

# Deer

Continued from Page 11

Deer have been the subject of increasing concern as Bergen County has morphed from a rural farming area into more populated suburbia.

As far back as 2004, then-Mayor Conrad Caruso called on the state Department of Environmental Protection to work with the Department of Transportation to address the burgeoning deer population and resulting motor vehicle accidents. Then-Police Chief Timothy McWilliams estimated that officers were handling two deer-related accidents a week.

In 2014, the Board of Health and the

Environmental Commission held a joint meeting to discuss deer management, said then-Councilman Jerry DeCrista. Board of Health President Duncan Carpenter urged that the ordinance prohibiting hunting in the borough be changed to allow bow hunting during the state-specified hunting season and off-season with a special state-issued permit.

At the time, Al Kurpis, who was a councilman and is now mayor, urged formation of a long-range management program.

In December 2015, the mayor at that time, Sam Raia, announced creation of a Wildlife Management Committee to seek options on the deer issue. Representatives of the DEP's Division of Fish and Wildlife provided testimony on varying methods of population control.

As recently as this May, the state DEP rejected the borough's non-lethal proposal to capture and spay.

Before the council adopted a deer culling ordinance in July, a group held a protest and argued that elected officials were acting too quickly and a more humane approach was needed.

"They never did a count," said Mark Nagelhout, Kim's husband. "We've had a Canadian expert fly over the borough when the leaves are off the trees. His count was 219 deer in the borough."

Animal Control Officer Carol Tyler put the ideal population at 10 deer per square mile this summer, or 50 for the 5-square-mile borough.

Still, Nagelhout says the hunt should stop.

"If you take deer out, more will move

in," he said. "The more food they have, the higher the fertility rate."

Giaimis says there are no immediate plans to stop the hunt.

"There is no legal requirement whatsoever to do so," he said. "I have discussed it with the division of Fish and Wildlife, and they do not offer specific numbers due to the multitude of differences between the numerous regions and towns within the state."

Giaimis said the state's position is that "as long as you are culling the population within the state-designated seasons they do not provide limitations."

The hunting season concludes Feb. 16. Giaimis said next year's governing body will have to decide whether the United Bow Hunters contract will be extended.

# Opposition won't stop deer hunt

## Official says most calls 'have been supportive'

**Marsha A. Stoltz** North Jersey Record  
USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

SADDLE RIVER - United Bow Hunters has culled 90 deer since Oct. 4 under a contract with the borough to thin the local herd, said Administrator Jerry Giaimis.

It is the only municipality-sponsored culling operation in the county, but not everyone is in favor of it.

"There are over 200 properties that have either allowed culling or allowed participants to retrieve wounded deer from their properties," Giaimis said. "The implementation of the program is a success, and no significant difficulties have occurred."

The "overwhelming majority" of calls to Borough Hall "have been supportive of our efforts," Giaimis said. No injuries were reported, he said.

Not everyone is happy.

Animal rights activists returned to the Saddle River Borough Council meeting last week to seek an end to the hunt.

"This hunt is not based on science or population control," said Kim Nagelhout of the Animal Protection League of New Jersey, which attempted to block the hunt in September with an unsuccessful complaint. "It's just do whatever you want," she said of the hunting plan.