

2017 NFDA Pursuit of Excellence Program

OLD BRIDGE FUNERAL HOME, OLD BRIDGE, NEW JERSEY

“Life is a gift, and it offers us the privilege, opportunity, and responsibility to give something back by becoming more.” ~ Anthony Robbins

THE CONCEPT: ALL AROUND OLD BRIDGE, MONTHLY PUBLICATION TO THE TOWNSHIP

All Around Old Bridge was developed by the staff of Old Bridge Funeral Home to become a resource to the community through by utilizing our relationships and involvement in the Township. Too often, the local headlines feature sensational headlines, crime stories or police blotters. We felt the need for an uplifting publication that featured achievements in our schools, sports activities, heartwarming stories about our residents, and provide an opportunity for local businesses to share their stories. Our desire was to become a resource to connect our residents and readers to the many great activities and achievements of our residents, businesses and elected officials. As funeral directors, we have a direct connection to the many families in the town, have a direct connect to our elected government leaders and businesses. We also wanted to developed a program that the community would know the funeral home was behind but wasn't connected to our bereavement, grief or educational programs. Currently Old Bridge Township is home to just under 70,000 residents and 1,500 businesses. The Township news and information is covered by a local weekly publication that also covers eight other towns, with Old Bridge being the largest town only receiving a page or two of content. Individuals looking for information would have to search online, call the township or stop in to receive information. We knew that Old Bridge needed its “own” paper, and that was our inspiration for the project.

THE DELIVERY

At a local Old Bridge Business Alliance meeting, made up of private industry members that are charged with helping the township in innovative ways and bring ideas to the Office of Economic Development, our funeral home stepped up and thought that a “publication” should be created, dedicated to the township, that was positive and highlighted the township officials, businesses and people that make Old Bridge such a great place to work and live. We received support for this idea from everyone in the room including the Mayor, Business Administrator, Town Council, other business leaders, and the Economic Development Officer. As a business in town, we wanted the publication to be created at no expense to tax payers, and thus began planning how to incorporate our ideas through the Mayor's Office and Office of Economic Development. In August of 2016 we put a plan together to begin this venture. The backbone of the project was to connect tax payors and our businesses (ratables) to our government leaders, and the departments with the town to show how and where our tax dollars are being spent. The publication, All Around Old Bridge, “AAOB”, was created, published, and designed by the funeral home staff and the first mailing was in October of 2016, to 21,000 homes and businesses within the township. We featured in our inaugural edition our local Hospital, Sept 11th ceremonies, free obituaries and many local stories and event notices. AAOB features monthly articles from the council minutes, a letter from our mayor, business updates from our economic development officer, Library News, Senior Center updates, Municipal Authorities and Water Commissioner reports, and many other prominent business leaders. Township residents now have a direct publication to read the work done by much of the township's elected and appointment officials.

The printing and delivery services are proud to be provided by union services by hard working residents of New Jersey.

THE IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY AND STAFF

The paper has not cost tax payers in Old Bridge a single cent, and has increased the profile and visibility of Old Bridge Township with prospective investors and residents. Before AAOB, unless you were active in the township, you would not know who their mayor is, what the council is doing or what projects were going on in town. It has been amazing to see not only the reception from the town but from each department and leader we work with. The paper has also saved the township in mailing costs and printing due to their articles being published in the All Around Old Bridge. The fact that all township residents receive the publication has also helped numerous businesses and institutions increase awareness of their products and services. Part of the appeal of All Around Old Bridge, is that is a full color newspaper, mailed monthly to residents (not thrown in the driveway) and is one of the most effective news mediums in the area. Having funded this project through the funeral home, we choose to allow the publication to be a place for small businesses to advertise who normally wouldn't have the budget for a township wide publication and to give opportunities to Old Bridge businesses that normally would not be in the market place. In less than 10 months the paper has grown from 14 pages to 28 pages and is mailed to over 26,000 addresses in the township. Reports from local business vendors are increased foot traffic in their stores, increased sales and revenue, and local institutions have increased attendance in their services and programs. We has also made it a point to engage the students of Old Bridge High School to feature their work and articles in the paper. This has helped many of the student writers experience real world experience and provided an opportunity for them to have their work credited by publication for college entrance applications. Services that have been offered to the businesses and community that are at no cost are press releases, obituaries, and charitable event promotions.

(Enclosed please see each months publication for your review.)

We have also saved funeral families money by establishing all obituaries are free, a service the local paper once had and renounced many years ago. Just recently during a funeral arrangement when the topic of an obituary came up the family said, "Can we run it in the new paper here in Old Bridge", needless to say we were overcome with how the publication has reached the community.

The best statistic to come from this entire project has been from the senior center. The senior center has a prominent position and article every month that has helped brand them as an active adult fellowship. The senior center director and assistant director both attributed a 15% increase in attendance from those article and the paper! To know that AAOB has made that type of impact leaves all involved speechless.

A documentary was produced about our publication with interviews from our directors, business leaders and township officials. To view the video please click the link or go to <https://vimeo.com/225555520>. The video contains interviews of Dr. Theodore Kadela, Principal of St. Ambrose School, Carlo Castronova of Guiseppe's Pizza, Sammy Denri, Owner of Café Luna, Alan Rosencranz, Vice President of the Township Council and Stephen Mamakas, Economic Development Director.

Many of the directors and staff have become contributing writers and photographers for the project. We also have a member of the staff that is vital to the project by utilizing their first degree is graphic design for the layout and publication of the paper.

IT'S ABOUT OUR TOWN

We truly feel blessed to be part of our community, and as part of a community the responsibility both personally and corporately to give back. Watching the impact of this paper on the community, readers, residents, business owners, contributors has been rewarding and humbling. In reflection, the greatest joy has been to see how infectious a sense of community has become with the staff of the funeral home. Community involvement has increased, new relationships and friendship formed with our neighbors, and ultimately a renewed sense of community. We named the publication All Around Old Bridge because it's about our town, our community.

OLD BRIDGE

ALL AROUND



PET PHOTO CONTEST!

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VOL. 1, NO. 1

A Publication for the community of Old Bridge

OCTOBER 2016

ALL AROUND OLD BRIDGE LAUNCHES



Stephen Mamakas, Mayor Henry and Jim Kroeze inspect print presses

It is with great pride and honor to launch this inaugural publication of All Around Old Bridge for the Township of Old Bridge, New Jersey.

The publication was born from the idea of providing local coverage specific to our township. All too often publications focus on the bad and sensational headlines, not on the hard work by residents, businesses, teachers, and local officials. After seeing many other towns (much smaller than Old Bridge) with publications, I felt the need for Old Bridge to have its own publication to promote our great township.

The concept for All Around Old Bridge began over two years ago with conversations with Economic Development Director, Stephen Mamakas, and Leaders in the Old Bridge Business Alliance. The business climate and excitement generated by the Alliance re-emphasized to me what a great place Old Bridge is to work, live and invest

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BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD FOR RARITAN BAY MEDICAL CENTER

By Joe Cooney Contributor, All Around Old Bridge



In January a merger between Meridian Health and Raritan Bay Medical Center in Perth Amboy and Old Bridge was labeled a "home run" kind of deal, according to Raritan Bay's president Michael R. D'Agnes.

Six months later, the merger of Hackensack University Health Network and Meridian took place, which created Hackensack Meridian Health.

"That," D'Agnes exclaimed recently, "was a grand slam!"

"Hackensack and Meridian have a lot of recognition, a lot of accolades and strong brands. This merger will prove to be an unbelievable asset for our patients."

The union brought together two academic medical centers, two children's hospitals and nine community hospitals from Bergen County to Ocean County and gave Raritan Bay "a strong and growing future in Middlesex County," predicted D'Agnes, who has been at the helm of Raritan Bay since 2000.

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OLD BRIDGE DAY DRAWS THOUSANDS

The Township celebrated its 21st Annual Old Bridge Day with an estimated 5,000 residents attending the event held on September 24 at the Municipal Complex. Early morning fog and clouds rolled away to reveal a blue sky and warm sun to allow residents and visitors to meet with over 150 vendors, ranging from local businesses, restaurants, government agencies, churches and charitable organizations.

The event, organized by the Township of Old Bridge Parks & Recreation Department, included live music, inflatables, games, prizes, food and refreshments, demonstrations, and giveaways.

The event began with the presentation of the United States Flag and National Anthem, followed by various musical selections played by the Old Bridge High School Marching Band. "We have

over 75 members in the band ranging from middle school students to seniors." Said Assistant Director Nick Ahr. Local band, Fit For the Weekend, comprising of Old Bridge High School alumni, continued the entertainment for the rest of the day playing favorite cover songs.

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OLD BRIDGE

ALL AROUND



ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS
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VOL. 1, NO. 2

A Publication for the community of Old Bridge

NOVEMBER 2016

LOCAL FOOD BANKS PREPARE FOR HOLIDAYS

By: Joe Cooney, Contributor AAOB



With the holiday season fast approaching, several Old Bridge organizations are gearing up to provide a helping hand – and a bounty of food – to those less fortunate.

"It's that time of year again," exclaimed Carol Eskaros, communications director of Calvary Chapel Old Bridge, as she talked about the church's seasonal preparations.

"The word has gone out, and people are already bringing in turkeys and all the trimmings that will be packaged and delivered (for Thanksgiving)," Eskaros added.

Calvary's Broken Loaves ministry, launched 26 years ago, will help approximately 450 families this year during Thanksgiving, according to Associate Pastor Dave Margareta. The ministry provides assistance each month throughout the year to a similar number of families.

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VETERANS DAY: ITS ORIGIN AND IMPORTANCE

By: David L. Hernandez Jr. Publisher

Veterans Day: Its Origin And Importance

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918, a temporary cessation of warfare or armistice was avowed between Germany and the Allied states in the 1st World War, which was referred to as "the Great War." Celebrated as Armistice Day starting the next year, November 11th was named a federal legal holiday all over the United

States. During the aftermath of the Korean War and World War II, Armistice Day was made Veterans Day, a special holiday dedicated to all American veterans of war.

The evolution from Armistice to Veteran's day

American effort during the second World War saw the greatest enlistment of the U.S. Navy, Army, Marines as well as the Air Force in the country's history (over 16 million people); about 5.7 million

more were deployed during the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. Sometime in 1954, after the lobbying movements by veterans' service organizations, progress was made, and the 83rd U.S. Congress had the 1938 act amended, and this act converted Armistice Day to "Veterans" day. President Dwight D. Eisenhower was the person who signed the law on June 1, 1954. And since then, November 11 has remained a day to honor all American veterans of wars.

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WORLD FEST

From delicious food, rides, crafts and great entertainment, the World-fest weekend was a success and left Old Bridge residents entertained.

The Voci Del Mondo (the voice

of the world) contest was like our very own American Idol with fabulous, local talent! The live taping of the new, community television cooking show was wonderful with

Chef Eric Levin and many attendees waited for the restaurateur's autograph. The attendees were able to enjoy fare from all over the world with various food vendors too!

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OLD BRIDGE

ALL AROUND



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VOL. 1, NO. 4

A Publication for the community of Old Bridge

JANUARY 2017

CALVARY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL: EDUCATING THE MIND, DISCIPLING THE HEART

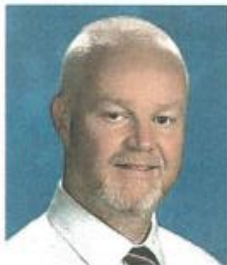


Photo of Jim Dunne

"He was trying his best, but he was struggling. One of our fourth graders was pushing hard to finish the last leg of an intramural cross-country meet when something happened that I have never seen before in all of my years as an educator. A sophomore who had already finished his race doubled back and came jogging alongside the fourth grader, cheering him and his peers to finish their race. It was a moment I will never, ever forget. None of us will."

Pastor Jim Dunne, principal of Calvary Christian School (CCS), reflects on what makes CCS a unique institution. "Older children helping the younger ones, teachers helping students,

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GOT MILK? PROBABLY. BUT IN A GLASS BOTTLE?

You do if you're one of the several hundred local customers of Udderly Delicious, a home milk (and much more) delivery service operated by Old Bridge resident Jeff Milling.

The Brooklyn, NY, native who then spent time in Staten Island before moving to Old Bridge, calls himself "one of the last of a dying breed."

"People see me sometimes and say, 'they still deliver milk?' It's something people are not accustomed to."

Indeed, it's been quite a while since consumers had milk delivered to their doorsteps. Back in the 1960's about a third of the country could count



on the deliveryman - usually dressed all in white - to drop off their dairy products. Latest figures indicate a scant 0.4 percent of residents are serviced.

Milling says the idea of bringing fresh milk and other products to locals began about 20 years ago. He had been

employed as an advertising circular distributor and had been working six days a week, missing time with his family. It was time for a change.

"I was thinking about doing something different," he recalls. "Something that people would not be accustomed to."

"Then one night about at about 10 o'clock my wife said we were out of milk."

That was the spark. And I also thought about the old days, the nostalgia of it - the glass bottles."

A meeting with Byrne Dairy farm in Syracuse, NY, launched what would become Udderly Delicious.

"Their milk and other dairy products

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NEW YEAR IS A PERFECT TIME TO THINK HEALTHY



We are already in the month of December and it is the high time for us to think about New Year Resolutions. The New Year resolutions are more like babies. Even though it's easy to make them, you will have to go through a lot of hassle in order to maintain. Here is a list

of New Year's resolutions that you can consider about in order to uplift your health and fitness in 2017.

1. High calorie group burning sessions

If you are a person who is struggling to lost weight, you need to think about high calorie group burning sessions. However, you would not be able to keep motivation in order to engage with high calorie group burning sessions throughout the year. Therefore, it is important for you to take part in group burning sessions. When you have few people around, you would tend to keep up with them. The high calorie group burning sessions

would give you the opportunity to burn a lot of calories within a short period of time as well. It has been identified that a single workout session can assist you to burn about 1000-2000 calories within an hour. As a result, you will lose weight at an accelerated pace. Max Fitness of Old Bridge is such a place. Max promotes, a friendly, supportive atmosphere suitable for all fitness levels. "We make a personal connection with our members and provide un-matched support" said Alex Bates, Manager of the Program.

"Positive energy all around where we will help you believe

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@ a GLANCE INSIDE

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Local Postal Customer



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