

MIDDLE COUNTRY LIBRARY EVENTS

Spring Jubilee

Families are invited to dig, plant, water and grow on Tuesday, May 1, 4-7 pm to celebrate the season opening of the Middle Country Public Library's Nature Exploration, an outdoor play area that provides children an opportunity to learn in a fun environment, at the Spring Jubilee.

Come join the festival of live music from the Bari Koral Family Rock Band, nature-based activities and crafts, water experiments and learn the importance of ladybugs in the interactive Nature Exploration at the Centereach branch.

Seniors fair

The library will hold its 4th annual Boomers and Seniors Products and Services Fair on Thursday, May 10, 3-6 pm at the Centereach location. The free seminar series will provide an opportunity to speak with representatives from a broad variety of service and product providers including personal finance, Medicare, senior living and prime-time travel.

To register (required) or for questions, contact Lori Abbatepaolo, project coordinator, at 585-9393, ext. 295. This program is part of the Allstate Readiness Series.



Children enjoy the festivities at last year's Spring Jubilee at the library's Centereach branch. Photo from Syntax

CARMANS RIVER

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between the board and town residents. The board will hold meetings May 30 and June 2 at Brookhaven Town Hall. Fiore-Rosenfeld said council members can hold additional meetings in their districts.

On Tuesday, Fiore-Rosenfeld summarized the resolution as a "public process to get input first and then write things later," which he said was an issue in the first plan.

The previous plan lacked sufficient public input, he claims. "They had these meetings but they had them called 'the Carman's River protection plan' and only had them at Town Hall," Fiore-Rosenfeld said Monday. "How many people from Three Village are going to show up to a meeting for a river they've never heard of?"

The councilman said a portion of the public comments will be used to gain input

Affiliated Brookhaven Civic Organization President MaryAnn Johnston supported the plan and the desire to hear from the public. She said the public meetings are "the beginning of a process that we should have been part of 22 months ago."

Pine Barrens

A portion of Fiore-Rosenfeld's plan that will be discussed at the forums involves code amendments that would require a minimum amount of Pine Barrens credits for any zone change in the town where a developer is allowed to build more densely and thus, make more profit. The town would require those developers to purchase a certain number of credits, in essence paying for Pine Barrens land other people had already purchased but were prevented from developing when the area was preserved.

Affordable housing

SCHOOL BUDGET

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required an 8.5 percent tax increase.

"The board has been working to tighten up the budget," Gerold said, adding the budget reflects \$3.4 million in cuts.

Board President Karen Lessler said she is satisfied with the budget, a product of many hours of going through the numbers with a fine-tooth comb.

"My board members worked a lot of hours trying to find where money was to cut," she said in a phone interview. "The community was also clear with what they did not want cut."

While cutting teaching positions isn't ideal — "I never want to see people excised, that always upsets me," Lessler said — "it's the best we can do with the cards we were dealt."

Some staff cuts the district made in

teaching positions, 4.5 librarian positions, one administrator and one clerical worker. The district also made cuts to spending for instructional technology, technology support, equipment purchases, textbook purchases and security costs. The district will no longer pay for summer school, and froze paying for administrators' professional development for one year.

The district will cut back on paper and mail fees by sending students home with progress reports and report cards and posting them on the website instead of mailing them home. The district will also make the school calendar only accessible online.

"We're hoping that the community is willing to support it," Gerold said of the budget.

The district will hold a budget hearing on May 2 at 6 pm. The election is on May 15, from 6 am to 9 pm at Centereach and