



INSIDE



A winning message

Amanda Hansen, 11, left, and her classmate, Amy Szymanowski, 12, right, talk about their school's D.A.R.E. — Drug Abuse Resistance Education — program. The two pupils at Saint Ann School in Raritan are among the 12 Somerset County school children whose artwork was selected to appear in the 2006 Project STAND Anti-Drug, Anti-Violence Calendar, which is produced in association with the DARE program. **Page B1.**

State gives OEM kudos

For the sixth year in a row, the Middlesex County Office of Emergency Management received the highest possible score on its annual evaluation from the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management. "Middlesex County OEM continues to demonstrate that it is regarded as one of the premier programs in the state of New Jersey," the evaluation read. "The county's staff is extremely proactive, self-motivated and dedicated to the programs." "I am extremely honored to be working with a group of individuals who, through hard work and professionalism, show their dedication to protecting the residents of Middlesex County," said Freeholder Christopher D. Rafano, chairman of the county Department of Law and Public Safety. "As a county, we have worked diligently to ensure that our emergency responders have the most up-to-date equipment and training to protect our citizens, and this stellar evaluation recognizes our commitment."

The state evaluates the performance of the county office and its personnel in responding to emergencies and fulfilling goals set by the state during the evaluation year.

The report praised the county OEM's response to the south county municipalities that were severely flooded during a July 17 storm. "The Middlesex County staff should be commended for their immediate, professional and efficient response to all major incidents in their county," the evaluation read. "This professional attitude was never more evident than during the South County Floods that impacted several municipalities. During that incident Middlesex County OEM immediately activated the County Emergency Operations Center and was able to provide valuable resources to assist with the incident."

"The State Police, through their comments, recognize the incredible talent and dedication of the men and women who respond to all types of emergencies in the county," Rafano said.

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Peter Weitsen, a certified public accountant with WithumSmith+Brown, teaches Pamela Hudgins of the Somerset section of Franklin, about QuickBooks as part of an initiative between the firm, the Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce and the First Baptist Community Development Corporation.

COURTESY SUSAN YOUNG MEDIA



Chamber helps launch careers

A local accounting firm has joined forces with the Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce and a Somerset-county faith-based community group to provide free bookkeeping training to area residents.

Two certified public accountants with WithumSmith+Brown's New Brunswick office, are providing QuickBooks software training for nine students affiliated with the First Baptist Community Development Corporation in the Somerset section of Franklin.

The six-session, 12-hour course is being taught by Peter Weitsen and Ed Mendlowitz, both shareholders with WithumSmith+Brown.

Weitsen was instrumental in developing the pilot training program. After attending a chamber of commerce meeting where the Rev. DeForest Soaries, founding chairman

of the corporation, was speaking on the positive impact of business/community organization partnerships, Weitsen looked for ways in which the accounting firm could make a difference in both the community and in the accounting industry.

"Our firm trains many clients in QuickBooks," said Weitsen. "It's the most popular and powerful accounting and bookkeeping program available for small and medium-sized businesses. I also knew there were many chamber members who needed assistance with QuickBooks training as well as folks out in the community who would benefit tremendously by learning this program."

"I spoke to the chamber and was able to connect with First Baptist. It's a great match."

Sharon Tucker Brown, executive director of the corporation, agreed.

She said many of the students are graduates of the corporation's STRIVE job readiness training program which prepares and assists adults for employment.

"The STRIVE program trains adults in 'soft' skills, but the other component of the program is offering them opportunities to improve their 'hard' skills in an effort to increase the likelihood of success in the job market," Brown said. "It's a great collaboration between business and community."

Weitsen added: "This is truly a community project that benefits everyone. It gives area residents an opportunity to learn a new skill which hopefully will result in employment for them. Ideally, they will be able to help businesses in the

Continued on page A2

County unveils 2006 budget

Middlesex County Freeholder David B. Crabel said that a draft 2006 County Operating Budget reduces the equalized county property tax rate by at least 1.1 cents per \$100 of equalized valuation.

Crabel said the reduction honors the commitment he made in his director's message earlier this month.

The draft \$343.9 million budget was unveiled at a special meeting of the Board of Chosen Freeholders last week.

The proposed budget was formally introduced at the Jan. 19 meeting and a public hearing will be held at 7 p.m. Feb. 15. Meetings are held in the Freeholder's Meeting Room in the County Administration Building in New Brunswick.

The draft budget unveiled Thursday includes a net tax levy of \$239.621 million which is \$21.790 million less than what would be permitted by the CAP law of the State of New Jersey. The tax levy is the amount to be raised through taxes.

Crabel said the County continues to grow. It is estimated that equalized rates will increase by almost \$9 billion this year. "This comes on top of \$17.6 billion in increases over the last two years," he said. "This budget recognizes that growth and,

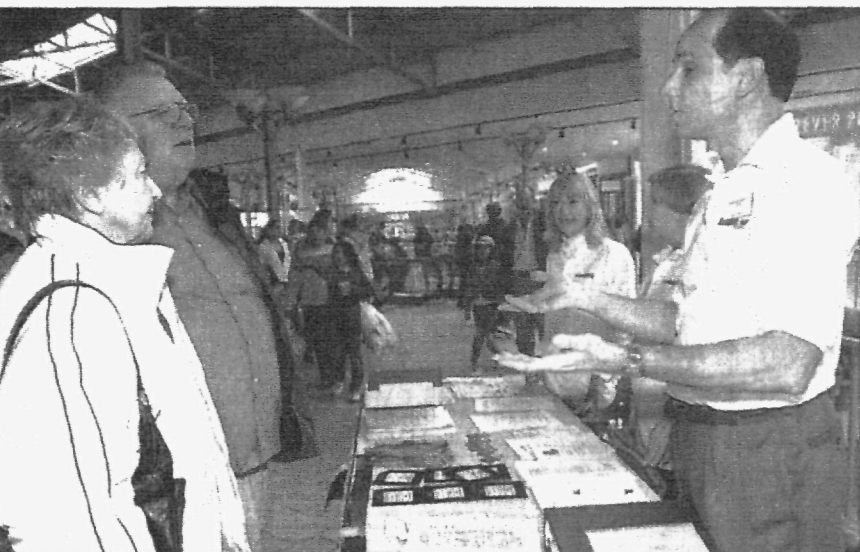
Continued on page A2

Volunteer fever finds Commons thread

"I want to work with kids. I like not having to sit home all day and wasting my summer."

Alex Mazepa

Student, Bridgewater-Raritan High School



GEORGE PACIELLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Area residents Charlotte and Arnold DeMarco learn about volunteer opportunities from Joe Casale inside Bridgewater Commons mall last week. To Casale's right are Marie Sperber and Betty Bushey, who helped sign up volunteers.

Organizations seek free help

By ALLISON ELYSE GUALTIERI
Staff Writer

BRIDGEWATER — Alex Mazepa is already looking forward to summer vacation.

Not to lazy days, sleeping late and sitting by the pool, but to continuing the tradition of volunteering that the Bridgewater resident set for himself last summer.

"I want to work with kids. I like not having to sit home all day and wasting my summer," the Bridgewater-Raritan High School student said.

While last Saturday was a far cry from the heat of July, Mazepa stopped by the Leadership Somerset table at the Bridgewater Commons mall to check out volunteer opportunities and organizations for the coming summer.

While he worked for the Somerset Valley YMCA last year, this year he's checking out the United Way of Somerset County, just one of the organizations listed at the event.

The goal of the project was to pair up prospective volunteers with organizations that need them. From children to the elderly, animals to the environment, the options were extensive.

The idea came about from the classes of Leadership Somerset, an

organization run by the county to encourage residents to become "trustees" of their communities. After visiting different organizations and facilities around the county and hearing speakers talk about their community efforts, said Marie Sperber, one of the students, a pattern began to emerge: Everyone needed volunteers.

"We thought if we could get to a central location and put out all the information on the organizations, we could help," she said.

Sperber, Joe Casale, and Betty Bushey, took their three-hour shift at the tables on Saturday afternoon, where they managed to get more than 25 people interested in volunteering.

"We've had people of all different ages stop by," Sperber said.

"The more the better," said Casale. "I think people don't know what organizations are available."

The group had compiled lists of organization by category and location, so that people stopping by could see what was interesting and what was close. They also had piles and piles of information and literature on each organization, so that

Continued on page A2

Blood drive turns the table on doctors

Physicians donate blood at Somerset Medical Center

By ALLISON ELYSE GUALTIERI
Staff Writer

SOMERVILLE — Oncologic surgeon Tham Seenivasan is usually on the other side of the table. But on Tuesday, it was his turn to be the patient, as he donated blood in the first blood drive for physicians at Somerset Medical Center.

Seenivasan laughed and joked with phlebotomist Julianna Manrique, as she took his temperature and checked his hemoglobin and hematocrit levels and swabbed his arm, asking if the cookies provided for donors were homemade.

Once the needle was in his arm, letting blood flow from him into a plastic pack containing coagulant so the blood doesn't clot, he explained why he chose to donate.

"It's lifesaving, and it's a wonderful thing that any human could do," he said. While he has donated blood in the past, this was his first time doing so in several years, and the staff of the blood bank at the medical center encouraged him to make it a habit.

"Each unit of blood can save three lives: you get plasma, you get

platelets, and red blood cells," said Dr. Katherine Toomey, an oncologist and the vice president of the medical and dental staff at the hospital.

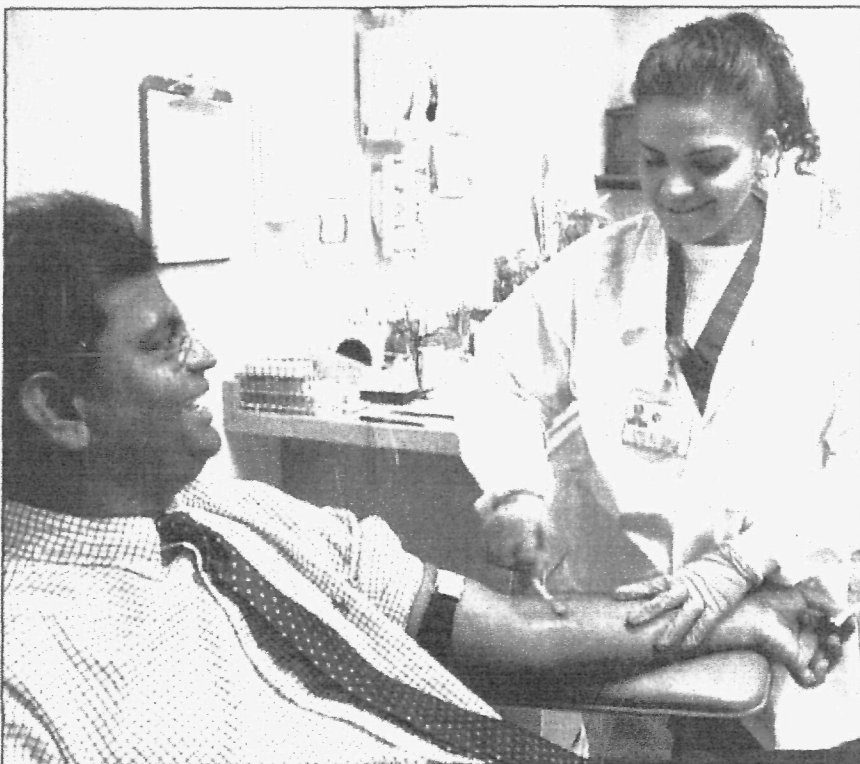
Toomey organized the drive to promote the idea of donation among the physicians at the hospital.

"I thought it would be a good idea to show the community that the people that order the blood can also donate," she said, explaining that for many, the blood drive is the first time many will donate, and not all know the procedure.

Toomey herself will donate today, and two of her partners were also scheduled to donate during the drive, which took place all week. An oncologist, she is one of the ones who orders blood most frequently for patients.

"We order a lot of blood transfusions, so we know how important it is," she said. In the last year, over 3,800 units of blood were transfused to patients at the center.

Blood products also have a shelf life, she said, so the supply has to be renewed. Plasma, which is frozen, can last a year, but blood must be used within 35 days.



GEORGE PACIELLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Julianna Manrique, a phlebotomist at Somerset Medical Center, prepares to draw blood from the arm of Tham Seenivasan, an oncologic surgeon at the hospital. The center is currently conducting a blood drive to promote the idea of donation among physicians.

Which do you prefer at a Mexican Restaurant?

| A | or | B |
|---|----|---|
| Food from a freezer. | | No Freezers. |
| Food from a can. | | No Can Openers. |
| Food scooped out of a steam table like in the army, a high school Cafeteria, or a bad prison movie. | | Food prepared when you order it. |
| Food that is microwaved to "warm it up." | | No Microwaves. |
| Food "spiced up" with MSG. | | No MSG. |
| Refried beans. | | No Lard. |
| Soggy steamed tortillas. | | Tortillas grilled for your order to melt the cheese and keep the choices inside warm. |
| Salsas poured from a bag. | | Salsas hand made from Roma Tomatoes, peppers, onions, cilantro and spices, on-site and within the last six hours. |
| Chips that you have to pay for And are poured from a bag. | | Warm chips hand cut on-site, cooked on-site, warm & included with your meal. |
| No Salsa Bar. | | A Salsa bar where you can customize your meal the way you like it. |
| A long, slow, single cafeteria line. | | A much shorter wait while you get your table, your drinks and as much salsa as you want. |

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If you like the choices in List "B," then there is only one place for you!

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Budget

Continued from page A1

to keep pace, includes over \$19 million in the 2005 Capital Budget for road and other infrastructure improvements." The increase in surplus is \$522,418, bringing the total of retained surplus to \$15.083 million.

The draft budget also included several areas of increases in appropriations,

including a \$2.58 million increase in group insurance plans for employees, a \$2.585 million increase in retirement systems for police, fire and public employees, a \$7.184 million increase in debt service and an \$819.472 increase in utilities.

Other increases include \$369,754 in real estate and other rental expenses, \$243,655 for Civic Square Operating Expense increases, \$601,904 increase in aid to the County Vocational-Technical schools, \$379,886 increase in

aid to the Board of Social Services and a \$302,416 increase for the Mosquito Commission.

"These items themselves, more than account for the increase in this year's budget appropriations," Crabel said.

The budget proposal also includes a 4 percent salary increase for the Freeholders that will require a public hearing.

"It is a budget that meets the needs of our citizens, but does not overburden our property taxpayers," Crabel said.

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Jobs

Continued from page A1

area with their bookkeeping needs."

For Pamela Hudgins of the Somerset section of Franklin, the class couldn't come at a better time.

A graduate of the STRIVE program, Hudgins landed her job at Somerset Eye Care through the program. She currently is responsible for insurance billing and coding, and insurance claims and verification.

The company's owner, however, was looking for someone to do personal, vendor, and patient billing. Because Hudgins is learning

QuickBooks, she'll be able to add those responsibilities, which also will include a salary increase.

"It's a great class and a wonderful thing for the whole community," Hudgins said. "I love education — it never hurts to learn more."

The corporation is a non-sectarian, non-profit organization founded in 1992 to improve the social, educational, and economic conditions in the community surrounding the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens.

WithumSmith+Brown is a certified public accounting and consulting firm. Founded in 1974, it is the fourth-largest New Jersey-based accounting firm and serves private businesses, public companies, and not-for-profits.

Volunteer

Continued from page A1

people could get to know a little more about the organizations and how to contact them.

Laura Hilton left with a brochure on the Big Sisters program. "I've always wanted to be

a big sister," she said, adding that she had heard about the organization through their television commercials. The Bridgewater resident loves working with kids, as she's a teacher's aide at a daycare, and while she hasn't done any volunteer work since high school, she was happy to find a way to get back into it.

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Obituaries

Marvin Mattingly

PISCATAWAY — Marvin T. Mattingly, 75, died Dec. 31, 2005 at the Franklin Care Center in Franklin Park.

He was born in Roanoke, Va., and lived in Central New Jersey for most of his life.

Mr. Mattingly retired in 1982 as an assistant vice president with Manufacturers Hanover Trust Co. in Manhattan. A graduate of Rutgers Preparatory School in New Brunswick, he attended Rutgers University before joining the Army for Korean War duty as a staff sergeant. He held a bachelor's degree in finance from Rider University. He was a member of the Scarlet R Club and Touchdown Club, booster clubs for Rutgers University athletics. Mr. Mattingly held season tickets for Rutgers football, men's basketball, women's basketball and baseball.

As a lifelong bridge player in

club and tournament play Mr. Mattingly held the rank of bronze life master from the American Contract Bridge League. He was a volunteer at Elijah's Promise in New Brunswick and an officer with the Unitarian Society of New Brunswick, located in East Brunswick.

Surviving are his wife, Kathleen; a daughter, Laura J. Smith; a son, Walter; a sister, Sylvia Marguccio; an aunt, Orilda Kelly; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Arrangements were by the Crabiel Parkwest Funeral Chapel in New Brunswick. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to Unitarian Society, 176 Tices Lane, East Brunswick, NJ 08816 or National Parkinson's Foundation, 1501 N.W. Ninth Ave., Bob Hope Road, Miami, FL 33136-1494.

Douglas E. Dyer Sr.

Douglas E. Dyer Sr., 87, died Jan. 15, 2006 at his home in Lebanon.

Born Jan. 10, 1919 in West Orange, he was a son of the late Percy Leon and Louise Hawken Dyer.

Mr. Dyer lived in Neshanic and Russellville, Tenn., before moving to Lebanon in 2000. He was a carpenter and the retired owner of Dyer Service, a metal fabricator in Piscataway and Somerville. Preceding him in death

were a son, Paul L.; and a sister, Dorothy Witek.

Surviving are his wife, Anneliese Albers Dyer; two sons, Douglas Jr. of Warwick, N.Y., and Robert Albers of Ringoes; a daughter, Heidi Albers Dyer of Tavernier, Fla.; seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Donations may be sent to Hunterdon Hospice, 2100 Wescott Drive, Flemington, NJ 08822.

Mary Shortall Huff

SOUTH BOUND BROOK — Mary A. Shortall Huff, 82, died Jan. 14, 2006.

Mrs. Huff lived in South Bound Brook and Whiting before moving to Bridgeville, Pa. Preceding her in death were her first husband, Thomas B. Shortall; and her second husband, William R.

Surviving are a son, Thomas R. and wife Linda of Bridgeville; a daughter, Claire M. Shortall of Pineville, La.; four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Services were held at Carmona-Bolen Home for Funerals, Whiting. Burial at Franklin Memorial Park in North Brunswick.

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Geology museum has an open house

The Rutgers Geology Museum holds its 38th annual Open House from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Jan. 28.

This free event is on the Old Queens Campus in New Brunswick; enter via the iron gate at the corner of George and Somerset streets. Among the presentations in Scott Hall.

"Extinction in Geological Time" with George McGhee, a professor of geological sciences at Rutgers.

"Diving on the Titanic" with David Bright, president of the Flemington-based Nautical Research Group.

The "African Rift Valley Great Lakes" with Andrew Cohen, a professor of geosciences at the University of Arizona.

"Born Among Giants," the story of the solar system's origins with Jeff Hester, professor of geological sciences at Arizona State University.

Bring your rocks and minerals to Geological Hall for identification. Minerals will be on sale at a separate desk in Scott Hall.

For more information, call William Selden at (732) 932-7243.

Special ceremony of religious school

METUCHEN — A consecration ceremony is scheduled at 9:40 a.m. Jan. 29 for the Aleph class in the religious school at Congregation Neve Shalom, 250 Grove Ave.

The program includes a special presentation to the pupils followed by their performance of the musical "The Promised Land." Parents, other relatives and the public are invited.

A workshop for parents at 9 a.m. precedes the program.

For more information, e-mail can2r11@aol.com or call Cantor Sheldon Levin at (732) 548-2238, Ext. 14.

Residents offered police academy

PISCATAWAY — The township sponsors a Citizen Police Academy for those who want to be familiar with their local Police Department.

Applicants must be Piscataway residents over 21 and pass a criminal background check. The academy is conducted for 12 weeks in the police station at 555 Sidney Road, off Hoes Lane behind the Municipal Complex.

Sessions begin Feb. 16. For an application, call

Detective Frank Hackler at (732) 562-2368 or Detective Calvin Laughlin at (732) 562-2349. All applications must be returned by Friday, Feb. 3.

'Learners Service' at area synagogue

METUCHEN — A "Learners Service" takes place at 9:30 a.m. Feb. 4 at Congregation Neve Shalom, 250 Grove Ave.

Rabbi Gerald Zelizer leads this special service geared to all who want to learn or review basics of a Sabbath service, such as donning a tallit; when to stand, bow or sit; how to follow a service; and the procedure for having an aliyah.

The main service will be conducted by Cantor Sheldon Levin at the same time.

For more information, call (732) 548-2238. The public is invited.

'Freedom Stairway' is coming to Edison

EDISON — Briz takes you onto the "Freedom Stairway" at 2 p.m. Feb. 4 in the Main Branch of the Edison Free Public Library, 340 Plainfield Ave.

He combines his songs with the story of the Underground Railroad and how slaves tried

to make their way to freedom. For registration, visit the circulation desk or call (732) 287-2298, Ext. 1.

Alumni scholarships offered at Middlesex

EDISON — The Alumni Association of Middlesex County College is accepting applications for the Alumni Scholarship, which will be awarded in the spring semester.

The scholarship, for dependents of alumni, has a deadline of Feb. 15. Application forms are available on the website, www.middlesexcc.edu, or by calling the Alumni Office at 732-906-2566. The scholarship will be one \$500 award.

Get tickets now for two matinees

PISCATAWAY — The Recreation Department has tickets for "Sweeney Todd," Feb. 26 at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre in Manhattan. Cost is \$110 for an orchestra seat to the Sunday matinee. The bus leaves at 11 a.m. from the Municipal Complex on Hoes Lane.

To purchase your tickets, call (732) 562-2382 or visit the Recreation Department at the Municipal Complex.



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| Junior Skis\$15 Adult Skis\$18 Snowboards\$15 Snowblades\$15 Helmets\$10 XC Skis\$20 Snowshoes\$20 | <table border="1"> <tr> <th></th> <th>Weekend</th> <th>Weekday</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Blue Mountain</td> <td>..\$39⁰⁰..</td> <td>..\$31⁰⁰..</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Camelback</td> <td>..\$45⁰⁰..</td> <td>..\$32⁰⁰..</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shawnee</td> <td>..\$36⁰⁰..</td> <td>..\$29⁰⁰..</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mountain Creek</td> <td>..\$36⁰⁰..</td> <td>..\$29⁰⁰..</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hunter</td> <td>..\$45⁰⁰..</td> <td>..\$34⁰⁰..</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hidden valley</td> <td>..\$32⁰⁰..</td> <td>..\$22⁰⁰..</td> </tr> </table> | | Weekend | Weekday | Blue Mountain | ..\$39 ⁰⁰ .. | ..\$31 ⁰⁰ .. | Camelback | ..\$45 ⁰⁰ .. | ..\$32 ⁰⁰ .. | Shawnee | ..\$36 ⁰⁰ .. | ..\$29 ⁰⁰ .. | Mountain Creek | ..\$36 ⁰⁰ .. | ..\$29 ⁰⁰ .. | Hunter | ..\$45 ⁰⁰ .. | ..\$34 ⁰⁰ .. | Hidden valley | ..\$32 ⁰⁰ .. | ..\$22 ⁰⁰ .. |
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| Mountain Creek | ..\$36 ⁰⁰ .. | ..\$29 ⁰⁰ .. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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Saturday, January 21, 2006

Opinion

'New Jersey — You Got a Problem with That?'

If New Jersey were a celebrity, it would have its publicist working overtime to fix its current status among states. Long known to cynics as the "ampt" between New York and Pennsylvania and slain with — ahem — jokes like, "So you live in New Jersey, what exit?," the Garden State is in need of an image makeover.

In the last two years, we've had a governor announce he was a gay American and resign from office in the same breath — after admitting he had lied while in office. We've had a political corruption scandal — pay-to-play — that continues to trouble local and state leaders and a crisis that has shaken the nation's largest public medical school — The University of Medicine and Dentistry — New Jersey — to its foundations, and lead to it being overseen by a federal official.

So, it comes as no surprise that former Gov. Richard J. Codey hired an ad agency to come up with a slogan to replace the tried-and-true one we've all become accustomed to: "New Jersey & You: Perfect Together."

A quarter-of-a-million dollars later and an unhappy Codey, bowled over by the agency's "We'll Win You Over," and the governor put the fate of the state's slogan in the hands of New Jersey residents.

The governor's office received 7,790 entries from state residents. Residents could then vote on the top five finalists. A total of 11,227 votes were cast, with the winning entry — "New Jersey: Come See For Yourself" — receiving 3,373 votes.

"An overwhelming amount of state residents made sure that their voices were heard during our search for a new travel slogan," Codey said when announcing the winning slogan last week. Well, at last count New Jersey had a little more than 8.4 million residents, which means less than one-hundredth of one percent of the state's residents sent in a suggestion.

"When it comes to its image, New Jersey really cares," Codey added during a press conference to announce the new slogan held on the Statehouse steps in Trenton, which took place at the same time that — a few hundred feet away — The Jersey Guys from NJ101.5 lead what it called the "100 Stripper March" to protest a new law banning smoking in places like restaurants, bars, and strip clubs.

Let the irony settle for a moment.

The winning slogan was submitted by Jeffrey Antman, 50, of Passaic, himself an employee of New Jersey Transit, where one of his jobs is to come up with advertising slogans. Although the winning entry was selected by the residents themselves, it certainly doesn't help the state shake its cynicism image when the winner is, well, a state employee who happens to write slogans for a living.

For his efforts, Antman received a two-night stay at a hotel and two tickets to a basketball or hockey game. A bargain over "We'll Win You Over," which cost \$17,857 a word.

And Antman's entry wasn't totally free of controversy. *The Star-Ledger*, owned by the same company that publishes *The Reporter*, ran a story about Peter McCabe from Branchburg, who, in an article last fall, provided the same winning slogan in an article in that publication. The reason he didn't win — he submitted it into the contest after Antman. A new slogan, a bit of controversy and some strippers. Business as usual it seems these days in New Jersey, where state leaders seem more adept at using smoke and mirrors to mask real issues than deal with a growing fiscal crisis, growing dissatisfaction with abuse of power and a state that is bursting at the seams with people.

Perhaps the state might want to consider this little ditty: "New Jersey: It Just Doesn't Get Any Better."

The following is contact information for state representatives serving Somerset County, as well as members of Congress serving Central Jersey.

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(202) 224-4744 (Washington, D.C.)
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One Gateway Center, 23rd Floor, Newark, NJ 07102, (973) 639-8700
Hart Senate Office Building, Suite 324, Washington, D.C. 20510, (202) 224-3224
— Rep. Michael Ferguson (R-7th)
45 Mountain Blvd., Building D, Suite 1, Warren, NJ 07059, (908) 757-7835
214 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, (202) 225-5361
— Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-11th)
30 Schuyler Place, Second Floor, Morristown, NJ 07960, (973) 984-0711
2442 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515-3011, (202) 225-5034
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— Sen. Walter J. Kavanagh (R-16th)
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16th)
36 East Main St., Somerville, NJ 08876, (908)-526-3600
— Assemblyman Peter J. Biondi (R-16th)
1 East High St., Somerville, NJ 08876, (908)-252-0800

The Chronicle welcomes comments and news tips. The following is a list of our staff and how to reach us:

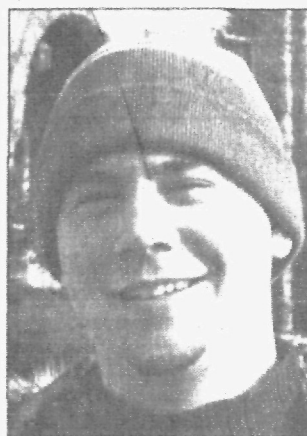
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Question of the week: What do you think of the state's new slogan?



LINDSAY AND JONATHAN BARLETTA
Middlesex

"It's pretty good. It's better than the last one."



ROBERT SULTAN
Somerville

"It's OK, but it's like saying it's not so bad. I liked some of the other ones better."



VERONICA LOPEZ
Bridgewater
"I think 'Best Kept Secret' is better."



TOREY AMSTER
Bridgewater

"It doesn't matter. They should find other things to do besides picking a slogan."

Letters to the Editor

A productive year

This letter is the first half of Somerville Mayor Brian Gallagher's State of the Borough speech, reprinted at his request.

To The Editor:

All eyes are on Somerville as she stands proudly entering 2006. Excitement of the new, the thrill of opportunity, and anticipation of change are the emotions filtering around our borough.

Somerville is on the move — and she is ready now for even greater things.

Tax stabilization, managing growth and increasing the quality of life in Somerville are the agenda for the Borough Council and the Planning Board this year, and we have all been working together towards this end. This is a council that has a proven track record of working well with each other, even in times of disagreement. And we have assembled a planning board that is sharp, prudent and understanding of history and looking toward the long term best interest of Somerville.

As the heart of one of the fastest growing counties in the country, Somerville's future lies in our ability to manage our growth carefully, to help control the impact of our neighbor's growth on our small borough, to improve our infrastructure smartly and to work together with our municipal neighbors, and our county and state legislators.

Our redevelopment efforts are well under way — however with any redevelopment we must be wary of our effects on the borough and help her grow while maintaining the very reasons we chose to live here. We must ensure our impacts are positive changes for the future.

Jaded by 20 years of stagnation, many people have said that they'll believe it when they see it regarding development of the landfill — start looking because here it comes.

I recently held a joint meeting of the planning board and borough council to begin the active landfill development phase. I felt it very important to have the board and council working together.

The decisions made by these two bodies in the coming months will impact our borough greatly, and as the policy making bodies of Somerville, we need to accomplish these decisions in an open public forum, together. Visioning programs to define what our borough wants on the landfill property will be conducted in March, and I ask the council, the board and our

citizens to embrace this long awaited project and this very public process and come at it with enthusiasm, creative ideas and an open mind.

Together, we have the ability, right now, to make Somerville an even better, more affordable and great place to live and raise our families. Some other notable events have played out in the borough this year:

— Somerset Medical Center, a non profit hospital, will very shortly be paying one of the largest tax bills in the borough as the Cancer Center is now under construction and slated for completion in the fall of 2006. The taxpayers will see \$300,000 in annual revenue.

— The pedestrian bridge from Mountain Avenue to the mall was completed.

— Many said the idea of promoting downtown Somerville was a waste of money and time, but if you tried to get a parking spot downtown in the shopping days of December you had competition — downtown Somerville is on the shopping map once again.

— Many said the idea of significantly improving Route 22 was a pipedream, but now we have been included in federal appropriations to do just that.

— Many said we would never have state of the art lighted ball fields in Somerville, however through the efforts of people like Pete Stires, Wayne Harmer, Mike Zolanz and Frank Quinn, we just went out to bid to build ballfields, with lights, at Vanderveer School so our entire community can enjoy them.

How did all of this happen? Not by chance, not by luck, but by hard work and having a vision of what could be done. Too many people find it far easier to pick apart the plans of others, rather than sit at the table and work towards a goal. This council and this planning board do just that — define the goal first, then work together to achieve. Far too many times we present our legislators with what our problems are and ask them for solutions — this new approach, defining our problems, creating our own solutions then seeking the aid of our county, state and federal legislators, has presented a new, business approach which is achieving not only success, but results.

BRIAN G. GALLAGHER
Somerville

The writer is mayor of Somerville. The second half of his State of the Borough speech will appear next week.

Councilman seeks support

To The Editor:

I would like to say to the residents of Raritan that I have been honored to represent you and the town as a councilman for the last three months of 2005.

I want to thank the mayor and council for appointing me to this position.

When Anthony Hudak was appointed mayor in October, he left open a council seat to which I was appointed through Dec. 31. There will be a special election on Thursday, Feb. 16, for the vacant council seat that I held. I would like to reach out to the residents of Raritan and ask you for your support to continue as a councilman for a full three-year term. I ask for your support since I am very concerned about our town and would like to continue to work for our residents.

I am a past member of the Raritan Fire Department who donated my time for the safety of our residents. I am also a member of the Board of Adjustment. While on the council, I was appointed the liaison to the Board of Health, Fire Department and First Aid Squad.

I am a third generation

Raritan resident. My grandparents made Raritan their home in the early 1900s and since then this town has been home to my family. I have new ideas for our town and would like to work with the mayor and council to put them into effect. I will try to start a senior cadet program to improve volunteer membership for our Fire Department and First Aid Squad.

I am presently working on and investigating the legal aspects of going to our high school and working with the principal and his staff to see if we can start a cadet program in which students would get credit from his or her school for going to EMT classes and fire school classes to become volunteers for their town, thus improving our memberships. I am filled with great enthusiasm and energy. I am committed to helping others and will be dedicated to Raritan and make myself available to all and be responsive. For your convenience, you may vote by absentee ballot. For more information or an application, feel free to call me at (908) 526-3090.

VICTOR J. LAGGINI JR.
Raritan

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:

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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.

Somerset County Briefs

Business partnership unveils new Web site

The Somerset County Business Partnership has announced the debut of its redesigned Web site with content focusing on programs and attractions found in Somerset County and the activities of the organization.

The site is www.somersetbusinesspartnership.com.

"We hope to present, and continually update, all of the great offerings that exist in Somerset County. The Web site promotes both tourism and business development within the County," said Jeffrey Horn, president and chief executive officer of the Business

Partnership.

"The content of the former site exclusively promoted the Business Partnership. As an organization, we believe that it is our responsibility to present the full range of information on Somerset County to those who are unfamiliar with what we have to offer as a place to visit, live, and work."

The opening page of the new site offers visitors the opportunity to explore one of three key areas of information.

— "Visit" directs Somerset County directs guests to information on cultural and entertainment events and venues, antiquing opportunities, historic sites and museums, parks, recreation and sports opportu-

nities, tours, where to eat and stay, and the annual Calendar of Events.

Also available are maps highlighting historical and tourism sites in Somerset County.

— "Live, Work, & Do Business" directs visitors to comprehensive information on Somerset County's 21 municipalities, including local facts.

Information on commerce in Somerset County includes a business directory, a listing of available professional services, seminars and educational workshops and public affairs information. Also available is a direct link to economic development and business advocacy information, providing direction, advice, referral and consultation.

Iraq veterans touched by students' support

"I Love Lulu" was more than just a show.

It was an opportunity for 41 young kids and their talents to shine and for their proud parents to beam.

And for four very special guests in the audience, it was an opportunity to see firsthand just how much they're thought of.

Army Staff Sgt. Melissa Cunningham and Sgt. Rich Crum, who served with the 1185th Transportation Terminal Brigade, based in Kuwait, and Major John Petrer, who served with the 50th, Signal Battalion DIS-COM, 42nd Infantry in Iraq are back home recently after serving a tour of duty in the Mideast.

They were invited to the show by the cast and the Branchburg Recreation Department, where they were joined by volunteers from Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 to be recognized for their service.

The cast dedicated their two performances last Friday and Saturday nights to U.S. troops overseas, and in lieu of paid admissions asked that audience members please bring a bag of groceries which were to be handed over to volunteers from OPSHBX.

The soldiers, along with Marine CWO Pat Dechirico, a 42-year veteran and OPSHBX volunteer, were invited on stage after the conclusion of the performance Saturday night, and expressed their thanks to the students.

Cunningham, obviously moved by the applause from the audience, said she was "humbled" by the reception.

Cash contributions totaling \$400 were also dropped off in a large jug outside the auditorium.

The bags and boxes of groceries dropped off in the lobby of the Whiton School prior to the evening performances were packed in the recreation department's van, with barely a few inches to spare, according to Mary Beth Ferris of the recreation department.

The goods were dropped off at The Chronicle office for sorting prior to the OPSHBX shipping event Feb. 4 (See item below).

Crum Cunningham and

Rod Hirsch
Executive
Editor



Petrera all received packages overseas packed and shipped by volunteers from OPSHBX. The soldiers will join OPSHBX volunteers in Manville on Feb. 4 to box and ship more packages for shipping overseas.

Since the organization's inception in February, 2005, more than \$70,000 has been raised and tons of supplies - enough to fill over 5,000 boxes - have been shipped overseas.

"I Love Lulu" was written, produced and directed by sister-and-brother Maranda and Joe DeStefano.

Volunteers needed Feb. 4

We're a little more than two weeks away from commemorating the first anniversary of Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 with a community-wide event in Manville Feb. 4 that will include packing at least 1,000 boxes for shipment to U.S. troops overseas.

The Veterans of Foreign War Post 2290 will co-host the event beginning at noon through 6 p.m. at their 600 Washington Ave. headquarters.

The post's color guard will be featured during opening ceremonies. We also expect several soldiers and Marines on hand who have recently returned from duty in the Mideast.

James A. Wisor, Jr., president and Renny Dilks, commander, along with Mayor Angelo Corradino are working with OPSHBX to ensure the success of the event. Corradino is working with several restaurants, delis and pizzerias in town to make sure there's enough food on hand to feed the 300 volunteers expected to participate.

We'll need volunteers willing to spend anywhere between one and six hours to help pack each of the boxes with a variety of toiletries, snacks, and personal items that have been collected since our last ship-



GEORGE PACCIOLLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Cast members of "I Love Lulu" applaud members of the United States Army recently returned from duty in the Mideast and who stopped in to watch the show, produced by the Branchburg Recreation Department and which featured 40 students. The students dedicated their performance to the soldiers. From left are Sgt. Rich Crum, Staff Sgt. Melissa Cunningham and Maj. John Petrer.

ping date Nov. 5.

Calls have come in from volunteers who have helped during previous packing events, as well as Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Brownies and Girl Scouts. Front office staff from the Somerset Patriots will also help out.

But more help is needed. If you're interested in helping out, please call (908) 575-6684.

Shopping Sprees

Our stockpile of supplies for Feb. 4 continued to grow this past week, with ten large boxes delivered by the Lindeneau School in Edison, a van load of supplies from the Branchburg Recreation Department and several bags and boxes that were dropped off at Powerhouse Gym on Route 28 in Bridgewater.

However, filling 1,000 boxes to send overseas to our troops is a tall order.

Operation Shoebox volun-

teers will host three Soldiers' Shopping Sprees this weekend and next, standing outside supermarkets handing out our shopping list of needed supplies, and collecting bags of donated goods from shoppers as they leave the stores.

On Saturday volunteers will be at the Pathmark Supermarket in Somerville; the ShopRite Supermarket on Route 28 in Bound Brook, and next Saturday, Jan. 28 at the King's in Bedminster on Route 206.

Please, if you see our volunteers, pick up a list and shop with our soldiers in mind. They're in need of whatever we can send them.

Soldier expresses gratitude

Dear Sir:

Thank you so very kindly for the box. I shared it with the entire office. I especially loved the Orbitz gum and the Altoids.

I love those things. It has touched me beyond belief how strangers have taken the time out to send us care packages and small tokens such as letters and notes. I am without the right words to express my thanks...

So I will simply say thanks.

Sincerely,

Capt. Cynthia L. Moore
JVB Plans Officer
FOB Courage
Mosul, Iraq

T-shirts for sale

Quality t-shirts with the handsome Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 poster and logo are available for a donation of \$10.

Several stores on Main Street in Somerville and Main Street in Metuchen are selling the shirts, which feature the distinctive red,

white and blue Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 logo, and a full-color reproduction of the Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 poster.

The shirts cost \$10 and are also available at The Chronicle office, 44 Veterans Memorial Drive East. All proceeds from sale of the shirts directly benefit OPSHBX. Sizes available are medium, large and extra-large.

We can also reproduce the shirts in quantity for veterans' groups, corporations, or other sponsors, and include the name of your company or organization on the shirt. Call and ask for details.

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

Financial contributions needed

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

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
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

Neshanic Station Country Café, 419 Olive St., Neshanic Station

Dorell & Sons Locksmith, 20 W. Somerset St., Raritan

Scott's Florist, 75 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

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

Bedminster Post Office, 251 Somerville Road, Bedminster

Bound Brook Carpet, 200 E. Main St., Bound Brook

Attic Treasures Antiques, Sansone Plaza, Route 22 East, Green Brook

Country Manor Furniture, 272 Route 22 West, Green Brook

Eclipse Fitness Sports & Wellness, 17 King George Road, Green Brook

Dr. Steven C. Balestracci, 154 Adamsville Road North, Bridgewater

Soprano's, 154 Adamsville Road North, Bridgewater

The Cricket, 408 Elizabeth Ave., Somerset

Baja Fresh Mexican Grill, 1595 Route 22 West, Watchung

AAA Vac, 1515 Route 22 West, Watchung Square Mall, Watchung

St., Peapack-Gladstone

North Branch Post Office, Route 22, North Branch

Somerset Medical Center main lobby, 110 Rehil 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

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

SALUTE THEIR SACRIFICE

OPERATION SHOEBOX NEW JERSEY 2005

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/pins |
| <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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481 North Bridge Street
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
(908) 725-0033

EDISON

1943 Oak Tree Road
Edison, NJ 08820
(732) 494-8444

FLEMINGTON

8 Reading Road
Flemington, NJ 08822
(908) 788-4844

194 Route 31 North
Flemington, NJ 08822
(908) 806-2265

HILLSBOROUGH

601 Route 206
Hillsborough, NJ 08844
(908) 281-4009

MANVILLE

40 North Main Street
Manville, NJ 08835
(908) 541-0404

METUCHEN

700 Middlesex Avenue
Metuchen, NJ 08840
(732) 516-0400

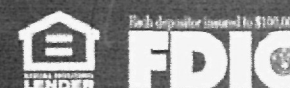
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Saturday, January 21, 2006

Middlesex County

Weekend
CalendarLittle League
registration set

MIDDLESEX — The Middlesex Little League holds registration for the 2006 season from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 21-22 at the clubhouse on Pierrepont Avenue.

Players must be at least 9 years old and no more than 13 years old as of May 1. All boys and girls who sign up for the 2006 season will be placed on a team.

Fee per family is \$70 for one child and \$95 for two. For players signed up after Feb. 1, the fee per family is \$95 for one child and \$140 for two. Bring a copy of your child's birth certificate.

For more information, call Justus Battista at (908) 812-7568.

Learn to conquer
clutter and chaos

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — "Conquer Clutter and Chaos for Good" with Jamie Novak from HGTV.

She offers her ideas on how to better organize your home at 7 p.m. Jan. 23 at the South Plainfield Public Library, 2484 Plainfield Ave. Snow date is Jan. 30.

Novak also will take questions from the audience and sign copies of her book "1,001 Quick and Easy Organizing Secrets." Admission is free.

For more information, call (908) 754-7885.

High school, Legion to hold
night of doo-wop

NORTH BRANCH — The Dunellen American Legion Post 119, along with the Dunellen High School Class of 2008, are sponsoring "A Nite of Doo-Wop 2006".

The concert featuring Johnny Maestro and the Brooklyn Bridge and The Dupress will be held 8 p.m. Feb. 4 at Raritan Valley Community College's Edward Nash Theatre.

For tickets or additional information, call (732) 968-0885, Ext 104, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily or Bill Uhler at (732) 968-5381 nights and weekends.

Tickets are also available at the college Box Office from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. Call (908) 725-3420.

Prices range from \$45-\$60.

Funds raised from the concert will be used by the Class of 2008 to help defray the cost of graduation programs and festivities in order for all students to be able to attend.

Post 119 has adopted a Platoon of 35 soldiers currently on duty in Iraq and will be using the money raised from the concert to send "care" packages to soldiers as well as to provide for Veterans at the Menlo Park Veterans Nursing Home.

Library seminar

on buying a home

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — The South Plainfield Public Library holds a financial and home buying seminar at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 5.

Elise Counts from First Equity talks about buying a home, refinancing, real estate investments and related subjects. A question-and-answer period follows her program.

Admission is free.

A Spanish translation of the seminar will be provided.

For more information, call (908) 754-7885 or visit the library at 2484 Plainfield Ave.

Make bookmark
as 'practical' craft

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Learn how to make a bookmark with the "Practical Crafting" program of the South Plainfield Public Library.

Ronda Wisniewski leads this program at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 6. Bring a pencil, a pair of scissors and a glue stick. Fee is \$2.

Registration is required; call (908) 754-7885 or visit the library at 2484 Plainfield Ave.

Space is limited.

'Love Story'

essay contest

DUNELLEN — The Dunellen Public Library wants Dunellen residents to tell of their own "Love Story."

Submit a brief essay, about your engagement and wedding, to the library no later than Monday, Feb. 6.

Essays should tell where, when and how you proposed to your spouse.

Judging is based on the most unique, most romantic and most original proposal.

All essays will be on display in the library during February.

Winners receive a complimentary dinner for two at the Dunellen Hotel.

For more information, call (732) 968-4585 or visit the library on New Market Road.

Unlimited Arc
softball league

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — The Recreation Department has opened registration for its men's softball league.

An "Unlimited Arc" open slow-pitch league plays on Monday night beginning April 24.

Registration continues through March 31 or until eight teams are formed.

For a form and full details, call (908) 226-7713.

Calendar helps pupils
stay on the right path

"In class we learned smoking completely ruins your lungs. And alcohol, it's not completely illegal, but people are wasting their money to hurt themselves."

Amy Szymanowski
Sixth-Grader,
Saint Ann School,
Raritan

By JIM WHITE
Staff Writer

Twelve-year-old Amy Szymanowski wants to be a school teacher when she grows up. Eleven-year-old Amanda Hansen is considering veterinary work. But both girls know that drugs and alcohol would complicate their plans.

Both sixth-graders at Saint Ann School in Raritan, Amy and Amanda are two of 12 area students chosen to have their artwork featured in the 2006 Project STAND Anti-Drug, Anti-Violence Calendar.

Project STAND — Somerset Teaming Up Against Narcotics and Drugs — is sponsored by the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office in conjunction with local DARE programs.

During the 2004-05 school year, fifth- and sixth-graders from the county's public, private and parochial schools were asked to draw posters reflecting anti-drug, anti-alcohol, anti-tobacco and anti-violence themes.

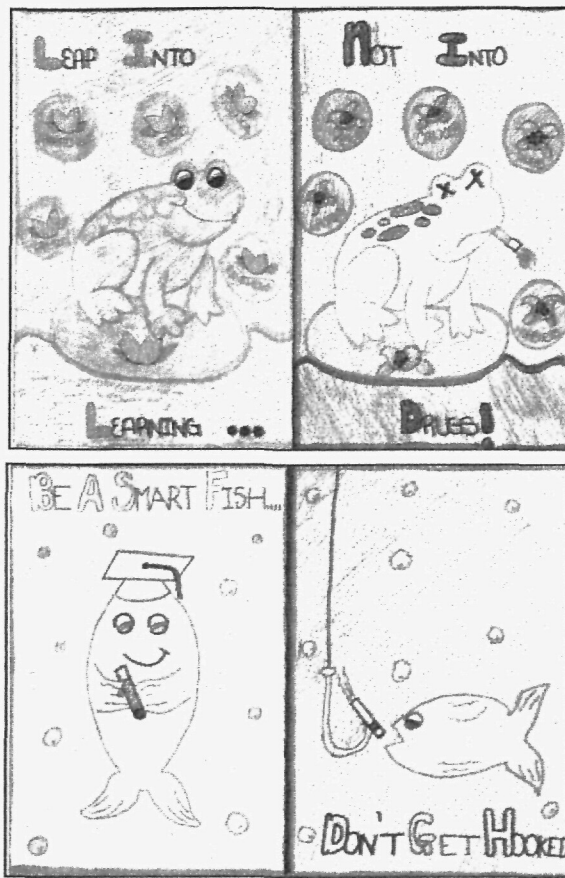
"In class we learned smoking completely ruins your lungs. And alcohol, it's not completely illegal, but people are wasting their money to hurt themselves," said Amy, whose colorful drawing she drew while in fifth grade earned her a first-place prize — a \$200 savings bond, made available through the Somerset County Chiefs of Police Association. Her work can be found above the month of November in the calendar.

Amy drew a picture of a happy-looking frog sitting on a lily pad and surrounded by smaller lily pads containing the words "happiness," "kind," "friends," "family" and "education."

She also drew a picture of a sickly-looking frog smoking a cigarette and surrounded by the words "grumpy," "mean," "cancer," "dumb" and "hopeless."

Her poster slogan reads: "Leap into learning! Not into drugs!"

Her classmate Amanda earned a second-place



GEORGE PACCIOLLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER (RIGHT); COURTESY PROJECT STAND (ABOVE AND TOP)

Amanda Hansen, 11, left, and her classmate, Amy Szymanowski, 12, right, both pupils at Saint Ann School in Raritan, had their artwork appear in the 2006 Project STAND Anti-Drug, Anti-Violence Calendar. Pictured at top is Amy's submission and pictured above is Amanda's artwork.

prize — a \$100 savings bond. Her creative drawing can be found above the month of July.

"I know you shouldn't get hooked on drugs," she said, recalling how she came up with the idea for her poster. "And I thought of fishing. I thought of a fish on a hook and people getting hooked on drugs."

Amanda's drawing shows a smiling fish wearing a graduation cap and holding a diploma, juxtaposed by another fish about to puff on a cigarette attached to a hook and fishing line.

Her slogan reads: "Be a smart fish ... Don't get hooked."

"We're very happy to have this program," said Sister Gloria Caglioti, principal of Saint Ann School.

Sister Gloria said students will get started on drawings for next year's calendar in February.



This year's winners were honored earlier this month by Somerset County Prosecutor Wayne J. Forrest and a host of local law enforcement members, educators and legislators. Other area students featured in the calendar include: Katie Drinkwater and Myles Diggins, both sixth-grade pupils at Bernardsville Middle School, Christopher Voda, a fifth-grade pupil at the School of Saint Elizabeth in Bernardsville, and Guillermo Barrantes, a fifth-grade pupil at Hillside Intermediate School in Bridgewater.

"All students that are DARE graduates and all students that participated in the contest should consider themselves winners," Forrest said in a prepared statement.

The 2006 calendars can be found in schools, libraries, and county and municipal buildings throughout the region.

Bicycle shop owner pedals toward finish line

By JIM WHITE
Staff Writer

BEDMINSTER — This is not the first time Alan Jaquish has had to abandon ship.

As a Merchant Marine in World War II, the ship he was on was torpedoed, likely by a German U-boat, while crossing the English Channel with reinforcements for the Battle of the Bulge.

"The ship was split in half," Jaquish recalled last week. "I was lucky. I made it. I was in the good half."

Now, at the age of 80, Jaquish, of Bernards, is abandoning the bicycle and lawnmower repair business he has captained for 22 years — Alan's Bicycle Shop — on the grounds of Grace Fellowship Chapel off Route 202 North/Main Street in Bedminster.

"It's no use, there's no business here," he said. "Last year I think I brought in \$100."

Jaquish, who plans to close up shop for good in early March, wants to get rid of everything in the meantime and is willing to sell what he has at near giveaway prices.

Inside the small, barn-like garage, there are bicycles and every conceivable bicycle part. There are lawn mowers, drive mowers and weed wackers. There are cabinets filled with nuts and bolts. And there are tools, toolboxes, tool sets, and more and more tools, some electric.

"I got to get rid of this stuff," said Jaquish, who added that he doesn't think he will miss the business after retiring, considering his monthly rent of \$350 is more than he brings in a month.

"To tell you the truth, this could be the best thing that ever happened to me," he said.

His wife of 57 years, Gloria Jaquish, agreed.

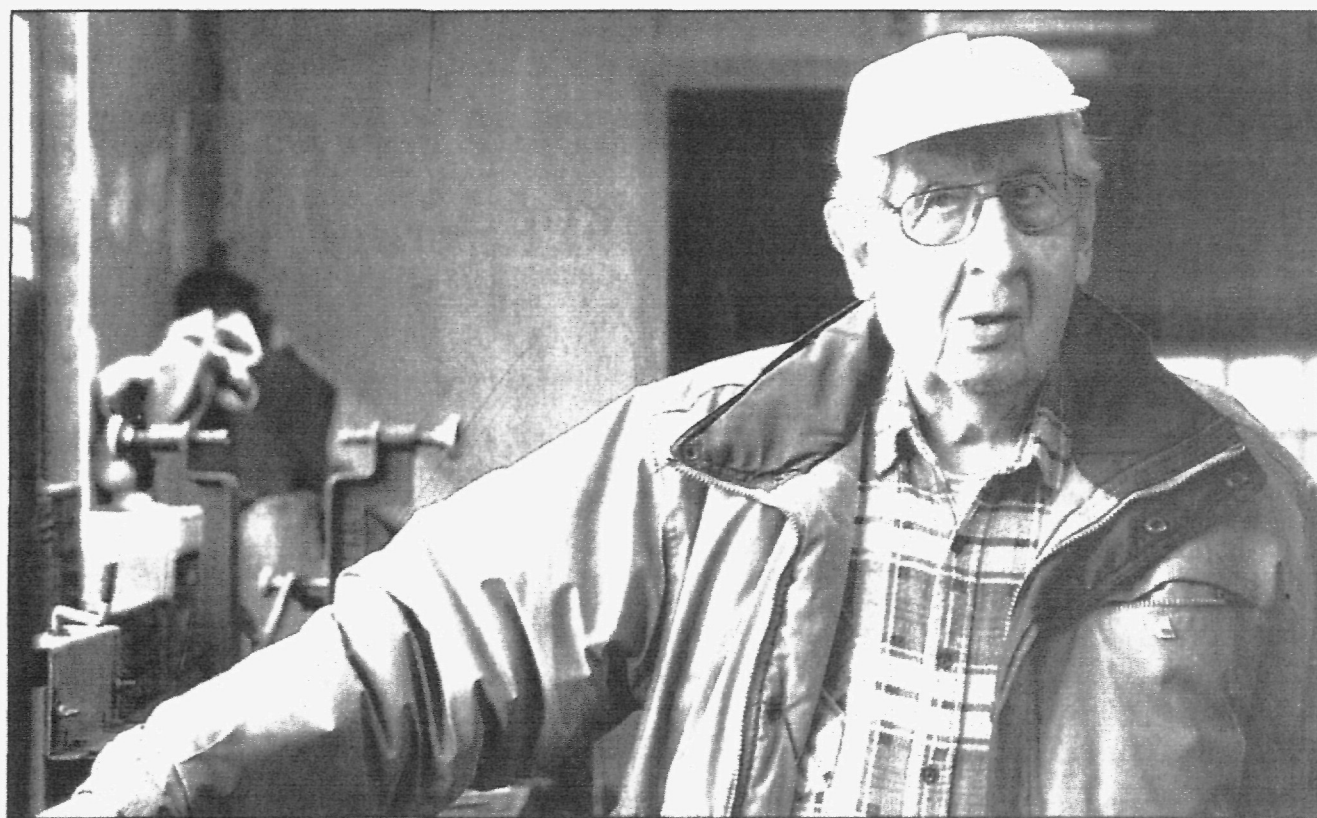
"I think he should have done it quite some time ago," she said. "You reach a zenith in anything you do, then it's time to go."

Gloria Jaquish also recalled what her husband had told her about that fateful day on the English Channel back in World War II.

She said while the ship was going down, the captain, who was young and panicked, jumped aboard a lifeboat and ordered his men to lower the boat down the side of the vessel and into the sea.

But Alan Jaquish could see that there were still injured and bleeding men on the deck. However, the captain insisted that the lifeboat be lowered right then and there.

"From what I understand, the rule of



the sea is the last man in the boat should be the captain," Gloria Jaquish said.

Gloria Jaquish recalled what her husband, who had picked up an axe from the lifeboat, said to the captain at that point.

"He said, 'We go back or I'll split your skull,'" she said, adding they went back for four injured men before that lifeboat was ever lowered.

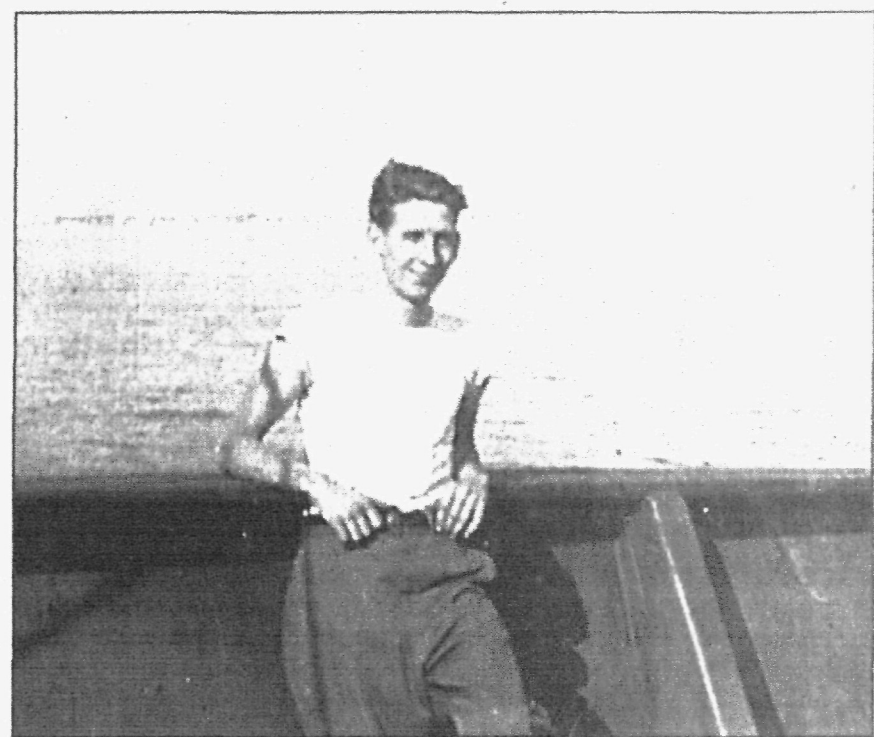
She also noted that Alan Jaquish was docked pay for insubordination.

"I don't like to tout my husband as some kind of big hero, because I don't believe war is how we were intended to live," she said. "War is an evil, ugly thing."

The couple said they plan to enjoy their free time after the bicycle shop officially closes.

A statement from Grace Fellowship Chapel, which owns the shop, reads: "Alan has been a great tenant, and we will miss him. He has been like a dad to us, a grandfather. He is like a staple in this community and has a ton of history here. We wish him well and will do whatever we can to help him make this transition easy."

For more information about what is available for sale, call Alan's Bicycle Shop at (908) 234-2821, or call Alan and Gloria Jaquish at (908) 766-4241.



GEORGE PACCIOLLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER (TOP); COURTESY JAQUISH FAMILY (ABOVE)
Alan Jaquish, pictured at top inside Alan's Bicycle Shop in Bedminster, is ready to close the doors on his business after 22 years. He is pictured above in his younger days when he served as a Merchant Marine in World War II.

Immaculata's biggest guns return for a visit

SOMERVILLE — Memories of grandeur and grand numbers came flooding back for a number of former Spartan standouts.

On a day capped by the undefeated boys basketball team's lopsided conquest of Oratory Prep, Immaculata High held its first Alumni Day Jan. 7, honoring its dozen 1000-point scorers while also hosting its first alumni game among former boys players.

A banner listing the names of the seven girls and five boys to reach 1000 career points

was unveiled and presented in honor of Greg Hilgenberg, father of Jen, the school's all-time scoring leader and presently the girls team's head coach.

"It feels pretty good to see my name up there as the top scorer," said Jen Hilgenberg, who totaled 1450 points before becoming a starter at Villanova. "It's an honor to have my name on that banner. The school has done a lot for me, and to still be part of this feels great."

Bobby Krzeminski, whose

1280 points rank second among the boys, was also back for the event. An Air Force Academy graduate, Krzeminski sparked Immaculata to its first sectional title during the 1982-83 campaign.

"This is great," said the former long-distance marksman. "I have a lot of fond memories of Immaculata and the basketball program, and it's great to see everyone. I definitely looked forward to coming back. I marked my calendar months ago. The success I had here enabled me to get through the Air Force Academy and to have success in the business world."

Looking back at his scholastic career more than two decades ago, two games stood out for Krzeminski, who was also a guiding force during '81-'82 season when the Spartans finished 23-2 for their best record ever and won the Somerset County

Tournament's A crown. "The single game I remember the most was a game we played at Hillsborough," he said. "I severely sprained my ankle and could hardly walk,

but I came out and hit three jumpers that helped us win. The other game that stands out was beating Bergen Catholic in the state tournament."

As a senior, Krzeminski poured in 29 points when the Spartans defeated BC 81-66 for the North Parochial A sectional crown in '83. Three nights later Paul VI of Haddonfield edged Immaculata 55-54 for the state title at the Byrne Meadowlands Arena (now known as the Continental Airlines Arena) in East Rutherford.

Michael Parenti made the trip from his home in Connecticut. With 1363 points, the 1988 graduate is the top boys scorer and second to Hilgenberg on the all-time list. He recalled the quality atmosphere that existed at the school.

"The best memories I have of Immaculata are the spirit of the school — the support for everyone from the nuns, the staff and the students," said the ex-standout guard. "It was all very genuine. This is just a great day getting a chance to

see the people I graduated with and even beyond that.

"It means a lot to me to be the top boys scorer. There's a great tradition at Immaculata, and to be the Number One boy, especially surpassing someone like Bobby Krzeminski, is really a great honor."

As far as recalling specific games, Parenti admitted it was a loss that probably stands at the top of the list.

"Playing a team like St. Anthony's in the state tournament is something I'll never forget," he said. "We gave them a game for a half, down by maybe four points, at halftime, before they just took over."

Liz Sellinger, an '83 graduate, also returned for the big day. A 25-point scorer in an upset of Somerville in a holiday tournament as a senior, she finished with 1019 points and was later passed by younger sister Eileen, who scored 1214.

"It's very exciting to be here for this," Liz Sellinger said. "It's great to see my old coaches and my teammates and watch the guys play. My best

memories are the friends I made and of my teammates and the close-knit family atmosphere of the school."

She also recalled that victory over Somerville, a 54-52 decision secured over the two-time defending county champion Pioneers on her two free throws with five seconds left.

"The one game that stands out the most was that game against Somerville," she said. "It was a last-minute thing. I think it was the first time Immaculata had ever beaten Somerville."

Kevin Cullinan (1042), who surpassed the 1000-point plateau in 1979 when he and fellow senior Greg Hinton (1056) both went over the mark, is now part of Head Coach Mike Frauenheim's staff and still has strong feelings about the program.

"I'm very proud to see my name up there and to be a part of this," he said. "Just being here with everyone makes it a great day. Immaculata has had such a big influence on me, and I'm so proud Michael has allowed me to remain part of the program and build it to another level."



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SEALED BIDS will be received from bidders classified under N.J.S.A. 27:27-35.1 et seq. in the NJDOT MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, New Jersey Department of Transportation, 1035 Parkway Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08625, until 10:00 A.M. on 1/24/06 and opened and read for:

Maintenance Bituminous Pavement Repair Contract, Central - 2006, Various locations - South of Route 57, Counties of Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Somerset and Part of Warren 100% State.

DP No: 054710

Bidders are required to comply with the requirements of PL 1975, c. 127 N.J.A.C. 17:27. Effective October 15, 2004, Pursuant to Executive Order 134, apparent low bidder must provide a completed, signed Executive Order No. 134, Certification and Disclosure Form when seven (7) state business days from the project bid date.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:26-44, Business Regulation, proof of valid business registration shall be submitted by a bidder with its bid proposal at the time of bid for 100% State funded projects.

Pursuant to the Public Works Contractor Registration Act, N.J.S.A. 34:11-36.49 et seq. (PL 2003, c. 91), bidders must register with the New Jersey Department of Labor, Division of Wage and Hour Compliance.

The Department, in accordance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 252 U.S.C. 42 U.S.C. Part 70 and 23 issued pursuant to such Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, will allow minority business enterprises full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not discriminate against any bidder on the grounds of race, color, sex, national origin, or handicap in the contract award.

Drawings and specifications for the proposed work are available at Bid Express website www.bidexpress.com. You must subscribe to use this service. To subscribe follow the instructions on the web site. The fee is \$35.00 per month for unlimited access to view and download the documents and additional \$95.00 per month for unlimited access to download the plans, directly payable to Bid Express. Drawings, special provisions, and bid documents may be inspected (BUT NOT OBTAINED) by contacting organizations at our various Design Field Offices at the following locations:

200 Spent Court
Mt. Arlington, NJ
973-770-5141

Route 79 and Daniels Way
Freehold, NJ
732-308-4025

1 Executive Campus, Rt. 70 West
Cherry Hill, NJ
856-486-6624

New Jersey Department of Transportation
Division of Procurement
Bureau of Construction Services
1035 Parkway Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08625

PO Box 605
Trenton, NJ 08625
B90.3T 1.07.14.21.06

NJDOT NOTICE FOR BIDS
SEALED BIDS will be received from bidders classified under N.J.S.A. 27:27-35.1 et seq. in the NJDOT MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, New Jersey Department of Transportation, 1035 Parkway Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08625, until 10:00 A.M. on 1/24/06 and opened and read for:

Route 9 Bus Shoulder Lanes & Pedestrian Improvements, Contract No. 12033300, Old Bridge Township, Middlesex County
Federal Project No. CM-0001233
DP No: 05158

Bidders are required to comply with the requirements of PL 1975, c. 127 N.J.A.C. 17:27. Effective October 15, 2004, Pursuant to Executive Order 134, apparent low bidder must provide a completed, signed Executive Order No. 134, Certification and Disclosure Form when seven (7) state business days from the project bid date.

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Drawings and specifications for the proposed work are available at Bid Express website www.bidexpress.com. You must subscribe to use this service. To subscribe follow the instructions on the web site. The fee is \$35.00 per month for unlimited access to view and download the documents and additional \$95.00 per month for unlimited access to download the plans, directly payable to Bid Express. Drawings, special provisions, and bid documents may be inspected (BUT NOT OBTAINED) by contacting organizations at our various Design Field Offices at the following locations:

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Trenton, NJ 08625

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B11.3T 1.21.28.24.06

BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK PLANNING BOARD

The Bound Brook Planning Board approved an application (#08-05), Yumina Realty, LLC, with respect to property located at 310 West Union Avenue (Lots 2, 3 and 4, Block 52). The property is located in the B-1 zone. The relief sought was site plan approval to refurbish existing site (presently housing a Krauszer's Market) and add permitted retail uses. The application was approved as to substance on December 22, 2005 and approved as to form on January 12, 2006.

The Bound Brook Planning Board approved an application (#18-05), Gilly's Landscaping Homeowners' Association, Inc., with respect to property located at 271-309 West High Street (Lot 1, Block 40). The property is located in the R-4 zone. The relief sought was a variance for a sign identifying the townhouse complex. The application was approved as to substance on December 22, 2005 and approved as to form on January 12, 2006.

B12.1T 1/21/06

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