

A busy summer in Manville...

These are financially challenging times in Manville as we work hard to confront a property tax crisis in New Jersey. Keeping Manville affordable is a top priority of your governing body. I hope you will join with me, and members of the Council, to preserve the quality of life we all enjoy in our community. I remain optimistic that with hard work and everyone's cooperation, we will be successful.

We had a busy first few months of 2016 with many accomplishments. We hired a full-time Borough Administrator, Ms. Andrea Bierwirth, in mid-July. She has hit the ground running and has greatly helped with the adoption of the municipal budget for 2016 in September and with the overall daily operations of the Borough.

The governing body has worked hard and had a plan to practically balance the municipal budget the last 2 years by implementing numerous cost saving ideas. In addition we have aggressively sought various governmental grants to benefit our community and help stabilize the municipal tax rate. We received \$250,000 in additional aid from Trenton to help offset the loss of property tax revenues from Blue Acre buyouts.

This year, the Borough applied and received grants for a trailer based generator for our emergency shelter, for new sidewalks near our grammar school, for parking lot lighting improvements for our library, for flood planning work to improve our standing in the Community Rating System and for various youth services grants to benefit our recreation program. The portable generator has been delivered and will be kept at our OEM building. It is a tremendous relief knowing we a solution to our power needs in times of emergency for our shelter.

We entered into a new emergency shelter agreement with the Veterans of Foreign Wars post 2290. This agreement assures the VFW that it will incur no financial burdens with the use of their facility as our emergency shelter. Our veterans are a big part of our community and they deserve our full support.

We do have a strong sense of community in Manville. Our recreation department along with our library, which is now a member of the Somerset County Library System, offers numerous programs to benefit our residents. Visit the Borough's website for more information, www.manvillenj.org.

Our recent "Community Day" event was a prime example of a community that thrives as a direct result of the efforts of our volunteers. Our sense of community will continue to strengthen as we

care about each other and are willing to contribute our time and efforts in making Manville a great place to live.

We encourage our residents to become active participants in our community. Think about volunteering in town. Try to attend Council meetings and please support our local businesses to help Manville thrive. We look forward to a productive 2017 with your support. A happy holiday season to all!

Mayor Richard M. Onderko