

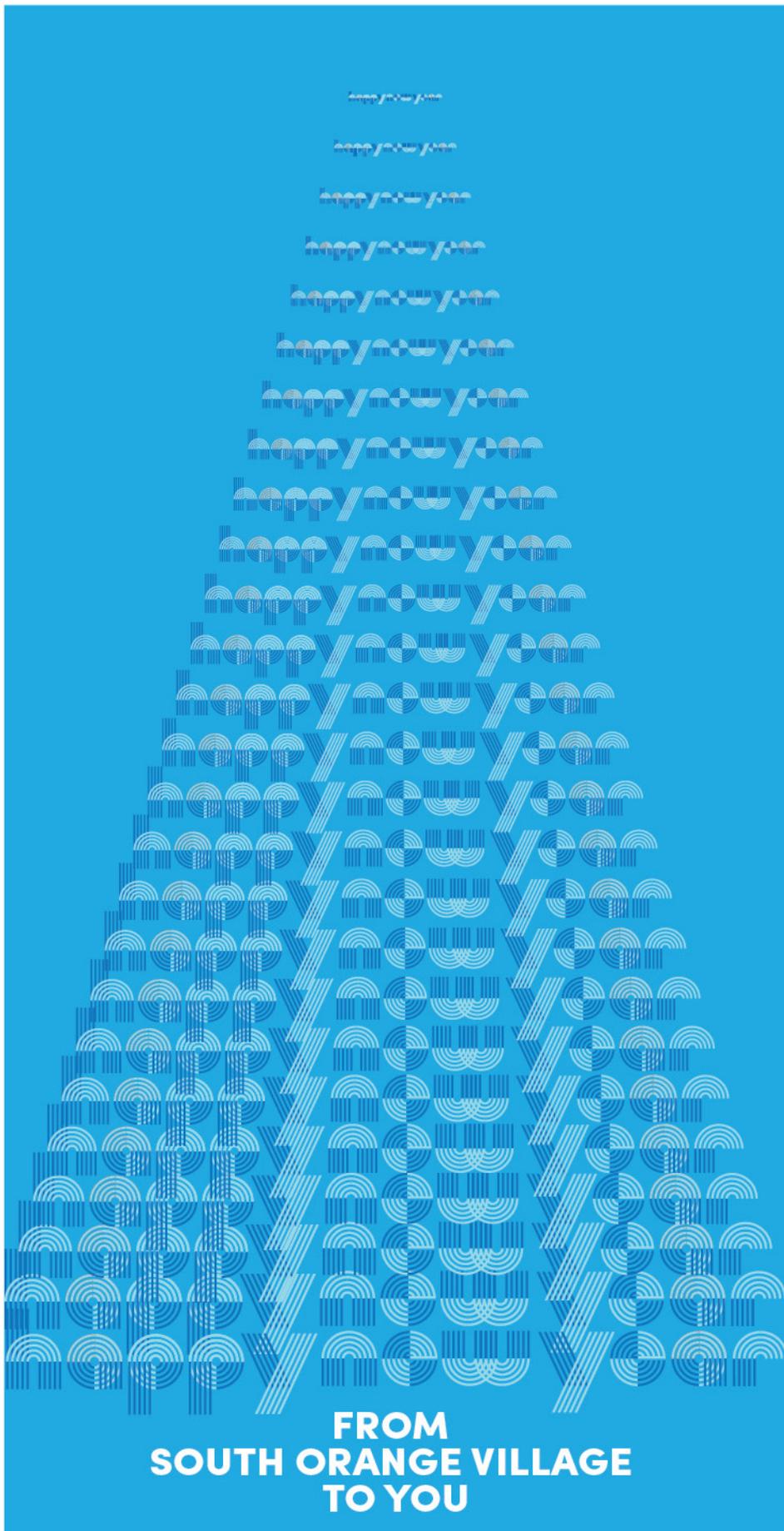
The Gaslight

ISSUE 07
2023

SOUTH ORANGE
VILLAGE
ACCESS IT ALL



WINTER
EDITION



LETTER FROM THE VILLAGE PRESIDENT



IN TOUCH WITH VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

VILLAGE PRESIDENT

Sheena Collum
973.378.7715 x 2

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Bobby Brown
Donna Coallier
Karen Hartshorn Hilton
Bill Haskins
Summer Jones
Steve Schnell
973.378.7715 x 2

ADMINISTRATOR

Acting Administrator
Julie Doran
973.378.7715 x 2

GENERAL INQUIRIES

973.378.7715

Clerk's Office, x 1

Building & Code, x 3

Tax Collector, x 4

Assessor, x 5

Finance, x 6

Engineering & Zoning, x 7

Parking Authority, x 2037

Health, x 7710

Water Service x 7760

Public Works

973.378.7741

Recreation & Cultural Affairs

973.378.7754

Fire Department

973.762.3200

Library

973.762.0230

Police, nonemergency

973.763.3000

Rescue Squad

973.762.5647

Animal Control

973.377.2296

Happy New Year, South Orange!

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays with family and friends and that you have a positive outlook on 2023. Whatever you wish for this year, whether through a resolution or something to check off a bucket list, my sincere hope is that you get to where you want to be. It's a time to say goodbye and a time to say hello!

Our community is off to a busy start, and below are some highlights:

- The South Orange Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, our roadmap for producing and rehabilitating affordable housing, has been completed two years ahead of schedule with several approvals and shovels in the ground.
- Accessory Dwelling Unit ("ADU") applications will be available to homeowners shortly, which advances several public policy goals related to housing supply, aging in place for senior citizens, and supporting caretakers.
- New recycling regulations are now in effect. Our new contracts help stop the taxpayer bleeding from a 250% increase in recycling costs to a strategy that minimizes contamination of materials, permits the Village to participate in the upside of the market, and helps save the planet.
- The water utility lead line identification program is underway, consistent with the New Jersey mandate that requires the replacement of all lead and galvanized lines within ten years. A Task Force continues to evaluate the most efficient and cost-effective structure to deliver high-quality water to our community in the short and long term.

Unfortunately, I also have some disappointing news... The Baird Community Center, scheduled to reopen at the end of the first quarter, will likely not be ready for an additional 90 days due to issues related to the supply chain and labor shortages with our contractors.

Next, after months of local government advocacy, there has yet to be any word from the Murphy administration or legislature on the 23-percent increase in the State Health Benefits Plan. This budget year will be a significant challenge at the municipal level. As always, I welcome you to join the conversation by attending meetings and reviewing information as budget discussions continue.

To end on a positive note, we always have many great things to celebrate. We received \$870,000 from the New Jersey Department of Transportation for roads. A new Mobile Sensory Activation Room will shortly debut at community events. The historic renovation and adaptive reuse of Village Hall is now complete and open to the public, and long-anticipated new storefronts are opening and expanding options to shop and dine locally.

Enjoy the winter months! Remember to stay warm, be careful on Floods Hill, shovel around fire hydrants, and keep devices powered up during inclement weather.

Always in partnership,

Sheena Collum
Sheena C. Collum
Village President



VILLAGE HIGHLIGHTS



NEWLY MERGED SOUTH ESSEX FIRE DEPARTMENT CELEBRATION

U.S. Rep. Donald Payne Jr., Assemblyman John. F. McKeon, Shared Services Czar Jordan Glatt, and Director of Local Government Services Jacquelyn Suarez joined the governing bodies of South Orange and Maplewood in celebration of the newly merged South Essex Fire Department. The event kicked off National Fire Prevention Week and featured the ceremonial swearing-in of nine new firefighter recruits.

"The fire department merger is the first of its kind in New Jersey, and with it came many obstacles," said Glatt. "On behalf of the governor, I congratulate both communities on getting this over the finish line. The result of this merger is twofold: enhanced public safety operations and significant cost avoidance for taxpayers. This is a model for the state and took a great deal of political courage."

The South Orange Rescue Squad was also recognized for its emergency medical services support during the transition period.



SOUTH ORANGE COMMONS GROUNDBREAKING

South Orange Commons is a 26-unit development that will provide 16 apartments for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and ten for low-income families. The project is the Village's first 100-percent affordable housing project and is the result of a partnership between JESPY House, Bergen County United Way/Madeline Housing Partners LLC, and Penwal Affordable Housing Corp. The project also received \$5.5 million in Low-Income Housing Tax Credits from the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.



COLLUM RECEIVES OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT AWARD

At the 107th annual conference of the New Jersey League of Municipalities, Village President Sheena Collum received the Outstanding Women in Municipal Government award, which recognizes the contributions of and dedicated service toward the advancement of women in government.

During her acceptance speech, Collum thanked the South Orange community for giving her the opportunity to serve as the first female Village president in the town's history and noted that, in 2019, the governing body had its first female majority; today, roughly half of all department heads are women.

"Women in leadership roles have a unique and special responsibility to other women to support, empower, lift, and bring others along for the ride," Collum urged.



FALLEN HEROES HONORED ON VETERANS DAY

Municipal officials, state and local first responders, Seton Hall's ROTC battalion members, local Boy Scouts, and community members gathered at the Memorial Rock in Meadowland Park for a Veterans Day ceremony. The ceremony included the unveiling of a plaque on the Memorial Rock honoring Maj. Dwayne M. Kelley and Lance Cpl. Edward "Augie" Schroeder II, both of whom lost their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom and both of whose families were in attendance.

Trustee Summer Jones noted, "This is a very special occasion, as we place a symbol of honor on our Memorial Rock and allow our community to stay connected to those that fought and lost their lives for our country."



VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT



TAYLOR VOSE RECEIVES 2022 NEW JERSEY FUTURE SMART GROWTH AWARD

New Jersey Future's Smart Growth Awards recognize the very best in planning, development, and redevelopment in the Garden State. Taylor Vose, a redevelopment project in the heart of downtown South Orange, was the recipient of this prestigious award and was honored during an awards ceremony in November.

The Taylor Vose project includes 110 units of housing, including affordable housing set-asides, 11,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor, and 10,000 square feet of commercial space on the second floor. Retail tenants currently include Indigo Road Studio, Three Daughters Baking Co., Kitchen a la Mode, Neighbors Wine Shop, and a 2,000-square-foot new community co-retail space that will feature local artists, makers, and entrepreneurs.

The municipal parking garage off Taylor Place is now open to the public.



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SNOW REMOVAL

Salting of roadways will begin prior to snow plowing. Snow removal will begin in the Village when Village streets have three or more inches of snow on them. Public Works vehicles will make four passes on each street – two down the center and one near each curb. Depending on the volume of snow, roadways may be plowed more than once.

SNOW REMOVAL GUIDELINES:

- Park vehicles in driveways during snowfall to allow plows easier access. If you park on a street you are expected to clear the area around your vehicle.
- Delay driveway shoveling until after streets are cleaned.
- Avoid shoveling or blowing snow into the street.
- Tell private contractors not to pile snow in roadways.
- Cars parked in driveways should not block the sidewalk or protrude into the roadway.
- Sidewalks should be shoveled within 12 daylight hours of a snowfall.
- Shovel walkways and driveways to allow access for emergency services in the event of a fire, illness, or public safety emergency.



VILLAGERS OF THE MONTH



NOVEMBER 2022 FRED SMITH

Fred Smith has been living in SOMa for 36 years, the last 12 of those years in South Orange. In 2015, he was looking for a way to serve his community. Characteristically, he didn't just dip his toes into those waters but dived head first, by starting a hyperlocal online neighborhood newspaper called TAPinto SOMA, part of a network of more than 90 franchised online local news platforms. TAPinto SOMA's news stories are targeted to our community and cover everything from town government meetings to social activities. Keeping journalism local, Smith has a team of reporters that includes college students and SOMa parents. Smith is also an active member of the Maplewood/South Orange Chamber of Commerce, focusing on helping business organizations be successful.

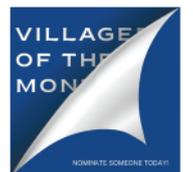
VILLAGE SPOTLIGHT



South Orange Elks

In 1909, the South Orange Elks Lodge was instituted as Subordinate Lodge 1154 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. The Elks, originally called the "Jolly Corks," first formed in New York City in 1868 as a social club for theatrical people. The initial New York chapter was issued a Grand Lodge charter by the New York Legislature in 1871. Wanting to do more than just socialize, the group extended its reach into the community with a focus on serving those in need. The South Orange Elks, one of 1,851 active Elks chapters, has more than 300 members. Among its major community contributions, it sponsors a Rent Party garden, which grows over 2,000 pounds of food that is donated to local food pantries; it supports local veterans by raising funds to assist with costs for travel to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games; and it works closely with our youth organizations. To learn more about the Elks, visit soelks.com.

Nominate a Villager of the Month today! Did you know that our Villager of the Month program honors residents within our community who are nominated by you? If you know anyone who should be considered for Villager of the Month, please submit a nomination through our online form at southorange.org/756/Villager-of-the-Month. The Community Relations Committee, which is the longest-running advisory committee to the Village, selects the awardees.





Natalie Knows...
— what moves you —



SELLER TIPS:

- 1 Don't over-upgrade
- 2 Take the HOME out of your house—hire a stager
- 3 Always be SHOW ready
- 4 Light it UP—when you have a showing
- 5 Half empty closets—shows more space for storage

BUYER TIPS:

- 1 Hire a Buyer Agent that knows the inventory, town, streets
- 2 Look past the sellers stuff
- 3 Get pre-approved to help you decide how much you want/afford to spend for a home
- 4 Be open to different styles of homes
- 5 Focus on no more than two towns

And, the tip list goes on...

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RECREATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS



SUMMER PLAYGROUND CAMP

Children are separated into groups according to their age as of September 30, 2023, and meet each weekday in the Meadowland Park area in South Orange. The program provides the children with a variety of activities, including games, sports, music, art, and special events. While each day is planned, there is time built in for children to just play and enjoy the lazy days of summer, creating their own fun under the supervision of camp counselors.

- Registration starts Wednesday, February 1.
- Registration ends Thursday, March 3, or when the program is fully enrolled. Early enrollment is recommended, as groups fill quickly.
- Camp hours: 9am–1pm, Monday through Friday.
- Program is seven weeks long.
- For ages 4 through 13, as of September 30, 2023.

BASEBALL

Baseball registration takes place online from January 1 through January 31. Registration is open to all South Orange and Maplewood residents ages 5–14. If you are interested and able to be a volunteer coach, please let us know when registering your child. Volunteer coaching is essential to the program's success.

ACTIVE OLDER ADULT PROGRAMMING

Visit our website for information and registration for our older adult programming, including arts & crafts, beginner yoga, chair yoga, tai chi and Zumba.



For additional information, please visit thebaird.org or call **973-378-7754 x2**. Visit our catalog for registration details: secure.rec1.com/NJ/south-orange-village-township-nj/catalog.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES INITIATIVES



ANNOUNCING 2023 CURBSIDE RECYCLING CHANGES

South Orange and Maplewood have implemented significant changes to their curbside recycling programs with a joint program that introduces dual-stream recycling. For almost two years, elected officials, including Trustees Bill Haskins and Karen Hartshorn Hilton; municipal staff; and Green Team and environmental advisory volunteers from Maplewood and South Orange have been collaborating to improve the overall cost-effectiveness and sustainability of both towns' curbside recycling programs.

Haskins explained the advantage of moving to a dual-stream system. "When a soda bottle is thrown into the same container with paper and liquid spills out, the paper becomes useless as a recyclable product, so it goes to trash. By separating our commingled plastic and glass from paper and cardboard weekly, we will decrease the contamination of both streams and ensure that more of what is recyclable gets recycled. By sorting it out, we are more cost-effective and recycle more efficiently."

See the pullout section of this newsletter for details, and help spread the word by telling your neighbors and local friends!



ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

After many months of field trips and other research, the Planning & Economic Development Committee, under the leadership of Trustee Steve Schnall (and, previously, former Trustee Bob

Zuckerman) presented an accessory dwelling unit ordinance for introduction to the Board of Trustees. The ordinance was developed in close coordination with the planning firm Topology.

An ADU is a self-contained portion of a principal one- or two-family dwelling, or an accessory structure, used as a secondary housing unit independent of the primary dwelling unit. An ADU can be used only as a residence for occupancy by one family/housekeeping unit for 90 days or longer, on the same lot as a one- or two-family dwelling where the owner lives on-site; it must be smaller in size and height than the principal dwelling unit on the lot. Details can be found at southorange.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2273

TOWNS AND UNIONS RALLY TO FIGHT STATE HEALTH BENEFITS FEE INCREASES

Facing unprecedented, unexpected, and irresponsible increases in health care premiums approved by the State Health Benefits Commission in September, elected officials in South Orange and Maplewood joined with local unions, employees, and school officials to ask the governor and Legislature to provide immediate relief.

The health care impact on the municipal tax levy will be roughly 1.5 percent. Coupled with premium increases for the county and school district employees enrolled in the School Employees' Health Benefits Program, this will result in South Orange taxpayers paying, on average, more than \$200 more a year in health care costs alone.

Residents are urged to contact Gov. Phil Murphy, state Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin, and state Senate President Nicholas Scutari to voice their concerns.



GET INVOLVED WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are many opportunities to stay up to date with your local government. On the second and fourth Mondays of every month (excepting holidays), the Village president and trustees hold open Board of Trustees meetings. The agenda and schedule for these meetings are published in local newspapers and on our website. It is at these meetings that Village business, in the form of ordinances and resolutions, is proposed and discussed. Sign up for our weekly e-newsletter, the South Orange Weekly Digest, at southorange.org/list.aspx to watch for specific ordinance presentations that affect the community.

Additionally, your local government has six standing Trustee committees that are organized annually. All meetings are open to the public and are held monthly. There are three Village trustees per committee, with one holding the position of chair; also on the committees are municipal department heads and resident volunteers. Most, if not all, ordinances

and associated revisions are generated by these committees. The committees and meeting times are as follows.

- Citizen Engagement & Strategic Partnership: second Wednesday of every month at 8am.
- Finance & Capital Projects: second Thursday at 9am.
- Health & Public Safety: second Thursday at 6pm.
- Planning & Economic Development: third Thursday at 6pm.
- Public Works & Utilities: third Thursday at 8am.
- Recreation, Arts, & Cultural Affairs: first Thursday at 8:30am.

Meeting dates and times are subject to change, so please check the town calendar at southorange.org/calendar for the most up-to-date information.

The Village president and trustees also participate as members or liaisons of other committees in town. A list of those committees can be found at southorange.org/149/advisory-committees.



South Orange Trustees, from left: Summer Jones, Steve Schnall, Bobby Brown, Karen Hartshorn Hilton, Bill Haskins, and Donna Coallier.

Village President Sheena Collum.

VILLAGE HAPPENINGS

UPCOMING EVENTS & CELEBRATIONS



Black History Month

Each year, Black History Month is celebrated in South Orange in February with a series of activities throughout our community, including panel discussions and art installations, with a focus on the national theme. This year's theme is "Black Resistance." We also publish a list of relevant children's books. For more information on this year's programming, visit [southorange.org/943/Black-History-Month-2023](https://www.southorange.org/943/Black-History-Month-2023).

Women's History Month

This March, elected officials in Maplewood and South Orange, in partnership with township departments, divisions, and organizations, join with local business districts to celebrate the achievements of women. We honor the lives and achievements of women by featuring a series of events geared toward education, empowerment, support, and solidarity, as we amplify women's voices to honor the past, inform the present, and inspire the future. For a list of events, visit our SOMA Celebrates Women webpage, [somawomen.org](https://www.somawomen.org), which updates every March.



HOLA FEST

On October 15 Seton Village hosted a successful HOLA Fest Food Truck Festival and Beer Garden on Irvington Avenue. Businesses, residents and Village Trustees came out to enjoy the day.

SOPAC

The South Orange Performing Arts Center has announced its winter season. Highlights include:

LUCKY CHOPS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28,
AT 8PM.



CABARET IN THE LOFT

WITH
MARK EVANS:
SUNDAY, JANUARY 29,
AT 7PM.

"CROCE PLAYS CROCE":

FRIDAY, MARCH 3,
AT 8PM.



For a complete list of scheduled events, visit [sopacnow.org](https://www.sopacnow.org).



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once we move

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Events

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2023 SODT EVENT CALENDAR

Events and dates subject to change. Visit southorangedowntown.org for most recent schedule

JAN	MONTHLY BOARD MEETING Jan 18	JUL	DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY FARMERS MARKET Wednesdays July 5, 12, 19, 26 DOWNTOWN AFTER SUNDOWN Saturdays July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 MONTHLY BOARD MEETING Jul 19
FEB	DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY Black History Month MONTHLY BOARD MEETING Feb 15	AUG	FARMERS MARKET Wednesdays Aug 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 DOWNTOWN AFTER SUNDOWN Saturdays Aug 5, 12, 19, 26 SETON HALL WELCOME BACK
MAR	MONTHLY BOARD MEETING Mar 15 DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY Celebrating women in business	SEP	DOWNTOWN AFTER SUNDOWN Sat Sept 2 FARMERS MARKET Wednesdays Sept 6, 13, 20, 27 MONTHLY BOARD MEETING Sept 20 DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY Fall Festival & Hispanic Heritage Month
APR	MONTHLY BOARD MEETING Apr 19 DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY	OCT	FARMERS MARKET Wednesdays Oct 4, 11, 18, 25 ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING Oct 18 HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL Sun Oct 29
MAY	MONTHLY BOARD MEETING May 17 DOWNTOWN AFTER SUNDOWN Sat May 27 DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY Celebrates AAPI Month	NOV	MONTHLY BOARD MEETING Nov 15 DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY SMALL BUSINESS SAT STREET FAIR Sat Nov 25
JUN	UNDER COVER MUSIC FEST Sat June 3 (rain date June 4) FARMERS MARKET Wednesdays June 7, 14, 21, 28 DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY MONTHLY BOARD MEETING June 21 DOWNTOWN AFTER SUNDOWN Saturdays Jun 10, 17, 24 SODT CELEBRATES PRIDE	DEC	HOMETOWN HOLIDAY & TREE LIGHTING Sat Dec 9 DOWNTOWN ON DISPLAY HOLIDAY MARKET Thursdays Dec 7, 14, 21 MONTHLY BOARD MEETING Dec 20

VILLAGE NEWS

AFFORDABLE NEW JERSEY COMMUNITIES FOR HOMEOWNERS & RENTERS

The deadline to apply for the historic ANCHOR property tax relief program has been extended to January 31, 2023, giving taxpayers and renters an extra month to apply.



ANCHOR eligibility is as follows:

- Homeowners with an income of \$150,000 or less will receive \$1,500.
- Homeowners with an income of more than \$150,000 and up to \$250,000 will receive \$1,000.
- Renters with an income of \$150,000 or less will receive \$450.

To learn more and file, visit state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/anchor.



VILLAGE HALL IS NOW OPEN

The historic renovation of the iconic 1894 Village Hall, which formerly housed municipal offices, is now complete. The space is open to the public as a restaurant, beer garden, and event space. The architectural design celebrates and highlights aspects of the original building, while incorporating a hospitable warmth and introducing contemporary comfort, expertly mixing old and new.

At the grand opening in November, municipal officials thanked Frank and Jeanne Cretella of Landmark Hospitality Group and their team for the beautiful adaptive reuse of a community treasure.

Visit the Village Hall website at villagehallnj.com.

SOMA TWO TOWNS FOR ALL AGES

Kristen Tyler has been hired as the coordinator for SOMA Two Towns for All Ages, a program working to make South Orange and Maplewood age-friendly communities. The organization seeks to identify, develop, and coordinate resources, policies, programs, and services that support and empower residents to age in place as full members of the community. SOMA Two Towns for All Ages works to create a sense of belonging for senior residents in the towns and to provide them with valued resources. Check out the website at somatwotownsforallages.org. Contact Tyler at kyler@southorange.org.

Working closely with SOMA Two Towns is SOMA social work case manager Michelle Fiederer. Fiederer works with older adults to identify current needs and discuss community resources available for support and assistance. Contact her at 973-986-4321 or sosocialworker@southorange.org. Her office hours are Monday and Wednesday, 9am-5pm, and Friday, 9am-4pm.



WATER UTILITY UPDATES NEW WATER METERS



In January, the South Orange Water Utility will begin replacing all water meters installed before 2018. Watch for notifications, which will include an information package and an online reservation system.

WINTER ADVISORY

Take care of your pipes with proper outdoor faucet maintenance. Be sure to close the shut-off valves for all outdoor faucets, disconnect your hoses, and drain the faucets.



TAX DEPARTMENT NEWS

2023 tax due dates:
February 1,
May 1,
August 1,
and November 1.



Taxes can be verified and paid at southorange.org/302, where tax account information is available 24/7 online. There is a 10-day grace period granted every quarter. After the 10 days, taxes are considered delinquent and are billed with interest from the original due date. To receive text or email reminders prior to due dates, sign up for "low alerts" on the Village's website: southorange.org/610/south-orange-alerts.

The Village's tax payment website will be upgraded in January to provide residents with extended tax history information and bill print capability.

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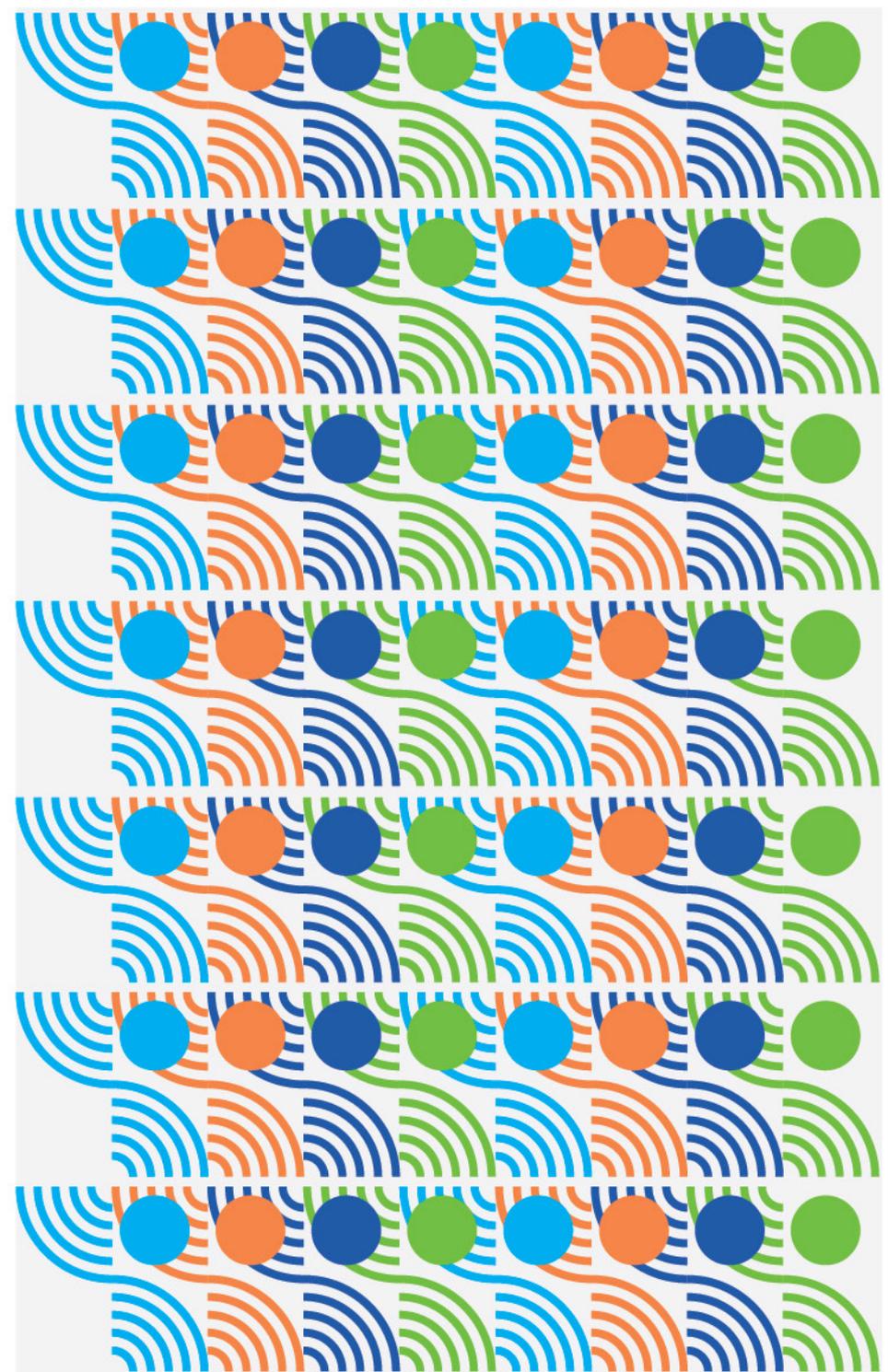
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Are you receiving emergency alerts and nonemergency notifications? Communication is key, whether it be during a global pandemic, for a severe weather event, or for a street closure. When you create an account, you decide how you would like to be contacted.



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