



Spring 2009

# Ventnor City Voice

Ventnor City, New Jersey Newsletter • 6201 Atlantic Avenue, Ventnor, New Jersey 08406 • www.ventnorcity.org • 609-823-7900

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR OF VENTNOR

These past months since our first Ventnor Voice communication with you has been very, very busy. We had to take out a Bond Anticipatory Note for \$2.9Million to replace the money paid from our Current Fund by the previous administration to pay for the pier construction. Also, the previous administration owed the State of NJ \$511,000+ for the Beach Replenishment Project. We recently paid this debt and the \$660,000 and \$780,000 “owed” to us in grants and loans will be forthcoming. Also, we had to borrow \$5.9Million in Tax Anticipatory Notes to pay our bills in August. This was repaid in February as we” tightened the reins” on spending and accumulated enough dollars to pay it.

Eminent domain for private development has been eliminated. Biking hours on the Boardwalk have been extended during daylight hours. An ordinance to maintain private vacant lots for beautification and environmental purposes has been passed.

We are in the process of having a global connect telephone system installed as an early warning system to contact all citizens in times of emergency – like a water main break or major fire or storm.

We’ve hired a “fire attorney” to help us collect unpaid \$s from fines imposed by our Fire Dept. for failure to meet fire codes. He will receive a percentage of the fines collected. Three new fire captains have been appointed, two of which were functioning in the role of Captain for more than ½ year.

A new auditor, Swartz and Co. has been employed to conduct the 2008 audit and to assist the commission in the process of our zero-based budgeting for 2009.

The ACUA is now collecting our trash and, on the same day, collects our recycling materials (recycling is every week now!).

The Pipe and Cradle in the West Canal on Harvard Avenue, crossing the Inland Waterway is out to bid for repair, and will solve significant water/sewer problems in this Ventnor Heights area.

Additional wood and fasteners have been purchased for the Boardwalk which is now completed.

The heating system in the new library, which has not worked properly since installation, is being replaced. While the boilers are “free”, we have to pay for the new installation since the warranty period has expired.

The ordinance regarding the use of tables and chairs in front of restaurants has been amended with stricter rules and regulations and

will be monitored by code enforcement with diligence this year. We believe that code enforcement is the answer to many problems we have in Ventnor. Every effort is being made to remedy faults of the past. We never needed eminent domain and re-development is a natural process if the City is viewed by insiders and outsiders as “a place I want to live.”

Regarding shared services, our city engineer and construction code officer will be shared with Longport. I am meeting monthly with Mayors Becker and Russo from Margate and Longport, respectively. A number of significant areas of shared services and consolidation are being discussed.

The City owned property at 5008 Ventnor Avenue has been sold for \$205,000. I believe cities should not be in the real estate business. The contract to be signed will determine what is to be done with the structures on that block.

City Clerk Sandra Biagi is assuming the additional responsibilities of the position of City Administrator as the former administrator left at the end of December. Also, Toro Abodein is Ventnor’s new Chief Financial Officer, assuming that position the first of this New Year. Long time Tax Assessor William Johnson has retired and we have appointed Judy Weiner as our new Tax Assessor.

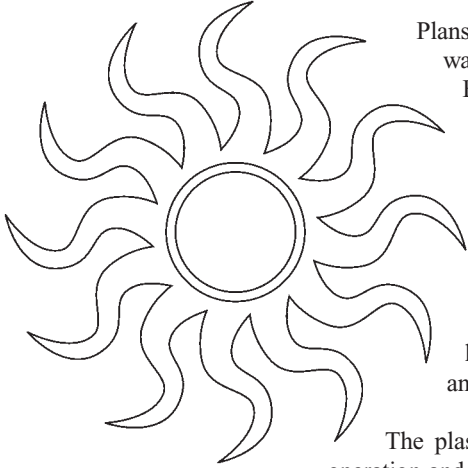
A fiscal committee of Ventnor citizens is working with Commissioner Piatt, the CFO, the City Administrator, and the auditor to complete a zero-based budget (everyone begins with zero dollars) The Ventnor City Municipal budget reflects NO tax increase for '09. Work on consolidating ordering of supplies, communication systems, and technology systems are in process and all materials are being inventoried. (P.S. We have many committees made up of residents of our community. I want to thank each and every one of them for their time and energies.)

A hearty congratulations to Patti Kedziora, Gary Chapin, Mike Weisen, Mike Advena, Jerry Thomas, the Ventnor PBA, the Ventnor Fire Dept. and many others for a successful Holiday Parade – great job!

Finally, and as important as all that we say, we congratulate our championship team in JV Football and, of course, our Lifeguard Ladies as they were champions again this past year.

– Mayor Theresa D. Kelly

# BEAUTIFICATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE



Plans for the spring are well under way as the Beautification and Environmental Committee researches an approved tree planting list; due to our location by the ocean certain trees and plants will not thrive. Also, NJ State Mandates prohibit many plantings such as nearness to utility poles, heights of trees at maturity, and the like.

The plastic bags use program is in operation and the City of Ventnor recently required use of biodegradable bags for lawn clippings (or you may use a regular trash can).

A fund raising program will be introduced in spring to purchase material to PLANT GREEN. Also, options regarding use of biodegradable trays in school, purchasing plant books and nursery information to be placed in the library and school, and a wild life ordinance are in the works. Improving the appearance of trash receptacles is on the agenda, too.

The B & E Committee was extremely disappointed that the metal grates, purchased to surround trees planted on Ventnor Avenue, stored at Public Works, went missing. A police investigation is on going.

Finally, for now, our "Roving Clean-Up" group, led by Jean Antolini, is preparing its forces to begin anew as spring quickly approaches. Remember, we need you to help us make Ventnor more beautiful and environmentally sound.

Thank you from *Cassandra Shober, Matt Steinen, Carla Glass, Jean Antolini*

*The next B&E Committee meeting is Monday, May 12th 6:30 at City Hall.*

## B & E COMMITTEE PHASE I INITIATIVES

The enthusiasm from the city, our friends and neighbors has been extraordinary as we work as a community to put a polish on Ventnor just in time for summer. This is what's been happening, what's planned and what's still needed as part of Phase 1:

Through donations, and the sale of VEGgie tote bags, the Ventnor Beautification & Environmental Committee will be purchasing plants and flowers for City Hall, Ventnor Cultural Arts Center, Tennis Courts and city clean-up Ventnor Avenue between Portland and New Haven Avenues. Monies have also been donated to do plantings in front of the old gas station on the corner of Ventnor and New Haven Avenues. Ventnor is being loaned a sidewalk powerwasher to safely clean the sidewalks.

Public Works is powerwashing and re-grouping the trash cans and has designated a landscaping person to trim trees and work on maintenance of landscape areas through out the city, and is working on a watering program for city as well.

An avenue banner program, and planter program has been initiated. We are hopeful that we will have the planters for the planting weekend, the banners before Memorial Day.

*Jo-Jo's* has given permission for a mural to be created and place on their fence-if this could be created in panels, it could move to another location once they begin their construction (traveling artwork, if you will). *Arrow Hardware* has donated a palate of soil. *ACUA* has donated eco-friendly mulch. Many of the Ventnor businesses have donated cash to the cause. *Shelly's Cafe* and friends will be providing the volunteers with water (and coffee, for the early birds who need it!) *Debbie Conrad* is contacting the current and press of Atlantic City, *Peter Makover* will have information running on *Channel 2*. *Marsha Gillespi* and *Sondra Klinger* have been working on distributing flyers and fundraising. *Shelly & Lisa Martinelli* will be contacting the Phase 1 business owners to advise them on the cleaning/power washing program. *Carla Glass* and *Liz Donaghy* will be ordering all the plants and flowers on Monday, May 4th. *Matt Steinen* will be providing native plants to incorporate into some of the planting areas. *Michelle Unmarino* is working on a "Merchant of the Month" beautification award program. (we are hopeful that a "Green Award" will quickly follow)

## OUTSTANDING CITIZENS OF VENTNOR

to limit this article to one person is both wrong and impossible. Our outstanding citizens are many and, at this time, we'd like to recognize these Ventnor citizens. Some are full-timers, while some are part-timers; some have their only home here, while some own a second home; some are young and some are older-than-young; but, all are wealthy in spirit and altruistic, working to make Ventnor a better place to live for all of us. Join us in thanking and honoring them. These outstanding citizens are the chairpersons of the many committees that are helping the present city commissioners do their best for you.

SPECIAL EVENTS – Anna Marie Courter

BEAUTIFICATION and ENVIRONMENTAL – Cassandra Shober, Carla Glass, Jean Antolini and Matt Steinen

RECREATION – Diane Birkbeck, Debbie Gaskill, and Bill Sabonjian

LEGAL – Bill Appel, Barry Maser, and Lynne Maser

CITIZENS – Patrick Gallagher

VENTNOR NORTHEAST RESIDENTS – Stacey Jaskol, Richard Gober, Sonia Loadenthal

COMMUNICATIONS – Janice Kaufmann and Peter Courter

FISCAL – Mila Summerson McDonough, Mike Ventura, Denise Hope

TELEPHONE – Patti Kedziora

Other committees which will be formed in the spring include Public Works and Fishing Pier as arrangements are made with the city commissioners.

## NORTH BEACH RESIDENTS (FORMERLY NORTHEAST RESIDENTS)

Those of us who reside in the former re-development area have agreed on "North Beach" residents as we move to remove the negative connotation of the past decade and to develop a positive, we-love-our-community attitude. As one of the many committees working with the new city commissioners, our primary goal is to change both the perception and attitudes of our own residents in this area of Ventnor and the other Ventnor citizens who have seen us as "the problem" in Ventnor. We are not, have never been, and desire all to see what great Ventnorites we are.

We want to do our best to work closely with code enforcement, enhance the attractiveness of our homes and streets, and become a magnet for new residents and businesses. Communication between and among our residents and all of our neighbors in Ventnor is so important so we may educate all of us. It is one of our primary objectives. We will use newsletters, flyers, and person-to-person contact to provide information that explains the obligations to take care of property, and, to work with neighbors and friends to improve North Beach. Neighborhood volunteers will reach out and help in their immediate areas. The rules and regulations of our fine City will be a focal point of discussion and review of information. Beautification and environmental care are important aspects of our determination, You can help! Tell us how we're doing!!!

Stacey Jaskol, Richard Gober, Sonia Loadenthal

## NEW BUSINESSES IN VENTNOR BY MELINDA KAPLAN



**The Euro Cafe**  
6525 Ventnor Avenue  
Spring Hours are  
9am to 7pm  
with lunch deliveries  
from 11am-2pm.  
The hours may change as  
the season approaches.  
Phone: 609-487-6525

A taste of foods from around the world is just around the corner for Ventnor residents (and friends). Located at 6525 Ventnor Avenue, the Euro Cafe is known for its delicious gelato made the old-fashioned way like in Italy, only better. They feature 18 flavors, not only the usual vanilla and chocolate but also banana cream pie, strawberry fondue, and peanut butter dream. It could be a difficult decision! And this tasty Italian treat is made right on the premises. Why wait until summer for a wonderful dessert?

You will also discover an interesting 13-page menu of foods made from the finest ingredients. Interested in paninis, subs, a corned beef special, buffalo chicken, pulled pork, a build-your-own salad or bagel and lox still featured at \$5.95, then head on over. A local resident I met at the cafe said "They have the best bread around" and added "My husband comes here when he has one of his hot-dog attacks". She was talking about the mile-long, half-pound Angus all-beef dog with toppings and chips for only \$7.95. I tried the New Orleans muffalata, thinly sliced turkey breast, genoa salami, aged sharp provolone cheese with homemade tapenade spread and chips. Wow! My friend had the Asian salad served in an Asian bowl with chopsticks. Excellent! And don't forget the gourmet beverages like the affagato made with 2 scoops of gelato in espresso for only \$3.95. I didn't have room.

The Euro Cafe is run by Steven Brand and Barbara Hopwood and their spring hours are from 9am -7pm, 7 days a week. Please check back as their hours may change as the summer approached. They have delivery too.....609-487-6525. You will find the cafe a clean and comfortable restaurant with a friendly atmosphere, a perfect place to read the paper or meet your friends. Give it a try!

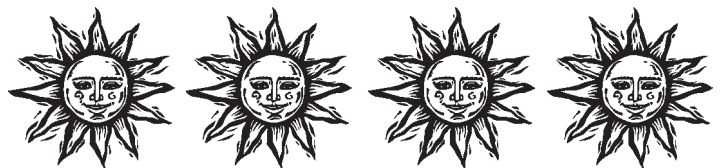


**Donna Siracusa's**  
Art Picture Framing  
Custom Mirror & Art  
6512 Ventnor Avenue  
Wednesday to Sunday  
from 10am-4pm  
Phone: 609-428-7727

You do not have to go very far to have your artwork, mirrors, or photographs expertly custom-framed. Take a short ride to 6512 Ventnor Avenue and visit with Donna Siracusa, the owner of the only in-house framing business on the island. Donna is a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Fine Art and an alumnus of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts with 28 years of experience not only in framing but in fine art conservation (preserving art for life). She paints in oils and pastels.

The store has a large assortment of frame corners to choose from and the prices vary from budget and medium to high-end frames such as French and Italian molding. Donna is able to keep her prices reasonable because she buys the molding in length and cuts it herself. Her training and artistic eye are will guide you to the perfect frame for whatever piece you bring in.

The store hours are Wednesday to Sunday from 10am-4pm. A small card near her desk reads "The quality is remembered long after the price has been forgotten.", a reminder that you will be receive the finest service.



## VENTNOR CALENDAR – MAY THROUGH JUNE 2009

- May 16 **Opening Day Little League Ceremonies** begin at noon. Ballfield in Ventnor Heights.
- May 15, 16 & 17 **Clean & Green - Clean up project** - Clean up project on Ventnor Avenue between New Haven and Portland Avenues. Volunteers needed – Contact Carla (609) 335-3512 for details.
- May 23, 24 & 25 **Memorial Day Weekend** – Barbecues permitted on beaches – grills only, no open pits, 10am – 6pm. Beach Badges Required.
- May 23 **Early Registration for Kenny Wayland Run** – 6:30pm – 7:30pm at Ventnor Community Building. Details call Ventnor Fire Dept at (609) 823-7942.
- May 24 **Kenny Wayland Memorial Run** – 7:00am start at Ventnor Community Building, Newport Avenue & the Beach
- May 25 **Memorial Day Services** – 9:00am at the Ventnor City Fishing Pier (Cambridge Avenue), 9:45am at the flag pole at the corner of Cambridge & Atlantic Ave (City Hall) and 11:00am at the VFW 601 N. Dorset Avenue.
- May 25 **Memorial Day Bar-B-Que for ALL VENTNOR RESIDENTS.** Join the Mayor and Commissioners in a city barbecue for all Ventnor Residents at St. James Memorial Hall at the corner of Newport & Atlantic Avenues from 4-7pm Sponsored by the Ventnor City Drug & Alcohol Alliance and other donations.
- June 29 **Summer Recreational Camps begin** – (registration forms can be picked up in the Mayor's Office from 8:30am – 4:00pm Monday – Friday) Details call Recreation Department at (609) 823-7950.

## VENTNOR 'S 2ND ANNUAL PLANTING WEEKEND MAY 15, 16 AND 17TH BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE BEAUTIFICATION & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

*Friday, May 15th* is mostly prep day, Public Works will be bringing in the planters and trash cans, cleaning the sidewalks, picking up the flowers and mulch, and getting us ready for Saturday.

*Saturday, May 16th* - put on your overalls, bring a shovel, and meet us at Shelly's Cafe at 8am.

If all goes well, Sunday we will enjoy the fruits of our labor. If it rains Saturday, we'll plant on Sunday.

Sounds impressive, right? NOW, *this is what we need...*

**Planting Captains** - someone in charge of each of the 4 planting areas. Please contact myself 609-823-8881 or Carla 609-335-3512

**Clean-up Captains** - yes, that's part of it, contact myself 609-823-8881

**Volunteers** - last year was a blast, we need YOU! Even if you can only make it for an hour - it'll be fun, promise. Meet at Shelly's 8am Saturday, May 16th.

**Recyclables** - a few bags of bottles and cans that we can fill the base of the planters with: allows for drainage, costs nothing, and decreases the amount of dirt we need to use. Contact Shelly 609-204-5419

**A Mural** - someone to get the kids and a concept that can be painted in a day (or two, I'll help :) ! CALL ME - this will be great!!!

**Money** - the more we've got, the further we can go. Make checks payable to the City of Ventnor Beautification & Environmental Committee. Contact John Piatt or Toro Aborderin 609-823-7900. The B&E Committee had pledged that each member would donate a flat of flowers. Money works fine. \$20 will purchase 2 flats. Please contact Carla 609-335-3512 [Qutypy@comcast.net](mailto:Qutypy@comcast.net)

## VENTNOR LINKS & RESOURCES

### Atlantic County Government:

[www.aclink.org](http://www.aclink.org)

### Atlantic County Utilities Authority:

[www.acua.com](http://www.acua.com)

### Downbeach Current:

[www.shorenwstoday.com](http://www.shorenwstoday.com)

### NBC 40:

[www.nbc40.net](http://www.nbc40.net)

### Press of Atlantic City:

[www.pressofatlanticcity.com](http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com)

### Ventnor Bulletin Board:

[www.ventnorevoice.com](http://www.ventnorevoice.com)

### Ventnor Business Association:

[www.ventnormerchants.com](http://www.ventnormerchants.com)

### Ventnor Community Association:

[www.weloveventnor.com](http://www.weloveventnor.com)

### Ventnor Public Schools:

[www.vecc.atlnet.org](http://www.vecc.atlnet.org)