



Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County, NJ



August 2022

History of Raritan Available on Municipal Website

A concise summary of the history of Raritan Borough is now available on the municipal website at www.raritanboro.org.

Beginning with the Naraticongs, the first settlers in the Raritan Valley, the site features information on the Middaugh Tavern built in 1734, highlights from the American Revolution, visits by Alexander Hamilton and President Warren G. Harding, the development of commerce, the signing of the Treaty of Raritan ending World War I, the story of John Basilone, and more.

County Tourism Launches 'Sip and See Somerset'

To help rebuild the Somerset County Tourism industry that was negatively impacted by COVID-19, Somerset County Tourism has launched 'Sip and See Somerset,' an invitation to visit county craft beverage destinations while learning about interesting destinations in proximity to each.

By picking up "passports" at each of the five locations, participants will be rewarded for visiting all five by Labor Day with a 'Sip and See Somerset' t-shirt. Details are available at www.visitsomersetnj.org/sip-and-see-somerset.



Somerville Dedicates Community Garden

Borough officials, members of the Environmental Commission and Recreation Department dedicated the Jay Scott Memorial Garden adjacent to Firehouse Field at 170 E. Main St. Scott was a Master Gardener and former chairman of the Recreation Commission.

The 1,400-square-foot community garden will make fresh produce accessible to residents who lack adequate space or appropriate conditions at home. The Borough was awarded a \$2,000 Sustainable Jersey grant funded by the PSEG Foundation and the Somerville Recreation Committee has committed \$3,000.

Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo, a member of the Environmental Commission, is overseeing the project. The garden beds will be available for public use in Spring 2023.

Raritan Planning Downtown Revitalization

The Raritan Economic Development Committee (REDC) is proposing a multi-faceted plan to revitalize the Borough's business district. Using the concepts from the Sustainable Economic Development Plan, REDC is discussing improvements to draw visitors including a farmer's market, movie nights, festivals, construction of an outdoor event space, more free parking, streetscape uniformity, and converting Nevius Street to a pedestrian mall.

Visit the Regional Center website
www.rcpsomersetnj.org

Movie & TV Production Coming to Somerset County

Representatives of the New Jersey Motion Picture & Television Commission and the Somerset County Film Commission were recently hosted by the Somerset Patriots at TD Bank Ballpark in Bridgewater.

The event was convened to encourage filming in Somerset County, showcasing the ballpark and other county amenities appropriate for filming.

DDD Visits Somerville Restaurants

Well-known Food Network host Guy Fieri and his Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives crew recently visited Somerville's Turf Surf and Earth. With the iconic red Camaro convertible parked in front, the group proceeded to record a feature for an upcoming show that aired on the Food Network for the first time on July 8, 2022 at 9:00 P.M. with numerous re-runs expected.

Central Jersey Jazz Fest

The Central Jersey Jazz Fest will begin Friday evening, September 9 in Flemington, continue Saturday afternoon in New Brunswick, Saturday evening in Metuchen, and conclude Sunday afternoon, September 11 in Somerville.

The Somerville event will be held on East Main Street between North Bridge and Grove Streets and will begin at 2:00 P.M. The free live concert will be held rain or shine and attendance is free of charge. Performers will soon be announced. Food and craft vendors will line the street as will local artists.

Ice Cream and Bakery Shop Opens in Somerville

Even More Epic ice cream shop and bakery has opened at 84 West Main Street in Somerville. An extension of the successful Epic Cookies located two storefronts away, the new location allows for a bigger bakery and preparation of custom orders while providing quality ice cream.

Bridgewater Community Day

The 2022 Bridgewater Community Day, presented by the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center in partnership with Bridgewater Township and Bridgewater Commons, is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 18 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The event will be held outdoors at the Bridgewater Commons and is free.

The event will feature inflatables, game truck (wristband required), music, crafts and a variety of trucks and vehicles for children to explore. Food will be available for purchase from food trucks.

Information is posted at bridgewatercommunityday.com.

Somerville Coffee Shops Changes Name

The coffee shop at 37 W Main St. in Somerville, formerly known as Cheech's and Lucid is now known as Ambee Coffee, the last and final name change. Due to trademark issues, ownership has been forced into the name changes while products have remained the same.

Additionally ownership is moving forward with a second location opening in Raritan at Route 202 and 2nd Street.

The new location, in partnership with Epic Cookies will offer everything the Somerville location has plus a kitchen and a chef. Opening is scheduled for the fall of 2022.

Raritan Approves Medical Marijuana Dispensary

The Raritan Planning Board has approved a 2,476 sq. ft. medical marijuana dispensary at 405 Route 202 in the borough. The facility will be shared with Uneeda Appliance, a longtime independent appliance store.

Gourmet Cafe Opens In Bridgewater

The Bridgewater Café, a new breakfast and lunch destination, has opened at 559 Union Avenue (Route 28) next to Mystic Lobster. The cafe offers healthy menu items including homemade artisan bread, paninis, and gourmet hot dishes. Also available is a coffee bar featuring Gramercy Park Coffee, assorted muffins, danish, empanadas, and ice cream.

Bridgewater Food Truck on Diners, Drive-Ins & Dives

Big Pink BBQ, a food truck located on Union Avenue in Bridgewater, just east of Finderne Avenue, was recently featured on the Food Network show, Diners, Drive-Ins & Dives. Host Guy Fieri not only gave rave reviews to the food but made numerous suggestions that enhanced to quality and service of the truck.

Somerset Street to be Named for John Basilone

A portion of Somerset Street in Raritan Borough, from Thompson Street to First Avenue, will be renamed Basilone Boulevard, a distinction given to John Basilone, the home town hero.

Basilone is a World War II hero who was the only enlisted Marine to receive both the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross.

The name change is an honorary one and the businesses and residents will not be required to change documents.

Somerville Street Fair to Return

Following two years of postponements of the Somerville Street Fair due to COVID-19, the event will return to Main Street on Sunday, October 2, 2022. Expected to participate are craft vendors, live entertainment and the best in street food.

Apartments Coming to Raritan

Edgewood Raritan has been approved to convert the former Raritan Intermediate School on Second Street into 14 one-bedroom apartments that will include affordable units.

Community Calendar

REGIONAL CENTER MEETING DATES

The Regional Center Partnership meetings are held virtually utilizing the Zoom application. To participate in the meetings beginning at 5:00 P.M.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96752382431?pwd=TTJOanp2U0IyaTFON2cvWFRrOHFmZz09>

Meeting ID: 967 5238 2431

Passcode: 825121

Wednesday, July 20 at 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday, September 21 at 5:00 P.M.

Thursday, November 10 at 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 5:00 P.M.

LINKS TO REGIONAL CENTER COMMUNITY EVENTS & PROGRAMS

Bridgewater:

<https://www.bridgewaternj.gov>

Raritan:

<https://www.raritanboro.org>

Somerville:

<http://www.somervillenj.org>

<http://www.downtownsomerville.com/>

Somerset County

<https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/about/calendar>

Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County, NJ

Bridgewater Township, Raritan Borough, Somerville Borough

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