

## Grant to aid Lake Hopatcong water quality

By ERIC OBERNAUER  
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A two-week contest has put Lake Hopatcong on the map along with New York's Lake George, culminating in a coveted grant award that will be used to enhance the enjoyment of the many thousands who will flock this summer to the shores of New Jersey's largest freshwater lake.

Sponsored by the Boat Owners Association of the United States, the online contest allowed visitors to cast votes in support of their favorite lake or lake region. Nearly 40,000 times over a two-week period in the latter part of March, supporters of Lake Hopatcong did just that by clicking on the BoatUS webpage.

The \$7,500 grant, which was announced Thursday by the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water, will enable the non-profit Lake Hopatcong

Foundation to print 10,000 water-resistant guide maps on durable, synthetic paper with information on water depth, lake access points, and — most notably — pump-out stations and high-risk invasive species. The maps will be distributed this summer at access points all around the lake's 45 miles of shoreline in Sussex and Morris counties.

"We're thrilled that all the passion that people put in to this paid off," said Jessica Murphy, president of the Lake Hopatcong Foundation. "This would have been a wonderful community-building exercise either way, but it's extra awesome because we actually did get the money at the end of the day, too."

It was Donna Macallesholly, the foundation's grants and projects coordinator, who initially put the word out and encouraged people to vote. Bob Kays, a foundation vol-

unteer, took up the cause himself shortly afterward by posting online reminders each day.

"Bob was a great champion of our effort and probably set the record for the most posts about it," Murphy said. "He would post a pretty picture of the lake every morning on the Lake Hopatcong Memories page on Facebook and remind people to vote."

Though the final results remain sealed, Lake Hopatcong and Lake George were the top two vote-getters among the eight lake organizations throughout the country that vied for a share of the grant money, which went to the top four finishers.

Lake Hopatcong and Lake George, in fact, were neck and neck and took the lead in turns throughout the contest, which allowed participants to vote once per person per day. Rounding out the top four finishers were the Chesapeake Conservancy in Maryland

and Kandiyohi County in Minnesota.

All four recipients will use the grant money they received for various educational programs and publications.

In Lake Hopatcong's case, the guide map will provide boaters with information on the proper way to prepare and clean their boats when entering, using and leaving the lake and direct them to specific spots where they can do so.

The guide map will also inform visitors of ways to spot invasive species, most notably the water chestnut — a highly aggressive plant that can completely overwhelm a lake's ecosystem, especially plant life in shallow areas of a body of water, as has already occurred in Lake Musconetcong.

The water chestnut can be identified by its many triangular leaves that form around a center stem.



Submitted photo

Lake Hopatcong was named one of four recipients in an online grant competition sponsored by the Boat Owners Association of the United States.

Throughout the year as new leaves on the plant grow, the old leaves slide down the stem, eventually forming multiple layers of plants in the water as well as on the surface.

The plant's fruit also has four horns on it, which fall to the bottom of the lake and

can be painful when stepped on.

To combat the plant's spread, the Lake Hopatcong Foundation has been encouraging people to report any sightings to the foundation office. The foundation also

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## Making preparations for the beginning of Passover



Photos by Tracy Klimek/New Jersey Herald

Rabbi Mendel Dubov, of Chabad of Sussex County, places lettuce on a plate between horseradish and a piece of roasted chicken as he prepared the Chabad's Passover Seder meal on Friday.

Passover began at sundown on Friday, when Jews worldwide commemorated the exodus from Egypt, where they had been slaves for decades.

Jews celebrated the start

of Passover with a traditional Seder meal, where the story of the Israelites is told as certain foods are served as symbols of their flight.

The food served includes Charoses, a mix of grated

apples, nuts, other fruits and spices, and sometimes red wine that looks and feels like the mortar the people worked with as slaves in Egypt, said Rabbi Josh Cantor of Temple Shalom in



Rabbi Mendel Dubov's sons Yosef, 4, right, and Aharon, 3, look at Passover Seder items they made in pre-school that were to be used during the Passover Seder that began at sundown on Friday.

Franklin. Eggs are served as the sign of rebirth, he said, while bitter herbs remind of the bitterness of slavery.

Rabbi Mendel Dubov, of Chabad of Sussex County, said central to the meal is

unleavened bread.

"The reason is that 3,327 years ago, when the Jews left Egypt, they left in such haste that there was no chance for their dough to rise," he said.

The name "Passover" is

derived from the sparing of the Israelites during the last of the 10 plagues to strike the Egyptians. Their homes were "passed over," according to Chabad.com.

Passover ends on April 11.

## Bilik looks to develop her own niche with Assembly bid

By ROB JENNINGS  
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Former Green Mayor Marie Bilik was in Sparta on Thursday, holding the first public event of her bold, uphill campaign for state Assembly.

Bilik is among a field of four candidates, including Assemblyman Parker Space, for two Republican primary nominations in the 24th District.

Just after 6 p.m., halfway through her free admission, wine-and-cheese event, Bilik addressed about three dozen who had gathered at the Sparta Ambulance building.

"I am very much an individual thinker but a team player," Bilik said.

Her campaign is unusual in that Bilik is attempting a political comeback, on a higher level, more than two decades after her last race.

Bilik walked away from politics in 1993 after seven years on the Green school board and five on the Township Committee — serving as mayor in her final year — upon getting a job with the New Jersey School Boards Association in Trenton.

"They require that you have no outward-facing political involvement," said Bilik, who eventually became the association's executive director.

Yet Bilik said she never surrendered her dream of someday running for the Legislature, even after abandoning her planned 2012 retire-

ment and becoming chief operating officer of the National School Boards Association in Alexandria, Va.

The day after Assemblywoman Alison Littell McHose's surprise Jan. 1 announcement that she would be stepping down, Bilik told Sussex County Republican Committee Chair Ailish Hambel she wanted to replace McHose.

The assumption was that McHose, hired as Franklin's business administrator, would resign from the Assembly in short order, with a Republican convention picking a replacement. Instead, McHose has remained in office, but is not seeking re-election.

In proceeding, Bilik did not seem fazed that McHose, Space and state Sen. Steve Oroho, R-24th Dist., had endorsed Freeholder Gail Phoebus as McHose's successor.

Space, seeking a second two-year term, and Phoebus are running as a team in the June 2 primary.

Bilik also appeared unconcerned that working in Virginia, though maintaining her residency in Green, offered an obvious point of attack.

She said she is retiring by year's end and will work from home in May, during the final stretch of the campaign.

Much of the Sussex Republican establishment is behind Space and Phoebus. A fourth candidate in the race is Nathan Orr of Branchville.

The top two voter-getters will face Michael Grace and Jacky



Stapel, running without opposition in the Democratic primary, in November

Bilik is looking to develop her own niche, one that she hopes will enable her to break through in what is likely to be another low-turnout election.

Her campaign chair is Sparta Councilwoman Molly Ann Whilesmith, who introduced Bilik on Thursday. Former Hardyston Mayor Wendy Molner, a longtime friend and former co-worker, is another key supporter.

Lillian Quinn, of Green, whose daughter is Bilik's campaign treasurer, was signing in arrivals at the front door.

"She's very caring," Quinn said of Bilik.

Freeholder Glen Vetrano, once among the county's leading Republicans and said to have harbored ambitions of going to Trenton, showed up Thursday.

So did Frankford Mayor Gary Larson, teaming up with incumbent Dennis Mudrick in the freeholder primary. Mudrick cast a decisive vote Feb. 25 in favor of the solar project settlement.

Both Larson and Bilik have said

they support the settlement, which Phoebus voted against and Space opposed.

The controversy is shaping up as a leading issue in both the freeholder and Assembly primaries, though Bilik — in an interview before her remarks — maintained it is not relevant to the Assembly seat.

Larson clarified afterward that he is neutral on Bilik and attended in order to learn more about her and introduce himself to voters.

Freeholder Richard Vohden, by contrast, jumped fully on board. Vohden — a fellow Green resident who served with Bilik on the Planning Board — went to the front of the room, after Bilik spoke, and took questions, and offered a de facto endorsement.

In discussing the need for a legislator to be an effective communicator, Vohden intriguingly volunteered two outside-the-district examples: Republican Assemblyman Jay Webber, organizer of the New Jersey Reagan Day event on Tuesday, and Democratic Assemblyman John Wisniewski of "Bridgegate" inquiry fame.

"He's articulate. He's knowledgeable," Vohden said of Wisniewski, while acknowledging their ideological differences.

"He can get up in front of a crowd and answer questions — which you just did," he said, referring to Bilik.

"That's what we need in Sussex County. Somebody who can get up there, speak on the issues, with a

strong voice that really represents us. We can do that," Vohden said.

"I'm proud, because you are what we need for Sussex County," Vohden concluded of Bilik.

Bilik offered some insights at her event.

She lauded public education, often a target of conservative criticism, as "the cornerstone of democracy," while lamenting "federal intrusion into the education process."

She defended Common Core, another popular conservative target, stating that her objection is not to goal-setting but an over-emphasis on testing.

"I call myself a conservative Republican," Bilik said.

It is virtually impossible, of course, for any Republican not seen as a conservative to win in the Republican-dominated district.

In addition to all of Sussex County, it includes Mount Olive in Morris County and 11 municipalities in Warren County.

Space and Phoebus, guided by a political dream team of consultants and other advisers, undoubtedly will seek to portray Bilik as something else.

Whether Bilik, over the next two months, will be able to offset the onslaught remains to be seen.

Bilik said she is committed to trying.

"This is all about giving the voters a chance. This is democracy," she said.

# Search on for 2 dogs after child is bitten in Vernon

**VERNON** — Vernon Township Animal Control is looking for two dogs that were walking on the Maple Grange Park walking trail on Thursday, April 2, and interacted with a child.

According to a message posted by police on Facebook, the dogs were with a man and a woman, who asked the child if he was bitten after his interaction with the dogs and confirmed that he was OK.

However, the child was bitten, but did not realize it until he got home, police said.

Tom Maellaro, the Vernon Township Animal Control Officer, said on Saturday that the owners of the dogs are not in trouble; officials just want to determine if the dog had rabies.

"Nothing is going to happen to the dogs," Maellaro said. "No one is in trouble."

"This was just an accident." The child was taken to a doctor immediately.

Unfortunately, the child will have to receive rabies shots if the owners and dogs are not identified, and if it cannot be confirmed that the dogs are up to date on their vaccines, Maellaro said.

The boy's mother was at the park on Saturday hanging signs, Maellaro said.

"We want to get this situation resolved quickly," he said.

Anyone with information on this incident or who knows the owners of the dogs is asked to contact Vernon Township Animal Control at 973-764-7751 during normal business hours or contact the Vernon Township Police Department at 973-764-6155.



Submitted photo

This is the Rick's C-Store in Lake Ozark, Mo., where Newton business owner Jeffrey Muller escaped after being kidnapped in 2010. The trial of Douglas Stangeland, the Missouri man accused of kidnapping Muller, will continue on Tuesday.

# Kidnapping trial resumes Tuesday

By JOE CARLSON  
jcarlson@njherald.com

**SUPERIOR COURT** — The trial of Douglas Stangeland — the Missouri man accused of kidnapping a Newton business owner in 2010 — will continue on Tuesday with six witnesses scheduled to testify on behalf of the state.

Sussex County First Assistant Prosecutor Gregory Mueller said at the end of testimony Thursday that he anticipated calling five witnesses from Missouri and one from New Jersey when the trial resumes.

On the list to testify are Patricia Lodge, the cashier at Rick's C-Store in Lake Ozark, Mo., where Jeffrey Muller

escaped; Fred Marsh, the parole officer who was in Rick's C-Store when Muller entered; and Officer Todd Warner, Officer Jeffrey Skinner and Sgt. Keith Vance, all of the Lake Ozark Police Department.

Lt. Rita Gallo, of the New Jersey State Police, may also be recalled to the stand to testify on what she discovered at the crime scene in Missouri, Mueller told the court.

The trial began on April 1 with opening statements, during which Muller, for the state, outlined what had happened leading up to Muller's kidnapping, and defense attorney Martin Morrison, on behalf of Stangeland, admitted

his client's role in the abduction, but said the defense would prove he was coerced by William Barger — a codefendant — who threatened his life and the lives of his son, ex-wife and father.

Stangeland, 51, of Nevada, Mo., is charged with several counts in connection to the mistaken-identity kidnapping of Muller, including conspiracy to commit murder, kidnapping and robbery.

If convicted, he faces up to life in prison with 30 years of parole ineligibility.

Joe Carlson also can be contacted on Twitter: @JoeCarlsonNJH or by phone: 973-383-1292.

# Grant

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has been hosting training seminars the past couple of years on what to look for and how to remove the plant for those who are interested.

Founded in 2012, the Lake Hopatcong Foundation's stated mission is "to improve and enhance the lake experience and environment."

The foundation last year purchased and established its new home in the former Lake Hopatcong Train Station in the Landing section of Roxbury.

"Although we knew people loved this lake, we were amazed by how much support we received throughout the four towns around the lake — Roxbury, Jefferson, Hopatcong, and Mount Arlington — as well as both

counties and throughout the state and beyond," Murphy said.

"It was absolutely inspiring and gives us so much hope as we move forward on projects to support this amazing natural and recreational resource."

Eric Obernauer can also be contacted on Twitter: @EricObernauer or by phone at 973-383-1213.

# Vernon man injured after crashing car while fleeing police

**VERNON** — A township man was injured after he crashed his car into two other vehicles while fleeing from officers Thursday night, police said.

Jose Ortiz, 25, was flown by medevac to St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center in Paterson and was in critical condition as of Friday morning.

At about 8:03 p.m., Vernon police were dispatched to a report of an erratic driver on Route 94 near the Dunkin' Donuts store.

Police located and stopped the vehicle in the business' parking lot, police said.

After speaking with driver — identified as Ortiz — an officer asked Ortiz to pull to the side of the parking lot.

While the officer was walking back to his patrol car to reposition it, Ortiz fled the scene, traveling south on Route 94 at a high rate of speed, passing vehicles on the double yellow line, police said.

After losing sight of the

vehicle — a black Honda — the officer continued with his emergency lights off and was eventually waved down by a motorist near Mott Drive, who informed him of a car accident on Route 94 near Rhapsody Hair Studio.

It was later determined that Ortiz's vehicle had crashed into two other vehicles, police said.

The road was closed for about four hours.

The identities and status of the occupants of the two vehicles were not released by police.

Charges against Ortiz are pending the outcome of the investigation by Vernon police, the Sussex County Prosecutor's Office and the Sussex County Crash Team, police said.

Also assisting at the scene were the Vernon Fire Department, McAfee Fire Department, Highland Lakes Fire Department and the Vernon Township Ambulance Squad.

# Franklin police seeking Passaic County woman

**FRANKLIN** — The Franklin Police Department is looking for a Passaic County woman wanted on charges of theft by deception and is asking for the public's help in finding her.

Doris Herrmann, 35, of Passaic, is wanted on a \$15,000 warrant, police said.

On March 18, a Franklin resident contacted police to report that he had been the victim of theft, having lost "several thousand dollars" to an acquaintance.

According to police, the man told officers that he was assisting an acquaintance — later suspected by police to be Herrmann — in "cashing" a check at the Chase Bank in Franklin, when after depositing an insurance check, withdrawing the funds and turning over the money to Herrmann, he learned that

the payment had been stopped by the payee, though Herrmann had already received the cash.

The victim also reported that he was possibly the victim of several smaller fraudulent transactions over the past year by the same person, police said. Herrmann is known to frequent several addresses in Passaic and Paterson, police said.

The ongoing investigation has revealed that Herrmann may also have been involved in other incidents in which she fraudulently obtained funds from victims throughout New Jersey, police said.

Police are asking that if Herrmann is seen, members of the public contact the nearest police agency and do not approach or make contact with her.

Anyone with any information regarding this incident or anyone who may have been the victim of a similar incident is asked to contact the Franklin Borough Police Department Detective Bureau at 973-827-7700, ext. 231 or 237.



HERRMANN

## VOTE BY MAIL NOTICE TO PERSONS WANTING MAIL-IN BALLOTS

If you are a qualified and registered voter of the State who wants to vote by mail in the Primary Election to be held on June 2, 2015, complete the application form and send to the undersigned, or write or apply in person to the undersigned at once requesting that a mail-in ballot be forwarded to you. The request must state your home address and the address to which the ballot should be sent. The request must be dated and signed with your signature.

If any person has assisted you to complete the mail-in ballot application, the name, address and signature of the assistor must be provided on the application, and you must sign and date the application for it to be valid and processed. No person shall serve as an authorized messenger for more than 10 qualified voters in an election. No person who is a candidate in the election for which the voter requests a mail-in ballot may provide any assistance in the completion of the ballot or may serve as an authorized messenger or bearer.

No mail-in ballot will be provided to any applicant who submits a request thereof by mail unless the request is received at least seven days before the election and contains the requested information. A voter may, however, request an application in person from the county clerk up to 3 p.m. of the day before the election.

Voters who want to vote only by mail in all future general elections in which they are eligible to vote, and who state that on their application shall, after their initial request and without further action on their part, be provided a mail-in ballot by the county clerk until the voter requests that the voter no longer be sent such a ballot. A voter's failure to vote in the fourth general election following the general election at which the voter last voted may result in the suspension of that voter's ability to receive a mail-in ballot for all future general elections unless a new application is completed and filed with the county clerk.

Voters also have the option of indicating on their mail-in ballot applications that they would prefer to receive mail-in ballots for each election that takes place during the remainder of this calendar year. Voters who exercise this option will be furnished with mail-in ballots for each election that takes place during the remainder of this calendar year, without further action on their part.

Application forms may be obtained by applying to the undersigned either in writing or by telephone, or the application form provided may be completed and forwarded to the undersigned.

Dated: April 5, 2015

Jeffrey M. Parrott, County Clerk  
Sussex County Clerk's Office  
83 Spring Street, Suite 304  
Newton, NJ 07860  
973-579-0900

APPLICATION FOR VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT

1 I hereby apply for a Mail-In Ballot for the: (Check only one)  
 General (November)  Primary  Municipal  School  Fire  Special (Specify) To be held on \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

2 Last Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ First Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Name or Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix (Jr., Sr., II) \_\_\_\_\_

3 Address at which you are registered to vote: Street Address or RD# \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_ Municipality (City/Town) \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

4 Mail my ballot to the following address:  Some Address as Section 3 Please include: any PO Box, ADR, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code & Country (if outside US)

5 Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ 6 Day Time Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ 7 E-Mail Address (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

8 Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Please sign your name as it appears in the Poll Book. 9 Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

10 Voter Options to Automatically Receive Ballots in Future Elections  
You may choose either option, both options, or none of the options. YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO CHOOSE AN OPTION. If you do not choose any option, you will only be sent the ballot for the election you chose in Section 1.  
A  I wish to receive a Mail-In Ballot for all elections to be held during the REMAINDER OF THIS CALENDAR YEAR.  
B  I wish to receive a Mail-In Ballot in ALL FUTURE NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTIONS, until I request otherwise.  
\*Please Note: Your ballot can only be sent to the mailing address supplied on this application. If your address changes, you must notify the County Clerk in writing.

11 Assistor  
Any person providing assistance to the voter in completing this application must complete this section.  
Name of Assistor (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Assistor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_ Municipality (City/Town) \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

12 Authorized Messenger  
Any voter may apply for a Mail-In Ballot by Authorized Messenger. Messenger shall be a family member or a registered voter of this County. No Authorized Messenger can (1) be a Candidate in the election for which the voter is requesting a Mail-In Ballot or (2) serve as messenger for more than TEN qualified voters per election.  
I designate \_\_\_\_\_ to be my Authorized Messenger.  
First Name of Authorized Messenger \_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Messenger \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_ Municipality (City/Town) \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Voter \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE USE ONLY  
Voter Reg # \_\_\_\_\_  
Muni Code # \_\_\_\_\_ Party \_\_\_\_\_  
Ward \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

"I do hereby certify that I will deliver the Mail-In Ballot directly to the voter and no other person, under penalty of law."  
Signature of Messenger \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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