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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021

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Republicans Scott Carpenter, left, and Joshua Marchal are running for two, three-year terms on the Florham Park Borough Council on Tuesday, Nov. 2.

BOROUGH COUNCIL RACE

Republicans seek voter support

By ALEX PARKER-MAGYAR
MANAGING EDITOR

Editor's note: This story profiles the two Republicans who are running for two seats on the Florham Park Borough Council. This newspaper has reached out to the Democratic candidate for a profile in next week's newspaper.

FLORHAM PARK - Republicans Scott Carpenter and Joshua Marchal point to their track records as volunteers and desire to improve communication with residents in their campaign for two seats on the Borough Council.

Carpenter, a 10-year member of the council, and Marchal, a first-time candidate, will seek three-year terms on the all-Republican governing body along with Democrat John William Upton in the Tuesday, Nov. 2, general election.

Carpenter, 62, of Circle Road, is a 48-year resident of Florham Park. A longtime member of the Florham Park Volunteer Fire Department, for which he formerly served as chief, he is superintendent of the Brooklake Country Club, where he has worked for 42 years.

Marchal, a 41-year-old resident of Edgewood Road, has lived in town for eight years. A veteran of the U.S. Navy, he is a member of the fire department and a local youth sports coach. He is a complex director and financial advisor for the Ameriprise financial services company, for which he oversees offices from Florham Park to Delaware.

In interviews with this newspaper, the running mates said they see Borough Council service as a continuation of their respective volunteer efforts in town.

Carpenter said the importance of giving back to one's community was ingrained in him during his childhood in Hackettstown. Moving with his family to Florham Park as an adolescent, he joined the fire department when he was 19. He later gave of his time and expertise overseeing the country club to aid the school districts in repairing their fields, and was a charter member of the town's environmental commission.

His belief in community service, which he said is "part of my DNA," ultimately graduated him to joining the governing body in 2012.

"I can't say enough how strongly I feel that if you live in a community, you should be part of it in some way shape or form," said Carpenter. "For me, this is in some ways the culmination of a life of commitment to the borough of Florham Park."

Marchal joined the Navy in 1998 and went on to earn the Navy and Marine Corps Service Medal, the enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist Pin and the USS Raven Junior Sailor of the Year in 1999. He left the Navy in 2002 as a petty officer third class.

He coaches youth baseball, football and soccer in Florham Park in addition to serving as a volunteer firefighter, and has two sons in the school district.

While volunteering locally is not a prerequisite for council service, Marchal said he believes it is an important asset. Interacting with members of various segments of the community as a volunteer, he said, has given him a better understanding of the wants and concerns of residents, as well of how the community works. He said he is committed to the town's future as a parent with children in the school system, and that it is important for school parents to have voices on the Borough Council.

"I'm involved in a good mix of things, and as long as I have the ability and time to do it I'm going to do it gladly," he said. "I think it's

PLEASE SEE GOP, PAGE 3



Photo by Judi Whiting

PREPARE THE SCARES

A ghastly host greets passing drivers and pedestrians from the front lawn of the Fraso family's Brooklake Road home in Florham Park at dusk on Friday, Oct. 8. The Frasos: Gerry and Angie with children Gina, Marissa, Christina and Marco, offer one of the spookiest Halloween displays in town ahead of the big day on Sunday, Oct. 31. Please see more photos of residents getting into the Halloween spirit on Page 10.

Council talks water rates amid meter replacements

By ALEX PARKER-MAGYAR
MANAGING EDITOR

FLORHAM PARK - The borough is to keep an eye on water rates as new, more accurate water meters are installed at hundreds of homes across town.

The National Metering Service has replaced meters at nearly 1,000 Florham Park homes, about 68 percent of the 1,442 homes targeted in the first phase of a water meter replacement project, Borough Council President Kristen Santoro said at a council meeting on Thursday, Oct. 7.

Some residents have since seen a significant spike in their water costs, though the increase may be as much a result of billing practices as the new meters being

more accurate than the ones they replaced.

Michael Sgaramella, director of the borough's water and sewer utility, said the cost increase is in part a result of the fact that users were billed for a period of four or five months, rather than the usual three, amid the transfer from the old meters to the new.

The new meters are far more accurate than the old ones. With the improved accuracy likely contributing to higher costs, Councilman Peter Malone suggested the council keep an eye on the fees paid over the next few billing cycles and consider adjusting water rates accordingly.

The council raised local water rates in 2020, increasing the minimum quarterly bill from \$24 to

\$33.60 for residential customers, and from \$36 to \$50.40 for business customers. Fees for water department services were also increased. The new rate structure also seeks to encourage water conservation, as fees escalate with greater usage.

"When the utility wasn't at break-even, we set new rates," Malone said. "But now we've got new meters in place that are more accurate, so maybe we need to go back and revisit the rates at some point in the future. Right now I don't think is the proper time, but we can give it a couple of billing cycles."

"I think it's a good idea to let a couple cycles go through and

PLEASE SEE METERS, PAGE 3

Town again earns top credit rating

FLORHAM PARK - Moody's Investor Service has reaffirmed the borough's AAA bond rating, the agency's highest, for the borough's general obligation bonds.

The independent analysis issued in September cited Florham Park's "exceptional credit position, far exceeding U.S. cities' median (rating) of Aa3," Borough Councilman Charles Malone said at a council meeting on Thursday, Oct. 7.

Notable factors affecting the rating included "a very healthy financial position, a very strong wealth and income profile and a solid tax base," as well as an "extremely small debt burden and a somewhat inflated pension liability," said Malone, the council's finance committee chair, quoting

the report.

The councilman praised Florham Park's finance team for their efforts, calling for a round of applause in the council chamber.

Public Works, Police News

Council members touched on a variety of items during the roughly 25-minute meeting.

On Department of Public Works efforts, Councilman Scott Carpenter said a new speed beacon is to be installed on Brooklake Road near Brooklake Elementary School in mid-October.

Malone added he has heard renewed calls for a sidewalk to be installed on Crescent Road to aid students walking to the two elementary schools off Brooklake Road. Neighborhood residents

have also inquired about the possibility of Crescent being widened to create a soft shoulder along the roadway.

In police news, Carpenter said some 382 candidates applied to participate in an upcoming physical test for an open position in the police department.

With the police force poised to replace up to five officers in 2022, Carpenter said the department will seek to pull from the large list of current candidates to fill those vacancies as they occur.

Carpenter also noted the department was the first in Morris County to have all of its officers complete an 18-hour course on de-escalation and use of force

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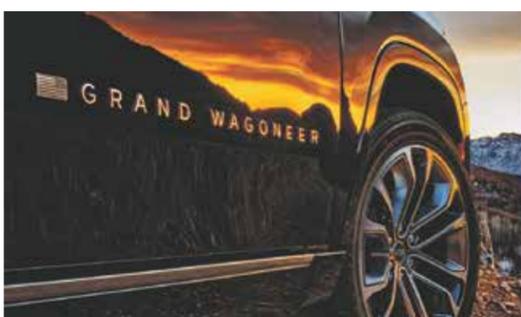
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