

The Chronicle

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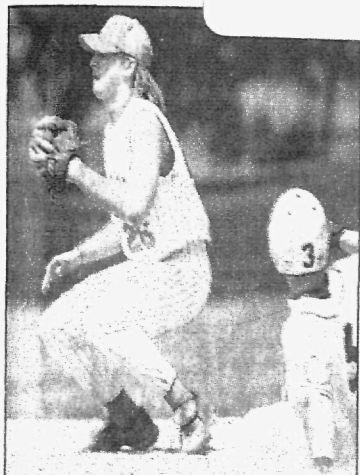
Vol. 144, No. 30

Saturday, July 23, 2005

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ught in 'marking' history



Ticket to the tournament

Post 435 of Edison wrapped up second place in the Middlesex Senior American Legion Baseball League with a 17-5 victory over South Plainfield and earn an automatic trip to district tournament. For recap of Legion games see B1.



Got to be moving on

The Samaritan Homeless Interim Program in Somerville is moving into new digs this week, bringing Director Tom O'Leary's dream of expanding the program into reality. Page B2.

How to Help OPSHBX

Operation: Shoebox New Jersey 2005, in partnership with American Recreational Military Services is seeking cash donations in support of their ongoing effort to supply American forces overseas with a steady supply of personal items, toiletries and snacks. ARMS is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Service code. All contributions are tax-deductible. All contributions are dedicated to the purchase of supplies and costs of shipping. ARMS/Operation: Shoebox New Jersey 2005 is an all-volunteer operation. Depending on weight, it costs between \$8 and \$15 to ship each box overseas. Checks should be made out to ARMS, with the instructions "Operation Shoebox NJ 2005" written on the memo line. Checks should be mailed to: Operation: Shoebox New Jersey 2005, c/o The Chronicle, 44 Veterans Memorial Drive East, Somerville, N.J. 08876. For more on Operation Shoebox, see Page A5.

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Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission is inviting students, historical organizations, community groups and others interested in Middlesex County history to participate in the new Historic Marker Project.

The project aims to publicly recognize locations tied to the heritage of Middlesex County. This project is funded by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders and Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission.

The commission will consider the

following criteria, however all need not be applicable for a site or place of interest to receive a Historic Marker. A site may be deemed eligible if:

— It is on, or deemed eligible for placement on, the state and/or National Register of Historic Places.

— It is significant in the history of Middlesex County, as it is associated with an important event or period in local history, persons or groups affiliated with the site were key to New Jersey's past or heritage or events reflecting cultural diversity, contributions of women and/or others.

— It embodies all or much of its original design, materials and workmanship in the historic structure.

— It is a field, industrial site or the physical remnants of a building when the location meets other criteria.

— It presently does not have an historical marker or signage.

The commission is particularly interested in sites that are little known to the public.

A local entity must be willing to help the commission and be a co-sponsor. Groups such as the local historical society, chamber of com-

merce, schools, PTA or any group interested in history may help with this project.

Whether an adult organization or a class project, this will be a great opportunity to become more familiar with local history.

Participants are encouraged to research various places in their area, recommend a local site for placement of a marker and devise the text to be imprinted on the aluminum or bronze signage.

For more information about the project and for the guidelines, contact Katie Zavoski at (732) 745-4489.



Main Street buzzing with change



GEORGE PACCIELLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Joe Verdicchio, above, general manager of Central Pizzeria in Somerville, removes a pizza from the oven inside the new and improved Main Street eatery. In recent years the Somerville strip and nearby streets have seen numerous shop upgrades relocations and new additions. For example, the Texas Ranch House, top left, is being replaced with a Dunkin' Donuts. Animal Attraction, top center, is moving from Division Street to Davenport Street, and Triangle Reprocenter, top right, is relocating from the Downtown Somerville Shopping Center to Main Street proper.

By JIM WHITE
Staff Writer

SOMERVILLE — Rosemary and Harry James recently split a small pie inside Central Pizzeria, just like they've done since moving to the borough 44 years ago.

Though this time they enjoyed their lunch one door over — 126 West Main Street instead of 122 West Main Street — at the noticeably new and improved Central Pizzeria, which now seats 68 people, has a giant brick oven, brick walls complimented by sweeping panoramas of Venice and other Italian landscapes, and a cocktail lounge in the back.

"We've been watching to see when it would open," said Rosemary James. "I think it's great. I love the pictures."

"And the food is delicious," added her husband.

"We walked over to the other side. The pictures are great," said Rosemary James, referring to The Venetian Grill, a new restaurant the owners introduced alongside their jazzed up pizzeria.

The pizzeria and restaurant — a former pet shop and shoe store — are just two of numerous shop upgrades, relocations and new addi-

tions on Main Street, indicating a growing commitment on the part of small business owners to downtown Somerville.

"We got a lot of action," Mayor Brian Gallagher said of what appears to be an ongoing revitalization of Main Street. "Downtowns offer something the malls cannot. Downtowns have a life, vitality, a neighborhood quality malls and super mega stores cannot offer. ... People come to Somerville for a reason, it's a destination."

Over the last two years, Main Street has seen a number of new restaurants and retailers come in, including Hungry Hound, Discover Wine, Tessuto (men's clothing), Curmudgeon (a music store), Wachovia, Maestro Fencing, and Wasabi (Japanese food). What's in the Ice Box? (gourmet foods) and Triangle Reprocenter also plan to move to Main Street proper.

And with the planned redevelopment of the Downtown Somerville Shopping Center — currently tied up in litigation between its anchor store, Pathmark, the borough and the developer, JSM at Somerville —

Continued on page A2

Redevelopment project gets OK

"Through this redevelopment project, we will create a safe, vital and thriving downtown."

Meryl Frank
Mayor,
Highland Park

HIGHLAND PARK — Borough officials recently released a draft redevelopment plan that will serve as a roadmap for the revitalization of Raritan Avenue.

The draft plan's key objectives include reinvigorating the downtown economy, reinforcing the hometown character of Raritan Avenue, cleaning up polluted and poorly maintained properties, and better controlling traffic and parking for the business district.

"Through this redevelopment project, we will create a safe, vital and thriving downtown," said Mayor Meryl Frank. "Our downtown is a diverse main street where we gather, shop and live as a community. Through responsible redevelopment we will make it stronger economically, safer and a real benefit to the entire community."

The redevelopment plan lays out broad guidelines that are intended to encourage historic preservation, renovation and where appropriate, new development.

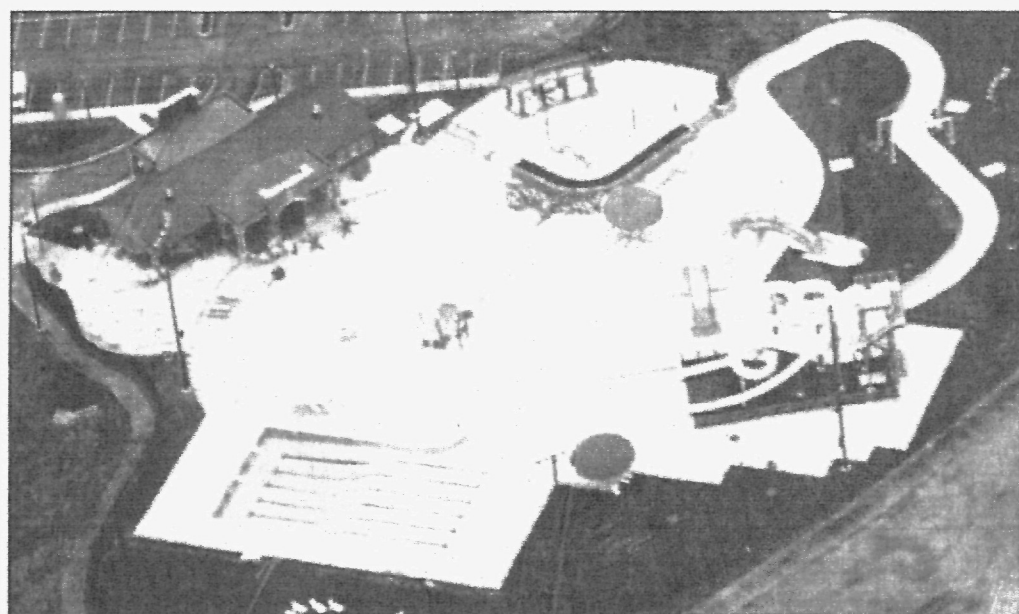
In particular the draft envisions a cultural center, including a movie theater and studio space.

Much of the proposed redevelopment consists of connecting parking lots, only 10 percent of the business district is being considered for renovation of existing buildings or new development.

"The draft plan calls for the creation of places for people to congregate and to enjoy the local businesses and public spaces," said Councilman Stephen Nolan, liaison for economic redevelopment. "Through this process, Raritan Avenue will become an even stronger core of our community."

Frank stressed that the plan encourages current tenants to remain in their properties, maintaining the distinct character of Raritan Avenue.

"The measure for success for redevelopment of Highland Park is not simply a thriving downtown and a stable rateable base, but our success will also be measured by how well our current businesses are treated," said Frank.



COURTESY SOMERSET COUNTY

A study released by the Somerset County Park Commission suggests \$200 million be spent over a 20-year period to keep up with a growing population. This swimming facility in Columbus, Ohio, is a possible model for an aquatic center in Somerset County that would go beyond facilities currently in use, and include more modern amenities, such as a sprayground and a lazy river.

Park Commission suggests \$200M, 20-year commitment

By ALLISON ELYSE GUALTIERI
Staff Writer

There are 10,000 acres in the county park system, featuring 66 bridges, 62 buildings, 39 ponds, 18 tennis courts, 12 picnic areas, five golf courses, four playgrounds and 37 miles of trails, but according to a new capital improvement plan released by the Somerset County Park Commission, that won't be enough to meet the needs of a growing population.

The two-year study, which surveyed existing parks facilities, county residents, local recreation department staff, as well as

looked at national trends, provides the first comprehensive look at the county's present and future recreation options and suggests \$200 million be spent over a 20-year period to keep pace with the projected needs of the county.

"Nothing looked at the county in a comprehensive manner," said Freeholder Director Rick Fontana, citing the study as "a snapshot of the county's needs now and in the future."

Conducted by the firm Brandstetter

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Everything Jersey

Main Street buzzing with change

Continued from page A1

stores have scrambled to relocate to Main Street, including Dunkin'

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Donuts, which will soon replace the Texas Ranch House, the Armed Forces recruiting station, which replaced the Amazon Café, and Path Liquors, which will move in at the former Marty Orshan's Big and Tall Men's Shop.

The revitalization trend has even spilled onto nearby Gaston Avenue, where a butcher shop and funeral home have moved in, and there are plans to rezone the former Shell gas station property for homes and retail space.

But it wasn't always this way. Gallagher said the building of the Bridgewater Commons Mall, which opened in 1988, and the various area strip malls took their toll on Main Street businesses over the years.

Bill Lawton, chairman of the borough's District Management Corporation, said Somerville has always been a vibrant community in one way or another, but mer-

chants were worried when plans for Bridgewater Commons Mall were introduced, and the mall did hurt clothing stores on Main Street.

So, he said, Somerville needed to find a niche — restaurants.

There are now 46 places to catch a meal along Main Street's eight blocks. And there is less than a five percent vacancy rate, not including the shopping center. A number unheard of in many towns, Lawton said.

Back at Central Pizzeria, general manager Joe Verdicchio said his family reinvested in the business because they feel they have a lot more to offer than pizza.

"People think of us as just a pizzeria," he said.

Opened in 1955, Verdicchio's parents, Pasquale and Luisa, have owned the pizzeria since 1976. Now, with the addition of The Venetian Grille, they can offer customers everything from steak to seafood, including sword fish

that customers have found to be "incredible," Verdicchio said. "We got tired of not being able to get food out there that we wanted to do. ... Incredible dishes were being wasted," he said.

He said the old site of the pizzeria, 122 West Main Street, is being used for storage right now, but it may eventually become a third restaurant of the Verdicchios.

Though the economy has seen better days, Verdicchio said this is a great time to reinvest in the restaurant.

"Because people always want to eat food they enjoy. People always enjoy eating well," he said. "People might skip the movies, but they still like to eat."

And Verdicchio said he has noticed more businesses and more people returning to Main Street.

"Antiques always do well. Florists are coming back," he said. "People are starting to like the quaintness of the town."

Further up the road, at 190 West Main Street, employees at The Melting Pot are hoping what people loved to eat in the 1970s — fondue — can make a comeback.

After being open for only a week and a day, Manager Holly Tremper said customers have packed the place every night for the French-Swiss style of cooking that involves melted cheeses and chocolates, bread, fruit and vegetables.

"It's great for dates," she said, adding that a part of the restaurant, dubbed "lovers lane," has very intimate seating and the lighting is just right. "It's very romantic for couples."

The Melting Pot is where Unecda Appliances, which moved down the street, used to be.

Tremper said The Melting Pot is in a prime location.

"This is the county seat. People are always coming down here," she said. "This is one of the oldest main streets that has survived."

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Park Commission suggests \$200M, 20-year commitment

Continued from page A1

Carroll, Inc., of Lexington, Ky., the plan sets out a 20-year vision and process for the county's parkland, one that sets out to achieve a balance between maintenance of existing facilities, new active and passive activities, and open space for the future.

"It's a lot more exciting to talk about new facilities, but

there are a lot of existing facilities that are not meeting needs," said Patrick Hoagland, a principal with Brandstetter Carroll. "There's a lot of things out there now that need to be maintained."

A survey of 801 county residents, conducted as part of the planning process, revealed that the largest areas of need are for walking and biking trails, nature parks, and hiking trails, as well as tennis courts, skating rinks, and playgrounds. Indoor recreation spaces are also in short supply, especially for use by all age groups.

"Municipalities are too small to do some of these things," Hoagland said, emphasizing that the survey indicated that residents desired park projects that are regional in scope, with multiple attractions to draw a

critical mass of people.

To that end, the plan advocates several regional recreation complexes, such as a regional skate park, regional outdoor athletic complex, and regional family activity centers.

The outdoor athletic complexes advocated by the plan include several different types of lighted playing fields, with pathways for walking and bicycling as well as playgrounds.

A family activity center, according to Hoagland, would include recreation opportunities for all ages, from children to senior citizens. Examples included game courts and a game room, meeting rooms, exercise facilities, arts and crafts, an indoor walking track, and possibly even an indoor aquatic center.



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Kevin Vivenzio
Kevin, 12, lives in Clark. His favorite subject in school is history. Kevin plays baseball, basketball, and enjoys bowling. He likes to watch football and golf on TV. During the weekend, Kevin enjoys going to see the Somerset Patriots play baseball. He is a Boy Scout in Troop 145 and enjoys camping and working on merit badges. Some of his hobbies include collecting coins, playing video games, and riding his bike. Kevin hopes to be a sports commentator.

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Middlesex Briefs

Middlesex church holding yard sale

MIDDLESEX — The Middlesex Presbyterian Church is holding a fund-raising yard sale today at 10 a.m. today to benefit the Jerry George Jr. Fund.

Financial donations are also welcome; make check or money order payable to Middlesex Presbyterian Church and write "Jerry George Jr. Fund" in the memo line.

For more information, visit www.mpc.presbychurch.net or call (732) 469-4498.

Pool memberships still available in Middlesex

MIDDLESEX — The Middlesex Community Pool memberships available for the remainder of the 2005 season.

Applications are available at the Municipal Building and Middlesex Public Library, both on Mountain Avenue. Proof of residency and proof of identity are required. Photo ID is required for admission to the pool.

Two more sessions of swimming lessons are scheduled, July 25-Aug. 5 and Aug. 8-19. Registration for the first session is from 10 a.m. to noon today at the pool. Registration for the second session is from 10 a.m. to noon Aug. 6, also at the pool. You must prepare to take a water test for proper placement.

Questions can be referred to (732) 537-1362.

Volunteer chefs are needed for elderly

EDISON — Those who love to cook can become a "Chef for the Day" with the Jewish Family & Vocational Service.

Volunteers are needed to prepare lunch for elderly members of a social adult day program in Edison. Times are between 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for one or more

days during July and August.

For additional information, call E.J. Berman at (732) 777-1940, Ext. 122.

MetroStars offering summer soccer camp

MIDDLESEX — MetroStars Player Development Programs will be offering a summer camp program on behalf of the Middlesex Youth Soccer Association at Mountain View Park in Middlesex Aug. 8-12.

Registration forms are available at the Middlesex Recreation Department. For more information, visit MetroStars.com or contact Dave McKiernan (732-752-4203).

Republican group plans trip to ballgame

MIDDLESEX — The Middlesex Borough Republican Organization is sponsoring a trip to see the New York Yankees vs. the Texas Rangers on Aug. 13.

The first 18,000 fans 14 and under will receive Yankee wristbands. Game time is 1:05 p.m. Buses will leave Middlesex High School at 10 a.m. The cost of the trip is \$40 and includes game ticket and transportation.

For information and to reserve a ticket, call Geri at 732-752-2048.

Piscataway church has summer program

PISCATAWAY — During the week of Aug. 1-5, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., All Saints' Lutheran Church in Piscataway will be hosting a summer program for children age 3 through grade 6 (completed in June).

The theme will be Safari Adventure. Basic Christian teachings will be explored through story, crafts, games, and music. All Saints' is located at 5205 Deborah Drive between Rivercrest Drive and Park Avenue.

The church facility has recently undergone extensive renovation and addition and is now air-conditioned.

For more information, contact the church office at (732) 463-1510.

Vacation bible school coming in August

PISCATAWAY — Christ United Methodist Church will be holding its Vacation Bible School Monday through Friday, Aug. 8-12.

This year's theme is about a

"Serengeti Trek — Where Kids Are Wild About God." Vacation Bible School runs from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. each day.

For registration, call (732) 463-1517. The church is at 485 Hoes Lane, adjacent to the Municipal Complex.

Bereavement support group is now forming

EDISON — The staff and volunteers of the Barbara E. Cheung Memorial Hospice are forming bereavement support groups to help Middlesex County residents who have recently experienced a loss. It is recognized that seasonal changes and going through various holidays and celebrations for the first time after a loved one has passed away can be extremely difficult.

Sessions, which focus on dealing with emotions and stress, and changes as a result of the death, are held from 2 to 3 p.m. the second Wednesday of every month. They are free and open to Middlesex County residents.

For more details, call Jill Zhou LCSW or Rev. Thurlan Meadows at (732) 9335.

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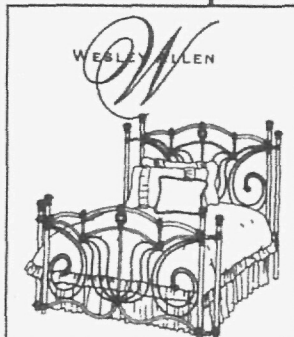
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Commentary

Take the two-hour challenge

The length of the average movie: 120 minutes. The amount of time spent enjoying a meal at an upscale restaurant: two hours.

The amount of time each morning many Central Jersey commuters spend in the car: 60 minutes (which totals two hours, if you are keeping score).

So what are those two hours worth? Just about \$9,333 a year for those Somerset County residents making \$35,000, which is the average county resident's salary, according to Census 2000.

Why the math lesson — because on Tuesday the New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority will hold a two-hour public hearing to discuss a draft of its long-range transportation plan. There are many other things I'm sure most of us can be doing between 7-9 p.m. than sitting in a county meeting room in Somerville. Perhaps planning out the next back road route to take when the inevitable Routes 22, 78, 287, 202 or 206 accidents snarl traffic.

Kidding aside, traffic in Somerset County is getting worse by the year, and the westward migration of residents — and jobs — to Hunterdon County and beyond to Pennsylvania will only increase congestion. To get an idea what Somerset County might look like in a few years, travel the roads of Union and Middlesex counties during rush hour.

Already the state police and other state agencies are reacting to the growth of traffic. Last week the state police announced the addition of five troopers to patrol a 30-mile section of Route 78, from the Pennsylvania border to Bedminster.

According to the state Department of Transportation, traffic on Route 78 has increased from 70,320 in 2000 to 86,250 last year. In addition, there is the construction of a new \$68 million weight station, expected to open in 2006, to help enforce weight limits on trucks and a \$36 million project to rebuild the Routes 78 and 287 interchange.

In addition, advance planning can have a big impact in helping to alleviate what will become a commuting nightmare in Central Jersey — if the present rate of increase is left unchecked.

Tuesday's hearing will bring the public up to date on a plan titled "Access and Mobility 2030," which is a composite of seven study projects mixed with comments from area leaders and growth forecasts. What state leaders hope to take away from the session is what people think about the plan, in particular if they think the initiatives will work, and which ones won't.

The hearing on the plan takes place 7-9 p.m. Tuesday in the freeholders' meeting room at the Somerset County Administration Building in Somerville. To view the Access and Mobility 2030 plan, visit www.njtpa.org.

Letter to the Editor

Permit parking removal bad idea for Somerville

To The Editor:

The latest scheme by the Somerville Parking and Traffic Committee to do away with permit parking is a fine example of how appointed officials think they can get away with something when citizens aren't looking.

It is a common practice to change a popular program during the vacation season.

Well, it won't work.

The issuance of permit parking decals in residential streets around schools and hospitals is successful in many towns, including Somerville.

When I chaired former Mayor David Hollod's west end parking task force, I became acutely aware of how students and visitors abuse the hospitality of a neighbor-

hood. In Somerville, taxpayers face a dual loss.

First we must subsidize the non-profit parochial schools and hospital with our tax dollars.

Then we have to put up with their litter and congestion when they patronize the institutions that give no tax relief to their hosts.

A reason for permit parking is to allow quiet tree-lined neighborhoods to remain that way instead of having them littered and congested daily.

Real estate prices in Somerville are at an all-time high.

Perhaps prospective homebuyers ought to tour the neighborhoods near the schools and hospital when they are open before they bid on a house.

The value of these properties would be substantially lower when they are blocked by scores of parked cars with students throwing their fast food wrappers on lawns.

Homes adjacent to schools and the hospital would quickly lose their "curb appeal."

I am sure that the majority of the Borough Council members realize that home values are the cornerstone of funding for our public schools and local government.

Any idea that jeopardizes home values and incites the neighbors is just plain idiotic.

It might be time for the mayor and council to do away with the parking and traffic committee.

GRANVILLE Y. BRADY Jr.
Somerville

Quotable

"What has made SHIP work is our ability to advocate for the needs of our clients. One of the goals of Safe Harbor is that we want to get the people off the streets and out of the downtown area. We are trying to offer some solutions to those problems."

Tom O'Leary

"It's a lot more exciting to talk about new (park) facilities, but there are a lot of existing facilities that are not meeting need. There's a lot of things out there now that need to be maintained."

Patrick Hoagland

Question of the week:

Will having a different date for the state's presidential primary alter voter turnout?



KIM BEERS
Readington

"I think voter turnout will increase by being more convenient."



SONIA DaSILVA
Somerville

"It's possible. It might increase the number of people coming out to vote. Because of so much going on in our lives, the increase may not be that significant."



SYDELL FISHER
Bridgewater

"I think it's a good thing."



MARY MEANY
Hillsborough

"The more opportunity to vote, the more participation you will have. It's good for democracy."

Letters to the Editor

Assemblyman earns praise

To The Editor:

As your mayor, I constantly struggle with the need to provide services that will keep South Plainfield the great borough that it is while at the same time keeping property taxes under control. That goal is complicated when emergencies arise which were not anticipated in the annual budget. Two such events occurred within the last month.

We are in the process of constructing a new building behind borough hall to enhance our police services particularly in the area of juvenile justice.

It was expected that the cost of construction would be totally offset through the use of drug forfeiture funds, which have been accumulated by the police department over the years. When the project went out to bid, we discovered that an additional \$50,000 was needed to award the contract. Police Chief John Ferraro and I met with our hometown Assemblyman, Patrick Diegnan and asked for his assistance.

A few days after this meeting, our police department was notified that all of the bullet proof vests used by our officers were potentially defective and that the company that provided them had declared bankruptcy.

The cost of replacement was approximately \$18,000, which also was not anticipated in the borough budget. Again the Chief and I reached out to Assemblyman Diegnan for help.

In both instances Assemblyman Diegnan came through for our residents. He met with Gov. Codey's Assistant Chief of Staff and convinced him of the need for a \$50,000 grant for the police building. He also proved the need to the Attorney General's office and we have been informed that South Plainfield will receive a grant to cover the cost of the bullet proof vests. These are just two of the most recent occasions when our hometown Assemblyman has come to bat for South Plainfield.

Although both of these

involve public safety, Assemblyman Diegnan's efforts haven't stopped there.

Just last month we were informed that we will be awarded \$50,000 under a state livable community grant to build a footbridge over the brook which separates the fireman's memorial from the veteran's memorial on Plainfield Avenue.

We will now be able to complete our vision of a memorial walk, which will connect the memorials in a beautiful, reflective walk with benches.

Last winter, Assemblyman Diegnan obtained \$200,000 in grant money to cover the cost of decorative lighting along the newly reconstructed Hamilton Boulevard. He is also pursuing a grant for historic looking street signs. He obtained over \$200,000 in grant money for the new sidewalks and curbs on Maple Avenue.

Our state of the art Computer Assisted Dispatch Center at the police station, which cost \$600,000 was totally paid for with a safe and secure communities grant through the efforts of our Assemblyman. Only through his efforts were we able to receive a grant of \$1million from the D.E.P. to clean up Veteran's Park.

All of this is in addition to the efforts that our Assemblyman has made on behalf of the South Plainfield school district.

There would not be a Future Stars Program if not for the law authored by Assemblyman Diegnan, which literally saved the pre-school program. Our Superintendent of Schools Robert Rosado called Assemblyman Diegnan's actions "miraculous" and he said he never dreamed that the district would receive the approximate \$230,000 in funding which was a direct result of the Assemblyman's intervention with the state treasurer. I was always taught to never forget to say thank you when someone does something nice for you.

DANIEL GALLAGHER
Mayor, South Plainfield

Library celebrates 75 years in county

To the Editor:

During the Great Depression, when the average yearly salary was \$1,368, Somerset County residents gathered around radios to listen to the Yankees, danced to the big band sound of Duke Ellington and escaped into books by writers such as Agatha Christie, Dashielle Hammett and Raymond Chandler. Many of these books were borrowed from the newly organized Somerset County Library System.

The Somerset County Library System was organized in 1930 to enable local libraries to obtain books that were too expensive for local libraries to purchase on their own, loan books to public and private schools, provide stimulus for public libraries in communities and provide a bookmobile service to serve rural sections.

In its first year, the library lent about 300 books each day through its many stations in private homes, schools and barbershops. For 75 years, Somerset County Library System librarians, directors, boards and commissions have worked tirelessly to make a difference in people's lives by providing the best resources to county residents in an accessible, prompt manner.

Today, the Somerset County Library System serves over 100,000 patrons and circulates almost 2 million items annually. While the bulk of library business still revolves around books, the services that the library provides have grown to include Internet access, online databases, audio books, DVDs, CDs, programs for all ages and much, much more.

Stop by any of the branch libraries located in Bridgewater, Hillsborough, North Plainfield, Peapack-Gladstone, Rocky Hill, Warren and Watchung on Monday, Aug. 8, for a day of special programs. A list of the day's celebratory activities may be found online at www.somerset.lib.nj.us under "More News."

The library also will have a tent at the annual 4-H Fair, Aug. 17 through 19, and youth services librarians will present a story time for kids at 2 p.m. each day in the Clover Theatre at the fair.

Please join the Board of Freeholders in celebrating the Somerset County Library System's 75th anniversary.

RICK FONTANA
Director, Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Committee only advises

To The Editor:

The recent article "Permit parking under review (July 14)" indicates that members of the local press corps report facts, not just opinions.

The writer opens the door to "cronyism" at its best as she refers to on-street parking permits located outside of the Somerville business area. For most of my tenure on the Parking and Traffic Committee, recommendations were requested by the mayor and Borough Council and after fair and proper research, a report was submitted.

The parking and traffic com-

mittee did not then — and do not now — act as anything but an advisory committee.

All too many reports were ignored in favor of "cronyism" — so Lot 7 went untouched for years and still does. Recently, I was advised by a good source that the State Department of Transportation will be involved in any on-street neighborhood permit parking projects and this should require a review of all permit parking in the borough.

Meantime, thanks to your reporter.

HERB MOBIS
Somerville

The Chronicle

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The Chronicle is here for you

The following information will help you get your ideas and community news into The Chronicle:

Call editor Craig Turpin at (908) 575-6698 with story suggestions, questions or comments. Information can be e-mailed to middlesex@njnpublishing.com.

The sports editor is Dave Allena. He can be reached at (908) 575-6690.

Our address: The Chronicle, PO Box 699, Somerville, NJ 08876. Our fax number is (908) 575-6683.

Correction policy

The Chronicle will correct errors of fact, context or presentation and clarify any news content that confuses or misleads readers. Please report errors to editor Craig Turpin at (908) 575-6698.

Al Asad, Iraq

Care packages fill shelves at Barracks 7-11

We received this letter of thanks and the accompanying photo from a New Jersey Marine unit deployed in Iraq:

Mr. Hirsch,

I wanted to thank you for the support you've given my Marines through the "Operation Shoebox" program. . . . I've set up what's become known as the Barracks "7-11" where my Marines can go and pick what they need to make life here a little more comfortable.

Every time my Marines see that I receive packages, they know that the "7-11" is soon to be restocked and are usually waiting nearby. I've enclosed a picture of my Marines for you, to see the faces that you are thinking about, most of them are from New Jersey. Thanks again for your thoughts and prayers.

Semper Fi.

Gunnery Sergeant Clark J. Rhie
Platoon/Convoy
Commander
1st Platoon
Transportation Company
Combat Logistics Battalion 2
Al Asad, Iraq

Volunteers needed

Somerville Mayor Brian Gallagher and Councilman Sean Decker are organizing a second "Operation Somerville Supply Line" event, hoping to duplicate the success of the first Supply Line held in downtown Somerville May 14 when more than 200 volunteers were on hand to help box, wrap and ship 600 packages to U.S. soldiers and Marines from the Central Jersey area who are deployed in Iraq.

Volunteers, donations of goods, and financial support are needed for the Aug. 12 event, which will be staged to take advantage of the huge

Rod Hirsch
Executive
Editor



crowds which pack Somerville Friday nights for the Classic Cruisers car show, as well as a live broadcast by oldies' station WMTR-AM, which has helped to spread the word about Operation: Shoebox New Jersey 2005. The station will begin to broadcast more information as we get closer to the date.

We'll need packers beginning at 5 p.m., and we should finish up by 9 p.m. Refreshments will be provided. Headquarters for Supply Line will be on West Main Street at the former Goodwill store in the Somerville Shopping Center. Volunteers will also be needed a few days ahead of time to set up the storefront with tables and chairs, as well as transporting the items to be packed from The Chronicle office, where the pre-sorting takes place.

You must sign up ahead of time to help out. We need an accurate count of volunteers to ensure a successful event. Call (908) 253-3348 for further information.

Free summer camp

Howard Miller, who runs Johnsonburg Presbyterian Camp in northwest New Jersey is offering a free week of summer camp to school-age children, 7-17, of soldiers who have been deployed overseas.

Janet Fandel, who's working with Operation: Shoebox New Jersey 2005 to organize a drive for her fellow employees at Ortho Women's Health in Raritan, called to tell us about the camp, spread across 450 acres about 15 minutes from



Members of First Platoon, Transportation Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 2, U.S. Marines, pose at Camp Lejeune, N.C. prior to their deployment to Iraq.

COURTESY CLARK J. RHIE

the Delaware Water Gap.

Both of her sons - one of whom is now on his second tour of duty in Iraq - attended the camp as youngsters.

"This is a wonderful camp for children of all faiths," she said. "Both my sons participated in the camp for many years, and it was always a positive experience."

John Hales, who heads the Family Assistance Center at the 42nd Infantry Armory in Franklin, can help families make arrangements with the camp. He can be reached at (732) 937-6290. The camp website is www.campjburg.org and can also be reached by calling (908) 852-2349.

Postcard blitz

Patriot Media's "I Love America" campaign has been a huge success, judging by the

number of postcards addressed to U.S. soldiers arriving at the office of The Chronicle.

The cable TV company, which has 115,000 subscribers, mailed gift packages to every home in their coverage area in Somerset, Morris, Hunterdon, and Mercer counties to celebrate America and the July 4th holiday.

The kit included an Operation: Shoe Box New Jersey 2005 coloring postcard, which recipients were asked to fill out and forward to The Chronicle. We've received more than 1,000, all containing messages of support for the soldiers and Marine who are deployed overseas.

Here's what some of you wrote:

"We are all thinking about you and hope you are doing well. Please stay safe and come home

soon." Nicholas, 9, Hillsborough. "Please be careful and come home soon." Gillian, 6, Basking Ridge.

"Thank you for fighting for our country. Take care of yourself. Good luck." Mackenzie, 15, Neshanic Station.

"Dear Troops, Our country is greatly indebted to you for your courage, time and sacrifice. We have not forgotten you and we are very proud of you and your families. We owe you big time." Sue and Joe, 41, Hillsborough.

"Dear Soldier, Thank you for your bravery and for keeping our country free. We wish you a safe return soon. God Bless America. God Bless You." Barbara, 38, Branchburg.

"Thank you for fighting for freedom for all the children, so they can be free like the children in America. We appreciate what you're doing. Hurry and get back

h o m e

We miss you. Keep the world safe." Leanna, 10, Hillsborough.

"I hope you are OK. I pray for our troops every day. War is terrifying for you, I'm sure, but you are steadfast in your duty and especially in what our country stands for - freedom and liberty.

God Bless and keep you safe." Grace, 70, Somerville.

"Jessie colored this card and ran out to play. Thanks to you and all our very dear, brave, patriotic wonderful people keeping our country safe, she was able to go and play. . . . I can clean and cook and go to church feeling safe. . . ." Barbara, Joe, Joey, Robyn, Buddy and Jessica, Somerset.

Postcards can be mailed to OPHBX headquarters at The Chronicle newspaper, and we'll pack them in the boxes we'll be shipping as part of Operation Somerville Supply Line Aug. 12.

The kit also includes Patriot Crayons for coloring the Operation Shoe Box postcard.

Mail postcards to:
The Chronicle
44 Veterans Memorial Drive
East
Somerville, N.J. 08876
Further information is available at www.patmedia.net/america

Rod Hirsch is executive editor of The Chronicle. He can be reached at (908) 575-6684 or email rhirsch@njnpublishing.com

Calendar of Events

July 21: Multi-estate auction, Bodnar's Auction, Ukrainian Cultural Center, 135 Davidson Ave., Franklin. Donations and contributions accepted for Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005. Box lots, 11:30 p.m., main sale, 4:30 p.m. (732) 545-1700.

Aug. 1: 6th annual Somerset Patriots Charity Golf Classic, Neshanic Valley Golf Course, Neshanic Station, shotgun start, 12:30 p.m. Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 is the spotlight charity for this event, which last year raised \$57,000 for Somerset Patriots Charities. Buffet lunch, putting contest, driving range, cocktail reception, four-course dinner, awards banquet. Each

group will be paired with a Somerset Patriot player. Registration deadline is July 22. (908) 252-0700.

Aug. 1: Clinton Station Diner, Route 173 & Bank Street, Clinton (off Route 78), 15 percent of the dinner receipts from 4-9 p.m. will be donated to Operation Shoebox. (908) 713-0012.

Aug. 12: "Somerville Supply Line." Somerville officials and residents will gather with Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 volunteers to box and ship items for U.S. troops 4-8 p.m. Landmark Shopping Center, West Main Street, Somerville. Donations of needed items requested. (908) 575-6684.

Operation: Shoebox New Jersey 2005 Drop-off sites:

Somerset County

The Chronicle office, 44 Veterans Memorial Drive East, Somerville
Commerce Bank Ballpark, 1 Patriots Way, Bridgewater
The 250th Signal Battalion, 42nd Infantry Armory on Hamilton Street in Franklin
The Somerville U.S. Postal Service office at 39 Division St., Somerville
Somerset County Sheriff's Office, County Administration Building, Grove Street, Somerville
Morgan Stanley, 166 West Main St., Somerville
Mannion's Pub & Restaurant, 150 West Main St., Somerville
Alfonso's Italian Restaurant, 99-101 West Main St., Somerville
Lloyd's Furniture, 130 West Main St., Somerville
Beneath It All, 72 West Main St., Somerville
Wachovia Bank, 1 West Main St., Somerville
Dr. William Moskowitz, 205 West Main St., third floor, Somerville
Somerville Center Antiques, 33 West Main St., Somerville
Dorell & Sons Locksmith, 20 W. Somerset St., Raritan
Shop-Rite Supermarket, 611 West Union Ave., Bound Brook
Girl Scouts of Rolling Hills Council, 1171 Route 28, North Branch
Nan Romano Fine Apparel/Distinctive Gifts, 432 Main St., Bedminster
Somerset County Park Commission main office, North Branch Park, Milltown Road, Bridgewater
Somerset County Environmental Education Center, 190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge
Leonard J. Buck Garden, 11 Layton Road, Far Hills
Warrenbrook Golf Course, Warrenville Road, Warren
Spooky Brook Golf Course, Colonial Park, Amwell Road, Franklin
Raritan Valley Community College Theater and Student Activities office, Route 28, North Branch
Learning Express Toys, 315 Route 206, Hillsborough

Test Sports Club, 1982 Washington Valley Road, Martinsville
US Bicycle Hall of Fame, Main Street, Bridgewater
Powerhouse Gym, Route 22, Bridgewater
Felix #9 Diner, Route 22, Bridgewater
Bedminster Post Office, 251 Somerville Road, Bedminster
Attic Treasures Antiques, Sansone Plaza, Route 22 East, Green Brook
Country Manor Furniture, 272 Route 22 West, Green Brook
Dr. Steven C. Balestracci, 154 Adamsville Road North, Bridgewater
Soprano's, 154 Adamsville Road North, Bridgewater
The Cricket, 408 Elizabeth Ave., Somerset
Morgan Stanley, 15 Independence Blvd., Warren
Baja Fresh Mexican Grill, 1595 Route 22 West, Watchung
Attic Treasures, 319 Route 22 East, Sansone Plaza, Green Brook
AAA Vac, 1515 Route 22 West, Watchung Square Mall, Watchung
Borough Hall, Route 22 and Grove Street, Somerville
Gladstone Cleaners, 258 Main St., Peapack-Gladstone
North Branch Post Office, Route 22, North Branch
Somerset Medical Center main lobby, 110 Rehill Ave., Somerville
Capelli Salon, 1171 Route 202 North, Branchburg
Natural Medicine and Rehabilitation, 745 Routes 202/206 South, Bridgewater
Sal's Talk of the Town, 1987 Washington Valley Road, Martinsville
Bucky's/The Closet, 45 So. Main St., Manville
Sherman & Son Jewelers, Bridgewater Commons Mall (second level), Bridgewater
Sherman & Son Jewelers, Somerset Shopping Center, Route 202/206, Bridgewater
Exercise Woman, Route 206 South, Raritan
Eagle Fence and Supply, 3220 Route 22 West, Branchburg

Middlesex County

Dollar Planet Dollar Store, Route 28, Middlesex
Summit Federal Savings & Loan, Washington Avenue, Dunellen
United Methodist Church, 150 Dunellen Ave., Dunellen
Dunellen Public Library, New Market Road, Dunellen
Variety Village, 420 Main St., Metuchen
George's Dry Cleaning, 424 Main St., Metuchen
Boro Ace Hardware, 655 Middlesex Ave., Metuchen
Metuchen Savings Bank, 429 Main St., Metuchen
What's The Scoop, 410 Main St., Metuchen
Quick Sign, 3 Kellogg Ct., Unit 15, Edison
Abbey Carpet, 501 Stelton Road, Piscataway

Hunterdon County

The Hunterdon County Democrat, 8 Minnekaoning Road, Flemington
Clinton Station Diner, Route 78 (exit 13), Clinton
Colalillo Shop-Rite Supermarket, 272 Route 202/31 North, Flemington
Sherman & Son Jewelers, Route 202, Flemington
Hunterdon Lock & Safe, 41 Mine St., Flemington
Perryville Wines & Liquors, 72 Route 173, Hampton
Rudl Fence, 2020 Highway 31, Glen Gardner
Stanton General Store, Route 629, Stanton

Warren County

Star Gazette & Warren Reporter, 106 E. Moore St., Hackettstown
Hackettstown Trading Post Furniture Gallery, 155 Main St., Hackettstown
Second Time Around, 124 Main St., Hackettstown
Franky & Johnny's Island Park Bar & Grill, 261 Route 46 East (intersection of Routes 46 & 31), Buttzville
Tramontin Harley Davidson, Exit 12, Route 80 Hope Interchange, Hope
The Hearth Shoppe, 12 Market St., Belvidere

SALUTE THEIR SACRIFICE



Salute the sacrifice of our troops deployed around the world by donating care package items through OPERATION SHOEBOX: NEW JERSEY 2005.

The Reporter, along with our community & corporate partners, are collecting small, personal items that will be packaged and shipped to the brave men and women serving overseas.

Look for our drop-off boxes at a store or business near you! Pick up The Reporter each week for updates and information. For details on becoming a drop off location, contact The Reporter's Executive Editor, Rod Hirsch at (908) 575-6684. Send your message of support today!

We're collecting the following items to be sent to our troops overseas:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suncan lotion | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bug spray | <input type="checkbox"/> Small drink mixes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lip balm | <input type="checkbox"/> Socks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feminine products | <input type="checkbox"/> Clothesline/plins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ear swabs | <input type="checkbox"/> Snack food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry detergent | <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal/protein bars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bug wipes/bug strips | <input type="checkbox"/> Fleece blankets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wipes (travel size) | <input type="checkbox"/> Microwaveable foods |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Razors | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard candy/gum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eye drops | <input type="checkbox"/> Batteries (any size) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spices/Tea bags | <input type="checkbox"/> Calling cards |

*Donated items must be in their original packaging.

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Anton Check

Anton Check, 88, died July 18, 2005 at the Burnt Tavern Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center in Brick.

Born in Perth Amboy, he lived in Fords and Hopelawn before moving to Brick in 1978.

Mr. Check retired after 35 years with the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical High School in New Brunswick, where he was a machine shop teacher for day and night classes. He attended Rutgers University.

He enjoyed swimming and shuffleboard at the Greenbriar II adult community in Brick.

Preceding him in death were four sisters, Josephine Brinkerhoff, Catherine Ditski, Sophie McCarthy and

Mary; and two brothers, Phillip and Joseph.

Surviving are his wife, Helen Pruss Check; a son, Anton D. and wife Louise of South Plainfield; a daughter, Carol Ann Szczesny of Weston, Fla.; a brother, John of Clearwater, Fla.; a sister, Anne of South Plainfield; a grandson, Anton D. of Upper Freehold; two granddaughters, Natalie Ann Temple of Flemington and Kristin Szczesny of Weston; and four great-grandchildren.

A funeral Mass was held Thursday at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, South Plainfield, following services at the McCrisky Home for Funerals in South Plainfield. Burial was in St. Gertrude Cemetery, Colonia.

Edna Mae Lee

SOUTH BOUND BROOK — Edna Mae Jackson Lee, 77, died July 15, 2005 at the Haven Hospice of Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield.

Born Dec. 19, 1927 in South Bound Brook, she was a daughter of the late Nelson and Edna Hall Jackson.

Mrs. Lee lived in Bound Brook all her life. She retired in 1967 after more than 20 years employment with the Daniel H. Conroy family and the Conroy Funeral Home in Bound Brook. She was a longtime member of St. Paul's A.M.E. Church and

sang in its choir.

Her husband, Willie L., died in 2003.

Surviving are two sons, David B. and Michael J., both of South Bound Brook, and Stephen J. of Kissimmee, Fla.; and a sister, Ida Eldridge of South Bound Brook.

Services were held Wednesday at St. Paul's A.M.E. Church with Rev. Ronald L. Sparks, the pastor, officiating. Burial was in Franklin Memorial Park, North Brunswick.

Arrangements were by the Hagan-Chamberlain Funeral Home in Bound Brook.

Jonathan Kimmel

PISCATAWAY — Jonathan S. Kimmel, 47, died July 16, 2005 at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick.

He was born in New York City and lived in Monticello, N.Y., before moving to Piscataway in 1983.

Mr. Kimmel was with Morgan Stanley for 12 years, most recently as a computer architect in Jersey City. He earlier worked for Prudential Securities in Edison and Merrill Lynch in Somerset.

He began his career in Manhattan with Manufacturers Hanover Trust Co. Mr. Kimmel held a bachelor's degree from Cornell University and a master of business administration degree from Pace University.

Surviving are his wife, Janet Lee Kimmel, two sons, Robert S. and David B., both of Piscataway; and an uncle, Stephen Wahrhaftig of New York state.

Services were held Tuesday at the McCrisky Home for Funerals, in South Plainfield.

Linda Sheenan

DUNELLEN — Linda E. Sheenan, 59, died July 14, 2005 at JFK Medical Center in Edison.

Born in Plainfield, she was a daughter of the late Domingos and Ada Sheenan.

Ms. Sheenan lived in Dunellen before moving to Bridgewater in 2001. She had been with Bollinger Inc. in Short Hills for over 25 years, most recently as a senior account executive.

Surviving are four sisters, Irene Esteves of Bridgewater, Ann Lewis of North Plainfield, Cyndi Blum and husband Peter of Easton, Conn., and Kathy Connell and husband Richard of Edison; seven nieces and nephews; and a great-nephew.

Services were held Saturday at the Sheenan Funeral Home. Donations may be sent to JFK Hospice, JFK Medical Center, 65 James St., Edison, N.J. 08818.

Louis Delle Cave Sr.

BOUND BROOK — Louis Delle Cave Sr., 80, died July 15, 2005 at his home.

Born in Bound Brook, he was a son of the late Pasquale and Josephine Marino Delle Cave.

Mr. Delle Cave, who lived in Bound Brook all his life, was an inspector and foreman with the gas division of Public Service Electric & Gas Co. He spent 26 years with PSE&G in New Brunswick and Plainfield before retiring in 1981.

He was a member of St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church.

His wife of 54 years, Norma, died in May 2004. Also preceding him in death were a brother, Anthony; and a sister, Phyllis DiSalvo.

Surviving are a daughter, Joan at home; a son, Louis Jr. and wife Debra Lee of Piscataway; a sister-in-law, Helen of Bound Brook; a grandson, Louis III of Piscataway; and many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

Marie Wendt

BOUND BROOK — Marie Wendt, 65, died July 9, 2005 at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick.

Born June 15, 1940 in Somerville, she was a daughter of the late John and Mary Perone Todaro.

Preceding her in death was a sister, Concetta Caruso. Surviving are her husband, Lee; three daughters, Rosemary Gargano of Flemington, Karen Capazzi of Dumont and Lynn Ginsberg of Hillsborough; and eight grandchildren.

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Saturday, July 23, 2005

Sports

Piscataway bows in Legion playoff opener

Post 261 of Piscataway opened the Middlesex County Senior American Legion Baseball League playoffs on the losing side when it fell 5-1 Sunday to South Brunswick Milltown to put its season in jeopardy.

After earning a playoff berth but not finishing with one of the top two records, Piscataway had to win its best-of-three series with South Brunswick to gain a spot in the state district tournament, which gets under way today. Rain, however, pushed back Monday's scheduled second game.

Also postponed Monday night was the battle between Post 435 of Edison and top-seeded Milltown for the overall league crown.

Piscataway fell behind 2-0 in the bottom of the first inning and could not recover against South Brunswick Sunday, collecting just three hits in six innings against Matt Forthum. Down 5-0, Piscataway ended Forthum's shutout bid in the sixth when Bobby Abreu singled and scored on a sacrifice fly by Robert Rose.

Warren Hills 6, North Plainfield 4 — Falling behind 5-2 after a five-run third inning by Warren Hills Post 265 of North Plainfield could not come back in dropping a decision Sunday in a game that could have clinched a state tournament berth.

With the loss Ball-Kitch fell to 13-6 and needed to win Tuesday night to qualify for one of the Somerset-Hunterdon League's three post-season berths.

The Bulls grabbed a 2-0 lead in the second on a single by Bill Merkler, a double by Mike Manganiello, an RBI grounder by Parke Smith and Paul Ignoscia's run-scoring single. North Plainfield then scored twice in the bottom of the third on a single by Mike Benak, a double by Andrew Miller and RBI singles by Nick Cesare and Merkler to cut the deficit to 5-4.

Ball-Kitch left two runners on base in that inning and two more in the fourth when it loaded the bases with no outs but saw a lined drive by Miller turned into a double play. In the fifth Merkler was thrown out a plate following a base hot, while the Bulls left two more men on in the seventh.

Miller, Merkler and Manganiello finished

with two hits each as both teams finished with 11 hits. Dave Dickerson suffered his second loss of the week after working

5 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings.

Edison 12, South Plainfield 7 — Edison closed out the regular season by out-slugging Post 243 of South Plainfield Saturday with David Zavistoski's 4-for-4 performance that included three runs scored leading the way for Edison, which claimed its 17th victory in 22 starts.

Keith Lorring belted a grand slam and singled, while Mike Shymanski also collected four RBI on a pair of hits. Robert Hrapsky knocked in three runs with two hits for Father & Son. South Plainfield fell to 8-11 with the defeat.

North Plainfield 11, Alpha 3 — Playing on a small field at Alpha the Bulls slammed three home runs and Mike Benak pitched five innings of shutout ball before tiring in the sixth as Ball-Kitch rolled to an easy victory July 15.

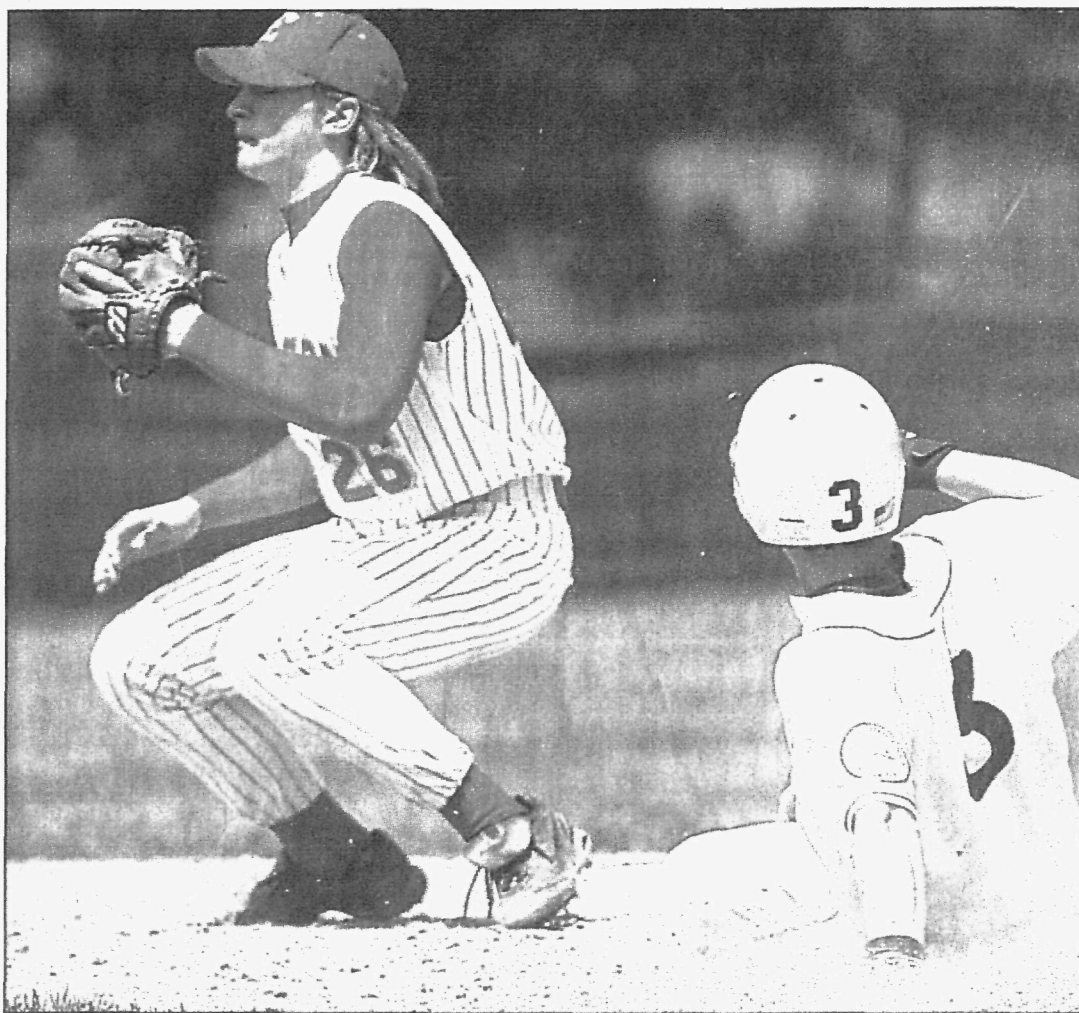
Mike Manganiello (3-for-4) followed a pair of third-inning walks with a three-run homer, while Dan Leary matched that with a three-run blast in the fifth. Merkler hit a two-run homer in the seventh when Benak and Andrew Miller contributed run-scoring singles.

Edison 15, Middlesex 4 — Robert Hrapsky fired four innings of one-hit ball in his first start, while the offense back him with three home runs as Edison routed Middlesex July 14. Jon Mendez finished 3-for-3, smashing a three-run homer, while Keith Lorring hit a two-run shot and Mike Shymanski added a solo homer.

Piscataway 5, Middlesex 2 — Mark Mazzei tossed six innings of five-hit ball, allowing one earned run and striking out three, and Kenny Walker, who picked up a save by pitching the seventh, and Russ Hopkins finished 2-for-3 with a run scored apiece July 13.

Edison 12, Iselin 1 — Mike Shymanski and Robert Hrapsky belted two-run homers, Keith Lorring went 3-for-3 with two doubles and one RBI, Tony Greder drove in three runs with two hits and Pat Rubenstein coasted on the mound in the five-inning game July 13.

North Plainfield 5, Clinton 4 — Building a 5-0 lead in the top of the third inning Ball-Kitch



GEORGE PACCIOLLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Edison's Dave Zavistoski, seen here during the high school season, capped the regular season in Middlesex County Senior American Legion Baseball League play with a 4-for-4 game against South Plainfield in a 12-7 victory as Post 435 took second in the league overall with a 17-5 record.

held off Clinton down the stretch as R.J. Dilts and Paul Ignoscia combined on a five-hitter July 13. RBI singles by Dan Leary and Mike

Benak and Nick Cesare's two-run single gave the Bulls four runs in the second, while Merkler had an RBI walk in the third.

Radmanovich's average on rise

BRIDGEWATER — Of all the first-half performances perhaps none jumps out at you more than the one turned in by Ryan Radmanovich.

It's not that the Somerset Patriots outfielder hasn't been productive since joining the club during the 2003 campaign, it's just that Radmanovich has always been more of a power hitter than a player that hit for average.

But when the second half of the Atlantic League of Professional Baseball kicked off Friday night there stood Radmanovich at the top of the batting leaders with a .336 average, 35 points higher than he's ever hit a full season.

Good health and a better eye at the plate are the biggest reasons why the soon-to-be 34-year-old Radmanovich is enjoying what could be a career season average-wise.

"I still feel healthy and feel as strong as I ever have," Radmanovich said prior to taking the field Friday night when he sustained a knee injury while going after a ball at the wall. "To play a full 70 games and not to be playing with any nagging injuries definitely adds to any success."

"To play 70 games and to feel good with maybe having only a stretch of two-three days when my hamstring tightened up might be the biggest factor in the first half. Physically if you feel good that carries over mentally, and when you feel good mentally you can concentrate more at the plate."

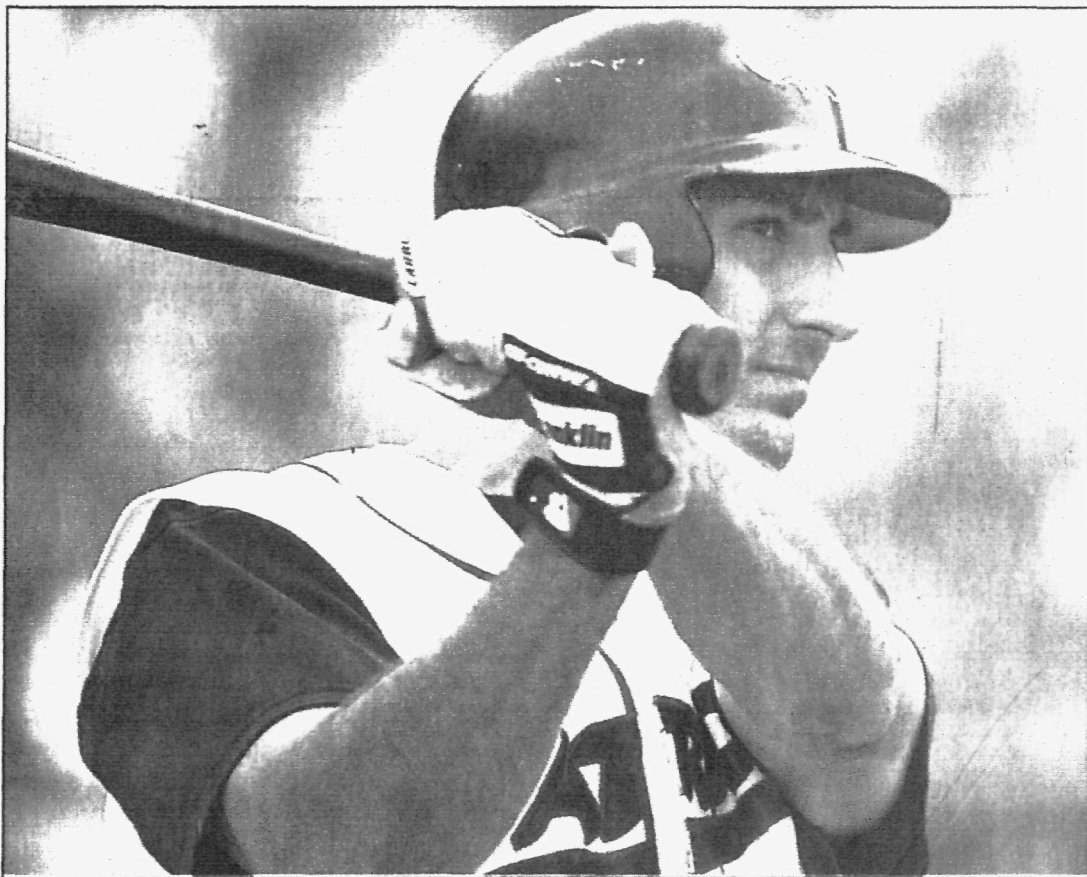
"I'm trying to be aggressive on pitches I can handle, but I'm also trying to be more selective. Instead of rolling over on a 1-0 pitcher's pitch I'm taking it, and then I'm trying to do something with a 2-0 pitch."

"My strikeouts have always been up, but when I put the ball in play I've been getting more hits. I'd like to cut down on my strikeouts, and I want to be even more selective in the second half and wait for pitches I can drive."

For Manager Sparky Lyle the big difference has been Radmanovich's approach with two strikes.

"The biggest thing is when he has two strikes he's shortened his swing and taking it the other way," he said. "That's one we try to get our hitters to do. With two strikes you have to shorten your swing."

"Ryan is a good player. He's been a good player for us. He looks terrible at times swinging and missing, but he's been cutting down on his swing and



GEORGE PACCIOLLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Patriot outfielder Ryan Radmanovich had his batting stroke going in the first half when he finished as the league's top batter with a .336 average.

that's helped him. He was playing a lot and he is healthy. When you're healthy and swinging well you gain confidence."

Radmanovich, who hit a career-high 28 homers in 485 at-bats with Salt Lake City in 1997, belted 21 with the Patriots in 2003 in 87 games and then slipped to 11 in 88 games last summer when his time with Somerset was limited because he played in the Olympics with the Canadian National Team.

The left-handed swinger started to turn on the power of late, hitting three against Atlantic City in the final first-half series to give him 13 in 253 official appearances to go with 14 doubles, one triple and 41 RBI.

"I've never been a quick starter, and my home runs have never come early in a season," Radmanovich said. "I know hitting the ball well helps me get in a groove, and it's been said home runs usually come in bunches and that's usually been the case for me."

"I don't know what happened last year. I was pressing a bit because they hadn't announced the Olympic team. I was trying to secure a spot on the team, and I might have been pressing a little bit to give myself an opportunity to make the team."

Lyle was never worried about another slow start this year power-wise by Radmanovich.

"You know the home runs will come," he said. "When a guy is swinging well and driving the ball well he's going to hit home runs. I've never seen a guy swing as hard as he can and hit one out."

Along with his Olympic experience, which included a fourth-place finish, Radmanovich has also had a taste of the Major Leagues, having gotten 69 at-bats with Seattle in 1998.

Along with everyone else in the ALPB, or any minor leaguer for that matter, Radmanovich has the thought of getting another chance at reaching the "the show" again in the back of his mind, although he admits it might not happen this year.

"It's getting late in my career and I definitely want a last chance to sign, if not here than overseas in Japan or Korea," he said. "At this point there's only about six weeks left to the AAA season, so you want to keep doing what you're doing and hopefully you sign in the off-season."

"Age isn't really a factor to me. My wife is always telling me I never give the same answer as to how old I am. As long as I'm healthy and someone is willing to give me a shot

I'll keep playing. You're not out of the game until you're out of the game I say."

"My family supports me completely in this, and my wife is a big part of that support. It's definitely nice that this league is on the East Coast, so I'm so close to home (West Hartford, Conn.)"

The idea of getting a chance to keep playing is quite appealing to Radmanovich, who would like nothing better to have another shot to play in the Olympics.

"Rob Ducey played with us and he was 37, so who knows. Beijing is only three years away," he said. "I'd definitely to play again. To be an Olympian has been a great part of my career. To be a two-time Olympian would be even better."

For now, though, Radmanovich is content with putting up a solid second half and helping the Patriots case a second league championship in his three years with the club.

"My No. 1 goal is to stay healthy. That's always my No. 1 goal," he said. "I just want to continue to do what I've been doing and help win some ball games. We're all competitive by nature, so you want to win any game you play, whether it's here or in the back yard. We want to be ready as a team to go into the playoffs."

Don't expect Pats to slip in 2nd half

BRIDGEWATER — If history offers any indication then don't expect too much of a drop-off in the second half from the Patriots — their slow start aside of course.

For the third time in the eight-year history of the Atlantic League of Professional Baseball the Somerset Patriots captured a first-half championship when they clinched the South Division title on the next-to-the-last day of the half July 9 to secure a place in the post-season.

And when they won those first-half crowns in 2000 and 2001 the Patriots came right back to claim second-half honors as well, so with Manager Sparky Lyle still at the helm know Somerset won't give anything away during the next couple of months.

"We'll play as hard as we can every night and try to win the second half, and see what happens," Lyle said. "That would bring the wild card into play, but we'll have to deal with that. I don't want us to get complacent."

"I don't want us to lose a series and not have anyone bothered by it because we're already in the playoffs. You can't play the second half that way because you want to be able to keep some momentum going. We have to prove to some of these teams that we're coming to play."

"I think the biggest thing we got from the first half is knowing we can play with most of these teams. I think Nashua is the strongest team in the league right now, and Camden might be a little better than us right now. I haven't seen Camden in a while, but they've been scoring a lot of runs."

Somerset gutted it out down the stretch, overcoming some injuries to turn back Camden for the first-half title.

"I think we played pretty well to win, considering we had some guys playing every inning of every game," Lyle said. "Most of the games we lost down the stretch was because we gave up a lot of runs early in the game. We built a 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ game lead and were struggling because we were giving up too many runs early."

"The second half isn't going to be as easy as the first is. The thing is just because we know we're in the playoffs doesn't mean we're going to slough off."

For Somerset the second-half challenge centers around its pitching staff, which was crippled with the losses of Derek Lee and Brian Tollberg to Major



League organizations.

Lee had a 4-2 mark with a 2.45 earned run average when signed by the Texas Rangers, while Tollberg was outstanding with a team-record for victories with 10 against just two losses, and an ERA of 2.30. Tollberg, who was signed by the Houston Astros, was the league pitcher of the month for June.

"Losing Tollberg and Lee leaves us with some big shoes to fill," Lyle said. "Starting pitching is something we have to work on. We'll have Kyle Evans in there, and we're waiting for (Greg) Modica to come back."

"(Mark) DeFelice will take the other spot for now, until we find someone. Mark really hasn't pitched much since he's been here, and we haven't even talked to him yet. Nothing is definite at this point."

"The other thing that hurts us is in putting Evans and DeFelice out there is we're probably only to get five innings out of these guys. They're not ready to go seven yet. That means we'll need to use another pitcher. That sixth inning is a big one."

"Our bullpen has been very good. Robert Marquez got hit hard last week, but we think he's getting too much side-armed and his ball isn't sinking. John (Montefusco) will work with on that. We also need more from Shane Hearn. You just can't do it with a couple of guys."

Offensively and in the field the Patriots should be getting better within a couple of weeks with the return of Billy Hall, the club's offensive catalyst, from a ribcage injury. The Patriots, however, aren't about to rush Hall's return.

"When Billy Hall comes back that will lift this club up," Lyle said. "Billy took some swings for the first time today. He's still tentative, but I thought he would be with that kind of injury. When you pull a rib cage muscle it takes a while to heal."

"Bill knows I won't put him in the lineup until he's ready. If it takes another two weeks then it takes another two weeks. That's another good thing about winning the first half. We have the luxury of not having to rush him."

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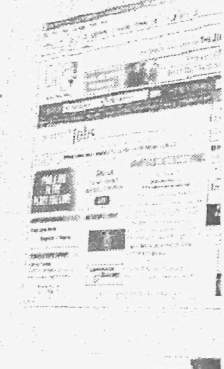
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Immediate opening, liquid fuel and/or propane delivery drivers. With DOT certification and ability to pass DOT physical. Position requires Class B License with HAZMAT and tanker endorsement. Very competitive salary and benefits package. We're an EOE company and drug-free workplace.

CALL TODAY 908-782-5414 or fax resume to 908-782-1175 Attn: Manager

Suburban ENERGY SERVICES

General Help 240

ENGINEER

Structural/Mechanical For Small International OEM. Flexible Hours. Fax/Email Resume to 908-638-4636 cmeyer@enviro-clear.com

ENVIRONMENTAL MULTI-TASKER

'Green' Co seeks PT individual with interest in the environment for a customer service position. Basic Computer Skills a Plus! Call 908-735-8871 or www.citiogis.com

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Immediate opening for entry level position available at glass and mirror company located in New Jersey. Must be mechanically inclined candidate will be trained in all facets of commercial glazing. Excellent salary and benefits. Valid driver's license required. Call Scott at 908-782-0812.

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After 8 yrs, we moved to a new beautiful location and we are interviewing full time and part time licensed professionals to join our team. Over 30 years of experience in a support position? If you have the qualities, we would like you to join our team and set you on the right course for an exciting career in the Newspaper Industry.

Excellent salary, medical, dental & 401k.

Send Resumes To:

Hunterdon County Democrat
PO Box 32
Flemington, NJ 08822
Attn: Robin Von Ohlsen

HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

For late model Caterpillar and Case equipment. Should be familiar with residential and commercial site work. Competitive salary based on experience. Call: 908-647-7786

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very lucrative opportunity! AEXGroup, a leading transportation broker of courier services, is seeking independent Contractors who can run their business with a sense of urgency to service existing time critical routes in NJ, NY, LI, PA. Evening routes available. NOW! Preferred: A 1998 or newer vehicle, i.e. cargo van, mini van, SUV, or car. Apply online at www.aexdrivers.net or call 1-800-670-9693

JAMES TOYOTA

Seeks Automotive Technicians & Service Advisors available for busy service department. Apply in person: JAMES TOYOTA 172 US HIGHWAY 202 FLEMINGTON, NJ OR FAX RESUME TO: CHRIS THORN 908-237-0644

LANDSCAPE FOREMAN/MACHINE OPERATOR

Top \$ paid to highly skilled landscape installer. Call: 908-638-9247 Eve.

MANAGER

FT/PT Managerial position available. No exp. nec. FLEMINGTON, NJ PLAZA CLEANERS Whitehouse Station 201-264-6858 or 908-303-9037

MOVIE EXTRAS, ACTORS, MODELS!

Make \$100-\$300/day. No Experience Required. FT/PT. All Looks Needed! Call 1-800-799-6151

MOVIE EXTRAS

Earn \$100-\$300/Day. All Looks Types Needed. No Experience Necessary. TV, Music Videos, Commercials, Print, Perf. Call Toll Free 7 days 1-800-880-3989 Ext.3504

Now Hiring for 2005 Postal Positions

\$17.50-\$23.00/hr. Full benefits/Paid training and vacations. No experience necessary. 1-800-584-1775 reference #4300.

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Landscape construction and tree care firm. Min. 5 yrs. exp. exp. Quickbooks, Word & Excel req'd. To run office with owner. Fax resume to: 908-668-5594

PAINTERS

\$15 to start. Min 5yrs exp. own tools, long term 908-284-9008

Restaurant

SOUS CHEF LINE COOKS (Line cooks: \$12-\$13/hr) FT/PT positions available. Apply in person. Harvest Moon Inn 1039 Old York Rd. Ringoes, NJ 08851

TEACHERS

For Piano, Woodwinds & Violin. New Providence NJ Call 908-464-5928

General Help 240

PHOTOGRAPHER

School Photographer Trainee Train now to start an exciting new career this fall. Lifetouch studio is looking for energetic, reliable folks, who are people oriented and would like to learn to photograph school children. No exp. is necessary. You just need a will to learn & desire to work with children. We will train you completely on our equipment. Be at a new location everyday with new people to meet & feel the reward of making lifetime memories for so many kids and their families. Lifetouch, Inc. is an employee owned company offering good pay, mileage benefits, and a superb retirement plan.

Call after July 25th • (908) 684-1326

POOL & SPA WHOLESALER

Interviewing Immediately. Strong established firm has an immediate need for a market specialist who knows the pool & spa industry and can service a very large territory including all of NJ, as well as parts of NY and PA. Strongest prospecting, closing and relationship skills required for this key distribution position. Call on retail, service and construction customers in the pool & spa industry representing a broad range of equipment, supplies and leisure products. Very competitive compensation package and excellent benefits offered. Prefer candidate currently in NJ or with strong knowledge of NJ and environs.

For immediate consideration, send resume and cover letter as a single document in zipped or PDF files, please email: car.lesum@bellsouth.net Reference: "MKTGSPCNET" in subject line of your email. EOE and Drug Free.

Sales Career Opportunity!

We provide qualified leads, complete training and sales support. \$1,800 to \$2,700 weekly income potential. Proven sales experience a plus. Call 800-367-7795 ext 411.

SECRET SHOPPERS NEEDED

For Store Evaluations. Get Paid To Shop Local Stores, Restaurants & Theaters. Training Provided. Flexible Hours. Email Required. 1-800-585-9024 ext. 6262

Medical Help 250

CMA/LPN/RN

FT/PT in busy family practice. Experience preferred. Great benefits. Call: 908-788-7846

General Help 240

Dental Asst

Periodontal office needs a motivated responsible person. We will train in all aspects of surgical & patient care. Benefit package. Fax resume to: 609-921-1028

FAMILY HEALTHCARE w/ prescription

\$69.95/month. Nationwide coverage. No limitations. Includes: Doctors, Dental, Vision, Hospital & more. Everyone Accepted! Call: WGS 800-288-9214 ext. 2358

HEALTHCARE for \$59.95/month !!! NEW LOW PRICE!

For entire Family! Prescription, Dental, Vision, Hospitalization, More! Pre-existing Conditions OK! Call P.S. Family Healthcare! (800) 571-8530 ext. W1034

MED. ASST. or MED. RECEPTIONIST

For busy family practice in Branchburg, FT or PT. Comp. skills and pleasant phone manner essential. Fax resume to 908-526-4495

MEDICAL ASSISTANT

FT. Busy Hillsborough practice. Great staff, compensation and benefits. Fax resume to 908-895-0013

MEDICAL BILLER

FT. Busy Peds. practice. Med. Manager exp. preferred. Call posting EOB, and insurance. Fax resume to 908-755-6905 Attn: Jean. Also FT RN/LPN position.

Now Hiring: RN Supervisor

Staffing Coordinator Companion Caregivers Flexible Hours. Good pay. Right at Home 908-722-7676

NURSES

Looking for a change? Dental surgical office is looking for a motivated person to assume assisting & clinical patient management. Will train. Benefit package. Fax resume to: 609-921-1028

OUTREACH POSITIONS

Available Immediately! New Jersey Statewide Openings MENTORS MA/MS Therapists Exp. w/ Min children P/T, Evening & Weekend Flexible Schedules TOTAL FAMILY SOLUTIONS 800-595-9212 Ask for Smita Smita@totalfamily.com

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Part Time, 1, 2 or 3 nights weekly, 28pm, \$30/hr. Flemington, 908-904-0212, fax resume 908-904-9778

Medical Help 250

Power Wheelchairs, Scooters and Hospital Beds at Absolutely No Cost to You.

Call Toll Free 1-800-708-9301.

Part Time Help 255

CUSTODIAN

Weekend & Evening Hours, Liberty Village Premium Outlets. Management of office, Flemington. Apply in person, 10am-4pm, daily. EOE Fax to: 908-782-2994

FRONT DESK

Dental specialty office needs personable organized person to help with office management. Fax resume to: 609-921-1028

Part Time DELIVERY DRIVERS

Drive company van or provide your full size cargo van delivering newspaper bundles to stores, machines, and Post Offices. Work approximately 8 hours on a Wednesday afternoon and evenings. Knowledge of Hunterdon County towns and surrounding areas helpful.

Interested? Call John at (908) 782-4747 x607

Hunterdon County Democrat

8 Minnekaoning Rd Flemington, NJ

Trades 275

GREAT OPPTY

To become a member of Plumbers & Pipefitters Union Local 9 (B-I-C) FT. pos. avail. for Plumbers and HVAC Techs. P/E. Includes full health benefits & pension. Michael J. Messia, Plumb. & Htg. 609-466-7571

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WATER METER SERVICE TECHS

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Acres & Lots 305 25 Acres \$44,900. Dog house, wooded lot (10 min. drive to 151st Ave). Private setting, new building site for 100,000 sq. ft. home. Call 908-782-4131, EOE.

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