Bulletins

• FORT LEE ANNUAL HEALTH FAIR A SUCCESS:
The Fort Lee Health Department's 19th annual Health Fair was held on Saturday, October 10, 2015 at the Jack Alter Fort Lee Community Center. The Health Fair is part of the Mayor's Wellness Campaign. The Fort Lee Health Department provided residents with flu vaccines and many free medical screenings.

• SNOW REMOVAL:
The Borough of Fort Lee reminds residents that every owner or tenant of any residential property abutting upon any public street shall remove all snow and ice from the abutting sidewalk of such street at least a total width of the finished walkway or four feet, whichever is applicable; any and all depressed curbs that may intersect two streets at a corner property; and any fire hydrant which abuts the property, within 12 hours after the cessation of the snowfall.

• FORT LEE BUSINESS DISTRICT ALLIANCE FALL-O-WEEN SPECTACULAR ON MAIN STREET:
This past Halloween the Fort Lee BDA hosted a grand reopening of the new Main Street between Center and Lemoine Avenues. This area was decorated in spectacular fashion for Halloween. There was a live DJ and free candy and refreshments for the costumed kids and their parents as people strolled and shopped on Main Street. For info. on the activities of the Fort Lee BDA visit **www.bdaftlee.com.**

• FORT LEE'S HALLOWEEN DOG PARK-TACULAR:
On Halloween at Fort Lee's dog park on Stillwell Avenue residents dressed their dogs in costume in competition for prizes. The event included pet adoptions, face painting, pumpkin decorating and more. This event was sponsored by the Borough of Fort Lee, the Fort Lee Regional Chamber of Commerce, Fort Lee Dog Walking, Focal Point Coaching /Maclay Asscoc., the Bank of New Jersey and Alma Bank.

• BOROUGH WINS NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BATTLEFIELD GRANT FOR MONUMENT PARK STUDY:
The Borough Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs and the Fort Lee Historic Preservation Commission was recently awarded a $13,000 Battlefield Grant from the National Park Service. This grant will go towards the creation of the first study of Fort Lee's Monument Park and the battles that took place during the period of the American Revolution in this area of Fort Lee. This research will result in more accurate and interactive signage in Monument Park and assist in establishing this new historic district which encompasses Monument Park and the adjacent Fort Lee Museum.

Photo by Donna Brennan

• FORT LEE FILM COMMISSION PRESENTS FIRST PUBLIC SCREENING OF HIGH TOR SINCE 1956 COURTESY OF THE FAMILY OF BING CROSBY:
The first public screening of Bing Crosby's "High Tor" since it aired in 1956 was held in October at the Fort Lee Historic Park Theatre and was sponsored by the Fort Lee Film Commission, the Palisades Interstate Park and HLC Productions. The film was screened courtesy of Kathryn Crosby (Bing's widow) with the assistance of film historian Joe Yranski. The screening took place before a capacity crowd. This first made for TV movie also starred Julie Andrews in her first American TV appearance. The film is about the preservation of the Palisades.

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FORT LEE THEN AND NOW

Celebrate Fort Lee's History

The Fort Lee Theatre, which was built in 1919, was the second movie house in Fort Lee and the first to be constructed as a theatre. The theatre was later renamed the Metro, in honor of Fort Lee native and MGM executive Eddie Mannix. The theatre is listed as operating as late as 1951 but it was purchased by the Fort Lee VFW Cairola-Barber Post 2342 in 1950. It was also home to the Fort Lee Building and Loan Association. The building still stands at 250 Main Street and today is home to the Parisienne Bakery and the Fort Lee VFW. Today this location is known as Veterans Square.

Thank you to all our Fort Lee Veterans including VFW Post Commander James Viola. James Viola served in the U.S. Navy in World War II and became Commander of the VFW Post here in Fort Lee after the death of his brother, former Post Commander Charles Viola.

Design by Blue Point Graphics 2015

FORT LEE TODAY
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Keeping Our Residents Informed
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Autumn Colors of A New Main Street

The Fort Lee Mayor and Council and the Fort Lee Business District Alliance (BDA) formally reopened the first refurbished section of Main Street between Center and Lemoine Avenues in October. The wider street includes larger sidewalks, new light fixtures with the ability to change colors and a decorative seasonal theme. The improved Main Street will assist the business community and shoppers alike. Holiday decorations are in the works courtesy of the BDA. On Halloween the BDA sponsored an event for children and adults to celebrate the new Main Street.

Fort Lee Regional Chamber of Commerce (FLRCC) Executive Board President Douglas Feltman, Mayor Mark Sokolich, FLRCC Executive Director Margaret Maclay, Councilman Joseph Cervieri, Fort Lee BDA President Romina Starace and Councilman Harvey Sohmer

From the Mayor's Desk by Mark Sokolich

This is a very, very exciting time for Fort Lee. Fort Lee has become the most progressive municipality in northern New Jersey with many more improvements to come in the near future. Fort Lee is on the move, and has already been recognized as one of the safest communities in the State of New Jersey, one of the best communities to retire to in the entire country and one of the best communities for young professionals to reside in and raise their families!!!

On a recent fall weekend I had the pleasure to attend a town-wide celebration at our dog park, with a full compliment of vendors, health officials, police officers and hundreds upon hundreds of fellow citizens of this great town. From there I went to our new Main Street and witnessed THOUSANDS of community members enjoying a Halloween celebration without compare; hosted by our Business District Alliance this event had our new Main Street hopping with activity. These events embody the genuine ideas of what Fort Lee is, the essence of living in a true city with a small town feel. These events, along with our community center, recreation center, youth center, myriad of sports teams as well as our adult activity center and library are all a part of services that the Governing Body sees as crucial to keeping Fort Lee the fantastic town that it is.

Our opening of three new public parks, a planned adaptive traffic signalization system, the Hudson Lights retail district, an incredible community theater and new parking facility at our municipal lot are just some of what the governing body has in store to keep Fort Lee progressing in a way that has already stabilized the tax rate and attracted so much positive attention to our community. Stay tuned Fort Lee, there is much more on its way.....

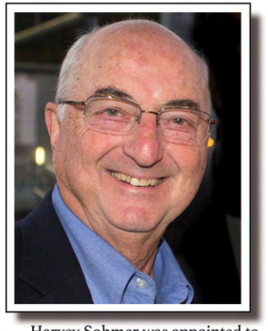
The Fort Lee Office of Human Services announces their annual Holiday Gift Drive. Those interested in donating gifts can contact the office at **(201) 592-3500 ext. 1511.**

The Fort Lee Office of Human Services 2016 Tricky Tray Fundraiser will be held on February 6th at the Fort Lee Recreation Center on Stillwell Avenue. The Church of the Madonna sponsors this annual event which raises funds for Fort Lee families in an unexpected crisis.

Fort Lee Mayor and Council issue proclamation for ADA Awareness Month

Councilman Harvey Sohmer presents a proclamation to Fort Lee Advisory Committee for Individuals with Disabilities member Dr. Sandra Pinkerton for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Awareness month in October.

Meet Councilman Harvey Sohmer



Harvey Sohmer was appointed to the Borough Council in January of 2008. Since that time the voters of Fort Lee have elected Councilman Sohmer to office for three full terms. "I appreciate the support of the residents of Fort Lee and I enjoy the work I do on their behalf," Councilman Sohmer said.

Councilman Sohmer has been a Fort Lee resident for over sixty years and is a graduate of Fort Lee High School where he met his wife Roberta. "The education and inspiration I received in the Fort Lee school system led to my service as a Councilman. I am very proud of my two daughters, Stacey and Jill, who also are graduates of the Fort Lee school system." Prior to his retirement Councilman Sohmer was a senior customer service representative for StoraEnso, a Chicago based paper manufacturer. "I am past president of the Fort Lee Education Foundation and past president of the New Synagogue of Fort Lee. I believe in community service most especially as it deals with helping the youth of Fort Lee," Councilman Sohmer said.

Councilman Sohmer is the liaison to the Fort Lee Volunteer Fire Department, DPW, Advisory Committee for Individuals with Disabilities, Communications Department, Parks & Recreation Department, Parking Authority and the Fort Lee Historic Preservation Commission. Councilman Sohmer is a long time member of the Fort Lee Historical Society. "One of my goals was to work with the Mayor and Council to bring about an economic revival to the center of town. I am very proud of the work we accomplished that has led to the development of a once barren piece of land on Main Street. This will lead to the economic revival of our downtown area and make Fort Lee a bridge to a better future for all of our residents."

Spotlight on Fort Lee OEM Coordinator Cathy Umrichin

Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Coordinator Cathy Umrichin is a lifelong Fort Lee resident. "My grandparents built the house I live in on McElroy Avenue. I went to School #4, and graduated from Fort Lee High School in 1992. I became a certified EMT in 1991 and joined the Fort Lee Volunteer Ambulance Corps (FLVAC) and also OEM as a volunteer." Cathy took some time away from the FLVAC to have children but remained active with OEM. "I rejoined the FLVAC in 2005 and remain active serving the last 2 years as chief. I served in the capacity of Chief of Operations for OEM while my children were little and became Deputy Coordinator just after the WTC incident (9/11). During 9/11 I assisted the Coordinator, the late Joe Licata, at the time in running operations from the Port Authority and was in charge of the operations at Fort Lee High school." Cathy has served as Deputy Coordinator since then and was appointed in 2014 to the position of Coordinator. She also serves as the Secretary for East Bergen Emergency Management Association and has held the position of Corresponding Secretary to the New Jersey Emergency Management Association from 2008-2015. In addition to her service to the FLVAC and OEM she has also coached Fort Lee Soccer and Fort Lee Girls Softball. Cathy's entire family are part of the Fort Lee OEM volunteers.

Fort Lee OEM is the coordination point of all the emergency services in the Borough of Fort Lee. They handle relocations after a fire and other problems in which the house or apartment is not deemed safe to inhabit. All OEM volunteers are required to be trained in the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. If interested in becoming an OEM team member contact the OEM office at **(201) 592-3700 ext. 1512** or visit the web site at **www.fortleeoem.org.**

A Call for Volunteers

The Fort Lee Volunteer Fire Department seeks volunteers. For information, contact the office of the Department Chief at **(201) 592-3500 ext 1013** or visit **www.fortleefire.org.**

We thank residents for their support during our Annual Fund Drive this past October.

Fire Dept. Honors World Trade Center

Members of the Fort Lee Volunteer Fire Dept. assemble on October 21st as a beam form the World Trace Center travels across the George Washington Bridge en route to Colorado for a Fire Department Memorial. Pictured are FLFD members JC Klein, Ryan Handschin, TJ Worner, Joseph Bar-Nadav, Battalion Chief Lane Goldstein, Vinnie Martin, JT Klein and Anthony Hand.

Fort Lee & Fox News Celebrate Birth of Fox Studio

Photo by Nelson Page

Pictured left to right: Clay Rawson and Tom Meyers.

Fox Studio was born in Fort Lee in 1915 and its first home was a studio on the corner of Linwood Avenue and Main Street, the present day site of a garden apartment complex. This corner was renamed Theda BaraWay in 2006 by the Fort Lee Film Commission by resolution of the Mayor & Council. Theda Bara was the first star of Fox Studios and she made films here from 1915 through 1919 when Fox moved their production studios first to New York City then to California. This studio, founded by William Fox, merged with Twentieth Century Pictures in 1935 to become 20th Century Fox. The Fort Lee Film Commission mounted a centennial exhibit to Fox Studio at the Fort Lee Museum (1589 Parker Avenue) this year and the exhibit runs through December 2015. William Fox started his newsreel division in 1919 and this became Fox Movietone News with the advent of sound. The current day Fox News, founded by Rupert Murdoch in 1996, has its roots with the Fox Movietone News, which operated from 1927 to 1963. Fox News contacted the Fort Lee Film Commission upon discovery of our plans for this centennial exhibit and through their Director of Development Clay Rawson, we were able to acquire many archival images of Fox Newsreel and Fox Movietone News dating from 1919 through 1963. These images and artifacts are on display at the Fort Lee Museum. Present day Fox News covered our exhibit with TV spots that aired nationally and internationally this year. Recently Fort Lee Film Commission Executive Director Tom Meyers visited Clay Rawson at Fox News HQ in Manhattan and was pleased to view the exhibit Clay set up outside the newsroom that includes our archival images of Fox Studio in Fort Lee and images from our present exhibit.

For information about our Fox Centennial exhibit at the Fort Lee Museum visit **www.fortleefilm.org** or call us at **(201) 693-2763.**

A View on the Bridge

Fort Lee Historical Society President Donna Brennan recently took a tour of the George Washington Bridge courtesy of the GWB Manager Robert Durando. Donna was able to capture some rare shots of the GWB from a spectacular viewpoint.

As Donna is also a member of the Fort Lee Film Commission it is quite appropriate she took part in some feats of personal courage such as movie serial star Pearl White accomplished on the cliffs of Fort Lee's Palisades in the "Perils of Pauline."

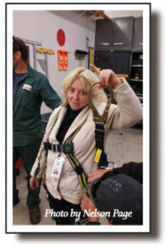


Photo by Nelson Page

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