



Mt. Olive Democrats Regroup And Ready To Elect Leaders

Members of the Mt. Olive Democratic Executive Committee, from left, are: Colette Tarallo, secretary; Irene Sergonis, treasurer and candidate for Mt. Olive Township Council; Deana Lykins, candidate for State Assembly LD 24; Lloyd Deans, interim municipal chair and candidate for town council; and Susie Caufield, Mt. Olive Dem County Committee member and campaign manager for Irene Sergonis for council.

By Cheryl Conway

After two years of organizing and growing, Mt. Olive Democrats are ready to hit the polls on Tuesday, June 4, to vote for their party's candidates running for local, county and state positions.

On the local front, Irene Sergonis of Budd Lake is running for Mt. Olive Twp. Council as a Democrat and Lloyd Deans, the interim chairperson for the Mt. Olive Democratic Committee, has announced he will run as a write-in candidate in the upcoming 2019 Primary Election.

"I'm running as a write-in candidate," says Dean, "army veteran, never held a political seat before. I've worked with both Republican Congressman and Democratic State Senators on Veterans issues."

Running for re-election on council for a four-year term are Republicans Joe Nicastro, Colleen Labow and Alex Roman.

Republican Mayor Rob Greenbaum is also re-running for a four-year term as mayor in an uncontested race so far.

Mt. Olive Democrats History and Growth

The Mt. Olive Democratic Committee reached a milestone last month, May 10, as it has been two years since re-establishing itself into a formal group, explains Shelly Morningstar, former municipal chair of the Mt. Olive Democratic Committee 2017-19. Morningstar recently stepped down as chair in April, passing her leadership role in the interim to Lloyd Deans, who has been serving as municipal vice chair.

"Prior to May 2017, there had been no active Democratic party here for almost eight years," says Morningstar. Jim Buell was the last Democrat elected to Mt. Olive Twp. Council in 2007, she adds. Democrats, "may had been meeting, but not regularly."

According to longtime Mt. Olive resident Les Kleinberg, "there was an existing vibrant Democratic Party organization when we moved to Mt. Olive in 1970," he informed Sergonis.

"We have no idea when or why it was established or who were the founders, but it was clearly established decades before we moved here.

"The major objectives of Democratic party candidates in the early 1970s were: Stabilization of the tax rate. There were major property tax increases in Mt Olive

the late 1960s and early 1970s; opposition to the large amusement park that was proposed for the site that eventually became the foreign trade zone. This opposition became bipartisan and was successful.

"The Mt. Olive Democratic party grew significantly larger during the late 1960s and early 1970s, getting new members from the newly built Clover Hill development in Flanders and the new developments in Budd Lake." While Democrats have been living in Mt. Olive for 75 to 100 years, "The Democratic Party did not disband; it was more like hibernation from 2007 to 2017," explains Sergonis, treasurer of the Mt. Olive Democratic Committee. "There were a few candidates like Jim Buell, Richard Escobar and Lew Candura who would run in the elections but interest in local politics was low. After 2016, there had been a "ground swell of women," says Morningstar, 11 women and one man to be exact, and they started to organize meetings. Details Sergonis: "My friend Gayle Furbert emailed me the following story about the April 2017 meeting that led to the reawakening of the Dems: 'Yes I was at the first meeting....which took place at the Flanders DD [Dunkin Donuts] mid April. I know it was Kate Matteson and Gina Trish who reached out to the Morris County Democratic Committee Chair Chip Robinson after realizing that they needed Mt. Olive if they were going to win the Assembly race. FB posts invited people to the Flanders DD to help organize the MO Dems... Lloyd and I were there, Shelly and Bonnie, Nicole Wright and her daughter, possibly Linda, and another guy. We decided to hold an organizational meeting at the library - so I contacted them and secured the meeting room for the May meeting. And the rest is history.' Postcards, 500 of them according to Morningstar, were mailed to registered Democrats to invite them to the library, and the meeting was posted on social media, resulting in close to 100 filling the Meeting Room on May 10, 2017. "We were able to recruit four candidates for town council who were written in on the Primary Ballot and appeared on the November Ballot," Sergonis details according to Furbert's recount of that meeting. Furbert told her, "We all learned about how campaigns are run and have expanded our horizons. I am glad that Mt. Olive was instrumental in getting Tom Malinowski elected. We needed checks and balances in Washington and someone who would fight for New Jersey. We

hope to build on what we have learned and have similar success in 2019 and 2020."

When the four Democrats ran in 2017, Morningstar says that was the "first time full slate of candidates ran for Democrats in Mt. Olive after 20 years. We increased Democratic voter turnout by 233 percent" in 2017, she adds.

"When there's an active engaged group of citizens meeting regularly, holding events to encourage people to vote," and providing a choice in the slate of candidates, "it goes to show" that canvassing, outreach and engagement does make a difference, says Morningstar.

"We worked really hard," says Morningstar, in reorganizing Mt. Olive Democrats. "We knocked on almost 6,000 doors in 2017, which was the "first time they had a door knocked by any Democrats" in 20 years.

Voter outreach helped get Democrat Tom Malinowski of the 7th district elected to Congress in Nov. 2018, defeating Republican incumbent Leonard Lance, says Morningstar. She says the Mt. Olive Democratic Committee "canvassed more than 8,000 voters in Mt. Olive Twp.," to help him beat his opponent by 102 votes in Mt. Olive, getting him elected.

"We phone bank and send out postcards," she says.

It even reached out to high school students to get them involved with the young Mt. Olive Democrats, she adds.

"It's really great to see young people engaged," says Morningstar.

MO Dem's Mission

The mission of the Mt. Olive Democratic Committee is: "Keeping our nation and community safe and expanding opportunity for all," as stated on its website <u>https://mountolivedemocrats.org</u>. "Our focus is on sustainable economic growth, protection and conservation of our environment, water, and open space, affordable health care, retirement security, open, honest and accountable government, and protecting civil rights & liberties. We support Democratic candidates who represent these values and through our civic engagement strive to ensure that these principles are reflected both in our local government and within our community.

"We are committed to educating our community about the importance of civic engagement, voting, voting rights, and voter registration," it states. "Getting involved in local politics is often the best way to make a lasting difference in our community. Through volunteering, you can help make positive changes, bring a voice for progress and improve the quality of life within our township, county, state and the nation."

The Mt. Olive Democratic Committee is one of 39 municipal political committees organized within the Morris County Democratic Committee (MCDC) and under the bylaws of the MCDC and NJ State Democratic Party, explains Morningstar.

"Shelly spearheaded the revitalization of our committee and we will be forever grateful for her hard work and dedication," says Sergonis. "We truly stand on her shoulders and will honor her achievements by continuing the mission to improve our community and represent all the people of Mt. Olive.

There are approximately 135 local residents, involved in the Mt. Olive Democratic Committee, says Sergonis, resident for 39 years. Meetings are held monthly on the third Wednesday in the meeting room of the Mt. Olive Public Library.

About 30 to 40 attend the meetings on average, says Morningstar, and those who cannot attend help in other ways such as voter outreach, community events, operating booths at the carnival and food truck festival.

The group also hosts a number of education programs, says Morningstar. The Mt. Olive Democratic Committee held the first Stigma Free Education session in town, she says. It also worked with the Mt. Olive Police Department to host a Gun Violence Prevention Program at the Mt. Olive Middle School to talk about gun ownership.

A Free Walk program was another event it organized as well as a program with the NJ Highlands Coalition on native species and plants in Budd Lake to discuss preservation efforts and environmental guidelines, explains Morningstar.

"We've coordinated a number of education programs," says Morningstar.

"Environment is very important."

Sitting on the Mt. Olive Democratic Committee are four executive officers made up of a municipal chair, vice chair, treasurer and secretary.

Mt. Olive has 22 districts.

"For Dems each district would have a male and female member for a total of 44 county committee members," says Sergonis. "We currently have 23 county committee seats filled and are actively seeking volunteers."

June 2020 will be the next election for county committee members, explains Morningstar. "There are vacancies," she says. The municipal chair can make appointments to fill those vacancies."

The role of committee members is "they represent their community on local issues," explains Morningstar. Whether it is a water issue, a town service, damaged roads, the committee member brings issues to the township. They also provide outreach with voters in their neighborhoods to engage them in voting, meeting candidates and encourage growth of their party.

"They are the folks that people elect to represent them," says Morningstar, "their local neighborhoods."

The municipal chair, meanwhile, is appointed by the county chair, she explains. Morningstar had been appointed in May 2017 by Chip Robinson, and was then elected as chair in June 2018.

Working in leadership positions for a non-profit organization helped her in her task of "getting a new organization off the ground," says Morningstar who is one of the founding members of the Community Garden in South Branch. "The last two years have really required an enormous amount of time. I learned a lot about land use, environmental laws, municipal budgeting," and canvassing. "I met people I never thought I'd meet. We are vetting great candidates. By getting out and talking to voters helps to set the stage."

Although she was elected to serve as the voice of the group, Morningstar says "it's really the work of this team; commitment of the team" that led it to the successful reawakening of Mt. Olive Democrats. Everyone sees their role and how important it is. They accepted the mission."

Get Out And Vote Today

Now is the time to get involved, and today is the day to get out and vote.

Registered Voters

As of May 16, 18,834 local residents have registered to vote in today's election, according to Michelle Masser, Mt. Olive Twp. clerk. Of those registered, 4,985 are

registered Democrats; 6,094 are registered Republicans; and 7,755 are unaffiliated.

Those numbers have increased from last year's primary on June 6, 2018 with 18,015 registered; with 4,300 Democrats, 5,787 Republicans and 7,928 unaffiliated. Voter turnout reached 12.5 percent in Mt. Olive; 2,252 came out to vote last year with 1,060 Democrats (24 percent) and 1,192 Republicans (20 percent).

"It is important to work in our local communities to make the world a better place for our children and grandchildren," says Sergonis. "The Mt. Olive Dems does have tons of fun and many new friendships have been formed. We've had movie nights, bonfires and barbecues. Postcard parties feature snacks and good conversation. Canvassing is done with a buddy and we get to know each other as well as listening to our voters."

Besides running locally, Democrats are running in the state and county as well. **Democratic Candidates**

"There is an excellent slate of highly qualified Democratic candidates who are running to represent the people of Mt. Olive Township for local municipal, county and state office in 2019," says Morningstar. The Democratic candidates for each office include:

NJ State Assembly - Legislative District 24: Deana Lykins of Green Twp. and Dan Smith of Mt. Olive for State Assembly.

Morris County Candidates- Surrogate: Michael Thompson; Sheriff: William Schievella; Freeholder: Cary Amaro; Cara Parmigiani; David Timpanaro.

For more information on the Mt. Olive Town Council Democratic candidates go to: Lloyd Deans - <u>deanslistvr@gmail.com</u>; and Irene Sergonis -

http://irenesergonis.com/;

https://www.facebook.com/irene4motc/.

"We need to bring new people with new ideas," concludes Morningstar. "There's always room for improvement,"

For more information, questions, and to get involved, go to

https://mountolivedemocrats.org or email mountolivedems@gmail.com.

Photo Gallery

Welcome readers to the 21st issue of Mt. Olive Online. Get MO news online today! Advertise with us!

Hundreds Pay Tribute To Fallen Soldiers At Annual ceremony

Photos by Joe Gigli, NJ Counties Online LLC

By Cheryl Conway https://mountoliveonline.today/mo-online-6-4-19-issue The true meaning of Memorial Day shined through on Monday, May 27, when hundreds attended a local ceremony at the All Veterans Memorial in Budd Lake to pay tribute to fallen soldiers and their survived families.

With 300 in attendance and more than 100 participants, the 2019 Memorial Remembrance Day Ceremony held at the AVM at Turkey Brook Park marked a day of remembrance and dedication. The program, sponsored by The All Veterans Alliance and Morris County American Legion, began with a bagpipe processional at 10:30 a.m.

"It was indeed a remarkable day," says AVM Founder and President Charlie Wood-Uhrmann. "We estimate that there were upwards of 100 participants, and 300 persons in attendance. It was a beautiful day and a wonderful event. Our crowd keeps getting bigger and bigger."

Also present were 17 Morris and Warren County American Legion Commanders, she adds. At this year's ceremony, seven families of fallen warriors' "were able to renew their resolve that

the life of their child (and in two cases - only child) was worth the loss and to continue to show that we the beneficiaries are worthy of that sacrifice," says Uhrmann.

The AVM and its Board of Directors were thankful and appreciative of everyone's efforts in this year's ceremony.

Says Uhrmann: "We would like to renew our appreciation to Brigadier General Frank Dulfer

for being our keynote speaker; LTC. Schakelford Chaplain, for delivering the innovation and dedication; Morris County American Legion Commander for leading the ceremony; Mt. Olive High School JROTC and Band for presenting the colors and musical cadence; Mt. Olive Girls and Boys Scouts for setting the memorial flowers; Mark Noyes for sharing his gift of bagpipes for more than 10 years now; Caren Kennedy, Rich Plumpton, and Andrea Beatty for their emotional musical renderings; and the Morris County Post Commanders for raising of the flags full staff. And a special shout out to BS Troop 249 for keeping everyone hydrated; and Joe Gigli who has been photographing our ceremonies for more than ten years. There truly is nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer."

Observed on the last Monday of May since 1968, Memorial Day is a federal holiday celebrated in the United States to remember and honor persons who have died while

serving in the U.S. Armea Forces.

Since 2007, Uhrmann has been organizing the Remembrance Day Ceremony at the AVM, a ceremonial complex she built through private funds and her non-profit organization, used to conduct and observe military events for the community and military families to congregate.

Events are always open to the community. Local politicians are welcome but never expected nor solicited to participate nor attend.

"The All Veterans Memorial's primary focus continues to be placed on our fallen warriors and the loved ones they left behind," says Uhrmann. "When we are asked why the mayor or council members are not included as part of the ceremony or even present at the ceremony, we always respond by saying that Memorial Day is not about politics, but about our warriors. Of course, they are welcome to attend if they wish to show their support; however, on this one particular day, we must all humble ourselves to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice."

Fallen Warriors Recognized

Seven families of fallen warriors were recognized as attending this year's ceremony. Three mothers participated by laying pavers in memory of their child who lost their life while serving.

Sergeant First Class Fabian G Ericksson, a U.S. Army-Korean War veteran, was one of the seven warriors remembered. Setting his Service Paver was his wife Fabian Ericksson and his daughter Denise Ericksson.

Ericksson served in the U.S. Army 279th Infantry, G Company, November 1950 to October 1952. Medals awarded included the Army of Occupation Medal Japan;

Combat Infantryman Badge Par 16 So 38; HQ 279 INF; Korean Service Medal w/1 bronze service star; United Nation Service Medal.

He served on the front line (drench warfare) and was a member of the Domain of the Golden Dragon/International Date Line for all sailors,

soldiers and marines at that time.

Specialist William "Billy" A. DeLucchi, a U.S. Army - Desert Storm Veteran also received a Service Paver, set by his mother Julie Gesregan and brother Sean Gesregan.

DeLucchi was an artillery specialist who served in Desert Storm. He enlisted into the Army https://mountoliveonline.today/mo-online-6-4-19-issue 11/28

while in high school as he had wanted to serve his country at a very young age. He spent four years in the Army before being deployed to fight in Desert Storm. After his four years, he returned home and continued his service serving in the New Jersey National Guard for four additional years; and went to college. He was proud to be in the military and an artillery specialist. He took his specialty very serious.

"He was always the first one in and the last one to leave," as stated in his bio provided by the AVM. "Specialist lost his struggle with PTSD after serving several tours and was the inspiration behind adding "PTSD" to the POW/MIA Remembrance Wall. His mother Julie visited the wall immediately after the Memorial Remembrance Day Ceremony and was extremely emotional that her son was selected to be the image used to depict the psychological prisoner of war."

Sgt. Corey Edwin Garver served in the U.S. Army - Global War on Terror / Afghanistan. Setting his Service Paver was his mother Ellen Garver.

Garver of Topsham, Maine died at the age of 26 on June 23, 2013 in Afghanistan from wounds sustained when enemy forces attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. Garver was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 506th infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, Fort Campbell, Ky.

"Corey had wanted to serve in the Army since he was five years old and always said he wanted to die with his boots on," as stated in his bio.

"It was an amazing ceremony," concludes Uhrmann. "It was nice."

Photo Gallery: Photos by Joe Gigli, NJ Counties Online LLC

Local Library News

Wellness Program Featured

Reconnect with nature and the universe when Mt. Olive Public Library hosts "Energy Bagua" on Saturday, June 8, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Gathering Room.

Come join in for this 90 minute session to learn a wellness practice that balances the Yin and Yang energy in the body and communicates with the energy from nature and the universe. Limited to 30 adults ages 12 and up.

Registration requested. Call 973-691-8686 ext. 106 or go to <u>www.mopl.org</u> to register.

Slide Into Summer At Local Library Events

All grades are welcome to join on June 22 at 10 a.m. for the Summer Reading Blast Off. There will be space carnival games, crafts, and an Out of this World author workshop.

Mt. Olive Public Library is "Ready to Launch" this Summer with "Out of this World" Events for its **Adult Summer Reading Program 2019**: "A Universe of Stories," June through August!

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Tuesday, June 18, at either 1-3 p.m. or 6 p.m.-8 p.m. the Gathering Room will feature the movie "Apollo 11." Never before seen footage and audio recordings take viewers straight into the heart of

NASA's most celebrated mission-landing on the moon!

Registration requested. Call 973-691-8686 ext. 106 or go to <u>www.mopl.org</u> to register.

A **"College Funding Seminar"** is set for Thursday, June 20, at 7 p.m. in the Gathering Room. This free seminar, presented by Alvin G. Newell, vice president of Solutions for College Funding, Inc., explains what every parent should know about getting maximum financial aid funding for their college-bound high school sophomores and juniors.

Registration requested. Call 973-691-8686 Ext. 106 or go to <u>www.mopl.org</u> to register.

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NEWS AT COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS

CCM Holds 50th Commencement With 1.4k Graduates

County College of Morris (CCM) in Randolph presented diplomas to the Class of 2019 on Friday, May 24, at Mennen Sports Arena during its historic 50th Commencement, with nearly 500 graduates participating in the 50th Anniversary ceremony.

The Class of 2019 includes approximately 1,400 students, many of who are transferring to top fouryear institutions in New Jersey and across the nation to earn their bachelor's degrees. The graduates received their diplomas in one of four degrees: Associate in Arts, Associate in Fine Arts, Associate in Science and Associate in Applied Science. The graduates consisted of those who completed their studies between August 2018 and May 2019, and those who will complete their studies this coming August.

Dr. Trish O'Keefe, president of Morristown Medical Center (MMC), served as the keynote speaker. "The day I started at MMC as a bedside nurse, if someone had told me I would become president, I would not have believed it, but it only proves that hard work, committing to your goals one step at a time, dedication, and very long hours pay off," said O'Keefe. "I know life will present each one of you with a series of opportunities - one step at a time. One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself – commit to your journey."

Also providing remarks was Douglas Cabana, director of the Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

"Today, as we look back at CCM at 50, this special day is a beginning for you of many special days as you move through life, whether you choose to continue your education, begin a career, become an entrepreneur, explore new territories, or try your hand at other new experiences," said Cabana. During his remarks, CCM President Anthony J. Iacono spoke to the graduates about courage as he highlighted several students who completed their studies despite life's challenges and obstacles.

"Be fearless in the pursuit of your goals and uncompromising of your values," lacono told the

graduates. "Never stop learning and remember that success is not simply about doing things right but, more importantly, success requires the courage to do the right things.

"Your success is not for you alone – it is yours to help others through knowledge, skills, compassion and courage. Build a life, not a career."

Trustee Chair Paul Licitra noted, "The awarding of your degree or certificate today is the result of your determination to live a life of meaning and contribution." Standing with college tradition, the CCM Peace Prize was awarded at commencement. Nora Anton, of Randolph, was presented with the prize for the tile mosaic she created commemorating the "Survivor Tree" found at Ground Zero. The faculty mentor for her project was Professor Dorothy Salinas, Department of Biology and Chemistry. The creator of the winning entry each year receives a \$1,000 award, provided by the CCM Foundation. This is the 18th year the college has awarded its Peace Prize, which was administered this year by Professor Laura Driver from the Department of English and Philosophy.

Included among the colleges and universities members from the Class of 2019 will be attending next are Columbia University, Cornell University, Drew University, John J. College of Criminal Justice, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rutgers University, and other top schools across New Jersey and the nation.

Along with numerous 50th Anniversary celebrations, the Class of 2019 saw many significant accomplishments at the college during their educational journey. PayScale, three years in a row, has rated the college number one in New Jersey based on the earnings of CCM graduates. Professor Venancio "Venny" Fuentes, chair of the Department of Engineering Technologies and Engineering Science, was selected as the sole recipient of the 2018 Northeast Faculty Award from the Association of Community College Trustees. The college received a Best Practice Award from the Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey and a Business Achievement Award from Randolph Township. Additionally, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges presented CCM Trustee Joseph Weisberg with its Trustee Leadership Award.

CCM Photo Club Honors High School Photographers In Annual Contest

Photo: Second Place photo by Jack Cudia of Roxbury High School.

The Photo Club at County College of Morris (CCM) in Randolph is proud to announce the winners of its seventh annual photography contest for New Jersey high school students. The competition's sponsor,

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Millburn Camera ASAP Photo, awarded gift certificates to the top three winners.

Winning first place with a \$300 gift certificate was Liam Devees, who did not report what high school he is attending. Jack Cudia and Julia Trevorrow of Roxbury High School won second and third place, earning them \$150 and \$75 gift certificates respectively.

Receiving Honorable Mentions this year were Avianna Miler from Whippany Park High School, Kaitlin Kleiner from Hunterdon Central High School, Naomi Boyd from Chatham High School, Suxin Liang from Morris Catholic High School, and Samantha Osborne, Tanya Amballa, Michell Rivas, and Simao Silvestre from Bridgewater-Raritan High School.

Amballa also won the Popularity Award for her photo which received the most likes on the competition's Facebook page.

The contest was open to all New Jersey high school students. This year's theme, "Roots," invited students to explore the meaning of cultural identification. More than 500 submissions from dozens of high schools around the state explored the concept that people can no longer be labeled as one thing or another. Photographers submitted photos that showed the beauty and complexity of their cultural identity.

The winners were announced at an exhibition and reception held at the CCM Art and Gallery earlier this month. Fifty-one photographs were selected for display, representing Roxbury High School, Whippany Park High School, Hunterdon Central Regional High School, Chatham High School, Morris Catholic High School, Morris Knolls High School and Bridgewater-Raritan High School. Photo Club members judged the work and selected the winners.

"Members of the CCM Photo Club were delighted with the quality of submitted images," said Hrvoje Slovenc, assistant professor of photography, who oversees the contest. "Selecting the finalists and ultimately the winners was a difficult, but rewarding, task."

Church Hosts Memory loss Program

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