

The Clementonian

Fall/Winter 2024

Issue 13

A 1936 Close Call at Clementon Park

by: The Clementon Historical Commission

Way back in 1936, Clementon Park found itself in the limelight – for some good reasons, but a scary one, too!

The story starts on September 1st, when newspapers nationwide announced that Clementon Park was the official training camp for Al Ettore, a 22-year-old heavyweight boxer slated to face off against Detroit's Joe Louis on September 22nd at Philly's Municipal Stadium (later JFK Stadium).

Why Clementon Park?

Before becoming Clementon's police recorder, borough resident Rosario Lucca was better known as Kid Locke, an amateur boxer. By 1936, Lucca's fighting career was behind him, but he still maintained connections to the sport. Maybe seeing an opportunity to put Clementon on the map, Lucca convinced Al Ettore's manager, Lew Tendler – himself a former boxer – to let Ettore prepare for the Louis match in Clementon.



Boxer Al Ettore at Clementon Park in 1936 with children including Teddy Gibbs (second from left), son of park owners and future park owner himself!

Over the next three weeks, Ettore lived and worked at Clementon Park, running and biking three miles around

town each morning and training before crowds that numbered as many as 3500! Young men "recruited in Philadelphia for firing-line duty" were brought to Clementon, where Ettore "punched for a round with each husky, displayed savage aggressiveness and a steady fire of fists that bodes ill for any heavyweight," per the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. On September 7th, Ettore even visited St. Lawrence Church in Lindenwold, where he told rector Jeremiah J. Sullivan, "Let me know what corner you're in, and I'll knock Louis in that corner."

At this point in his career, Joe Louis – though favored 3-1 to win – didn't yet have a title to his name, and was rebuilding after a devastating loss to Max Schmeling three months earlier. As the September 22nd match neared, newspapers noted that bets were scarce – evidence that many predicted a close battle. "I never felt so confident about any fight in my life," Ettore told one paper.

But before climbing into the ring with Louis, Ettore would bear witness to an incident in Clementon that might have been hard to shake.

It happened on September 20, 1936.

On that date, just two days before the much-anticipated fight, 1000 spectators gathered on grandstand bleachers at Clementon Park to witness one of Ettore's final training matches.

It was a crowd that proved too heavy.

**STAND COLLAPSES
AS ETTORE ENTERS
RING FOR TRAINING**

**None Are Injured; Mishap
at Clementon Unnerves
Louis' Opponent**

Courier-Post headline, September 21, 1936

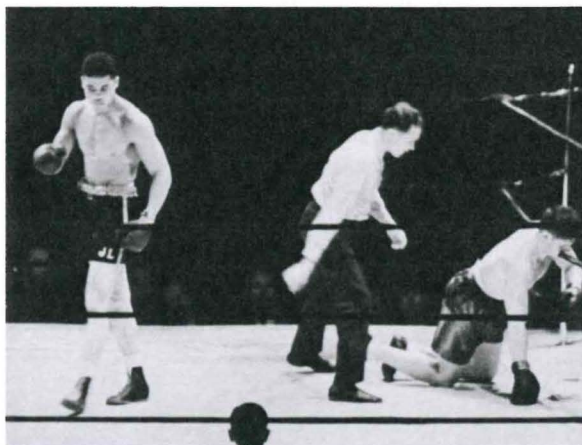
As fans rose to cheer when Ettore appeared, the bleachers beneath them "folded like an accordion," according to the *Evening Courier*. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* picks up the story:

"Most of the spectators were still upright on their feet as the entire section slowly settled to the ground, although a few did lose their balance as the structure crumbled." Amazingly, only three people suffered minor injuries. "Ettore held up his training until assured no one was seriously hurt," the *Inquirer* continues. "The incident seemed to rattle the 22-year-old youngster. He was far from his best. Only when stung did he show any of his tigerish instincts."

So how did Al Ettore fare two days later?

A crowd of 40,407 gathered at Municipal Stadium for the fight on September 22nd – still the second all-time high attendance for any outdoor fight in Philadelphia!

Once the bell rang, it became clear: Clementon-trained Ettore was, sadly, no match for Joe Louis. He suffered a knockdown in the first round, followed by several heavy blows in the second. Tides change in the third round, which Ettore took. However, Louis bounced back, battering Ettore in the fourth round and ultimately nailing him with two left hooks in the fifth. "The game Ettore attempted to rise but...fell face forward over the west ropes," one newspaper wrote.



"Maybe I didn't have the right kind of sparring partners down at Clementon," Ettore admitted to newspapers later.

Joe Louis would go on to reign as world heavyweight champion from 1937 until 1949 – the longest single champion reign of any boxer in history. He was elected into the Boxing Hall of Fame in 1954; he died in 1981.

Al Ettore competed for three more years after his loss to Louis, fighting, among others, Maxie Rosenbloom, Gus Dorazio, Bob Pastor, Steve Dudas, Jersey Joe Walcott, and Tommy Loughran. When he retired in 1939, he admitted he'd never recovered from a punch in the final

round of the Louis match. In 1951, Ettore sued various broadcasters for \$200,000 in damages for televising footage of the Louis-Ettore match without his consent. "Ettore further charged the presentation was 'distorted' because the third round, in which Ettore held his own with the champion, was eliminated," wrote New York's *Troy Record*. "His attorney says Ettore has lost business at his tavern and has been subjected to ridicule as a result of the televised version of the fight." How the lawsuit shook out is unknown. Al Ettore died in 1988 in Upper Darby, PA.

And Clementon Park? Within a week of the Louis-Ettore fight, the park became training camp for another boxer: Utah-born Mormon Dean Detton, who prepared here for a bout against Long Island's Dave Levin – a 2-hour, 8-minute match that Detton ultimately won. Whether Clementon Park birthed any subsequent boxers, we do not know. We do know that its bleachers never again fell beneath large crowds!

Note: This story was assembled to the best of our ability using Clementon Historical Commission archives and publicly available information. Email us at ClementonHistoricalCommission@gmail.com with additions or corrections, and follow us online:

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/ClementonHistoricalCommission
Instagram: @clementonhistory

The Clementon Historical Museum is open the third Wednesday of the month, from 6pm - 8pm. Depending on the turnout, this may change to twice a month.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

The Planning and Zoning Board is responsible for preparing, maintaining, and implementing a General Plan for the town, as well as approving all site and development plans. This group of residents makes recommendations to Council for any changes or improvements within Clementon. We are looking for community volunteers for this Board.

If interested, please contact:
Jenai Johnson (Municipal Clerk)
or
Tori Kupsey (Deputy Clerk)
at 856-783-0284, Ext. 124

CLEAN COMMUNITIES

The fall Clean Communities event will be held Saturday October 19 and Sunday October 20. This is the perfect opportunity to clean up your yard or even your street; old swing sets, fences, and lawn furniture will all be accepted, as well as any rubbish you have collected from the curb line.

Dumpsters will be placed at the rear of the Clementon Library, and accessible from 9am until 3pm both days. Only residents of the Borough of Clementon are able to access this area, and identification will be requested. If you have any questions on materials you are able to dispose of, please call the public works office at (856) 784-0495 to check!

SPECIAL EVENTS

This committee of residents is always looking for new volunteers to help plan, staff, and support events in town. We have several major events throughout the year, but are always open to adding more! Please contact gcantwell@clementon-nj.com for more information or to share ideas.

Upcoming Events:
Trunk or Treat - Oct. 30
Christmas parade/ Holiday Party - Dec. 13

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Clementon is turning 100 next year and the Centennial committee is working hard to ensure that the Veterans Monument in Heroes Park is up-to-date. If you entered military service from Clementon - even if you're not a current resident - and your name is not yet listed on the monument, please send a copy of your DD-214 to ClementonHistoricalCommission@gmail.com. Please feel free to redact your sensitive information from the form, just make sure we can verify your name and place of entry into active duty. Not a Veteran yourself, but know one? Please spread the word so we can add as many names as we can!

The Office of Veterans Affairs serves all veterans and their family members within Camden County. This office is located in the Wolverton Library, 3rd Floor 200 College Drive, Blackwood, NJ 08012, and is available Monday through Friday to give assistance to all our veterans and dependents. If you have any questions regarding our services, please call (856) 374-5801.

SUSTAINABLE JERSEY

Several residents of Clementon are working toward certification in this statewide program. Help is always welcome, from boots on the ground to penning the submissions. More details can be found at www.sustainablejersey.com.

To volunteer, please contact:
gcantwell@clementon-nj.com

Clementon's annual Memorial Day ceremony was held on May 27th, with several local veterans both attending and presenting. Thank you to all that came out! Special thanks to the fire department for performing the flag ceremony.



LIBRARY

We are saddened to report the closing of our beloved Clementon Memorial Library. As the library was an entirely separate organization, the town was simply not able to step in to oversee it. Hopefully in the near future the two entities will be able to cooperate in reopening!

Fortunately, Clementon does pay into the County library system and residents are able to use ANY county library. Residents of member communities are eligible for a free two-year library card with proof of address. There are two branches within 5 miles of us located at 203 Laurel Rd, Voorhees, and at 15 S Black Horse Pike, Blackwood. Visit www.camdencountylibrary.org for more info.

COUNTY INFORMATION

Did you know that Camden County has a Tool Library? Membership is free for any county resident!

Members of the Tool Library will be able to rent a tool for a period of time rather than purchasing one from the store. To join and for inventory availability drop by at:
508 Lakeland Road, Blackwood
856-374-5195
Hours of Operation (or can call ahead)
Monday – Friday: 9AM – 3PM
or visit the website at:
sustainablecamdencounty.myturn.com/library

All tools in the Tool Library have been donated by the public, and we will continue to accept tools on a rolling basis. We gladly welcome both volunteers and donations of tools that are in good working order. Donations of tools can be made at the Regan Building on the Lakeland Site or an arrangement can be made to pick them up.

NEW JERSEY STATE PARKS

There have been many access improvements throughout Wharton State Forest!

New Canoe and Kayak Launcher and Dock
Stay dry when sliding into Atsion Lake with our newly-installed canoe and kayak launch and dock. The canoe and kayak launch eases boarding and launching for people of all abilities.

While you’re there, check out Atsion’s inclusive playground with swings and sound elements or feel the sand and water using a beach wheelchair and beach access mat.

Atsion Recreation Area is located at 715 Route 206, Shamong, NJ.

For more information, please call the Atsion Office at 609-268-0444.

All-Terrain Wheelchair Now Available at Batsto Village
Navigate the sandy Pine Barrens trails in and around Batsto Village on Wharton State Forest’s battery-powered all-terrain wheelchair. All-terrain wheelchair is free to use. Reservations and walk-ins on first come, first serve basis.

Call Batsto Visitor Center at 609-561-0024 to reserve it for your next visit to Batsto!
Batsto Historic Site is located at 31 Batsto Road, Hammonton, NJ 08037.

CURRENT SERVICE MEMBERS

- Army**
E-3 Joshua Silva of Niagara Avenue is stationed at Fort Campbell, KY. He is working as an Airsoft mechanic.
- Army National Guard**
E-4 Specialist Ariam Escobar of Niagara Avenue is currently serving as a 91B Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic stationed in Cherry Hill, NJ.
- Marines**
Lance Corporal Class Jonathan States of Blackwood-Clementon Road is stationed at Cherry Point, NC, soon to be deployed to the Northern Atlantic area.

CLEMENTON ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

The Clementon Environmental Commission meets on the third Wednesday of the month, in the Courtroom at 7:30PM. You can find us on Facebook for updated walks, cleanups, and news, and also on our website at clementonenvironmental.weebly.com

YIKES! While we were sleeping ALIEN species have been taking over Clementon and surrounding areas and it is up to us to start fighting back. Invasive species are defined as organisms not native to a particular ecosystem that, once established, overwhelms native species. Some favorite plants that are actually invasive include Crepe Myrtle, Rose of Sharon, Wisteria, Bradford Pear, and Butterfly Bush. Below is a list of New Jersey's most common invasive plants:

- Amur Honesuckle
- Autumn Olive
- Bamboo
- Barberry
- Black Locus
- Common Reed (Phragmites)
- Daylily
- English Ivy
- Garlic Mustard
- Japanese Honeysuckle
- Japanese Knotweed
- Lily of the Valley
- Multiflora Rose
- Oriental Bitterswee
- Periwinkle
- Purple Loosestrife
- Sweet Clematis
- Tree of Heaven
- Winged Burning Busch
- Wisteria

White this list is long, it is far from complete, many more species can be added. Invasive species, both plant and animal, are serious because they change our ecosystem, affect pollinators, cause changes in our wildlife and affects our quality of life. So let us roll up our sleeves, educate ourselves and prepare for war.

Check the web sites listed below for more information:
Wikipedia, List of Invasive plants in New Jersey
The Native Plant Society of New Jersey
NJDEP:
An Overview of Nonindigenous Plant Species in New Jersey
National Invasive Species Information Center

We also would like to congratulate Bonnie Weaver and Penny for being the winners of our Garden Contest.



Please visit our Facebook page to see color photos of the Fairy Garden and Native American Medicine Wheel Garden! Thanks to all who entered, all the gardens were beautiful.

CLEMENTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

September is always a joyous time of year, especially in our school. While students and teachers were enjoying their summer vacations, contractors and the building and grounds team were hard at work on projects to refresh indoor and outdoor spaces.



Freshly painted primary grade entrance area creates a safe color-coded entry for students and expedites police response time.

Maintaining our school building and grounds is essential to creating an engaging learning environment for students. Inside our school, several projects were completed including updates to our Media Center decor, refinishing of the floors in our gym, the kitchen and other rooms and offices. Exterior and interior walls were given a fresh coat of paint which makes any space more inviting.



Media Center wall art

There is a lot of excitement in our school community about the nearly complete (as of mid-August) obstacle course and walking track.

This project is an excellent addition to our school grounds for students and community members to benefit from. Community members are welcome to utilize the space at the



The obstacle course & walking track

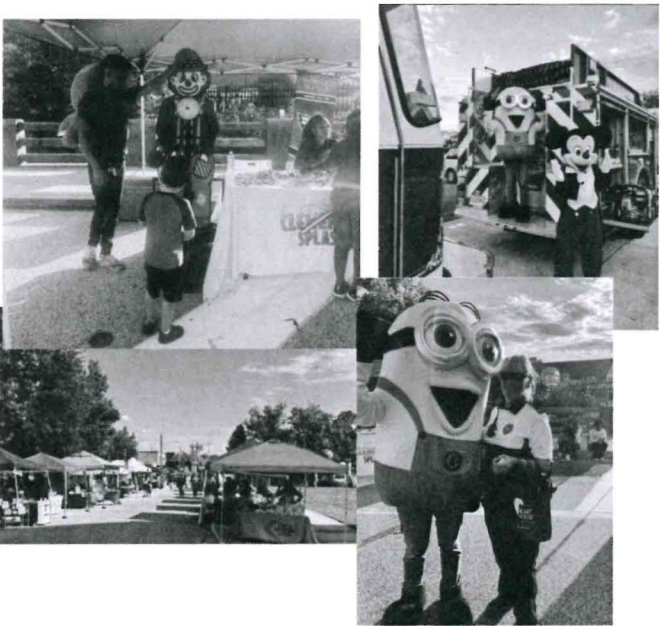
end of school and aftercare hours on weekdays and on weekends. The outdoor play experience will also be enhanced as we replaced playground mulch with a rubberized play surface. The rubberized play surface provides a comfortable, soft cushion to walk, run, or play on, and complies with ADA standards for handicap accessible playgrounds.

Safety remains a top priority in our school. Recently, a path gate was completed with an emergency egress. In addition, we’ve introduced a new door fob system and security cameras along the path - all of which will enhance the safety of our students and employees. The Clementon Board of Education and District administration take great pride in being able to prioritize and complete such projects that benefit all Clementon residents.

CLEMENTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Clementon’s Nation Night Out was held on Monday August 12th at Garfield Ave and the Activity Field. We had perfect weather for the many vendors, giveaways, bounce houses, and pony rides!

Special thanks go to DiMeglio Septic, Characters4U and AirfullyYours for their generous donations of products and time that help make this event happen!



PUBLIC WORKS

The Clementon Department of Public Works has been very busy and hard at work serving the community. The infrastructure is being maintained, and planned updates are currently being performed with the rising cost of today's world being taken into consideration. Some of the larger, more noticeable projects that we are working with the County on are the Gibbsboro Rd/ Berlin Rd intersection that has been completed and currently Berlin RD from Lake Ave to Delaware Ave. The Public Works has just hired 2 new employees, which puts us at the correct staffing levels. The Fire Hall/ Community center has been repainted, and the Bottoms Lake embankment was reinforced. All this was completed along with our regular summer task of park maintenance, brush pickups and building/property maintenance. We like to know that the community is our eyes and ears and when anyone has a question or a concern:

1. Give Public Works a call: 856-784-0495
2. Check the Borough website
3. Borough Calendar
4. Call the Borough Hall: 856-783-0284

The Sewer Department is responsible for the maintenance of the sewer mains. Property owners are responsible for the laterals from the house to the main, including to the vent. If you discover a blockage, you may call the sewer department to come out and perform a courtesy plunge in an effort to alleviate the problem. Recurrences of this type will require the homeowner to contact a professional plumber to correct the problem.

The Water Department will begin reading water meters September 9th. 'Call back cards' will be left at properties when the borough employee is not able to gain access to the meter. When you receive this card you have the following options:

1. Complete and return the callback card (If you are not sure where your meter is located or if it is hard to read, please call 856-783-0284 ext #114).
2. Call the provided number and provide a reading by phone
3. Call and request an employee return and read the meter

At this time, if your meter is located inside your home please call the above number and schedule your free meter replacement as soon as possible. Clementon Public Works employees will also be knocking on doors to schedule these mandatory replacements.

The Water Department will begin flushing hydrants the week of October 7th. This will occur weekdays between the hours of 9am and 3pm. During this time, you may experience discolored water and/or low water pressure.

Leaf/Brush Collection will take place during the following weeks:

Zone 1:	October 21 st	November 18 th
Zone 2:	October 28 th	November 25 th
Zone 3:	November 4 th	December 2 nd
Zone 4:	November 11 th	December 9 th

There will be one pickup during your scheduled week, we are not able to make return trips. There will be no late collections. If you miss your week, leaves must be stored on your property and cannot be left in the roadway. This will be strictly enforced.

Brush collection will be done the same week as leaf pickup. Please keep brush separate from your leaves, and collect logs and stumps in a separate pile as they will not fit in the chipper.

- To ensure your leaf pickup, please:
- park vehicles in your driveway or off of the road during your scheduled collection week.
 - rake leaves to curb line or place in OPEN bags or containers
 - if placed in open bags, please leave a trash can curbside to dispose of emptied bags.
 - keep leaves at least 10 feet from any storm drain or outfall (this is an NJDEP rule)
 - bags should not exceed 50 lbs
 - please do not put leaves out more than one week prior to your scheduled collection week
 - Do not mix brush, stone, or any other debris with your leaves

CLEMENTON FIRE – RESCUE

by: Chief Randall Freiling
Clementon Fire Rescue would like to thank members of our governing body, and of course our residents, for their commitment with the acquisition of our new truck. This new engine replaces our 1992 engine and has many new advancements in firefighter safety. The compartmentalization and cab design allow the members to obtain their needed tools/equipment while exiting the cab or on immediate exit. This greatly assists the firefighter to focus fully on the task at hand and not have to move from compartment to compartment to obtain needed equipment. This also allows us to continue moving forward with our goal of lowering the town's ISO ranking to a Class 3.



We will be holding our annual Community Risk Reduction/Fire Prevention, in conjunction with Clementon's Division of Fire Safety, on Saturday, October 12th starting at 11AM at Clementon School. There will be events for children and displays of fire apparatus, along with informational set-ups. This year we've partnered with Friends of Clementon Food Pantry bringing medical professionals, senior services experts, insurance professionals, etc., all tailored for a healthier and safer community.

Additional Borough offices that will be there to answer questions are;
Clementon Police Department
Clementon Code Enforcement
Clementon Division of Fire Safety/Inspection

Non-Borough participants;
Friends of Clementon Food Pantry

Keep an eye on our social media sites for additional information, along with upcoming events such as our annual food drive and SANTA expedition, among others.

Website	www.clementonfire.com
Facebook	Clementon Fire Rescue Station 61
Twitter	@CLEMENTONFIRECO
Instagram	clementonfirerescue

SENIOR AFFAIRS

The John Leshner Senior Center at 49 Berlin Road is open to all area seniors. They are currently looking for volunteers and participants for arts and crafts events, book club, and anything else you'd be interested in sharing. Stop by on Tuesdays from 9am-2pm for more information and a friendly game of Bingo.

The Clementon Housing Authority is always looking for volunteers to share their talents and skills with the seniors; contact bjm@clemhousing.net to offer your expertise.

County Services Available to Seniors
Camden County Division of Senior & Disabled Services/ADRC
Location: DiPiero Building
512 Lakeland Rd., 4th Fl.
Blackwood
Hours: 8:00am to 4:30pm.
Phone: 856-858-3220

This office provides information and assistance, recreational activities, advocacy, assistance with various forms, (e.g., PAAD, Lifeline) and oversees distribution of Federal funds under the Older Americans Act & Title III to various agencies, which provides services pertaining to the well-being of Camden County's aging population. Please contact them to explore your options.

The Carol Norcross Senior Center
Location: 512 Lakeland Road

The Center is currently hosting a weekly Just For Seniors Ceramics Class. Other services and activities at the Senior Social Wellness Center include caregiver support groups, door-to-door transportation, lunch and nutrition programs, woodworking, needlecraft, sewing, painting, board and parlor games, movement programs, educational and community service programs, health screening information and referral services, social services assistance, daily grocery and personal shopping trips.

For more information about upcoming Just for Seniors events, call 856-374-6005 or visit their website at www.camdencounty.com/service/senior-disabled-services

Below is a letter received from Atlantic City Electric regarding the increase in electric bills

Dear Government Official,

Please see the helpful information below to assist residents who may have concerns about their electric bills. I am hopeful that you can share this information with residents on your webpage or social media. If you have other outlets such as municipal cable programs or newsletters, that you feel would be helpful reaching residents, please let me know.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss this further. Thank you

Atlantic City Electric Continues to Assess Increased Energy Usage Effecting South Jersey Customers

The company is committed to working with local officials to support customers facing financial hardships – and urges customers to reach out to the company directly for help.

Mays Landing, N.J. (August 29, 2024) – Summer heat continues impacting the region, with the state on track for potentially the warmest summer to date. Atlantic City Electric understands the extreme summer heat, combined with changes in rates and cost of energy, have led to fluctuations in customers' recent energy bills.

New Jersey experienced the second hottest June on record, with a nearly eight percent temperature increase from June 2023 to June 2024. July was the seventh hottest month on record. It was also determined that residential usage in Atlantic City Electric's service area for June and July increased 20 percent compared to last year.

Recent studies have revealed that New Jersey residents are using energy more than ever before, causing equipment to work harder. This increased energy demand, coupled with inflation and extreme weather, are contributing factors affecting energy bills.

Customers have also experienced a 20 percent overall rate increase during the last year due to several different factors including supply, distribution and seasonal rate increases.

The supply rate is the cost of the electricity a customer uses, and that rate changes based on purchase cost of electric. It is a pass-through cost that the company does not profit from. Customers can use a third-party energy provider for the supply portion of their bill. The distribution rate allows the company to continue investing in reliability upgrades to better serve customers. Distribution rates also address severe storm damage and help us invest in making the grid more resilient against future storms.

We recognize our customers' concerns and the economic challenges so many are facing right now. Atlantic City Electric wants to make certain customers not only understand their bills, but also the resources available to lower energy usage and save money. We will continue to work with local officials to ensure we are meeting the energy needs of our customers and to understand the factors contributing to rising energy costs.

Each customer's bill is unique and can vary from energy use, to supplier, to clean energy solutions like solar. Our goal is to ensure customers are well-informed about the factors affecting their bill so they can better understand rates and consider all potential ways to save energy and money. Which is why we now have a portion of our website dedicated to educating our customers and addressing their concerns. We ask our customers to visit atlanticcityelectric.com/BillSupport where they will find additional information on understanding their energy bill, rates and more. There is a section for customers to directly reach out to our Customer Care team by submitting questions through our online portal – saving our customers' valuable time.

Atlantic City Electric understands and hears our customer concerns – and we are here to empower customers to better manage their energy use with programs to support those who may be struggling to meet their energy needs or are facing a financial hardship.

Energy assistance programs are available for eligible customers that may need help paying their bill. More information is also available to help understand your energy usage and bill.

To help save energy and money on your next bill consider:

- A no-cost Quick Home Energy Check-up identifies energy saving opportunities in your home
- Budget Billing helps make bills more predictable each month during the year
- Seasonal energy-saving tips for your home

Alexandria Likanchuk | Sr. External Affairs Specialist

Atlantic City Electric | Governmental & External Affairs

295 N. Grove Street | Berlin, NJ 08009

o: 856-753-2850 | c: 609-805-3730

atlanticcityelectric.com