



THE MENDHAM MESSENGER

The Newsletter for Mendham Borough

February 2026

Letter From the Mayor

Dear Mendham Residents,

The new year has started, and I wish everyone good health and success. The Borough had its reorganization meeting at the Mendham Firehouse on Wednesday January 7th. I want to congratulate Councilman Neil Sullivan on his re-election, and I am grateful for his fair-minded honesty and to have him still in his council position. I also want to welcome Councilman Chris Neff to the Borough council and look forward to him applying his vast expertise in the communications and environmental field. Lastly, I would like to congratulate Dr. Marilyn Altoff on her appointment as President of Council. The Council President's role is to be acting Mayor and run the Council meetings when the Mayor is absent.

I want to thank Rabbi Arrie Herson, for performing the invocation at our January re-organization meeting and inviting me to the Chanukah celebration in Brookside. It was a wonderful event with many families and children enjoying the celebration with food, drink and fellowship. I also want to give a shout out and thank Hidden Pond Christmas Tree farm for their annual generous donation of trees for our Holly Trail Event and The Bruin Family and South Street Gardens for donating and laying wreaths on all the veterans' graves in the Borough.

The winter weather started with a few snowy days late in December and January backed up with some frigid weather. But as of writing this it feels like we are in a warmup with 50-degree weather. It looks like we are going to have a mixed bag of winter weather. Thank you to our DPW Crew, which does a super job keeping the Borough streets plowed and salted. Everyone, please remember to keep your sidewalks cleared from snow. Many Borough children and adults are out walking in the winter in our neighborhoods.

Early in January with plenty of cold weather the Mountain Valley pond froze enough for ice skating. It was cool to meet an ice fisherman on the pond which was the first time if have ever see someone ice fishing on the pond. Unfortunately, the weather warmed up quickly and the pond was closed for ice skating. Please always be mindful and always check the Borough website to see if the pond is open and safe for skating.

Mendham Boroughs' State mandated 4th Round Housing Element & Fair Share Plan (HEFSP) court hearing was in December. Fair Share Housing Center (FSHC) and the Sisters of Christian Charity ("Sisters"), through their tenant, Accordia Realty Venture, LLC ("Accordia") which has leased the land for their development, filed challenges to the Borough's HEFSP.

Accordia and the Sisters propose a project which would redevelop/

renovate the old "Mother House" convent building, and add an addition to the building for 150 rental apartments and a parking garage. The project would consist of 120 market-rate family rental apartments and twenty percent (20%) set aside for 30 affordable family rental units. The Sisters and Accordia demanded that its 150-unit redevelopment project be included in the Borough's 4th Round HEFSP, and requested that the Court order the Borough to adopt amendments to the Borough's zoning code to allow for this project.

The Borough fought hard against these challenges and in support of balanced planning objectives. In addition, the Borough proposed adopting important zoning regulations for the Sister's site, which would include an age-restriction requirement and a conservation easement for the remaining undeveloped portions of the Sisters' property. These proposals were rejected outright by the Accordia/Sisters and the Court. The Sisters of Christian Charity made it clear that they intend to further develop the remaining portions of their property in the future and therefore do not want to be burdened by a conservation easement.

Unfortunately, after hearing legal arguments from all sides, the Affordable Housing Program Judge ruled that the Borough's immunity from a builders' remedy lawsuits and exclusionary zoning be revoked. This would open the door for any builder to come to the Borough and build high density housing and not be subject to the Boroughs zoning code. However, the Affordable Housing Program Judge further ruled that Borough's immunity could be restored if the Borough agreed to remove the age-restriction and conservation easement requirements, amend its 4th Round HEFSP to include Sisters of Charity and Accordia's project, and adopt zoning to allow for the project to proceed.

Despite the best efforts of the Borough, in light of the Program Judge's decision, the Borough was forced to reconsider its position and allow for this development. This decision was not an easy one to make, but after many sleepless nights it was necessary to have the Borough's immunity restored to protect the Borough's zoning and the future long-term interests and needs for the entirety of the Borough.

The Sisters of Christian Charity project fronts on Bernardsville Road. Please pay attention to the development project and feel free to call the Sisters at 973-543-0528 or email villapauline@scceast.org with questions and concerns you may have.

Lastly, don't forget Valentines Day! Do something special for someone!

James R. Kelly

Mayor James "Jim" Kelly



From Your Library

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to the library's growth and success. We had an amazing year with fabulous events, fundraisers, and kids programs. Thank you to our community for supporting our fundraisers; we had four events this year, which were all very well attended. We started out the year with the Neil Cavuto speaking engagement, then had a Wine Tasting, a Golf Outing, and ended the year with our Holiday Historic House Tour.

The Mendham Borough Library embraces our role as a community center in our town. Our adult and kids programs were very successful and well-attended. Some highlights included Raising Backyard Chickens, The Science Man, the What's It Worth event, Wreath Making, and Paint and Sip nights, just to name a few. This year our library hosted over 1,000 programs for individuals of all ages. We had over 45,000 library visits and circulated over 53,000 items. Additionally, we had over 17,800 electronic check outs of e-books, audio-books, magazines, music and shows. Over 9,200 children attended youth programs and more than 4,300 adults participated in adult events. In the fall we started a new Mahjong group, and added another just for beginners on Tuesday mornings.

Monthly Programs

Yoga via Zoom

Tuesdays and Thursdays
8:30 a.m.

\$5 per class.

Sign up for a month at the library.

Mahjong

Beginners: Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

Advanced: Wednesdays, 1 p.m.

Social Bridge

Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

For experienced players.

Canasta

Thursdays, 10 a.m.

For experienced players.

In Stitches

Fridays, February 6 & 20, 1 p.m.

All levels welcome!

Adult Coloring Club

Monday, February 23, 6:30 p.m.

Join us for a fun drink and creative coloring with friends!

Book Club

Friday, February 27, 10 a.m.

The Art Thief by Michael Finkel

February Adult Programs

Discover Morris County's Treasured Trails

Tuesday, February 3, 6:30 p.m.

Join the authors of the *Afoot in Morris* guidebook, Daniel Chazin and Jim Simpson, for a fascinating evening! They'll be sharing their favorite hike recommendations,



along with the rich lore and history of the trails, parks, preserves, and sanctuaries across Morris County. Don't miss the details on local Mendham gems like the Buttermilk Falls Natural Area, India Brook Natural Area, Burnett Brook Natural Area, and Meadowood Park. Get inspired for your next adventure!

Home Organization Life Hacks

Wednesday, February 25, 6:30 p.m.

Are you completely overwhelmed by life? Do you struggle



with keeping track of everyone's activities? Do you dread having to decide what to make for dinner? Are you always running late because you cannot find what you need to get out

the door? Lindsey Mahanna, Professional Organizer, will be sharing tips for how to tackle the overwhelm in your life and how to set up systems to help reduce the number of decisions you need to make each day.

Adult Crafting Club: Valentine's Wreath

Monday, February 2, 12:00 p.m.

Create a festive Valentine's Day Wreath to adorn your door; all supplies are included for this adult craft!



Did You Know?

The Mendham Borough Library has a Never Ending Book Sale with many wonderful titles for sale for \$1.00 or \$2.00. We currently have many books for adults with authors including David Baldacci, Jodi Picoult, James Patterson, John Grisham, Anne Tyler, and JoJo Moyes. We also have children's books including Disney books, "The Bad Guys," "Unicorn Academy," "Big Nate," and "Diary of a Wimpy Kid." Stop by and pick some up!

February Children's Programs

Toddler Sing-Along

*Mondays, February 2, 9, 23 (Closed February 16),
10:30 a.m.*

Join us for some fun songs!

Babies and Books

Fridays, February 6, 13, 20, 27, 10:30 a.m.

Join us for a story, nursery rhyme or poem!

Shadow Art (5+)

Wednesday, February 4, 3:30 p.m.



Create an illuminating piece of art as we trace the shadows of different things to create our picture.

Teens at the Library Survey

Teens! We want to hear your voice!

What kind of programs would you like to see offered at the Library?

Scan the QR Code or visit our YA room to fill out the form and let us know what you love!



Fletcher Gallery

This February, the Fletcher Gallery is proud to feature the work of Nino Tsereteli. While Nino explores various media, she specializes in oil and pastel illustrations and paintings. Her collection spans a diverse range of subjects, including portraits, landscapes, still lifes, and animal studies. We invite you to stop by and experience this unique exhibition.



Kindness Club Valentine's Workshop

Tuesday, February 10, 3:30 p.m.

Spread a little love and joy as we make Valentine's Day Cards for our loved ones and friends at Holly Manor.



Lego Club

Tuesday, February 24, 3:30 p.m.

We'll bring the LEGOs, you bring your imagination.



TAG (Teen Advisory Group)

Teen Bedazzling Bonanza (10+)

Wednesday, February 18, 5:30 p.m.

Bring your own small items to bedazzle or bedazzle one of our cool rubber ducks.

Coming Up

Adult Crafting Club: Shamrock Sign—Mon., Mar. 2, 12:00 p.m.

Holi Craft (5+)—Tues., Mar. 3, 3:30 p.m.

Blueprint of The Mind - Mentalism Show—Wed., Mar. 4, 6:00 p.m. at Hilltop House

St. Patrick's Day Fun—Tues., Mar. 17, 3:30 p.m.

Mendham Borough Library will be closed on Monday, February 16.

Please register for all programs at www.mendhamboroughlibrary.org.

2025 Annual Appeal

Tremendous thanks to all of our donors for supporting our 2025 Annual Appeal. As you know, we depend on your financial support to raise over \$100,000 annually to meet our budgetary needs. While Mendham Borough supports us, the town funding is limited. We are incredibly grateful to all of you for donating to our library and to our community. Your gifts enable us to purchase more reading materials, more e-books and e-audiobooks, offer more programs with skilled presenters, update our historic building, and engage our community. Thank you for your generosity.

We have made every effort to be accurate with the donor list but apologize in advance if there are any errors or omissions to this list.

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A.P. Kirby Jr. Foundation Inc. ♦ Arts Council of the Morris Area

Thank you to the following companies and foundations for their donations and matching gifts:

56 Degree Wine ♦ Bailey Funeral Home ♦ Chubb ♦ Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey ♦ J.A. Morey ♦ Mendham's Senior Artisans ♦ Edmond & Virginia Moriarty Charitable Foundation ♦ Peapack Gladstone Bank ♦ Rockefeller ♦ The Sue Adler Team ♦ Verizon ♦ Vision Construction Services LLC ♦ John Vitale, Esquire ♦ Wicker Basket ♦ Wyndham Hotel & Resorts

Donations in memory of loved ones and friends:

In Memory of Gloria Cardello: Alise and Marty Ford

In Memory of the Mueller, Fotta and Fazekas Families: Mike and Aubrey Mueller

In Memory of Andrew Perrin: Steve and Carole Brady ♦ Alex and Marian McDonnell ♦ Alexander McDonnell ♦ Toni Murray ♦ Janet and Lawrence McMillan ♦ Jessica Patterson

In Memory of Steven Siegal: Sheri O'Connor ♦ Carolyn Walsh

In Memory of Claire Steinberg: Stephany Gomes

In Memory of Thomas Wing: Thomas & Anne Fraenkel-Thonet ♦ Bob and Jane Helmstaedter ♦ Thomas Klumpp ♦ David & Angie Long ♦ Mary Elyn Matthews ♦ Janany Sabescumar ♦ Ed and Rena Wing

Mendham Borough School District Bond Referendum: Updates in Action

Auditorium Work Begins

One year after the community voted to approve the referendum, we are thrilled to see students and staff utilize the improved spaces as the referendum projects come to fruition.



Fifth-grade students use hands-on experiments to explore science concepts, thanks to the resources in the new dedicated science lab. The lab supports collaboration as students apply lessons to real-world applications, thereby deepening their understanding.

Visitors to Mountain View Middle School may have already noted the new security vestibule. It has enhanced building security and improved day-to-day operations. Staff can now greet parents and guardians as they drop off items in the secure location, replacing the impersonal cart system.

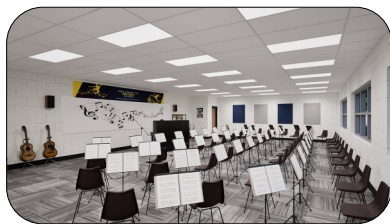
Other major updates at Hilltop School include roof and boiler upgrades to boost efficiency, as well as HVAC upgrades through Regular Operating Districts (ROD) funds.

Now, we look forward to our next project – the addition of an auditorium at Mountain View Middle School.

Construction began in early January and is anticipated to be completed in 2027. This addition will:

- ◆ Create an appropriate gathering place to support performing arts education, and expand related arts courses to include public speaking, performance, production, and technical areas.
- ◆ Provide much-needed space to welcome community members to school events, such as graduations, talent showcases, performances, and more.
- ◆ Offer a designated classroom space for music classes.

The contract was awarded to Vanas Construction in November 2025. The state requires school districts that pass a referendum to award contracts through a competitive bidding process to the lowest-qualified bidder. This protects the community by ensuring projects are completed in a cost-effective manner.



Construction activities will take place Monday through Friday from approximately 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and, if required, on Saturday at the same time. A construction manager from Legacy Construction Management Inc. will be on-site daily to monitor progress and ensure the safety of the students, staff, and community. Measures have been taken to control dust and debris in the construction zone, and cleanup will be performed on a daily basis.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work



to improve the Mendham Borough School District. From concerts and performances to assemblies and celebrations, the new auditorium will serve as a vibrant gathering space for our students to showcase their talents to the Mendham Borough community.

You can learn about the improvements at www.mendhamboro.org/referendum. If you have any questions about the construction, please email the Board of Education at communications@mendhamboro.org.

Mendham Borough Department of Public Works

2026 Bulk and Recycling Schedule

Bulk Trash pick-up is every Monday. If pick-up falls on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day or Christmas Day, pick-up will be on Tuesday. Collection time may vary during holiday weeks. Please place bulk and recycling at the curb the evening prior to scheduled collection day. Please contact us at 973-543-6535 during normal business hours (Monday – Friday 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.). We're happy to help.

President's Day: Monday, Feb 16, 2026—Normal Bulk Schedule

Memorial Day: Monday, May 25, 2026—Bulk pick up will be **Tuesday, May 26, 2026**; Service will be delayed one day

Juneteenth: Friday, June 19, 2026—Normal Recycling Schedule

Independence Day: Saturday, July 4, 2026—Normal Recycling Schedule

Labor Day: Monday, September 7, 2026—Pick up will be **Tuesday, September 8, 2026**; Service will be delayed one day

Columbus Day: Monday October 12, 2026—Normal Bulk Schedule

Veterans Day: Tuesday, November 11, 2026—N/A

Thanksgiving Day: Thursday, Nov. 26, 2026—Pick up will be **Friday, November 27, 2026**; Service will be delayed one day

Christmas Day: Friday, December 25, 2026—Normal Recycling Schedule

New Year’s Day: Friday, January 1, 2027—Normal Recycling Schedule

2026 Meeting Schedule for Mendham Borough Mayor and Council Meetings

Meetings are held at the Garabrant Center, 4 Wilson Street, Mendham Borough at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Please go to our website for more information.

- WednesdayFebruary 4
- WednesdayFebruary 18
- Wednesday March 4
- WednesdayMarch 18
- WednesdayApril 1
- WednesdayApril 15
- WednesdayMay 6
- WednesdayMay 20
- WednesdayJune 3
- WednesdayJune 17
- WednesdayJuly 15
- WednesdayAugust 12
- WednesdaySeptember 9
- WednesdaySeptember 23
- WednesdayOctober 7
- WednesdayOctober 21
- WednesdayNovember 4
- Monday**November 16
- WednesdayDecember 9

JCP&L Tree Trimming Maintenance

Please be advised that JCP&L will be doing power line clearing of tree branches in our area starting January 1, 2026.

Winter Skating at the Mud Hole

Mountain Valley Park Pond (Mud Hole) opens for skating when weather and ice conditions permit. Signs will be posted to let residents know if the ice is of sufficient depth for skating. **Ice must be 6 inches thick.** The 6” minimum thickness standard is enforced as an added safety measure because the pond is not stagnant; there is always a current below the top frozen layer which may cause the ice to crack more easily than a stagnant pond.

ALWAYS USE CAUTION WHEN SKATING

- ◆ No Town Supervision is provided
- ◆ Do not skate on pond when “NO SKATING” signs have been posted.
- ◆ Use caution when skating, ice conditions may change throughout the day
- ◆ Never skate alone
- ◆ Do not gather in large groups on ice
- ◆ Beware of ice covered with snow
- ◆ Stay away from cracks, seams, pressure ridges, slushy areas
- ◆ No Ice Fishing

*****SKATE AT OWN RISK*****

From New Jersey American Water

Use Road Salt Responsibly

New Jersey American Water is reminding customers that the widespread use of road salt to melt snow and ice can impact local water sources. While the company continues to provide drinking water that is safe and meets all health-based primary drinking water standards, some customers may notice temporary changes in taste due to increased salt runoff entering rivers and streams.

Each winter, road crews, businesses, and homeowners apply salt to improve traction on roads, driveways, and sidewalks. As snow and ice melt, this salt can wash into nearby waterways, some of which serve as drinking water sources. Higher concentrations of sodium and chloride in the water can result in a slightly salty taste, though these levels do not pose a health risk for most people. Those on sodium-restricted diets should consult their physicians with any concerns. Use only what’s needed. A 12-ounce coffee mug holds about one pound of salt—enough to treat a 20-foot driveway.

- ◆ Apply salt efficiently. Scatter granules with a few inches of space between them for effective coverage.
- ◆ Clean up excess salt. Sweep up leftover salt from dry pavement to prevent it from washing into storm drains.

(Continued on page 8)

Borough Events in February, 2026

Borough Meetings: held at the Garabrant Center unless otherwise indicated.

Council: 7 p.m. Wednesday, February 4;
7 p.m. Wednesday, February 18

ECOSST: 7:30 p.m. Monday, February 2

Historic Preservation Commission: 7:30 p.m.
Monday, February 16

Joint Land Use Board: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday,
February 17

Recreation Committee: 7:30 p.m. Thursday,
February 19

Borough Schools Board of Education:
7 p.m. Tuesday, February 24, Hilltop Elementary
School Cafeteria

Recycling: Thursdays, February **Curbside Bulk
Pickup:** Mondays, February

(Continued from page 7)

- ◆ Shovel first. Clearing snow before it turns to ice reduces the need for de-icing.
- ◆ Consider alternative de-icers. Calcium magnesium acetate and magnesium chloride are often better choices than traditional rock salt. A list of de-icers that meet the EPA's Safer Choice Standard is available at epa.gov.
- ◆ Reevaluate snow removal contracts. Businesses hiring snow-clearing services can opt to pay based on area cleared rather than the amount of salt used.

