

History of the Hammonton Town Flag



by Gabe Donio, Gazette Staff Writer

Discussion about having a contest to design the town flag began in 2004. James Brady, a local veteran who dedicated many hours to local veterans' events and programs, had been working on the town flag project in the months leading up to his death in October of 2004. After his passing, his son Martin Brady, then-American Legion Commander Donald Frederico and members of the American Legion completed the effort began by the late James Brady.

On December 13, 2004, representatives of local businesses, civic clubs and churches went to the American Legion Hall on Egg Harbor Road and purchased "votes" – blue-colored chips that were placed in cups next to each of the design entrants. The winning entrant came from Dan String, then a student from Waterford Twp. attending Hammonton High School.

The flag is a white circle with royal blue lettering on it that reads "Town of Hammonton Blueberry Capital of the World" with a blueberry branch over red and white, on a field of royal blue.

The red, white and green colors reflect the town's status (as of the 2000 U.S. Census) as the "Italian-American Capital of the United States." At the time, the town had the highest percentage of Italian-Americans per-capita of United States towns with a population of more than 1,000.

The town remains one of the highest per-capita populations of Italian-Americans in the United States today.

The blueberry theme represents the town's agricultural heritage, and its unofficial status as the world's "blueberry capital."

String was awarded a \$100 United States Savings Bond for winning the contest. Two other entrants – Trisha Twesten and Shane Kier -- were selected for second and third prize honors and each received a \$50 savings bond.

“We should give the art department of Hammonton High School and Hammonton Middle School a lot of praise for their efforts,” Frederico said in 2004. An emotional Martin Brady thanked the business community, civic organizations and churches for their support after the selection was made 10 years ago.

“I’m just overwhelmed,” Brady said.

On the night 10 years ago when the winning design for the town flag was selected, Frederico said the project was historic and a source of pride for the entire community.

“I think the town of Hammonton will be proud of its flag,” Frederico said on that December night in 2004.

The town flag now flies at Hammonton Town Hall and other municipal buildings and properties, including Hammonton Lake Park, over Ronald Reagan Rock at the corner of Central and Bellevue Avenues and is displayed within the town council chamber to the right of the council’s seats.