar threats due to the types of chemicals involved and the "home brewer's" interests in keeping the operations secret. Either way, you could be in for a world of hurt if you stumble upon a hidden lab.

Let's talk about chemicals for drug and bomb making, listing them alphabetically to try to limit the opportunities for this information to be used for manufacture. The information provided is to inform you on what you may see that wouldn't make sense without knowing what goes into illegal home-made items. If you find any or an assortment of these items in volumes or multiple units, they are not being used for everyday usage.

According to multiple sources, these materials run the gamut to include the items in the table below.

In addition to these materials, the lab operators may throw out "everyday" items they use to create their products. You may see strong evidence of the manufacturing through the dumping of lab materials like filtering items with red and/or yellow stains or containing a powdery residue, like bed sheets, coffee filters, rags, pillow cases; empty containers of the manufacturing items listed in the paragraph above; bottles or containers connected with rubber hosing and duct tape; coolers and Thermos bottles; heat-resistant glass containers (like Pyrex dishes) with dried chemical deposits remaining; propane tanks or coolers that have a strong ammonia odor; respiratory masks and filters or dust masks; discarded rubber or latex gloves; plus funnels, hosing and clamps, and similar things.

Brendan Tobin is a firefighter with more than 23 years experience. Brendan has advanced certifications in Haz-Mat, Confined Space, CBRNE, and more. He is a firm believer in the fact that continuous training makes a safe workplace. He is the Training Manager for Jet Vac, Inc., a branch of the Jack Doheny Supplies family of companies, and has been with them since 2006. You can reach him at btobin@jvnj.com or 800-577-1841.

In addition to the hefty volumes of materials you may find, there may be hidden dangers as well. These dangers come from gases, mists, vapors, and residues from the chemicals. These can include anhydrous ammonia; chlorine gas and hydrogen gas, phosphine and acid gases such as hydrogen chloride and hydrogen iodide (hydrochloric acid and hydroiodic acid); and metal hydrides. Vapors can include ether, gasoline iodine, Methyl-Etheyl-Ketone, and toluene. Acid and caustic mists include phosphorous, sulfuric acid, sodium hydroxide, and dusts can occur from lithium, mercuric chloride, and other chemicals. Inhalation or ingestion can cause permanent injury and death or be passed on to the next generation as birth defects. Either way, you don't want contact with any of them.

If you think these items are scary or are the only dangers you face when you find a lab site, think again. Depending on how close you come to the lab, you could also face booby traps, fires, explosions, and weapons, so do the right thing by getting away and contacting authorities as soon as you can.

Being educated is your best defense. A firefighter on a routine search of an apartment building after a fire call stumbled upon a cache of explosives being synthesized in one apartment. He only noticed the problem because he'd been trained in a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives training (CBRNE) Awareness course at work. Programs like these are available to any First Responder or municipal group that serves the public, including fire, EMS, police, and utility workers. Be trained, be aware, be safe, and go home every day.

Chemicals for Drug and Bomb Making

acetone	alcohol (isopropyl)	ammonium sulfate	anhydrous ammonia
battery acid (sulfuric)	bleach	brake cleaner	bronchodialators
camp stove fuel (inc. white gas)	chloroform	diet pills	drain cleaners w/lye, caustic soda, etc.
energy boosters	fertilizer	Freon	gun cleaning solvent
Heet, Iso-Heet & other fuel line anti-freeze	gasoline additives w/ methanol or alcohol	industrial or food grade hydrogen peroxide	hydrochloric acid (HCl)
iodine (crystal & liquid)	lithium batteries	matches	mineral spirits
muriatic acid	cold pills w/ ephedrine or pseudoephedrine	paint thinner	phenyl-2-propane
red phosphorous	salt (Epsom, rock, table)	sodium & lithium metal	starting fluid/ ether

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The Local View…

By: Mayor Chuck Chiarello, Buena Vista Township

I was recently asked to provide more of my personal views on issues facing local government and other topics as they come along.

As House Speaker Tip O'Neill said "all politics is local". The front door to government is your local municipal building and your elected officials. There are changes in the air and significant challenges facing local governments.

Unquestionably, we have entered into a new era of change in both how government is run and the public's expectations of government. Many factors have brought about this change including the state of our national economy, increased pressure to reduce the size of government, and a somewhat bad image that government, in general, gets in the media.

Local governments are facing an ever shrinking amount of financial support from our state government. I also find that state legislators are making more and more decisions on behalf of local government. Many times, decisions are made without our input or our blessing!

Local government is still the first line of defense for our taxpayers and citizens to solve problems or voice their complaints.

Since the most recent governor's election I have seen a trend of more citizens complaining about more issues. Those citizens want to pay less taxes and get more services or, at least, not lose any services. We are, however, heading to a point where local government may not be able to accomplish the full expectations of our taxpayers and residents.

The expectations of our citizens has changed. Most believe their individual problem should be the number one priority of the municipality at that moment. The problem could be trash that was not picked up, a pothole, or a dog running loose in the neighborhood.

Citizens want more from their local government then ever before. In fact, they are looking for "one stop shopping" whether their issues are on the local, school, county, state, or federal level of government.

Chuck Chiarello is Mayor of Buena Vista Township in Atlantic County for the past 16 years and has served in office for 19 years. Chuck is a member of the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors since 1996 and is currently First Vice President of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities. Mayor Chiarello has been involved in many issues during his numerous terms in office. Communicating to the public so that they have a better understanding of government has always been one of his goals.

Since local municipalities generate the tax bills, citizens tend to come to us first. Many times they are addressing issues that we can not help them with on the local level. Our municipality has always tried to help our residents get answers, even if they are out of our jurisdiction.

Explaining to a resident that a problem can not be resolved by their town leads to a certain amount of dissatisfaction which we have little or no control over. Our school system is entirely independent of our local government. While we do work with the schools on a regular basis, the public expects us to have all the answers regarding their decisions and their budgets.

With economic problems looming and some anti-government feelings circulating in New Jersey (and across the nation) I believe that people have become very cynical of government. There is a belief that everyone in government is in it for themselves. There is also a belief that other residents are getting a better deal than they are. It is our job as elected officials to try to change that mind set. I have always spoken very positively about the value of government. I have told our residents that they get a good value for their tax dollars in our community. Promoting the positive aspects of your town leads to a better understanding of what your government is doing and how it compares to other communities.

In Buena Vista Township, we tell residents what their tax dollar is providing for them on the local level – roads, public works, parks, street lights, trash, recycling, snow removal, and so much more. In our town 17 cents out of every dollar covers local services and 83 cents goes to the other layers of government – schools, county, health, library, open space, and fire districts in Buena Vista's case.

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2010 Annual Mayors Fall Summit

On Friday, September 17, over 200 Mayors gathered at the Governor's Mansion, Drumthwacket for the 19th Annual Mayors Fall Summit. This was the first time the Annual Fall Summit was held at Drumthwacket, and the first time that we parted from the festive, maritime atmosphere that made the Mayors Fall Summit a favorite event among Mayors.

The Mayors came together in a casual, enjoyable, yet more structured and productive environment than in previous events. This encouraged a better exchange of information and created a one on one setting with the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Cabinet members with the Mayors. And, what better a place to hold this event than historic Drumthwacket, originally built by Charles Smith Olden, in 1835 and is now the official residence for the New Jersey State Governor.

The 2010 Mayors Fall Summit turned out to be a success of unprecedented proportions! Mayors came to meet with Governor Christie, Lieutenant Governor Guadagno, members of the Governor's Cabinet and legislature to ask questions one on one. Much information was exchanged not only between the Mayors and Governor and his staff, but also by Mayors networking with other Mayors, sharing and exchanging information amongst each other. Friday, Sept. 17, could not have been a better day for the New Jersey Mayors!

The following pages are the photographs from the 2010 Annual Mayors Fall Summit. We dedicate these pages to all of you hard working New Jersey Mayors, who are out there making a difference in your community. Enjoy!

One on one. Governor, cabinet and Mayors

2010 Annual Mayors Fall Summit

Commissioner Bob Martin (DEP),
State Treasurer Andrew Sidamon-Eristoff,
Commissioner BettyLou DeCroce (DCA)

Joseph W. Mrozek,
Deputy Commissioner
NJ Department of Transportation

Mayor James Lynch
Bordentown City

Governor Christie Opens the Question and Answer Session

Colonel Rick Fuentes
Superintendent NJ State Police

Mayor Joseph A. Nametko
Netcong Borough

Commissioner BettyLou DeCroce

Robert Czech
Chair, Civil Service Commission

Mayor Mark Blaszka
Franklin Township

question and answer session…

Governor Christie taking in questions from the Mayors

Mayor Thomas Arnone, Neptune City and NJCM President

Treasurer Andrew Sidamon – Eristoff

Mayor Kate Fitzpatrick Delanco Township

Mayor Ron Sworen, Frenchtown Boro.

Mayor Chuck Chiarello, Buena Vista Township

Commissioner Bob Martin, DEP

2010 Annual Mayors Fall Summit

NJCM Executive Board members attending, left to tight Mayor Gary Passanante-Somerdale, Mayor Thomas Arnone–Neptune City and NJCM President, Hon. Jack Morrissey–Mayor Emeritus Chairman, Mayor Colleen Mahr–Fanwood, Mayor Gary Giberson–Port Republic, Mayor Christine Schaumburg–Clinton Township, Mayor Tim McDonough–Hope Township, Steven Glickman Esq. NJCM Counsel

Mayor Ed Zimmerman – Rock Hill Borough greets NJCM Executive Board Members, Mayor Colleen Mahr and Mayor Gary Giberson

Mayor, and NJCM President Thomas Arnone welcomes Governor Christie to the NJCM Annual Summit

Mayor Arnone introduces Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno

Mayor Tim McDonough – Hope Township addresses the Mayors

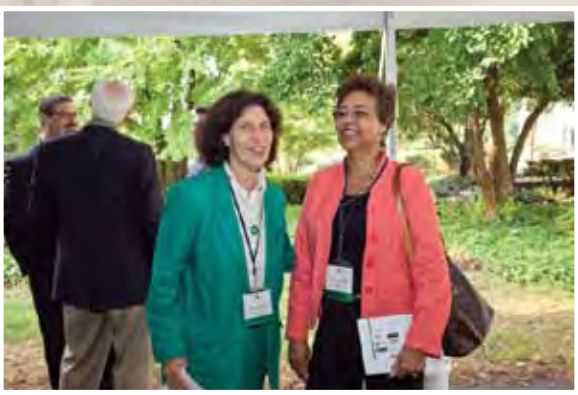
NJCM Mayor Emeritus
Back row L to R: Hon. Elwood Hampton, Tony Beatrice, Ted Wardell, Charlie Pritchard, Barry Lefkowtiz, Jack Morrissey Augie Longo
Front row, L to R Elena Hampton, Bea Cerkez, Cathy Frank-White, Carol Hoffman

Rick Mroz, NJCM Legislative Counsel

Gallery of Mayors

2010 Annual Mayors Fall Summit

Gallery of Mayors



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Energy Deregulation Potential Savings to Municipalities

By: Barry Lefkowitz, NJCM Economic Development Consultant and Honorary Mayor Emeritus, John Starn and Randy Poulson, Veridian Energy

Energy Deregulation

Energy deregulation began in the 1990's resulting in 14 plus states having deregulated with many others following their lead. Have you noticed that you suddenly are being inundated by advertisements in the mail offering discounts on your electric bill? New Jersey deregulated the public utilities with the lobbying assistance of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors in 1999 and now offers what has become known as the "Energy Choice Program" which is both endorsed and supported by all non-government Utility Companies. The deregulation of the energy industry has been compared to what happened in the communication industry which led to lower phone, long distance and cable television costs while increasing the quality and quantity of products.

New Jersey's "Energy Choice Program" has opened the door for competition resulting in lower energy prices for both its' local government, residential and business customers. Anyone can now have the opportunity to lower their electric energy costs by choosing the "energy supplier" of their choice. As the result of energy deregulation your service is now broken down into separate pieces resulting in electric bills being broken up into two parts that now distinguish between the electricity "Delivery and Service Charges" and the electricity "Supply" charges. The "Energy Supplier" only provides the electricity for the "Supply" side of your bill and the "Utility Company" provides the "Delivery and Service" side of your bill. Essentially, the Utility Company is responsible for delivering/getting the electricity to you and the "Energy Supplier" is responsible for supplying the electricity to the "electric power grid" for its' customers so that the local utility company can then deliver the electricity to the customer.

Service, Billing and Maintenance continue to be provided by your local Utility Company after you choose your new electric supplier. The customer continues to receive one bill from the same Utility Company that they have always worked with, trusted and relied upon for daily service, emergency repairs and installation. The switch to a new "Energy Supplier" is seamless and efficient.

The Local Utility Company "does not" make any money from the supplying of electricity because the deregulation of the energy industry prevents them from making a profit from the supplying of the electric energy. The purpose of Energy Deregulation was to break up the monopolies and to lower costs. Therefore, the local utility companies support the choice of different energy suppliers by its customers. In fact if you look at your electric bill there is a statement noting that you have the right to use a third party provider. The utility websites also talk about your right to use the third party provider and that it does affect your relationship with your present electric provider.

Barry Lefkowitz is President of MGR, Inc for 39 years as a lobbyist and economic development consultant at the State and Federal levels and had been NJCM's Legislative Agent for 15 years and its Economic Development Advisor the past 5 years.

Deregulation means that you can shop around so why wouldn't you want to reduce your energy costs? Since the electric suppliers are licensed by the "state and the federal governments" and regulated by the NJ Board of Public Utilities now you can shop and save on your energy costs.

Even municipalities, cities and other governmental consumers of electric energy can take advantage of energy deregulation to reduce costs, meet budgets and hopefully lower taxes too. Everyone and every entity that consumes electric energy can benefit from energy deregulation and help the environment.

Meeting Goals and Making a Difference

One of the energy suppliers that we are presently working with and stands out because it is meeting and/or exceeding the goals of energy deregulation is "Viridian Energy" a Connecticut based Energy Company that is on the forward edge of the curve when it comes to "Cost Reduction, Green Energy and Marketing" to its' customer base. Viridian Energy is currently operating in Connecticut, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey and will soon be operational in the state of New York.

ViridianEnergyis a "Green Energy" company that stands out among its' competitors by "MEETING OR EXCEEDING" the proposed 2020 federal environmental goal of 20% renewable energy. Viridian Energy currently exceeds New Jersey's state mandated renewable energy requirement of 6% by offering its' New Jersey Customers "Greener Energy" with Viridian's "20% Everyday Green" product or their "Green-E Certified 100% Pure Green" product. Viridian's 20 % Everyday Green product exceeds NJ standards by 14% & affords customers maximum savings and an easy way to purchase affordable green energy. For those customers who are committed to the maximum reduction of the environmental impact that energy consumption has on our environment but with a lesser emphasis upon savings they can purchase Viridian's internationally recognized Green-E Certified Platform "100% Pure Green Product" which exceeds NJ standards by 94%. Viridian's green energy is sourced from locally produced high quality wind power. Viridian provides Greener Energy to the grid and the local

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Hamilton's SHAPE Program

By: John Bencivengo, Mayor of Hamilton Township

The dinner table was the focal point for my family when I was growing up. That's where we laughed, talked about the day's events and shared stories.

And because it was an Italian household, the table was usually covered with plates of pasta and loaves of warm bread.

Now, I realize that more than fond memories followed me into adulthood. Over time, it's become clear that the hearty eating I grew up with isn't always the best idea.

Changing a lifetime of habits isn't easy, but I'm doing it.

I am eating a more balanced diet, losing weight and reducing my risk for future health issues, including high blood pressure, diabetes and heart problems.

I believe that as the leader of Hamilton Township (Mercer County), I should do more than change my eating habits. I should also set an example and encourage others to do it.

That's why I have committed Hamilton, a community of about 92,000 residents, to a program called "Let's S.H.A.P.E. Hamilton." It is a yearlong effort that we kicked off at our annual SeptemberFest celebration in collaboration with a nationally renowned health care facility located right here in Hamilton, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, and the RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness, as well as Capital Health, St. Francis Medical Center, the Hamilton YMCA, our Hamilton Township Health Department and Champion Fitness Center.

The goal is to have residents commit to losing a combined 100,000 pounds within a year. I would like to lose at least 25 pounds myself.

According to the National Institutes of Health, the economic burden of obesity is at least $100 billion annually. Chronic disease and conditions related to obesity and inactivity account for more than 75 percent of the $2 trillion spent annually on medical care in the United States.

Hamilton Mayor John Bencivengo has his blood pressure checked at Septemberfest by Giovanna Guarraggi, a RWJ Hamilton community education clinical coordinator

Statistics show that more than half of Americans are overweight, and more than 30 percent are considered obese. In fact, according to data from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, obesity rates increased in 28 of the 50 states last year.

According to Dr. Jeffrey Levi, the executive director of the Trust for Americans' Health, who wrote the obesity report with the RWJ Foundation, "Obesity is one of the biggest public health challenges the country has ever faced, and troubling disparities exist based on race, ethnicity, region, and income."

John F. Bencivengo is the Mayor of Hamilton Township and serves on the NJCM Board of Directors.

I get even more concerned when I see the data regarding children. It's positively alarming. Federal statistics show that about one in four overweight children shows early signs of Type II diabetes, and roughly 60 percent exhibit risk factors for heart disease.

By combining old-school know-how about nutrition and exercise with the latest in technology, I fully intend to help my township collectively improve our health and wellness.

After being examined by health care professionals, participants in "Let's S.H.A.P.E. Hamilton" will have the opportunity to take part in wellness-related events throughout the year and monitor their progress on a new, password-protected, secure web site: www.LetsSHAPEHamiltonNJ.com. The site will, among other things, maintain a running tally of our accumulated weight loss.

The exciting part of this is to see that you lost weight. Being able to check into that web site on a regular basis should serve as encouragement for the participants. Believe me, I know how difficult it will be to remain committed in the long term for some people, with all the temptations we have in our fast-food society. But I am confident that many residents will benefit from this program.

continued on Page 39

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City Of East Orange Opens New State-Of-The-Art School Facility With Star-Studded Fanfare

By: Mayor Robert L. Bowser, City of East Orange

The City of East Orange, New Jersey, affectionately referred to as the 'City on the Move' has once again gained nationalized attention for an outstanding accomplishment, with the opening of the state-of-the-art educational facility, the Cecily L. Tyson Community School of Performing and Fine Arts (CTS) in October of 2009.

The grand unveiling hosted by renowned film and stage actress Ms. Cecily Tyson herself kicked off the showcase with ravishing red carpet arrivals of prominent political figures, distinguished celebrities, designers and members of the clergy. Those in attendance included New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine, Hon. David Dinkins, Mayor Shirley Franklin of Atlanta, former Ambassador Andrew Young, actors Terrence Howard, Tamara Tunie, Lynn Whitfield, and singers/songwriters Ashford & Simpson to name a few. Even media mogul Oprah Winfrey was on hand to celebrate this momentous occasion with her personal friend Ms. Tyson.

CNN's Soledad O'Brien served as Mistress of Ceremony, Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts provided the invocation, while noted philanthropist and Senior Vice President of Booz Allen & Hamilton, Inc., Reginald Van Lee was the event's benefactor.

After opening the program with remarks by prominent individuals in the City including East Orange Mayor Robert L. Bowser, Principal of the CTS Laura Trimmings, and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Clarence C. Hoover, III, students of CTS had the inimitable opportunity to perform with gospel great BeBe Winans, harpist Jeff Majors, cellist Jessie Smith and soloist William Morrison.

Additional highlights of the evening included a performance by Terrence Howard who played his guitar while singing an original song inspired by his father with the accompaniment of a CTS student on piano. The program continued with a touching story from Angela Bassett on how

her acting career was inspired by the award-winning actress Ms. Tyson.

After guests finished dining on scrumptious hors d'oeuvres and a delectable formal dinner consisting of delicacies such as Crab Cakes with Caviar, Petals and Jicama, and Chilean Sea Bass with roasted tomatoes, they were invited to participate in a live auction chaired by designer b Michael. The auction included two autographed tennis rackets donated from Serena and Venus Williams, a special invitational package from former President Bill Clinton, original artwork by Fabrice, two first-class airline tickets from Continental Airlines, and several other specialty items raised an impressive $25,000 to benefit CTS.

Robert L. Bowser is the 12th Mayor of the City of East Orange and began serving his fourth term after taking his oath of office on January 1, 2010. He is one of just a few Mayors to serve more than three terms and the only African-American Mayor to serve more than two terms

"Ms. Tyson is not just the school's namesake," said Mayor Bowser. "She is a living example of what it means to make a living as a performer and the hard work and dedication it takes to perfect ones' craft to get there. Her commitment to the success of every student is real and her support of the school's work will not only help the students, but the entire East Orange community." Bowser continued.

To accept having the school named in her honor Ms. Tyson had but one condition; that she be actively involved, and involved she is! Since accepting the offer, Ms. Tyson has invited and hosted visitors to the school such as Dr. Maya Angelou, Rosa Parks, Wynton Marsalis, Ruby Dee, Judith Jamison, Tyler Perry, Michael Eric Dyson, Tania Leon and Les Brown to speak to and assist the young students interested in pursuing careers in the arts. Additionally, Ms. Tyson has raised money for the students and spends every graduation ceremony and her birthdays with the students she endearingly refers to as "her children."

The school adheres to a system of formal academic instruction by which academic development remains the foundation, as well as incorporating an intense arts curriculum designed to allow students to be artistically creative in a field of their interest. Through this school structure, Ms. Tyson commented "These children have God-given artistic talents that we can now properly nurture and train."

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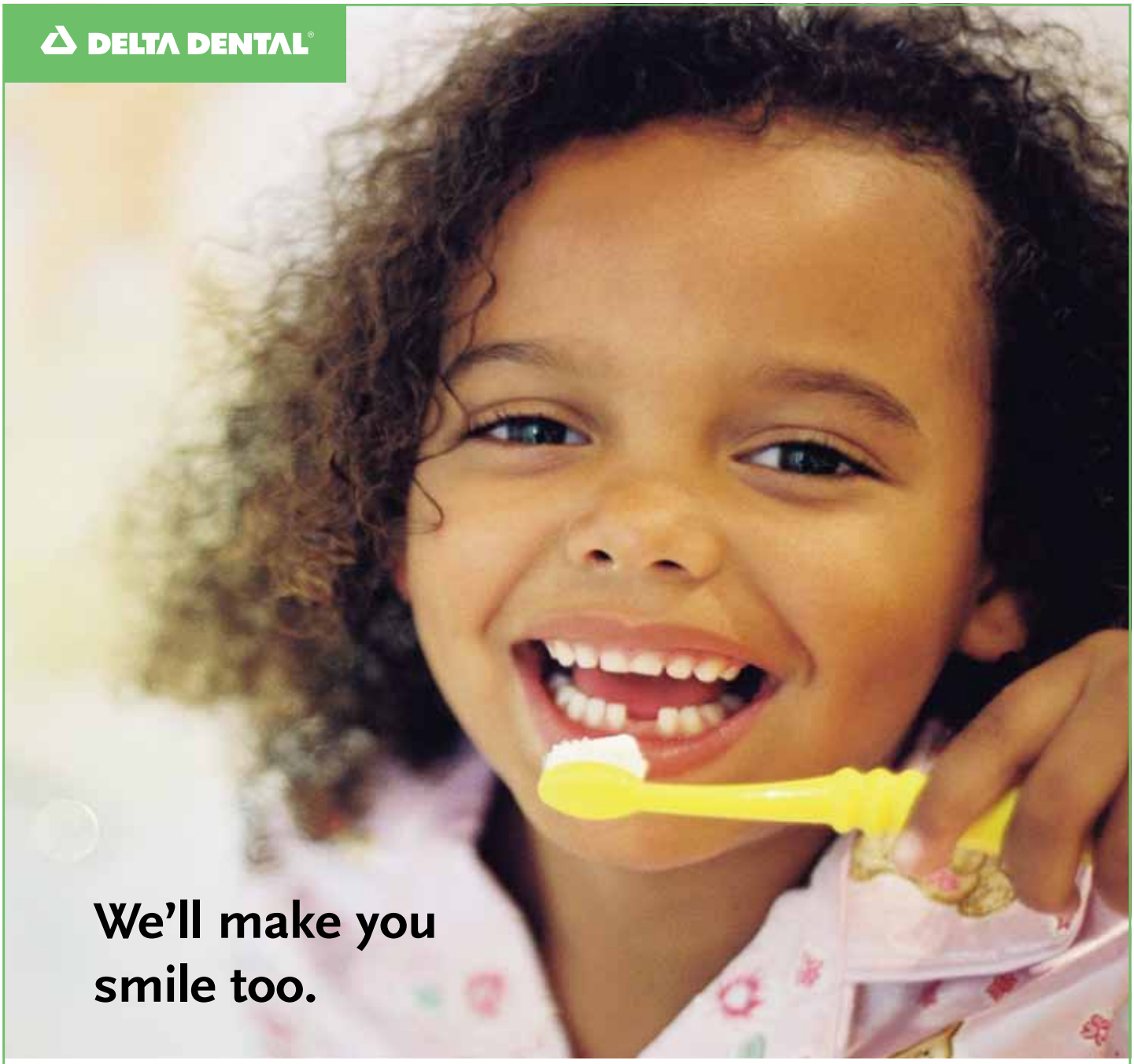

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South River's Signs, Lines and Safety Program

By: Mayor Raymond T. Eppinger, Borough of South River

South River is a 2.8 square mile, essentially built out borough in the heart of Middlesex County with a population in excess of 16,500.

Since taking office in 2008 our administration has focused on infrastructure projects. Major projects, which include sewer, water system and road repairs, have been undertaken over the past three years. In the summer of 2009, after consulting with the Business Administrator, Chief of Police and Director of Public Works, we introduced an effort to manage an often overlooked detail of streets and roads and launched the Signs, Lines and Safety Program. This program focused on the following items:

• **Street Signs** – every intersection was cataloged by Public Works to determine if the street sign was missing or needed replacement. In addition, we have a mixed set of signs, including standard metal and concrete poles. We are now in the second phase of replacing the concrete poles, many of which had deteriorated, and by the end of the year all of our street signs will be updated and standardized.

• **Traffic control signs** – we found that a number of Stop, Yield, Fire Zone and No Parking signs were damaged or missing. Again our various departments worked together and inventoried the various locations in the Borough where signs needed to be replaced. Over the course of the past two years, these signs have been restored. This phase has also yielded some interesting findings – some of our No Parking areas had never actually been designated as such. Therefore, we have kept our borough attorney and our traffic safety officers busy as borough ordinances have required updating.

• **Handicapped Parking Spaces** – we have become very proactive, not only addressing the requests for on street spaces, but also following up yearly to insure that these spaces are still required.

• **Handicapped Accessible Curb Cuts** - South River was one of five municipalities in the state that took part in a Senior Mobility study. Working with Rutgers University, several state and county organizations, our Office on Aging and our Committee on the Handicapped and Disabled, we mapped out walking routes to our downtown in need of various upgrades and repairs. Based on their studyand with the use of HCD funds, we have just signed a contract to replace thirty-five curb cuts to make the sidewalks ADA compliant. In addition, any ADA compliant non-skid mats that have been damaged throughout the Borough are being replaced.

Mayor Raymond T. Eppinger is a life-long resident of South River and is completing his third year as Mayor. He has also served as Councilman, Board of Education member and a host of other boards, committees and commissions.

• **Line Striping** – again, a study was undertaken to map out all the stop bars, cross walks, no parking areas and center road line dividers in the Borough. Normally, we would repaint these areas in school zones or walk to school routes with standard paint on a yearly basis. As we continued our road repaving projects the borough engineer routinely recommend the use of thermoplastic technology for line repainting. While it takes a bit longer to install and costs more, the life expectancy exceeds five years. We recently began a two-year, two-phase project to have all lines in South River redone using thermoplastic line application.

• **Street Lights**–South River is unique because we are one of the nine municipalities in the state that own their own electric utility. South River does not generate power, but purchases it off the national electric grid and operates the electric company like any investor owned utility. Until the past several months South River was dependent on the police, residents and a Mayor who took his wife on "dates" looking for burned out lights and bad starters for reports of lights that were out. We have now instituted a program whereby our two apprentice linemen spend time every six weeks during second shift looking for and replacing lights. Not only are our streets brighter, but our young men are gaining valuable on-the-job training.

When we are elected to serve our communities as Mayor, our first inclination is to promote a major project that will make a splash and let our residents know that we want to make a difference. Given these tough economic times and the other realities we face, a show stopping project may not be feasible. However, based on the comments and e-mails I have received from our residents, it is quite apparent that this program has been well received. As one resident told me, "it shows that the administration cares about the little things." Believe it or not, this is truly a quality of life issue that has resonated with taxpayers. Of the projects that will impact your community and generate positive feedback, I can highly recommend a program like South River's Signs, Lines and Safety Program.

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DOT and FEMA Provides Timely Response to an Emergency in Port Republic

By: Mayor Gary Giberson, City of Port Republic

As I settle in the Mayor's Office to read mail, answer requests, sign checks and the usual, I am comfortable with it all and think about my twenty-fifth year as Mayor for the City of Port Republic. All the years of Serving have been rewarding, and the fellowship of many has been great. Not really a city, but more of a special rural historic town in the northeast corner of Atlantic County. The town was settled in 1637 by the Dutch Sawyers and ship builders from New Amsterdam, now New York City. They found on the beautiful Mulicia River, the Atlantic White Cedar in abundance, perfectly suited for ship building and established a shipyard community known as Chestnut Neck, now Port Republic.

I also serve our town as its Emergency Management Coordinator and had my hands full of F.E.M.A. matters as the winter storms of 2009-10 were one after the other that set a precedence of record storms involving F.E.M.A. in Atlantic County. I have never been as happy here in City Hall regarding the events that happened recently.

Mayor Gary Giberson is the Mayor of the City of Port Republic and 3rd Vice President of NJCM

On July 26th, 2010, a bulkhead holding a retaining wall on the Nacote Creek was severely compromised by the torrential storms, and the pressure from the rising water caused the waler (horizontal brace) to break lose. This, in turn caused 1 ½ " inch aluminum rods to snap loose from the wale ties. The waler fell into the Nacote Creek off of the north wing wall of the bridge and dam. Two days later, the bulkhead moved and the earth behind it dropped 18" inches! An emergency was declared for immediate action.

I forwarded a priority mail latter requesting discretionary aid, and within seventeen hours I received a phone call from DEP Staff Member, Dave Rosenblatt asking "how can we help you and how soon can we meet?"

Repair is currently underway not only to repair the bulkhead, but make it stronger for future storms and weather conditions. The Folks at FEMA were happy to cooperate and this job will be fully refunded by them to our partners from the wonderful state of New Jersey thanks to Mr. Robert Martin and our Governor.

May God continue to bless us and hats off to our great Governor, Chris Christie who has cut away former red tape and uses common sense to help us Mayors get the job done!

Happy 25th Anniversary Mayor Giberson, from all of us at NJCM

Barry Lefkowitz *continued from Page 27*

utility company simply delivers that energy directly to homes and businesses.

Many providersmake it easy and comfortable to choose a third party service for your new energy supplier because there are "no enrollment fees, no cancellation fees and you can cancel at any time for any reason". Providers such as Viridian Energy also helps you to help reduce the environmental impact associated with the consumption of energy by offering customers a greener energy product.

In summary, is energy deregulation working and what is the future outlook?

I don't know where the results of the law been for the last ten years but it's starting to work now by lowering electric energy costs for those communities, churches, non-profits and others with vision and a little faith who choose to participate in "New Jersey's Energy Choice Program" and finally we have the potential to reduce our carbon footprint a little faster and thanks and providers like Viridian Energy our local state economy by using NJ workers.

I believe that the future of energy deregulation is a bright as it gets because less control means lower costs, a cleaner environment and a healthier state economy,especially due to the innovation and commitment of a companies like Viridian Energy.

If you are interested in finding out more about third party providers don't hesitate to contact me at 609-267-2855 or Barry.Lefkowitz@MGR-Lobbyist.com

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Amy Osborn- continued from Page 13

program so that adults and children can safely walk around town. We are also in the process of launching a "red-light camera" program at significant intersections.

Osborn: Three words for you: Property. Tax. Relief. Discuss!!

McHale: As a state we need to keep New Jersey affordable. Seniors cannot be taxed away from our communities and young families cannot be prohibited from purchasing homes because of high taxes. We're starting to move in the right direction with the recent property tax caps but municipal government is small compared to school districts. In 2010, only 18% of Dumont voters turned out for the school budget. While it was overwhelmingly rejected, the turnout was abysmal on what is arguably the most important vote of the year. We can cap spending, we can consolidate services, but we can't operate in a vacuum. Property taxes have three components (municipal, county, and school districts) which need to be dealt with all at once.

Shehady: Keep up the great work, Governor Chris Christie! The recent pension reform and property tax cap are excellent tools for towns like Springfield. We have reduced spending wherever possible, but unfunded mandates, the arbitration process, and duplication of services at multiple levels of government still need attention in order for municipalities to realistically meet the cap. For Springfield residents, we pay an obscene amount of taxes to the county but the return in services is minimal. The county level needs more oversight and accountability or should even be eliminated.

Osborn: If you had the opportunity to sit down with a famous person or historical figure who would it be and why?

McHale: Johnny Cash. As a Georgetown American Studies graduate, I have a strong affinity for the American experience and our collective culture. Johnny Cash captures the 20th Century American experience brilliantly.

Shehady: I would love an opportunity to sit down with any of our nation's founding fathers – either the signers or the framers. To be in the presence of such courage and brilliance would be motivational. I am curious to see how they would respond to or address some of the issues we face today.

Osborn: Mayors are ambassadors for their towns. Please sum up for us, in one sentence, what makes your community a great place to live.

McHale: Dumont takes the time to invest in its children and residents, which makes it an extraordinary community.

Shehady: Springfield is a wonderful town, with a rich history and perfectly situated in New Jersey, that is home to talented, diverse, and enthusiastic residents.

Osborn: What has been the value of your NJCM Membership?

McHale: I'm an internal student and membership in the NJCM has helped me grow as a Mayor and a person. We all have unique experiences but in them are common themes. Together, as mayors, we can learn from each other.

Shehady: Thanks to our NJCM membership, we benefit from the free-flow of relevant information and open exchange of ideas with other Mayors around the state. The reference materials serve as a great resource and the meetings are the perfect setting to network with other Mayors who face similar challenges.

For information on these two fine communities, please visit their websites at www.dumontnj.gov and www.springfield-nj.us. Your suggestions are always welcome! Please email them to me at Capitolconcepts@hotmail.com

Bencivengo- continued from Page 29

The web site will remind everyone that we are all in this together. You have to have that motivation. And this is not merely about dieting, which is a short-term thing; this is about a life-changing pattern of wellness.

The acronym S.H.A.P.E. stands for the key points of the program. S is for Screen for Health; H is for Healthy Weight, know what is healthy for you and work to achieve it; A is for Abstain from Smoking; P is for Physical Activity, at least 30 minutes daily; and E is for Eat Healthy Every Day.

I was inspired to start this program after attending a U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting earlier in the year, where I learned about a similar program in Oklahoma City.

The U.S. Conference launched its Healthy Cities Campaign in 2004, encouraging mayors to take leadership roles by virtue of their abilities to set policy and garner media attention.

In Mercer County, I know that other towns that have taken stands at some point in support of the national effort include East and West Windsor, Ewing, Hopewell borough and township, Hightstown, Lawrence, Pennington and Robbinsville.

When we kicked off the program at SeptemberFest, we set up a Mayor's Wellness Village that included RWJ Hamilton, Capital Health, St. Francis Medical Center, the Hamilton YMCA, the township health department and Champion Fitness Center.

And SeptemberFest was not the only public event serving as a magnet for "Let's S.H.A.P.E." participants. During the year, there will be more health-related events that will serve as checkpoints for residents to monitor their progress.

Not only do I encourage residents to join the "Let's S.H.A.P.E." program, I am hoping township employees will do so as well.

So it's all about better health, lower blood pressure and generally feeling better, and I encourage more people to join our effort.

Health is such an important factor in our daily lives. By starting this new program, I want to provide residents with a new opportunity to improve their own health and the collective wellness of our entire community.

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NJCM Business Council

NJCM Business Council Expands Services to Meet "New Norm"

By: Gary Passanante, Director, NJCM Business Council

As we bring to a close 2010, a very difficult year for both the public and private sectors throughout our state, I am encouraged by the interest and willingness of our Mayors across the state to engage in new levels of shared services with their neighboring communities. I am equally pleased to see that our private partners are remaining engaged with our Mayors and are seeking even more opportunities to communicate and share resources in an effort to control rising costs.

Our new Governor has certainly changed the face of government as we all knew it and now it is up to us as local leaders to explore new avenues that will help us manage our communities in this "new norm". The New Jersey Conference of Mayors is there representing the interests of Mayors and their constituents. Through the NJCM Business Council arm, we continue to provide a voice for businesses as they work side-by-side with Mayors across the state finding new solutions to our ever-growing challenges.

In light of these challenges, the New Jersey Conference of Mayors through its Business Council has plans to increase the exposure and communication with our membership and Mayors in the 2011 calendar year. We recognize the importance of more synergy between the public/private sectors and we know that Mayors provide the best conduit for businesses to communicate at the local level.

We will be instituting a series of bi-monthly "workshops" provided by our Business Council members that will serve to educate our Mayors on the latest technologies, best practices, services, etc. that are available to them in their quest to operate more efficiently and meet the new 2% cap. These workshops will be centrally located at our offices in Trenton and will feature guest speakers from our pool of Business Council members as well as our own professionals and possibly representatives from the Governor's staff and administration.

Gary J. Passanante is the Director of NJCM Business Council and the Mayor of Somerdale

While we recognize the continued economic pressures each of you face, please consider the NJCM Business Council as yet another valuable "tool" for both public and private concerns that will aid you in your quest to control costs, improve service deliveries and meet the new challenges that lie ahead. If you have not yet joined the Business Council, I urge you to contact me by email Director@NJCMBC.org or by phone (856) 207-9142. I would be happy to discuss our membership and the full set of benefits available.

Let me extend my sincere thanks to all of you, our business members, Mayors and especially our Executive Board for your continued support and confidence in the Business Council. Together, we have started something very special, and together, we will reach new heights and achieve ever greater goals.

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Wednesday, April 27, 2011

A full day event from breakfast to a Cocktail Reception with prizes, gifts and much more!.

Network with Mayors, Legislators and other business leaders

Includes:

Valet parking
Assigned lockers with showers
2 hours open driving range with comped balls
Golf cart
Comp tees & towel
PGA Pro on site
Comp Beverage cart

Contact NJCM office to RSVP:
609-989-9216
Or njcm@njcm.org

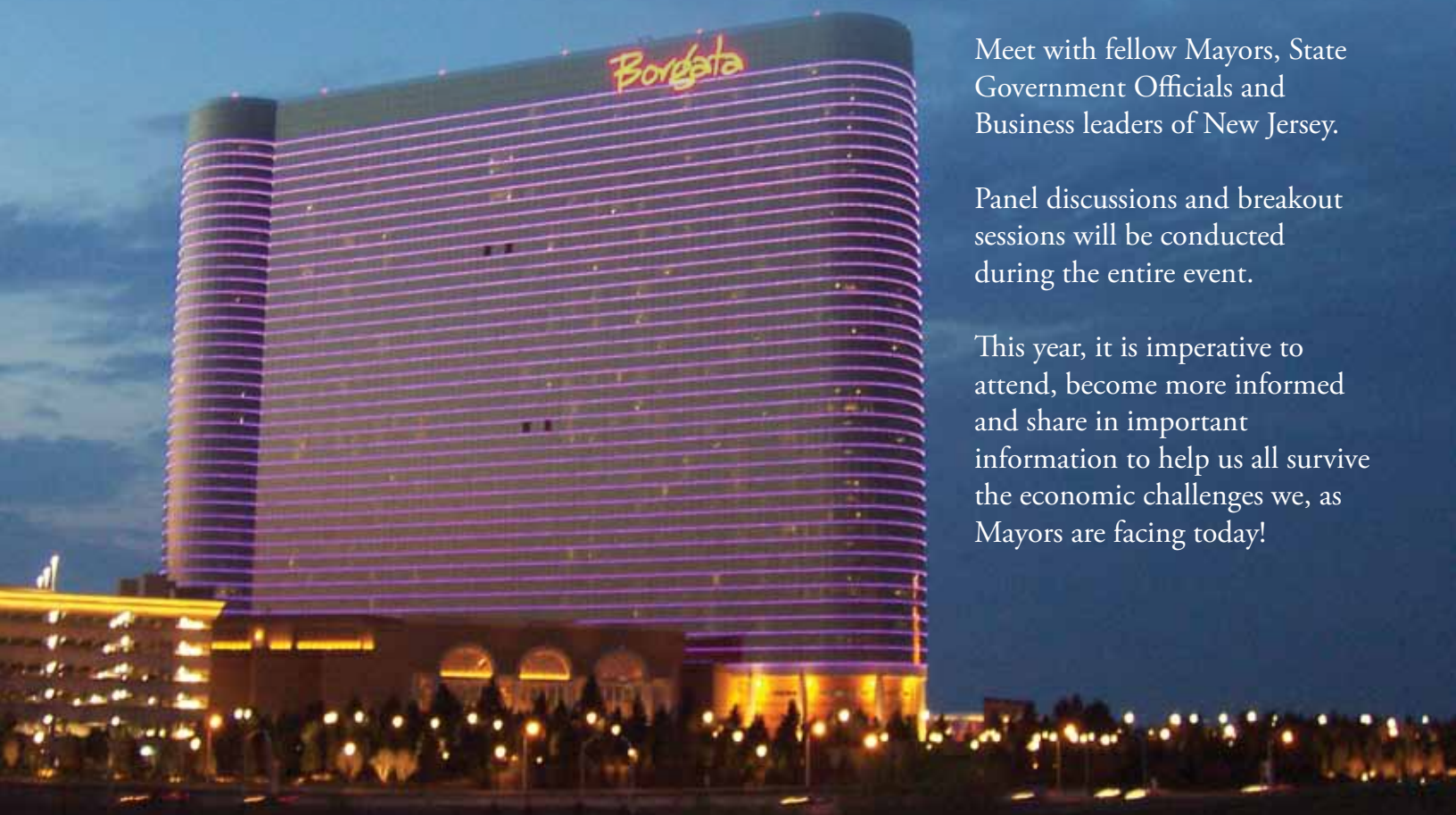
NJCM
Since 1963

SAVE THE DATE

48th Annual NJCM 2011 Spring Conference

Wednesday, April 27 - Friday, April 29, 2011

at the Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa, Atlantic City



Meet with fellow Mayors, State Government Officials and Business leaders of New Jersey.

Panel discussions and breakout sessions will be conducted during the entire event.

This year, it is imperative to attend, become more informed and share in important information to help us all survive the economic challenges we, as Mayors are facing today!

Conference information and updates will be posted on the NJCM website early December.
Registration packages & information will be mailed early January.

www.njcm.org