



# *Demarest Digest*

## *The Mayor's Message*

Dear Residents,

I hope this message finds everyone safe and well. The spike in COVID cases has subsided and with spring just around the corner, let's hope we can all spend time outdoors in our beautiful borough. For those residents who have not seen my update on the County Road bridge that was posted on the website, here's a recap of that update. Materials have been ordered for the new culvert, and as soon as the materials are received the culvert will be built and the engineer and contractor can embark on the next phase of replacement: delivery and installation. I am in regular contact with the engineers from Bergen County in charge of replacing the bridge and will update our residents as progress towards replacement continues. Thank you for your ongoing patience and cooperation as we continue to use detours around this bridge.

On Saturday March 12<sup>th</sup> at 3 PM there will be a ceremony at our Gazebo at the Pond, the Demarest Peace Site, renaming the Gazebo in memory of long time Demarest resident Nancy Woods. Please join us as we remember and honor Mrs. Woods. Former Mayor Dick Schooler will be there to recount the history of this now iconic symbol in our borough.

Finally, I want to welcome Steve Tillack as the new president of the Demarest Nature Center. Our Nature Center is another gem in our borough. I also want to thank outgoing president Peter Coy for his years of service to the Nature Center. As spring returns let's all get out and enjoy the trails and the activities the Nature Center provides.

Stay safe and well everyone,

Mayor Melinda Iannuzzi

**PLEASE NOTE: Offices will be closed April 2 for Good Friday and May 31 for Memorial Day.**  
Visit the [Demarestnj.org](http://Demarestnj.org) home page to sign up for notices with Constant Contact.

## Summer Rec Camp will run June 27 to August 5.

## *Calendar of Events*

Please visit [Demarestnj.org](http://Demarestnj.org) or call 201-768-0167, ext. 110, for the latest information.

March 2	Planning Board meeting 7:30 pm
March 3	Shade Tree Commission meeting 7:30 pm
March 9	Virtual Court 4:00 pm
March 10	Nature Center meeting 7:30 pm
March 15	Zoning Board meeting 8:00 pm
March 21	Library Board meeting 7:00 pm
March 23	Recreation Commission meeting 8:00 pm
March 22	Environmental Commission meeting 7:30 pm
March 26	Guided Walk/Volunteer 11:00 am (see Nature Center article)
March 28	Mayor and Council meeting 7:30 pm
April 6	Planning Board meeting 7: 30 pm
April 20	Virtual Court 4:00 pm
April 14	Nature Center meeting 7:30 pm
April 19	Zoning Board meeting 7:30 pm
April 23	Birdhouse and Birdfeeder Building 10:00 am (See Nature Center Article)
April 25	Library Board meeting 7:00 pm
April 25	Mayor and Council meeting 7:30 pm
April 26	Environmental Commission meeting 7:30 pm
April 27	Recreation Commission meeting 8:00 pm
May 4	Planning Board meeting 7:30 pm
May 5	Shade Tree Commission meeting 7:30 pm
May 11	Virtual Court 4:00 pm
May 12	Nature Center meeting 7:30 pm
May 14	Canoe Day at Duck Pond
May 16	Library Board meeting 7:00 pm
May 17	Zoning Board meeting 7:30 pm
May 18	Board of Health meeting 7:00 pm
May 18	Recreation Commission meeting 8:00 pm
May 23	Mayor and Council meeting 7:30 pm
May 24	Environmental Commission meeting 7:30 pm
Jun 1	Planning Board meeting 7:30 pm

## *A Message from the Borough Clerk about the upcoming bag ban*

N.J.'s strictest in the nation ban on single-use bags takes effect soon. What you need to know. <https://www.nj.com/business/2022/03/what-you-need-to-know-before-njs-bag-ban-strictest-in-the-nation-takes-effect.html> Download website in blue above

**The New Jersey bag ban is almost here.** In just several weeks, New Jersey will ban single-use plastic bags in most instances, and paper bags at large grocery stores. The bill to ban bags and other single-use plastic items was signed into law in November 2020, but allowed for an 18-month lead time for stores and consumers to prepare. The ban will likely be the strictest in the nation when it goes into effect May 4, banning all single-use bags at grocery stores and limiting the types of bags non-grocery stores can use. But residents will likely have some questions about what the ban covers and how it will impact them. Here are some things you should know before the restrictions start.

**When does the bag ban go into effect?** New Jersey will ban the distribution of single-use plastic bags and certain types of takeout food containers starting on May 4, 2022.

**What's the deal with paper bags?** Non-grocery and retail stores can still provide paper bags. So a clothing retailer or a small bodega would be just fine to hand over your purchase in a paper bag. But large grocery stores — anything over 2,500 square feet — cannot give out paper bags. For reference, a trade publication says most grocery stores are between 12,000 and 40,000 square feet. So that means the well-known brown paper bags at Trader Joe's will no longer be allowed. The New Jersey Food Council, a lobbying group for grocery stores, specifically supported the inclusion of paper bag restrictions.

**So what do I do when I go to the grocery store?** Bring your own bags (reusable or single-use is just fine), be prepared to buy a reusable one at the register, or carry out your purchase without a bag. Stores cannot require customers to purchase a reusable bag.

**What qualifies as a reusable bag?** To be considered a reusable bag, the bag must have handles, be made of some kind of washable fabric, and withstand 125 uses and multiple washes. Anything made of plastic, regardless of thickness, is not considered reusable. Bags with glued-on handles also don't qualify as reusable.

**Do other states also ban paper bags?** No, New Jersey's bag ban is unique in its restriction on paper bags. New York's plastic bag ban went into effect in October, but still allows for paper bags (stores can charge for them, though).

**How is this going to affect my shop from home grocery order?** It's a little unclear how major retailers are planning to handle shop from home orders once the ban goes into effect. A state Department of Environmental Protection spokesperson confirmed that these types of orders are not exempt from the

rules. Spokespeople for ShopRite and Stop & Shop said their stores are still coming up with a plan, but that they will be in compliance with the law.

**What are the exceptions to the plastic bag ban?** There are a number of exceptions. According to the DEP, those exceptions are:

~A bag used solely to contain or wrap uncooked meat, fish, or poultry.

~A bag used solely to package loose items such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, coffee, grains, baked goods, candy, greeting cards, flowers, bulk food, or small hardware items.

~A bag used solely to contain live animals, such as fish or insects sold in a pet store.

~A bag used solely to contain food sliced or prepared to order, including soup or hot food.

~A laundry, dry cleaning, or garment bag.

~A bag provided by a pharmacy to carry prescription drugs.

~A bag for newspapers.

~Any similar bag, as determined by the DEP pursuant to rule, regulation, or guidance.

**What is polystyrene, and how does that part of the ban impact me?** Polystyrene is a plastic used to make food containers. It comes in two forms: hard plastic like you might get a condiment in at the deli and foam, which you would likely associate with the term styrofoam. Also starting on May 4, containers made using the foam polystyrene will be banned. The hard version will not be included by the ban, a DEP official said. Through May 2024, long soda spoons used for thick milk-shake type drinks, 2-ounce portion cups when used for hot foods or “foods requiring lids,” trays for raw meat or fish, and pre-packaged food that comes in that type of packaging will still be allowed.

**Are straws also banned?** No, there is no statewide ban on single-use plastic straws, but restaurants can only give one out if the customer specifically asks for it. This started in November. Food service businesses are required to keep a supply of plastic straws on hand, something disability advocates have pushed for when similar straw bans have gone into effect elsewhere.

~With thanks to the North NJ Chamber of Commerce

## *Municipal Court*

Virtual court will be held on the assigned dates. The Violations window is open Tuesday through Thursday 9:00 to 1:00; Monday and Thursday 2:00 to 5:00.

## *From Our Officer in Charge*

Please remember to lock your vehicles all the time. Also, if you are going to warm up your vehicles (regardless of the time of day or night) please make sure the vehicles are locked. Several towns have had vehicles stolen from driveways while they were warming up. Suspects are stealing cars now during the daytime hours.

## *From the Demarest Ambulance Corps*

**We are looking for new members. Join us!**

## *From the Demarest Board of Health*

On February 17th, Mayor Melinda Iannuzzi signed the "MAYORS WELLNESS CAMPAIGN ANNUAL PLEDGE OF PARTICIPATION." Mayors who make a commitment to the Mayors Wellness Campaign (MWC) inspire their residents to live their healthiest lives. They lead campaigns to create innovative wellness initiatives for residents of all ages. The MWC shares resources to support community leaders who pledge to make their communities healthier places to live, work and play. With the support of the MWC, in partnership with the New Jersey League of Municipalities, mayors throughout New Jersey can be powerful champions of community health and wellness. "As Mayor, I pledge to work collaboratively with the Quality Institute and ask the residents of my community to join me in our Mayors Wellness Campaign. Together we'll work to build healthier lives and a stronger community. As Mayor, I will create and sustain innovative activities and programs that empower citizens to improve wellness in our community." The Demarest Board of Health is proud to participate in this initiative for our residents and community. We will be sharing information and sponsor events in partnership with local businesses and provide opportunities for you to join in! Stay tuned! #MWC #mayorswellnesschallenge

## *Municipal Parking*

If you are in need of additional parking or somewhere to store a vehicle that should not be parked in your driveway, there are spots available downtown for a nominal permit parking fee. To inquire, please call the Borough Clerk, Susan Crosman, at 201-768-0167, ext. 139, for further details.

## *The Shade Tree Commission*



### DOES YOUR TREE LOOK LIKE THIS?

If the answer is yes, then it is important for you to read the following on tree damage caused by ivy. If left unchecked, ivy will eventually grow up the trunk and then grow outward onto the limbs. The added weight from the ivy makes the tree more susceptible to breakage in storms. Eventually the ivy will kill the tree. Large diameter living ivy vines can constrict trunk growth, injuring the bark and creating entry sites for pests and disease. The berries produced by the ivy are eaten by birds, thereby spreading the ivy over a greater area.

It is recommended that you removal the ivy in your yard, starting with the ivy that has invaded trees.

### How is this done?

You can do this yourself, but first make sure that it is English Ivy (not poison ivy). Wearing gloves and using hand pruners, cut all of the ivy vines around the bark a few inches above the ground and again at chest height. Be careful not to damage the tree itself. Remove the vines between these two cut lines, it may take a bit of hard work but it's worth it. After you have done this remove all the ivy in a six-foot radius from the tree when the soil is wet so it's easier to do. Although the ivy vines still cling to the bark after being cut, they should slough off as the tree trunk continues grow and add girth. Of course, there are landscaping services that can do this for you if you so choose.

By removing the ivy, you will be saving the tree and removing an eyesore from your property. We hope this has been of assistance.

For more information from the Shade Tree Commission check out our new Facebook page. It will let you know what we've been doing to keep Demarest green.

## *The Demarest Public Library*

Ms. Cara has resumed Little Wiggles Storytime at the train station! We meet on Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:30.

Children and their caregivers are invited to the Demarest Train Station once a month for Korean read-aloud stories, read by a community volunteer! This program is planned in partnership with the Korean Demarest Parents Association. Storytimes will be on the following dates at 3:30: March 28, April 25, May 23, June 13

The Demarest Library will be participating in NJ Makers Day this year on Saturday, March 26. Children and teens can come to the library to participate in activities that celebrate maker culture and STEM-based learning. Stay tuned for more details!

Take-Home Crafts for kids are available at the library! Next time you're in the library, ask for a kit at the desk. No registration required. Craft kits are offered while supplies last.

Visit our website for more information about upcoming children's programs: [demarestlibrary.org](http://demarestlibrary.org)

## *A Plea from the Department of Public Works*

We have been responding to quite a few sewer backups. The usual culprits are baby wipes and grease! Please do not flush either of these items. Both are trash and need to be disposed of in your garbage can.

## *News from the Public Schools*

Ongoing Kindergarten Registration for Demarest Public School

Demarest Public School Kindergarten registration is ongoing for the 2022-2023 school year. Please call to make an appointment with the County Road School secretary, at 201-768-6060 EXT. 51535. All registration forms can be found online at <http://demarestsd.schoolwires.net>. Please bring the completed forms along with the child's original birth certificate, medical forms (immunization record), three (3) proofs of residence, such as a deed, lease, utility bill, etc. Children are eligible for Kindergarten in September if they are five years old by October 1, 2022.

## *CCO Reminder from the Building Department*

In order to rent or sell your home, a Certificate of Continued Occupancy is required. The form is located on the Demarest website ([demarestnj.org](http://demarestnj.org)). You must complete the application, pay the required fees and have the home inspected prior to any change in occupancy or ownership. This process takes approximately 4 weeks, so make sure you allow ample time. Any question, please call Marti Francis at 201-768-0167, ext. 110.

## *Is Your Number Up?*

Emergency personnel need to reach people as quickly as possible. Thus, it is vitally important that your house number be displayed in accordance with Borough Ordinance 78-2. The Police Department reminds you that your number must be affixed in a conspicuous manner on the front of your house so as to be plainly visible from the street. Additionally, you may display an additional house number on a post or mailbox, especially if the front of your house is not visible from the street. Please note that numbers on rocks or otherwise on the ground are not helpful, as they can be covered by leaves or snow.

## *Removal of Large Appliances and Equipment*

Please call IWS sanitation at 201-768-5407 to schedule an appointment for the pickup of large appliances and other household equipment. Refrigerators, air conditioners, and ice makers must have the Freon removed by a certified service person before pickup. If you are buying a new appliance, please check with the merchant as to whether they will remove and dispose of the old appliance.

## *Demarest Nature Center*

Spring will soon be upon us! The Demarest Nature Center is full of natural beauty. Soon the trees will be in blossom, and our green Earth will reveal its majesty. The Nature Center has remained open throughout the pandemic, and we encourage you to explore the trails and nature. We have several exciting events coming up:

- A guided walk and volunteer day on March 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am (meet at the entrance to the Nature Center at the bulletin board, next to the Imagination Playground).
- A Birdhouse and Birdfeeder Building workshop On April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10:00 am-2:00 pm at the Wakelee Fieldhouse. We will provide materials needed to construct birdfeeders that can be used on private properties in Demarest. Please bring a hammer!
- Canoe Day on May 14<sup>th</sup> at the Duck Pond. Save the date!

We provide a refuge for nature and for the community. We do not receive financial support from Demarest. We are all volunteers, and we rely on your financial support to maintain the trails, keep the birdfeeders stocked, support nature outreach programs for the community, etc. Please consider supporting these efforts. You can donate with an envelope in the semi-annual newsletter or by contacting us directly. See you on the trails!

If you believe any information is incorrect or incomplete, please contact Marti Francis ([francis.demarestnj@gmail.com](mailto:francis.demarestnj@gmail.com)) so I may fix it.