

The Chronicle

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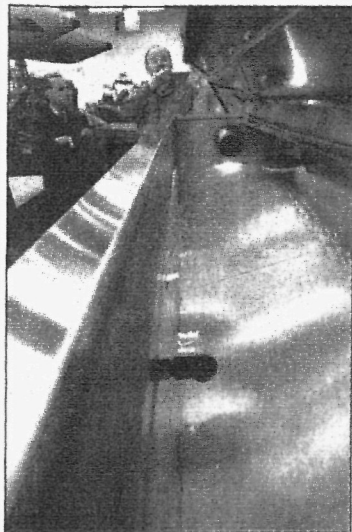
Since 1862

Saturday, February 18, 2006

50 cents

Vol. 145, No. 7

INSIDE



The evidence doesn't lie

With the help of Somerset County Prosecutor's Office detective Gary Mayer, right, Prosecutor Wayne Forrest gives a tour of the prosecutor's office's Forensic Unit in Hillsborough, including this water recovery system used for ballistics testing. The unit's facility is about to undergo a \$3.6 million renovation. **Page B1.**

Hospital gets high marks

NEW BRUNSWICK — Patients rated Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital's nursing care and food among the top 2 percent in the nation, according to Press Ganey, a company that measures and reports hospital patient satisfaction. Patients evaluated their satisfaction regarding nurses on a variety of criteria, including friendliness of nurses, promptness of response to call button, nurses' attitudes toward requests, attention to personal needs, skill of nurses and how well nurses kept them informed. For meals, patients were asked about the quality of the food, temperature of the food, how well a restricted diet was explained and the courtesy of the person who served the food. The hospital is one of a handful of hospitals in the nation to have room service dining, in which patients order their meals from extensive, restaurant-style menus and have them delivered to their rooms at times of their own choosing. Patient satisfaction results also showed the Bristol-Myers Squibb Children's Hospital at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital ranking in the top 1 percent in the nation. In addition, patients at the hospital ranked security at the hospital in the top 2 percent nationally. The patient satisfaction statistics are from the most current quarter of 2005. The hospital's performance is based on a comparison to similar-sized hospitals in the United States. The high patient satisfaction scores reinforce the status of the hospital as one of the region's leading hospitals. In 2005, Consumers Digest magazine ranked the hospital among the top five hospitals in the nation for patient safety. The hospital also had more top-rated physicians than any hospital in New Jersey listed in New York magazine and New Jersey Monthly's 2005 "Best Doctors" issues.

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Bike-safety initiative ready for launch

Camille Fernicola, a Middlesex County freeholder, announced a new initiative to combat the number of pedestrian and bicycling accidents that occur throughout Middlesex County.

The new program would help fund municipal projects that provide a safer and more accommodating environment for pedestrians and bicyclists in the county.

"I have always had a special interest and concern for the growing needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in our county," Fernicola said. "It is

too often that we hear of pedestrians and bicyclists, who are the most vulnerable in the mix of traffic, being involved in serious or fatal accidents that may have been prevented had different conditions existed."

In 2004, 15 of the 57 traffic fatalities in Middlesex County were pedestrian fatalities.

The Board of Freeholders recently voted to establish the Middlesex County Pedestrian Bicycle Safety Program. The board will use \$500,000 from the county's Open Space and Recreation Trust Fund to provide

grants to municipalities at a county-municipal 80-20 matching system.

Applications for the grant program will be sent to the mayors of all 25 Middlesex County municipalities in March. Eligible projects must come from approved municipal comprehensive master plans and/or bicycle-pedestrian plans, have completed engineering and design work, and must be able to be built within three months of when the application is made.

Fernicola said it would be ideal if the bike paths and walkways to be

created or enhanced would serve as links for existing green spaces in a community. However, each application would be evaluated on its own merits, she said.

Types of eligible projects include: New sidewalks, sidewalk extensions, new or enhanced crosswalks in areas of high pedestrian activity, installation of pedestrian activated traffic signal devices, installation of lighted crosswalks or crosswalks with reflectors, new striping, signs, blinking

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Jean and William Radice of Bridgewater renew their vows on Valentine's Day at the Adult Day Center in Bridgewater. John Graf Jr., center, president of the Somerset County United Way, presided over the ceremony. The couple has been married for 53 years.

53 years and still loving it

By AMY S. BOBROWSKI
Staff Writer

BRIDGEWATER — "We met at work and when I first met him, I hated him," said Jean Radice.

But more than a half of century later, Jean and William Radice are more in love than ever. The couple, Bridgewater residents, married for 53 years, renewed their vows at the Adult Day Center on Tuesday — Valentine's Day.

When William Radice asked Jean out on a first date, she agreed, but offered a snide comment.

"I said, 'I'm only going out with you to do you a favor,'" she recalled. But after William Radice, now 74, came back from training with the Navy, Jean Radice had a change of heart.

"When he came out, I saw him and I saw the man that he is," said Jean Radice, now 76.

During a short ceremony at the center, the couple professed their unending love to each other again. The moment was made more special by the presence of their guests. Jean Radice's sister who was her original maid of honor was there and so was their daughter.

The couple first wed June 14, 1953 at St. Anne's Church in Raritan. Mary Grecco, the maid of honor stood by her sister then and she reprised her role during Tuesday's ceremony.

"It was a beautiful day," said Grecco of the couple's first wedding. "Their reception was at the Bradley Garden Fire House. We had a ball and there was a lot of dancing."

John Graf Jr., president of the Somerset County United Way, presided over the vows in front of more than 30 guests — most of whom were dressed in festive reds and pinks.

"Every experience you've ever had ... has brought you to this special moment," Graf said to the couple. "As you walk hand in hand in the future, remember to cherish each moment together."

Both Radices choked up when it came time to recite their vows. Some guests had tears in their eyes, some showed smiles and one even leapt up to get tissues as soon as the ceremony was over.

After the ceremony, the couple celebrated with a reception lunch and champagne toast in the center's

cafeteria, where they laughed, talked and made more happy memories.

"It was beautiful," William Radice said. "She's beautiful. She's still as young as ever."

For their daughter, Lisa Giranda, this was a chance for her to experience the special occasion.

"I missed the first one, right Aunt Mary," she said, joking with Grecco. Today, the Radices live with Giranda and her husband.

"My husband and I will be married for 25 years in June," Giranda said. "They've been a big inspiration to us. They've showed us a lot of love."

Tuesday wasn't the first time the couple reaffirmed their love for one another. Three years ago, in celebration of their 50th anniversary, the couple renewed their vows. When staff at the Adult Day Center asked if they would do it again, they jumped at the chance.

Typically, each year the center holds a mock wedding to celebrate Valentine's Day. This year, the staff wanted to do something a little different and a little more special.

"Why not do it," Jean Radice said. "We're still so in love."

Black history celebration at Village

PISCATAWAY — The Middlesex County Cultural & Heritage Commission and the Folklife Program for New Jersey present a "Celebration of African American Heritage: Soul Food & Storytelling." This free program is at 2 p.m. Feb. 25 at East Jersey Olde Towne Village, 1050 River Road.

Participants will explore the roots of soul food cooking with a lecture by New Brunswick filmmaker Marilyn Herod. Using clips from her documentary "Planting the Seed," Herod will detail the history and background of this historic cooking tradition. The lecture will be followed by a tasting of a variety of traditional dishes, including fried chicken, okra gumbo, benne crackers and sweet potato pudding, provided by the Promise Jobs Culinary Training School.

Also at 2 p.m. Debbie Kirkland will present a children's craft and storytelling. Using African instruments, puppets and words in Swahili, Kirkland will bring traditional African and African American stories to life. She will continue the program with African Mask Making, where the children will create masks using raffia, yarn and cloth. Kirkland will round out the children's activities with face painting using the colors and designs of African royalty. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Herod is an educator, independent filmmaker and writer. She is the author of "From Ashes to Ovens," which describes the history of Soul Food. She holds a bachelor's degree in English from Rutgers University and is a member of the Rutgers Film Co-op/New Jersey Media Arts Center.

The Promise Jobs Culinary Training School, founded in 1997, is a 17-week program that grew out of Elijah's Promise in New Brunswick. The intense curriculum, created by director Pearl S. Thompson, provides students with a firm foundation in the culinary arts. Over 200 students have graduated from this program since its inception.

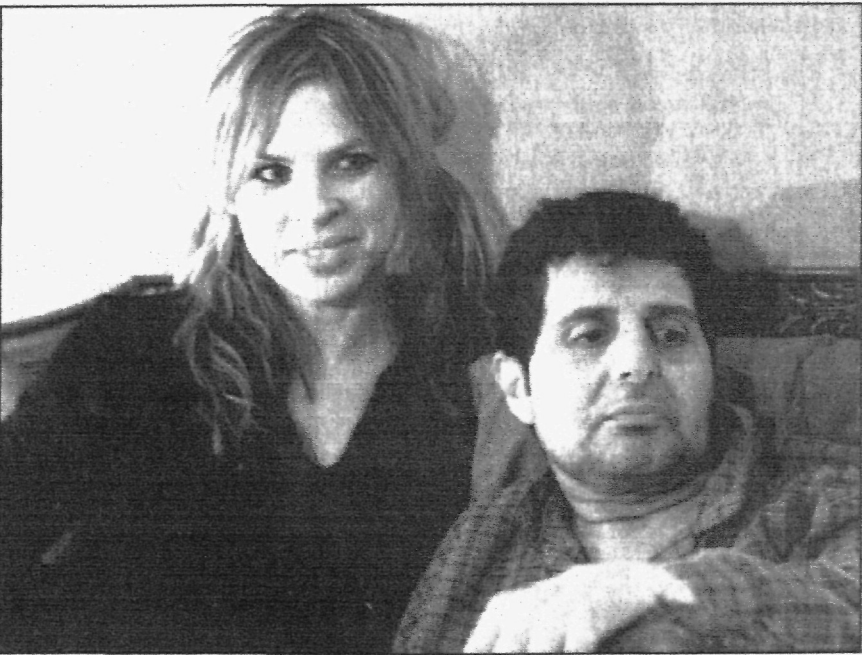
Kirkland, founder of Afro-Centric Parties, focuses on multicultural storytelling, face painting, arts and crafts. In the last decade she has spearheaded a cultural explosion as she has enhanced the education of children and adults through traditional stories and crafts.

Space is limited. For registration, call (732) 745-4489.

The Folklife Program for New

Continued on page A2

They won't let a disease weaken their faith



Danielle and Randy Najarian in the couple's bedroom at home in Bedminster. Randy was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in October 2004 and will die without a bone marrow or stem cell transplant.

By JIM WHITE
Staff Writer

BEDMINSTER — The picture on his bedroom dresser is that of a younger Randy Najarian. He looked just like Rambo back then, with muscles on top of muscles.

In stark contrast last week, on the other side of the room, a frail Najarian sat beneath the covers of his bed as a machine fed his body nutrients through a tube.

Najarian, 50, was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in October 2004 — a cancer of the blood that eats away at the bones. He is currently in the third and worst stage of the disease, and will die without a bone marrow or stem cell transplant.

Complicating matters, Najarian has very rare DNA and, to date, doctors have been unable to find a matching donor, despite him being on a world-wide registry.

So, while he waits, a typical day for Najarian, a former pharmaceutical sales rep, involves a lot of reading, talking on the phone and television.

"Then the thinking takes over," he said. "I start thinking about the past.

"Then the thinking takes over. I start thinking about the past. I go back all the way to when I was a kid. I wonder if I'll ever get back to the strength I had before this. It makes me cry a little bit. But I try to stay positive. I have a lot of good friends. You gotta laugh about it."

Randy Najarian

I go back all the way to when I was a kid. I wonder if I'll ever get back to the strength I had before this. It makes me cry a little bit. But I try to stay positive. I have a lot of good friends. You gotta laugh about it."

"When it comes to men, they want

Continued on page A2



COURTESY SOMERSET COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A combined swearing-in and awards ceremony was held recently for two Somerset County Sheriff's officers and 11 sheriff's officers and corrections officers, respectively. Pictured from left to right, acting Sgt. Mark Szczecina, corrections officer Raymond Thompson, sheriff's officer Timothy Musto, corrections officers Vincent Carrube and Keith Covert, Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano, Cpl. Donald Essig, Col. Joseph P. Lamont, Sgt. Frank Johnson, corrections officer Jose Carrasquillo, Sgt. Timothy Pino and Sgt. Nicholas Klementowicz.

South Plainfield resident joins Somerset County Sheriff's office

SOMERVILLE — A combined swearing-in and awards ceremony was held recently for two sheriff's officers and 11 sheriff's officers and corrections officers, respectively.

Retired Judge Samuel Chiaravalli administered the oath of office to sheriff's officers Christopher Omelio and Pedro Rodriguez.

Omelio is a resident of South Plainfield. He graduated from the Somerset County Police Academy on Dec. 22. He has a degree in mechanical design from the Somerset County Technical Institute and also has attended Raritan Valley Community College. Prior to being accepted to the county police academy as an alternate-route candidate, he worked in the health and fitness industry.

ness industry.

Rodriguez is a resident of Union. He has a bachelor's degree from DeVry University. He is currently enrolled in the county police academy's training class. Prior to joining the Sheriff's Office, he worked as a manager for CVS Pharmacy.

In addition, 10 Special Response Team members were presented exceptional duty awards for their participation in the Louisiana emergency assistance deployment.

The officers departed for Louisiana on Sept. 7 and after 36 hours arrived in Kenner, La.

For the next 10 days they responded to police-related incidents, such as thousands of unanswered 911 calls, looting and fires, searched houses for survivors and victims and assisted animal-control officers.

The SRT members who received awards are Sgt. Nicholas Klementowicz, Sgt. Timothy Pino, Sgt. Frank Johnson, Cpl. Donald Essig, sheriff's officers Mark Szczecina and Timothy Musto, and corrections officers Keith Covert, Vincent Carrube, Jose Carrasquillo and Raymond Thompson.

In the audience was Assemblyman Christopher "Kip" Bateman, who also went to Louisiana to assist in the recovery. Sheriff Frank Provenzano acknowledged his participation in this effort. Also, Sheriff's Officer Lewis Bimble was recognized for preventing a serious crime.

While patrolling the parking lot of the Lyons train station in Bernards Township on Sept. 29, he observed a suspicious vehicle parked in a remote area of the lot. As a result of his actions, a 32-year-old male was arrested with a 14-year-old female.

Provenzano spoke about his 37 years of experience in law enforcement and how infrequently police officers ever come across a crime in progress. He commended Officer Bimble's alertness, professionalism and investigative skills.

"Thanks to Officer Bimble, a sexual predator was apprehended and possible harm to the young lady was prevented," said Provenzano.

Bike

Continued from page A1

lights and "yield to pedestrian" signs or banners, traffic calming measures to help reduce vehicle speed, bicycle paths, lanes or routes with appropriate signage, bicycle lockers and racks and bicycle shelters.

The construction cost of a proposed project should be a minimum of \$25,000. Improvements to be funded through the matching grants must comply with approved County engineering standards.

Fernicola said when possible, the county will continue to coordinate with the resources of agencies such as Keep Middlesex Moving, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority towards attaining state and federal funds for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

"I realize that there are no simple solutions that will address this problem fully, and that a combination of measures, strategies and commitment from all levels of government and everyone else involved is essential to bring about a safer traffic environment for all," Fernicola said.

Village

Continued from page A1

Jersey was established by the Middlesex County Cultural & Heritage Commission in 1990 to broaden the appreciation and availability of folk arts, folklore and folk life within Middlesex County; identify

and preserve folk traditions expressed by the people of Central New Jersey; provide a forum for the presentation of New Jersey and regional folk artists, recognized by their community for excellence; encourage public involvement in the folk arts through educational programming and cross-cultural exchange.

Nominations sought for Dare to Imagine awards

VSA arts of New Jersey announces that it is seeking nominations for the second annual Dare to Imagine Awards.

The awards will recognize adults and children under age 18 who have made a positive difference in the life of a person or persons with disabilities.

Awards candidates must have made an impact that relates to one or more of the following focus areas: Corporate and organizational responsibility; education, training and enrichment opportunities; accessibility; and personal commitment and volunteerism. Individuals whose contributions are related to the arts are especially

encouraged to apply.

The application deadline is March 25. Selections will be announced in the spring or summer. Awards recipients will be honored at a ceremony in the fall featuring a presentation about the award winners by the Unlimited Potential Theater Company, which is dedicated to providing opportunities for adults with physical disabilities to be actively involved in all aspects of the performing arts.

For an application, visit www.vsanj.org or call (732) 745-3885.

VSA arts of New Jersey is the statewide affiliate of VSA arts, an international organization.

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Mortgage Loans.....	274,234,228
Equity And Consumer Loans.....	27,028,059
Office Properties And Equipment.....	2,557,124
Other Assets.....	1,450,743
Total Assets.....	\$ 577,837,160
Liabilities And Capital	
Deposits.....	\$ 468,498,606
Borrowings.....	25,859,733
Tax Escrow Funds.....	2,471,676
Other Liabilities.....	2,061,388
Capital.....	78,945,757
Total Liabilities And Capital.....	\$ 577,837,160

*Unaudited

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Faith

Continued from page A1

to be men, but it's hard. It's tested us," she said. "But we don't have to wait for the doctors to find someone. We can go look on our own," she said.

Danielle Najarian has organized a bone marrow and blood drive to be held 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 19 at The Buttonwood Manor, 845 Route 34, in Matawan.

Testing is \$70 per person, but donations are being accepted to cover the cost of testing and to assist the family with medical expenses.

"Even if you're not a match for Randy, you can be a match for someone else," she said.

Also, a fundraiser originally

scheduled for Feb. 11 at The Buttonwood Manor has been moved to Feb. 25.

The event, which will feature dinner, music and dancing, kicks off at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased by calling the manor at (732) 566-6220 or the Najarians at (908) 719-2281.

One of Najarian's doctors, David Siegel, chief of the Myeloma Division at Hackensack University Medical Center, said multiple myeloma is a bone marrow cancer that affects white blood cells, akin to leukemia. And without intervention — a bone marrow or stem cell transplant — it is fatal.

Siegel said a stem cell transplant from Najarian's own body — a procedure he has already undergone — is not as dangerous as receiving one from someone else, but only a foreign stem cell transplant is curative.

He said the average survival rate for someone with stage 3 multiple myeloma is three to five years, but much shorter if the cancer is aggressive.

The doctor described Najarian as an "unbelievably nice man."

"Despite many hardships, he never complained, though he certainly has a reason to complain," Siegel said. "His wife and family stood by him like nothing I've seen."

"We're both Leos," she said. Donations to the Randy Najarian Fund can be mailed to P.O. Box 802 Bedminster, NJ 07921-0802.

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Since 1862

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Middlesex County News

Bridal show in Menlo Park

EDISON — Local residents are invited to preview the latest in wedding fashions at the fourth annual American Bridal Show in Menlo Park Mall.

The show runs during mall hours today and tomorrow. Mall stores and over 30 vendors from catering halls, DJs, limousines, florists, dress shops and tuxedo shops will be on hand to showcase the season's hottest styles and trends for weddings.

A fashion show in the Macy's section begins at 2 p.m. each day featuring live models suited in contemporary wedding attire from Macy's bridal department and Dante Tuxedos.

Guests can receive a complimentary wedding planner with any \$100 in receipts from mall retailers dated Feb. 17-19. Shoppers can obtain this gift at the Guest Services desk on the upper level near the food court.

For more information, visit the Guest Services desk or call (732) 494-MALL.

Broadway's belle to sing at season finale

NEW BRUNSWICK — The Edison Arts Society will present the Edison Symphony Orchestra Season Finale "The Romeros: The Royal Family of the Guitar" at 2 p.m. tomorrow at the State Theatre, 15 Livingston Ave. in New Brunswick. Andrea Burns will be performing selections from her Broadway repertoire from Evita, Les Miserable, The Theme from Light in the Piazza among others.

Burns has appeared as Vicki Nichols in The Full Monty, and as Belle in Disney's Beauty and the Beast. Her portrayal of Lucille Frank in Harold Prince's national tour of Parade garnered her a National Broadway Award nomination for Best Actress.

For over three decades, the Romeros have received popular and critical acclaim, appearing with the Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Boston, and Cleveland orchestras. The Romeros prevail as champions in the realm of classical guitar.

Tickets for the Edison Symphony Orchestra Season Finale are \$50, \$40, \$35, and \$30 per person. Call the State Theatre at (732) 246-7469 or toll

free 877-STATE11 or visit their Web site at www.stateheatrenj.org.

Conservative temple offering programs

HIGHLAND PARK — The next meeting of Raritan Valley Chapter of Hadassah will be held 1 p.m. Tuesday at the Highland Park Conservative Temple.

Moshe Moskowitz will give English translations of Yiddish stories.

The following meeting of Raritan Valley Chapter of Hadassah will be 7:45 p.m. March 21 at the temple.

Judy Freeman will give a workshop on "Motivating Children to Read." She will entertain with story-telling, creative drama, songs and jokes.

'Low Vision' group to meet

EDISON — If your eyesight is not all that great, a Low Vision Support Group may help you cope.

This support group meets at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday at the Jewish Family & Vocational Service, 515 Middlesex Ave. Transportation may be arranged if you need it. Insurance may be accepted in lieu of a fee.

Registration is recommended; call (732) 777-1940.

Get information on upcoming trips

PISCATAWAY — An Information Night is scheduled for trips being sponsored by the Piscataway School of Community Education.

The program is at 6 p.m. Wednesday in the Board of Education office at 1515 Stelton Road.

Among the trips being planned are a nine-day cruise to the eastern Caribbean, leaving from New York on June 23; a 14-day cruise from London, England, to Rome, Italy, leaving on Sept. 8; a five-day "Celtic Escape" in Ireland leaving Nov. 8; and "A Taste of Scotland," scheduled for August 2007.

Day trips planned for Broadway shows include "The Phantom of the Opera," April 1; "Wicked," Oct. 21; and "Monty Python's Spamalot," Nov. 4.

Registration is recommended for the Information Night; call

(732) 572-4688.

Fashion show for Heart Month

PISCATAWAY — February is Heart Month and an upcoming "Red Dress Fashion Show" features models from township schools.

The fashion show is at 7 p.m. Friday in the Patton Building at Piscataway High School. Fashions are by Macy's, Dress Barn and Mande, modeled by Piscataway students and by employees of Grandview School.

Handouts on heart health will be provided, courtesy of the American Heart Association and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital.

Cost is \$5 with all proceeds going to the American Heart Association. Advance tickets are available at any Piscataway public school. For more information, e-mail jfjck@pway.org.

Italian dinner fit for a Knight

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — The Knights of Columbus sponsor an Italian dinner from 4-7:30 p.m. Friday in their hall at 334 Hamilton Blvd.

Cost is \$8 for adults, \$7 for seniors and \$4 for children under age 12. This dinner features pasta, sausage, meatballs, salad, bread, coffee, tea and dessert.

For more information, call Bill Butrico at (908) 561-8128. Proceeds benefit the Knights' local charities fund.

Diocese is holding stewardship meeting

METUCHEN — The Diocese of Metuchen Office of Stewardship is pleased to announce the second annual Stewardship Symposium being held Feb. 25 at the St. John Neumann Pastoral Center.

In keeping with the spirit of the Diocesan Synod, the 2006 Stewardship Symposium has adopted as its theme, "Together on the Road."

The theme will be developed throughout the day with related workshop and session topics. Fr. Benedict Groeschel will set the tone with the keynote topic "Ongoing, Daily Conversion."

In the luncheon general session, author Daniel Conway will reflect on the "baggage" we carry

by sharing thoughts from his book, "What Do I Own and What Owns Me."

In workshop presentations, Fr. William Hanson speaking on Congregational Engagement and Fr. Len Rusay speaking on Stewardship and Social Outreach will show us how to motivate our fellow travelers and care for those we meet along the way.

Msgr. James Choma will speak to the clergy on "Parish Stewardship: Gimmick or Way of Life and Parish Stewardship Committee" members of three parishes will round out the day by leading a Parish to Parish open forum allowing time for participants to share information and experiences.

Russian support group is formed

EDISON — A support group has been formed for Russian-speaking people in the area.

This group meets at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 27 at the Jewish Family & Vocational Service of Middlesex County, 515 Plainfield Ave. If you are interested, call Tatiana Larina at (732) 777-1940.

Meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Library program held on president's wife

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — The public is invited to a performance on "Abigail Adams: Remember the Ladies."

This free program is at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 5 at the South Plainfield Public Library, 2484 Plainfield Ave. Kim Hanley from the American Historical Theater portrays Mrs. Adams, the wife of former President John Adams.

"Remember the Ladies" recounts the events of Mrs. Adams' life along with her views on women, American independence and racial equality.

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

Women's Club to hear surrogate

METUCHEN — The Metuchen-Edison Women's Club holds its monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 8 at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Middlesex and Oak avenues.

Middlesex County Surrogate Kevin Hoagland speaks about wills and estates. In addition, attorney Gary Hoagland speaks

about last wills, trusts, living wills, advance directives and power of attorney.

Guests are welcome and refreshments will be served. If you are interested in attending, call Diana at (732) 548-0925.

Library ready to go 'Back Into Nature'

DUNELLEN — The Dunellen Public Library goes "Back Into Nature" at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 13.

David Womer brings his creatures from the animal planet to the New Market Road library so you can touch them. Space is limited.

Registration is required; call (732) 968-4585.

Canal historian gives book talk

DUNELLEN — Linda Barth is a director of the Canal Society of New Jersey and, with her husband, has led tours of canals in the Northeast.

She has written a children's book about a "Bridgetender's Boy" who lived along the Delaware & Raritan Canal. Barth visits the Dunellen Public Library for a book talk and book signing at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 20. Copies will be available for purchase.

Accompanying Barth on the program is Doreen Lorenzetti, who drew the illustrations for "Bridgetender's Boy."

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

Scouts planning Spring Camporee

EAST BRUNSWICK — The Central New Jersey Council, Boy Scouts of America, will hold a Spring Camporee from April 28-30 at the Middlesex County Fairgrounds.

The theme is "Be Prepared — Scouting Salutes Our Emergency Services."

Scouts will learn disaster relief from the people who provide those services in New Jersey. More than 4,000 scouts are expected to attend.

There will be displays from the Middlesex County Office of Emergency Management, including emergency vehicles and mobile command buses. The State Police will be there with one

of their helicopters, as well as Haz-Mat teams and a mobile emergency hospital.

Civil emergency response teams will conduct demonstrations. There will be displays from the Red Cross, which will conduct a blood drive. The Sharing Network will talk about organ donations.

Scouts can earn a number of merit badges, including Emergency Preparedness, First Aid, Safety, Traffic Safety, Fire Safety, Crime Prevention, Fingerprinting, Public Health and Weather.

The Central New Jersey Council covers most of Middlesex County.

AAUW branch offers scholarship

The Mid-Jersey Branch, American Association of University Women, is offering a one-time scholarship of \$1,000 to a woman over 25 who is pursuing her first bachelor's degree at a four-year college or university.

For an application, e-mail singerlac@aol.com or contact Mid-Jersey AAUW Scholarship Committee, c/o 21 O'Hara St., Edison, NJ 08837 before March 27.

Completed applications must be received by April 1.

County library system adds Spanish interface

The Somerset County Library System has launched a Spanish interface of its on-line catalog.

Spanish-speaking patrons are now able to search the Spanish version of the catalog from the library home page (www.somerset.lib.nj.us) by clicking on one icon. There is also an option available to patrons to have their library checkout receipts and overdue notices printed in Spanish.

The growing Hispanic population created the right opportunity to begin offering this valuable service at the Somerset County Library System. This feature is not costing the SCLS any additional money and will address a growing need. Although the SCLS does not foresee the need to offer the catalog in any other additional languages at this time, it is always monitoring the needs of the community in an effort to provide the best possible service to all library cardholders.

Campus Notes

William N. Michel of Piscataway was named to the dean's list for the fall 2005 semester at American International College in Springfield, Mass.

He is a junior majoring in criminal justice.

Amanda Lockshiss of Piscataway was named to the dean's list for the fall 2005 semester at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Conn.

Jenna Greczek of Middlesex was named to the dean's list for the fall 2005 semester at the State University of New York at New Paltz.

She is a freshman majoring in music therapy and music performance.

Lisa Ambrosini of Middlesex was named to the dean's list for the fall 2005 semester at Providence College in Providence, R.I., where she is a senior.

A total of 21 area students achieved academic honors in the fall 2005 semester at the Madison campus of Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Honors list students have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a scale of 4.

They include Amy Gaynor and Sara Castellanos, both of Bound Brook; Chiara Giordano, of Dunellen; Jessica Emens, Dorothy Iacone, Nicole Matos, Dana Patterson and Peter Scocca, all of Edison; Victoria

Lau, of Metuchen; and David Gutierrez, of Middlesex.

Dean's list students have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

They include Katie Mateicka and Richard Nalepa, both of Metuchen; Darlene Belford, Stephen Valinski and William Vandever, all of Middlesex; Tisha Hutchinson, Jilyan Lane, Quyen Nguyen, Stephanie Shafer and Quintella Thomas, all of Piscataway; and Jennifer Silhanek, of South Plainfield.

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Saturday, February 18, 2006

Opinion

A better use for open space funds

Politicians are famous for "bringing home the pork" — giving out lots of our tax money to their home constituents.

But in his final days, former acting Gov. Richard Codey signed a law which gives more money for New Jersey's open space, farmland and historic preservation programs, without costing the taxpayers another dime.

"We estimate this law will ultimately allow us to capture an additional \$20-30 million more in interest earnings," explained Ralph Siegel, executive director of the Garden State Preservation Trust, which funds the preservation of parks, farmland and other open space.

When the state issues bonds to raise funds for open space preservation, the money isn't committed to specific preservation projects all at once. As a result, there's large amounts of cash on hand immediately following a bond issue — perhaps as much as \$1 billion — in what are essentially interest-bearing checking accounts.

"On the other hand," Siegel explained, "if we put some of



Michele S. Byers

those funds in federally guaranteed income investment packages, we can earn a great deal more interest than we are currently and keep the funds 100-percent safe."

This new law tweaks New Jersey's successful open space campaign — so far nearly \$2 billion is available for open space, farmland and historic preservation. In 2005, the state's Green Acres program alone preserved a record 38,000 acres!

"But even with this additional funding, by somewhere around 2007, in all likelihood, there will be no more GSPT money for

preservation appropriations," Siegel said. "We have lots of money to close deals already in progress; that money is in place. But the bond money approved by the voters will all be committed in a few years, depending on the level of funding requests by the various agencies doing preservation work. At that point, we will have to go back to the voters."

Gov. Jon Corzine can help make sure New Jersey's conservation funds continue by creating a new Governor's Commission or Task Force on Open Space, Farmland and Historic Preservation immediately, with an eye toward asking voters to renew the Garden State Preservation Trust funding.

It was good, old-fashioned common sense for the Legislature and Codey to pass and sign the bill; common sense tells us to plan ahead for the next phase of New Jersey's open space campaign.

Michele S. Byers is executive director of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, a Far Hills-based organization.

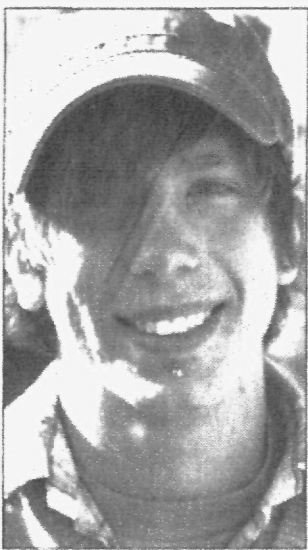
Question of the week: Have you been following the Winter Olympics?



"I haven't yet, but I'm planning on it. I like the speed skating."
ELIZABETH RUSSO
Somerville



"No, unfortunately. I had planned on seeing the opening ceremony, but I missed it. I like the curling, and I'm going to watch a lot of it."
PAT POSWENCYK
Hillsborough



"No, I'm too busy."
DAVE CADALUZZO
Hillsborough

Letters to the Editor

A call for help was answered

To The Editor:

This fall the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Somerset County experienced a financial crisis — not because of a lack of community support — but because of its expanded programming for homeless families.

The board of trustees of the network reached out to houses of worship throughout Somerset County to help avoid a shut-down of services that are aiding families find a permanent solution to their homelessness. Many congregations reached deep into their "pockets" to quickly provide funding for assistance to the women, men and children in the network.

In addition to the ongoing Emergency Shelter Component provided through IHN and its network of congregations, the organization opened Sunrise House in the fall of 2003. Sunrise House provides low-rent interim housing for two families who are preparing for a return to independent living and who need additional counseling and skill-building. In the spring of 2004, Interfaith Hospitality Network of Somerset County additionally began providing continuing case management for clients in permanent housing.

With a greater emphasis on counseling and skill development aimed at preparing these families to manage on their own, this program is unique to Somerset County and provides a true path for families to escape the trap of returning to dependency on "the system" for their most basic needs. This increased programming is costly, with an addition to the highly-skilled Interfaith Hospitality Network professional staff and expenses related to new training and support activities for clients.

Thanks to the financial support of congregations, the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Somerset County is able to provide continual help to the families who aim for a return to self-sufficiency. The board of trustees gives our heartfelt thanks to the houses of worship who responded to our letter and brought us out of crisis this fall.

Any group or individual who would like to support the network should call (908) 704-1920. Donations are tax-deductible and are always welcome.

IRENE LIEBERMAN
Somerville

The writer is a member of the board of trustees of the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Somerset County.

School leaders are always in demand

To The Editor:

When New Year's Day arrived this year, did you resolve to get involved? Did you say that this is the year you're going to make a difference in your community?

If so, your opportunity may have arrived: I ask you to consider becoming a candidate for your local school board.

The deadline for candidates to submit their nominating petitions — the document that gets their name on the ballot — is Feb. 27. The Annual School Election is April 18.

As the president of the New Jersey School Boards Association and a long-time local school board member, I can tell you that serving on a school board can be challenging, sometimes difficult — but ultimately rewarding. What could be more meaningful than helping to shape the education of every child in your community's public schools?

School boards don't run the schools; that's the job of the superintendent and principals. Rather, the school board works with the superintendent to set the goals and the agenda for the district. The board annually evaluates the superintendent, and it also writes the policies under which the district operates. It oversees the budget, approves curriculum, and represents the public during contract negotiations.

Not surprisingly, the job demands a commitment of time — certainly more than simply attending a few meetings a month. The job also demands that board members possess other skills. They must make and publicly defend sometimes difficult

decisions. They must work as a team, because a school board member acting alone has no authority to make decisions for the district. And, although the position is nonpartisan, it does require a certain level of political savvy and diplomacy. But above all, the board member must be committed to ensuring a quality education for the public schoolchildren in the community.

You can learn more about the issues affecting your schools by attending meetings, going online, and discussing candidacy with local education leaders. Although school board members are unpaid lay representatives, they don't step into the job unprepared. Newly elected board members are required by law to attend a New Jersey School Board Association Orientation program, which provides the "basic training" for the board room. After that, board members may attend numerous training programs that the New Jersey School Board Association sponsors.

Think it's time to make good on that New Year's resolution? To learn more about running for the school board, the New Jersey School Board Association has published a Candidate Kit, which can be obtained online at www.njsba.org or through your local school district's business office.

Consider candidacy because this just may be the year that you make a difference in your community.

PATTI J. PAWLING
New Jersey School Boards Association

The writer is a member of the Barrington Board of Education in Camden County.

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

CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE HOLDERS

— U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez (D)
One Gateway Center, 11th Floor, Newark, NJ 07102, (973) 645-3030
(202) 224-4744 (Washington, D.C.)
— U.S. Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg (D)
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. Kavanaugh (R-16th)
76 North Bridge Street, Somerville, NJ 08876, (908)-526-4222
— Assemblyman Christopher Bateman (R-

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

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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.

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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

Irish celebration to focus on Ferguson

SOMERVILLE — The Selection Committee of the County Somerset Celebration of the Irish has announced that Rep. Mike Ferguson, R-11th, has been selected as Irish Person of the Year for 2006.

He is the 16th annual recipient of the award and will be honored at a cocktail reception at 6 p.m. Friday, March 3 at the Neshanic Valley Golf Course in Branchburg.

Ferguson is in his third term representing the 7th District, which includes Bedminster, Branchburg, Far Hills, Green Brook, Peapack-Gladstone, Warren, Watchung and the eastern part of Bridgewater.

"Congressman Ferguson's

dedication to family, country and community are unparalleled," said John Kennedy, chairman, Celebration of the Irish. "While he concentrates on critically important national issues, he maintains an extraordinary commitment to the people of New Jersey. His hands-on efforts to address the problems and issues of the people of Somerset County make him a worthy recipient of the Irishman of the Year award."

On Capitol Hill the congressman focuses on reducing taxes, improving homeland security and defending the values that have made America strong. He received the 2005 Outstanding Legislator of the Year award from the New Jersey Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Ferguson serves on the House

Energy and Commerce Committee, which has wide jurisdiction over the health care, telecommunications and energy industries that employ hundreds of thousands of New Jersey residents. On the Energy and Commerce Committee he serves as vice chairman of the Health Subcommittee. He also is a member of the Telecommunications and Internet Subcommittee; the Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee; and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

Before his election to the House in 2000 Ferguson was a teacher of Western civilization and basketball coach at Mount St. Michael Academy in the Bronx. He also was an adjunct

instructor in political science at Brookdale Community College in Lincroft. His experiences as a teacher inspired him to institute his "Substitute Civics Teacher Program," in which he regularly visits 7th District schools to discuss civics and public service with students ranging from kindergarten to high school and college.

The New Jersey native holds a master's degree in public policy, with specialization in education policy, from Georgetown University. Ferguson graduated from the Delbarton School in Morristown and received a bachelor's degree in government from the University of Notre Dame.

He and his wife, Maureen, have four children.

"I am genuinely honored by this selection," Ferguson said. "The organization has a history of honoring people who have made a significant impact on their community while supporting a very important need. Being part of this honored group is a very special recognition for me and for my family."

The County Somerset Celebration of the Irish was begun in 1989 to honor an individual of Irish heritage and to raise money to support the Walter J. Kavanaugh Scholarship Fund. The scholarship has been presented annually to a student who is the child of a law enforcement officer or public safety volunteer in Somerset County, or to a student who actively participates as a public safety volunteer in

his community while attending school. Proceeds from the reception also support the Somerset St. Patrick's parade.

Admission to the reception is \$85. For reservations, call Kennedy at (732) 271-3310.

Recycling center holds drop-off on March 4

BRIDGEWATER — The next First Saturday of the Month drop-off will be held March 4, at the Somerset County Recycling Center, located at 40 Polhemus Lane in Bridgewater.

The Recycling Center will be open from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on First Saturday of the Month drop-off dates, including March 4, April 1, May 6, June 3, July 1, Aug. 5, Sept. 9 (second Saturday due to holiday), Oct. 7, Nov. 4 and Dec. 2.

Patriots ticket sales support U.S. troops

Single game tickets for the Somerset Patriots' upcoming 2006 season go on sale at Commerce Bank Park in Bridgewater March 11, and each fan who brings a bag of supplies to be shipped to U.S. troops serving in Iraq will receive a special Buy One Get One Free ticket good for any Patriots game Sunday through Thursday throughout the season.

Patriotic fans will also receive a 25 percent discount in the Patriots' Headquarters gift shop as part of the promotion.

The Patriots, who last year won the Atlantic League championship for the third time in their eight-year history, were one of the first organizations to pledge their support for Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 when the grass-roots effort was launched last year by The Chronicle. OPSHBX volunteers were on hand last year to collect items from fans when tickets went on sale.

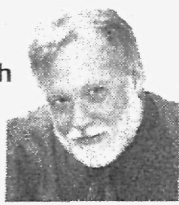
"We are proud to have Operation Shoebox join with us for the opening day of ticket sales once again. This event is not only the start of our individual ticket sales, but also our commitment to be an even bigger part of Operation Shoebox for the upcoming season," said Patrick McVerry, president and general manager of the Patriots.

The Patriots have promised to host two packing events at the ballpark this year, in May and September.

To date, OPSHBX has shipped over 6,000 packages to U.S. troops in Iraq and the Mideast region and raised \$75,000 to pay for shipping. Its most recent packing event was held Feb. 4 at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2290 in Manville, at which 1,465 packages were prepared for the troops.

The ticket windows open at 9 a.m. March 11, with hard core fans showing up in the middle of the night with blankets and containers of coffee to stake their place in line for a shot at the best seats. Last year, Roy Lawrence, his daughter Kristen and Vic Riker were

Rod Hirsch
Executive
Editor



the first to score tickets.

Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 is asking fans to bring the following items to the ballpark on March 11th:

Sun screen, foot powder, telephone calling cards, eye drops, beef jerky, toothpaste, tooth brushes, mouth wash, bug spray, lip balm, feminine products, ear swabs, moist wipes (travel size), razors, toilet paper, coffee, small drink mixes, socks, clothesline/pins, snack foods, cereal/protein bars, fleece blankets, microwaveable foods (can or box), hard candy/gum, writing materials, and batteries (any size).

Tickets for all 72 home games will be available at the ballpark. Somerset Patriots ticket prices are \$12 for executive field box seats; \$9.50 for field box seats; \$8.50 for upper box seats, and \$5 for turf club seating.

Game times for the 2006 season are 7:05 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1:35 p.m. on Sundays. The Patriots will host 12 fireworks shows, different promotional nights, and a variety of theme nights throughout the season.

For more information call (908) 252-0700 or visit the website at www.somersetpatriots.com.

Rosary beads

Elaine Dudash of Green Brook called The Chronicle just one day before the Feb. 4 shipping event at the Manville VFW to ask whether OPSHBX would accept religious items for shipping to the troops overseas.

She explained that the St. Luke's R.C. Church Rosary Society in North Plainfield had fashioned several strands of rosary beads, and hoped that they could be

included in the packages.

Earlier that week, we had received a letter from the deputy chaplain of the U.S. Army 101st Airborne thanking OPSHBX for its support, so naturally, we thought he'd be the best person to help distribute the rosary beads. They were placed in a box along with other items, and are on the way overseas.

Below are the letters from Dudash and the chaplain:

Dear Officer,

Enclosed please find 110 pair of black military rosary beads. Military beads mean all black that can go over the head.

These are made with much love for our servicemen and women who are in harm's way, by St. Luke's Rosary Society - Rosary Makers in No. Plainfield, N.J. They have been blessed by our pastor, Father John Giordano.

I hope they will give your people some comfort in this time of stress.

Thank you for all you are doing and enduring. We always pray for you.

With love,
Mrs. Elaine Dudash
Chairlady

Letter from Iraq

Dear Operation Shoebox,

I wanted to let you know that I received your large care package with toiletries, soups, snacks, books and lots of love.

We sense your prayers and support and it makes a difference here on the battlefield.

One of the blessings of serving our great nation is to experience the love and support of the local communities. This means a lot to our soldiers. The toiletries, snacks, and reading materials are always appreciated.

Thank you again for your continued generosity, prayers and support to our deployed soldiers and our loved ones who remain behind.

God Bless,

Scott Hammond
Deputy Division Chaplain



GEORGE PACCIELLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

First in line last year at the Patriots' ticket office were, from left, Vic Riker, Roy Lawrence, and his daughter, Kristen. The Patriots are sponsoring a special promotion to benefit Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 when single game tickets go on sale March 11 at Commerce Bank Park in Bridgewater. Fans can take advantage of a two-for-one ticket deal, as well as receive 25 percent off merchandise at the Patriots' Headquarters gift shop.

101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)
FOB Speicher, Iraq

Dinner at the diner

Louka's Last American Diner on Route 22 in Branchburg, arguably the most popular roadside eatery on that stretch of state highway for miles, has signed up to support the efforts of Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005.

"You have to respect what the troops are doing over there," said co-owner Nikolaos Renieris. "Every little bit helps." he added. "We can't change the world, but we can help do something."

Renieris said the diner - its windows trimmed in American flags and "God Bless America" - will donate a portion of its profits from Monday nights during February to OPSHBX.

There's two more dates left

this month. Make plans with family or friends to have dinner at the diner Feb. 20 or 27, beginning at 5 p.m., or stop in through midnight. Every dinner, cup of coffee, dessert or a late night snack that is served will help support OPSHBX.

The diner is also a drop-off site for those wishing to donate a bag of groceries with items to be sent to U.S. troops overseas. Donations of loose change and dollar bills can also be deposited in a large jug at the cash register.

Louka's Last American Diner is on the eastbound side of Route 22, directly across from Colonial Motors.

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 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

Rob Wilson
Borough Council president
Somerville

I'm a
Patriot
How 'bout you?

A Somerville attorney and president of the Borough Council, Rob Wilson collected over \$2,800 from supporters who pledged that money to Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005 after he successfully completed the grueling 26.2 mile New York Marathon in November.

Join The Reporter, Rob Wilson and other citizens and businesses who support Operation Shoebox New Jersey 2005. Salute the sacrifice of our brave servicemen and women serving overseas. Be a Patriot Support OPSHBX. Call The Reporter's Executive Editor Rod Hirsch at (908) 575-6684 or click www.nj.com/shoebboxnj for information on how you can help.

The Reporter
www.nj.com/shoebboxnj

SALUTE THEIR SACRIFICE

OPERATION SHOEBOX NEW JERSEY 2005
Support Our Troops

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"/> Suntan 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.

Visit us on the web: www.NJ.com/shoebboxnj

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Photos: New Jersey Times Staff; Images: Images by pressphotos

Garden show warms up winter

EDISON — Gardeners from throughout New Jersey will have an opportunity to leave winter behind and enter a world of color and fragrance at the fourth annual New Jersey Flower, Garden and Outdoor Living Show, being held through tomorrow at the New Jersey Convention Center.

"The Flower, Garden and Outdoor Living Show is a chance to shed the winter blues for awhile and peruse more than 150 displays and exhibits that include everything from garden ornaments, ceramics and tablecloths from Provence to landscape designers, outdoor furniture, gardening tools and entertaining accessories," said show director James B. McLaughlin, president of show promoter MAC Events. "The four-day show includes display gardens created by some of New Jersey's most innovative landscape designers who follow the show's theme of 'Gardens Near and Far' in focusing on the many different styles and customs that make each culture's gardens unique."

The show features numerous appearances by national-

ly known gardening experts as well as a variety of free seminars by exhibitors that have made horticulture their lives and will share their trade secrets and techniques with show guests.

Featured speakers include Joan Hamburg of WOR radio and Ralph Snodsmith, host of the WOR "Garden Hotline." Best-selling garden book author, television personality and *New York Times* gardening columnist Ken Druse also will be appearing at the show.

Experts from Rutgers Cooperative Research & Extension will offer comprehensive lectures during seminars and man several booths to answer questions.

Innovative landscape designers will present 13 display gardens following this year's international theme of "Gardens Near and Far" as the centerpiece of the exhibition floor.

This year's show offers visitors an innovative new feature, "Bouquet for the Day," an interactive area on the show floor where experts like Joanne Scocchi from Gardener To Gardener will demonstrate how to make

eye-catching container plantings. Students from the New Jersey School of Floral Design will create the perfect centerpiece with affordable flowers. Pam Schlett of Stephens Gardens Creations will show visitors how to create a bird-friendly water garden and how to choose the right fish, plants and types of filtration systems.

John Barr and Don Clayton of Clayton Block will demonstrate how to install double-sided walls and pillars to make your backyard stand out.

Professionals from the Bartlett Flower Farm in Wall will share tree-pruning techniques.

Ken Selody, a former contributing editor to *Martha Stewart Living* magazine and the owner of Atlock Flower Farm, will talk about how to produce and maintain a classic tabletop topiary.

Show hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. today and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. tomorrow.

For admission prices and driving directions, visit www.macevents.com or call (800) 332-3976.



"Marilyn Hotchkiss Ballroom Dancing & Charm School," starring Robert Carlyle and Marisa Tomei, and 20 more not-yet-released movies will premiere in Filmmakers Symposium. For more information, call (800) 531-9416 or visit www.PrivateScreenings.org.

Making spring bloom early

Seniors use flowers to brighten up Valentine's Day

By TAKESHA PETTUS
Staff Writer

RARITAN — With a fist full of sweet smelling flowers, members of the Bridgewater Garden Club recently visited the Raritan Extended Day Care Center with hopes of bringing bright smiles to senior residents.

Club members and seniors put together floral arrangements in red vases with a faux cherry and straw to resemble an ice cream float. The arrangements, once complete, were displayed on the tables in the main dining hall at the center.

Members prepared the flowers by cutting the stems,

and made sure each senior had what was necessary to complete an arrangement.

"We always like coming here," said club member Mary Dobich. "They (seniors) do a nice job."

While most members said they found the visit rewarding, others saw it as a way to spend personal time with loved ones.

Mary Ann Vitali of Bridgewater often goes with the club on visits and especially enjoys coming to the Raritan center because her 88-year-old mother Louise Sacco is a resident.

"They do some great things," said Kelly McNamara, assistant administrator for the center. "It cheers up the whole place."

In addition to putting together floral arrangements with seniors, the club, founded in 1955, runs several programs throughout the year as a means of raising funds.

Each year, the club holds a boxwood tree sale with the proceeds going to the Garden Club. The club has also published a cookbook.

The acts of kindness go beyond Somerset County. The club also runs a program

called Operation Hug, which sends military men and women bouquets of flowers.

In addition to spring plantings at the Somerset County Library, the club runs a Junior Acorn program for children ages 3 and up. Floral arrangements are taught at the Bridgewater Senior Center and the Edna Mahan Correctional Institute for Women located in Clinton. The club also works with the Visiting Nurses Association to distribute flowers to area hospitals, and runs a mentoring program at Arbor Glen School.

The National Garden Clubs, Inc. was formed in 1925 for the purpose of providing education, resources and national networking opportunities for its members to promote the love of gardening, floral design, and civic and environmental responsibility.

"It's a really good club," said publicity director Colleen Boylan. "It's a fun club. It's both a working and social club."

The club meets every fourth Tuesday of the month at the Somerset County Library.

See the films, talk to the stars

Imagine seeing a movie before anyone, then the lights come up, and there in front of you are the creators of the film, ready to answer questions and discuss their work.

Screening in New Jersey theatres, Filmmakers Symposium has hosted over 1,000 movie premieres in the past 15 years.

The program is now offered at two locations: Loews Mountainside on Monday evenings starting Feb. 27 — a second session begins April 10 — and at Loews Monmouth Mall on Tuesday evenings starting Feb. 28 with a second session beginning April 11.

"The series will always be flexible in order to take advantage of opportunities as they arise," said Symposium director Chuck Rose. "Wonderful surprises and fantastic celebrities can pop up out of nowhere, so I try to keep the schedule as fluid as possible. In the past two years, we premiered 91 movies which later earned a total of 38 Oscar, 44 British Academy, 39 Golden Globe, and 31 European Film Award nominations."

Oscar winners and nominees Danny Aiello, Alan Arkin, James Cromwell, Frank Darabont, Ethan Hawke, Jean-Pierre Jeunet, John Sayles, Marc Shaiman and Howard

Shore have been among past guest speakers.

Others who have shared their insights at previous Symposium sessions include Dylan Baker, Bob Balaban, Jim Breuer, Al Franken, Famke Janssen, Delroy Lindo, Derek Luke, David Morse, Viggo Mortensen, Connie Nielsen, Mary Kay Place, Kevin Smith, Fisher Stevens, David Strathairn, Henry Thomas and Wendy Wasserstein.

For information or to register, call (800) 531-9416 or visit www.PrivateScreenings.org.

The series is open to anyone, but seating is limited, so early enrollment is advised. Subscription is \$151 for six weeks or \$269 for 12 weeks.

Confirmed films and those under consideration for the upcoming session include:

— "All the King's Men" with Sean Penn, Jude Law, director Steven Zaillian

— "As You Like It" with Kevin Kline, Bryce Dallas Howard, director Kenneth Branagh

— "Ask the Dust" with Salma Hayek, Colin Farrell, director Robert Towne

— "Catch and Release" with Jennifer Garner, Timothy Olyphant, director Susannah Grant

— "Confetti" with Martin

Freeman, Jessica Stevenson, director Debbie Isitt

— "The Da Vinci Code" with Tom Hanks, Audrey Tautou, director Ron Howard

— "Fade to Black" with Danny Huston, Paz Vega, director Oliver Parker

— "The Hoax" with Richard Gere, Marcia Gay Harden, director Lasse Hallstrom

— "Hoot" with Luke Wilson, Logan Lerman, director Wil Shriner

— "In the Land of Women" with Meg Ryan, Adam Brody, director Jonathan Kasdan

— "The Inside Man" with Denzel Washington, Jodie Foster, director Spike Lee

— "The King" with Gael Garcia Bernal, William Hurt, director James Marsh

— "Kinky Boots" with Chiwetel Ejiofor, Joel Edgerton, director Julian Jarrold

— "The Last King of Scotland" with Forest Whitaker, Gillian Anderson, director Kevin Macdonald

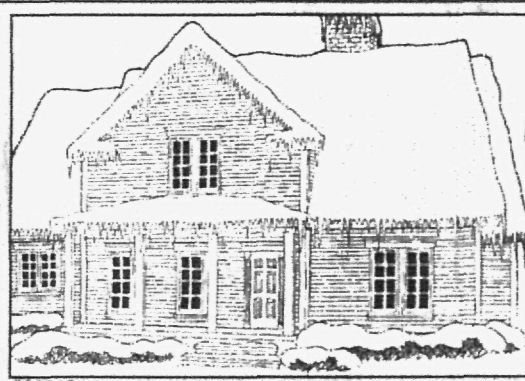
— "Little Children" with Kate Winslet, Jennifer Connelly, director Todd Field

— "Lonesome Jim" with Casey Affleck, Lili Taylor, director Steve Buscemi

— "Lucky 13" with Jami Gertz, Daryl Hannah, director Scott Marshall

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Patriot tickets to go on sale March 11

BRIDGEWATER — A special collection event for "Operation Shoebox: New Jersey" will be featured Saturday, March 11 when individual tickets for the Somerset Patriots' 2006 Atlantic League of Professional Baseball season go on sale at Commerce Bank Park.

While the ticket office will be open 9 a.m.-4 p.m. that day, there will also be a collection for Operation Shoebox, an organization created a year ago to build and maintain a supply line of personal items to be shipped to soldiers overseas.

"Operation Shoebox: New Jersey" is asking people to bring the following items to the ballpark March 11 — sunscreen, paperback books, foot powder, eye drops, toothpaste, mouthwash, lip balm, bug spray, ear swabs,

feminine products, ear swabs, laundry detergent, razors, toilet paper, spices, tea bags, beef jerky, coffee, socks, snack foods, cereal, microwaveable foods (can or box), small drink mixes, telephone calling cards, clothesline/pins, fleece blankets, writing materials and batteries (any size).

Any fan who brings an item for Operation Shoebox that day will receive a special "Buy One, Get One Free" ticket offer for any Sunday-through-Thursday home game throughout the season. Fans who bring an item will also receive 25 percent off in the Patriots gift shop.

"We're proud to have Operation Shoebox join us for the opening day of ticket sales again," said Somerset President/General Manager Patrick McVerry. "This event is not only the start of our



individual ticket sales but also our commitment to be an even bigger part of Operation Shoebox for the upcoming season."

Tickets for all 72 home games will be available at the ballpark. Ticket prices are \$12 for premium field box seats, \$9.50 for field box seats, \$8.50 for upper box seats and \$5 for lawn seating.

Game times are 7:05 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1:35 p.m. on Sundays. The Patriots will host 12 post-game fireworks shows,

along with different promotional nights and theme nights.

There are also season tickets and group tickets on sale. For further information call (908) 252-0700 or visit the team's website at www.somersetpatriots.com.

FONSECA RETURNS

After a three-year absence, Ben Fonseca will return to the Patriots coaching staff this season, taking over first-base duties. He was Somerset's third base coach from 2000-2002 and also was the team's director of baseball operations in '02.

Fonseca is a scout for the Milwaukee Brewers, a position he's had since leaving Somerset. He currently is the director of player development for the Jack Cust Baseball Academy in Flemington and heads the

"Super 17" program there, helping train some of the state's top ballplayers.

"Since leaving the team three years ago, I've started a family and I want them to be a part of what I love, the game of baseball," said Fonseca. "I'm very excited to once again be part of the Patriots organization."

Fonseca will also be a community ambassador for the Pats when not on the playing field. He's spearheading school and community outreach programs with the team, including an anti-bullying campaign and Strike Out Drugs.

He also has experience in ALPB offices as the assistant to the executive director. Fonseca was a coach with the Newark Bears and the Atlantic City Surf prior to joining Somerset in 2000.

Cacchio exits Bound Brook

BOUND BROOK — Rob Cacchio, who was Bound Brook High's head football coach the past two seasons, has resigned to take over the program at Warren Hills High in Washington, Warren County.

Cacchio, a resident of Washington, replaces the highly-successful Bob Lockhart, who guided the Blue Streaks to the Skyland Conference-Delaware West Division championship in 2005 when WHHS went 5-0 in the division and 6-5 overall. Lockhart also resigned following last season.

Cacchio, 32, was named the Crusaders' head coach in 2004 after three campaigns as an assistant at Bridgewater-Raritan. The Crusaders went 2-8 that year and 3-7 during the past season.

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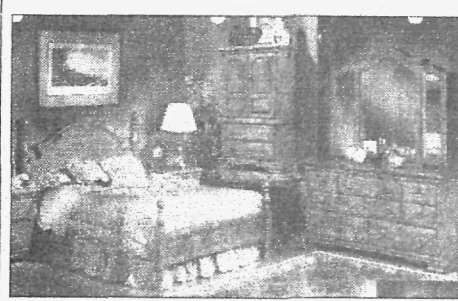
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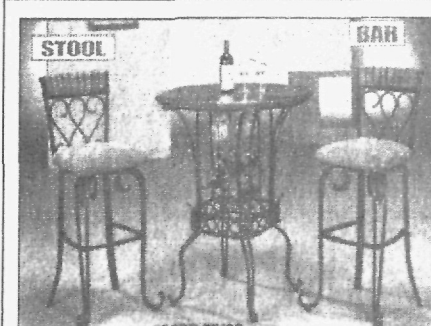
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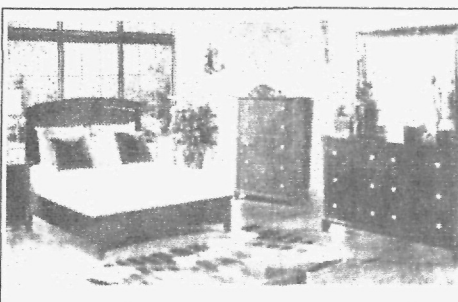


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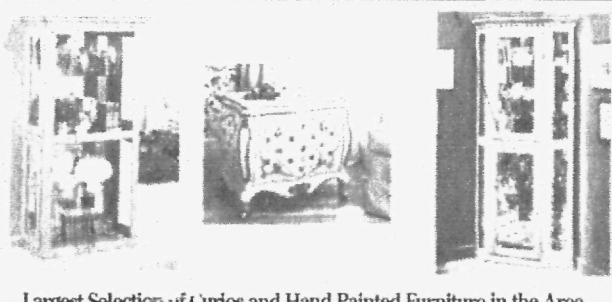


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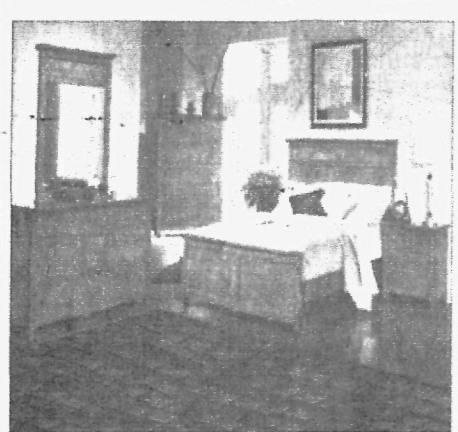


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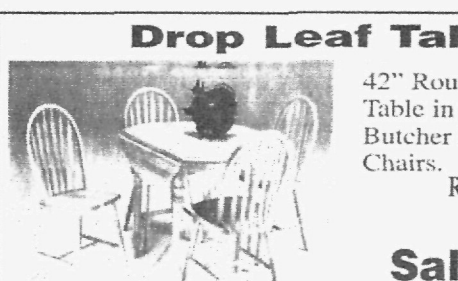


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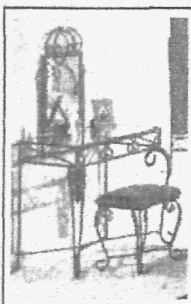
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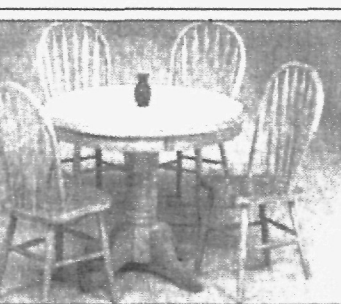
Your Choice of Colors: Natural, Natural and White or Natural and Green or White Washed Oak.

Sale \$79



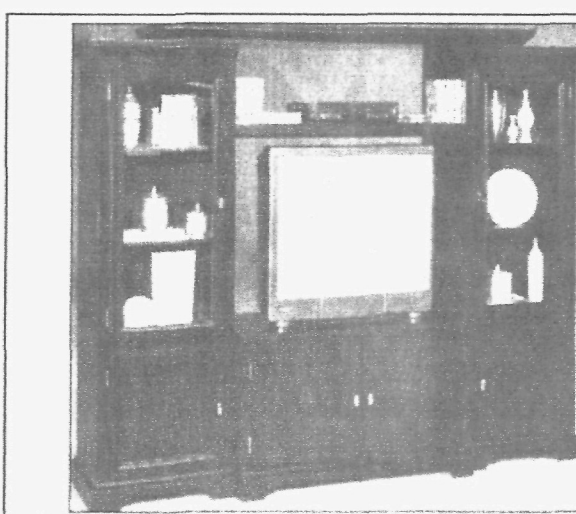
Vanity & Bench Set

\$99



Oak File Top Nostalgia Dinette
42" Round Table with 4 Fully Assembled Chairs

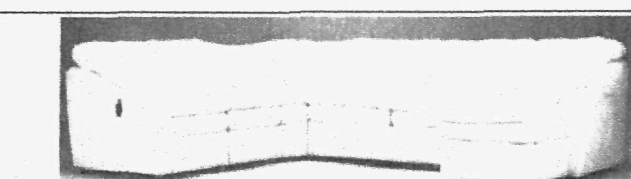
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4 pc Entertainment Center in Cordovan Finish
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SALE \$2229

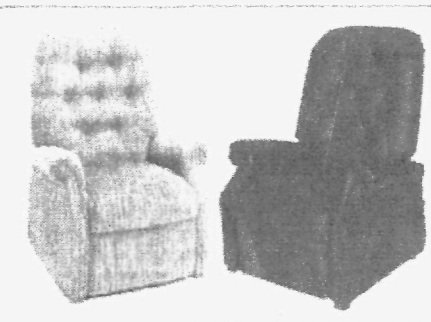
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INCLUDES ALL 3 PIECES

Cherry Table and 2 Chairs includes all 3 pieces

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In Blue, Mauve, Green or Brown also available in Black Vinyl

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Saturday, February 18, 2006

Community Life

Briefs

Circus tickets on sale at library

EDISON — The Edison Recreation Department is sponsoring a trip Saturday, March 11, for Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus at Continental Airlines Arena.

Cost of \$35 per person includes round-trip transportation plus a ticket to the 7:30 p.m. show. All persons under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Tickets are available at the Dorothy K. Drwal Stetson Community Center, 328 Plainfield Ave., and the Minnie B. Veal Community Center, 1070 Grove Ave. No phone or mail orders will be accepted.

For more information, call (732) 248-7313 or (732) 248-7316.

Winter and spring classes being held

MIDDLESEX — The Middlesex Community School has scheduled a number of courses in the winter and spring.

Except where indicated, courses are held at Middlesex High School on Bound Brook Road. The schedule:

— "Beginning Crochet" with Dina Fornataro, 6:30 p.m. Feb. 22. Fee is \$15.

— SAT Prep, 6:30 p.m. Thursday for eight weeks beginning March 2. Fee is \$15 payable to the Community School plus \$325 payable to ESC, the course provider.

— "Floral Design" with Heather Boehme, 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 6. This class is at America's Florist, 227 W. Union Ave., Bound Brook. Fee is \$10 payable to the Community School plus \$25 payable to the instructor.

— "Excel" with Vi Valenti, 3:30 p.m. Monday for four weeks beginning March 13. An introduction to Microsoft Excel with emphasis on entering data, formatting, calculating basic formulas, editing and managing files. Fee is \$95.

— "Basket Weaving with Adele Hueston," 6 p.m. Monday for four weeks beginning March 13. Fee is \$25.

— "Decorative Painting and Design Craft Projects" with Ann Rothwell, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 4 and June 1. Fee is \$20 payable to the Community School plus \$15 payable to the instructor.

You can register on-line at www.middlesex.k12.nj.us; look under "Community School" on the home page and click on "General Registration Form." For registration by phone, call (732) 317-6000, Ext. 20206.

Indian dance recital in library

EDISON — Shreelatha Billa performs classical Indian dance at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18 at the main branch of the Edison Free Public Library, 340 Plainfield Ave.

Her program includes "Pushpanjali," an invocation to the gods; "Padam," a devotional in praise of a deity; and four other dances. Admission is free.

For registration, call (732) 287-2298, Ext. 1 or visit the circulation desk of the main branch.

Card party has Hawaiian theme

EDISON — "Hawaiian Nights" is the theme of the 27th annual card party sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Guild of Bishop George Ahr High School.

The event is at 6 p.m. Friday, Feb. 24 in the high school at 1 Tingley Lane, off New Dover Road near Oak Tree Road. Reservations are required; call Linda Lordi at (732) 548-6612 by Tuesday, Feb. 21.

Neve Shalom

sets Purim events

METUCHEN — Events to celebrate Purim have been scheduled at Congregation Neve Shalom, 250 Grove Ave.

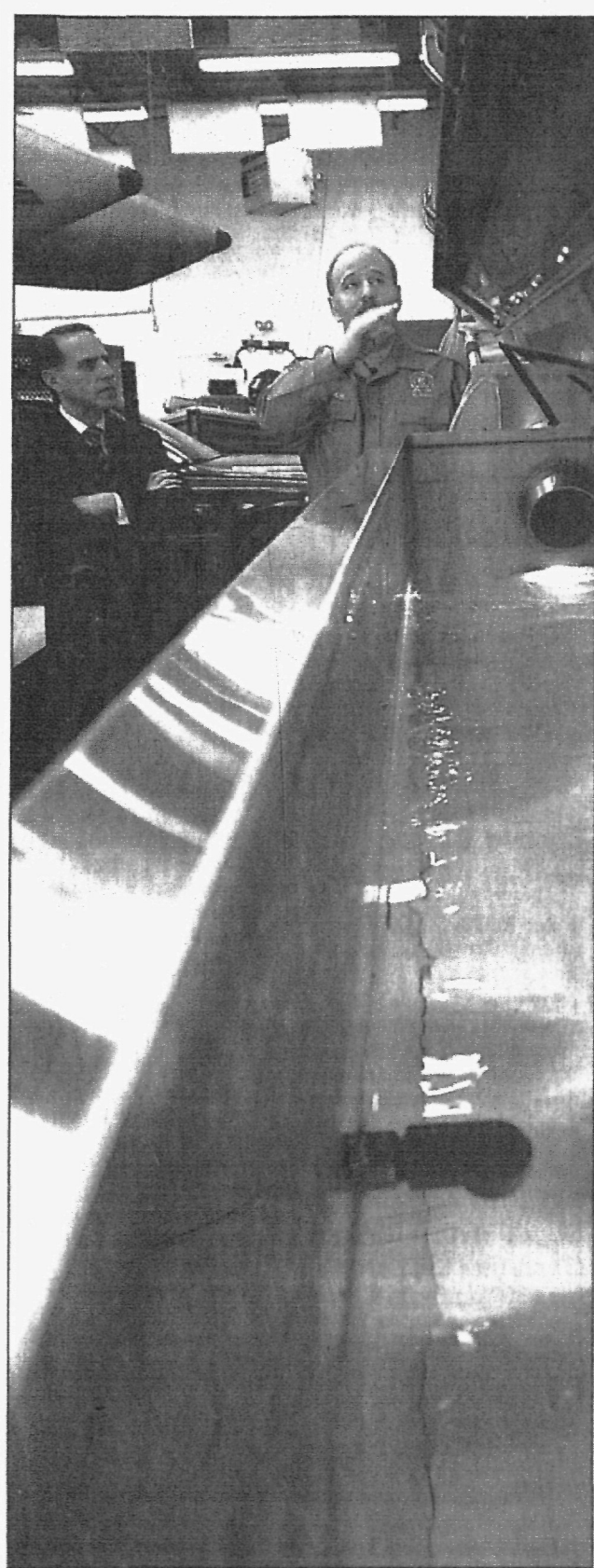
The synagogue's Purim carnival runs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, March 12.

Activities on Monday, March 13 include a "Tot Purim" program for ages 2-5 at 5:30 p.m., an abbreviated version of the Megillah reading for children at 6:30 p.m. and a complete reading of the Megillah at 8 p.m. Music precedes the Megillah readings.

For more information, visit www.neve-shalom.net or call (732) 548-2236.

Borough celebrating its 325th birthday

BOUND BROOK — The borough is celebrating its 325th anniversary this year. Individuals, organizations or groups interested in participating in organizing events or in adding their borough-based activities happening in 2006 to a borough calendar can call Bob or Lynn Fazen at (732) 560-0138 or e-mail lynnrae@fazen.org. There will be a birthday celebration May 4-7, including a 325th anniversary parade for May 6. For additional information on the celebration weekend, contact Bill Siebel, 325th parade committee chairman, at bills2531@yahoo.com or call (732) 356-8762.



PHOTOS BY GEORGE PACCIELLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Somerset County Prosecutor Wayne Forrest and detective Gary Mayer of the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office's Forensic Unit are pictured above discussing a water recovery system used for ballistics tests at the unit's headquarters in Hillsborough. The facility is about to undergo a \$3.6 million renovation. Detective Sgt. Barry Jansen, pictured above right, gives a tour of the fingerprint lab.

The real 'CSI'

County's forensics unit overdue for its \$3.6-million upgrade plan

By ALLISON ELYSE GUALTIERI
Staff Writer

When Somerville resident Ronnie Lyles committed murder using a claw hammer in February 2000, police never found the body of his victim, 19-year-old Charo Kates. Authorities assumed that the body had been incinerated.

Lyles was successfully convicted anyway, thanks to the efforts of the Forensic Unit of the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office. Though Lyles tried to wipe away blood at the scene, members of the division were able to find and identify the blood using a reflective ultraviolet imaging system, blood which was matched to the same type as the victim's mother. Lyles' conviction was based in part on that forensic evidence.

Any "CSI"-induced expectations, however, are shattered with a visit to the Hillsborough facility. Once home to the police academy, Somerset County's forensic unit headquarters has spiders aplenty, and wires dangling from the former classroom ceilings, hanging over state-of-the-art microscopes and imaging systems. An upcoming \$3.6 million renovation, approved last week by the Board of Chosen Freeholders, will make drastic changes.

Currently, crime scene vehicles share garage space with ballistics-testing equipment. Out in the garage, a 485-gallon water recovery system sits in the corner behind a few parked vehicles. This is where Detective Gary Mayer tests weapons, shooting down a tube angled at 22 degrees into water that can stop a bullet traveling 3,100 feet per second — three times the length of a football field — though analysis happens elsewhere in the building.

A vehicle, sitting outside the garage of the facility last week, had a note scrawled on its windshield: "Hold for prints." Plans for the renovation include a special indoor space for the processing of motor vehicles used in the commission of a crime, just one of the changes investigators said will make a significant difference.

In addition, the garage that currently holds not only crime scene vehicles, an arson investigation truck, and a dive team vehicle and apparatus, but also the ballistics testing equipment will see the addition of bay doors for those vehicles, and will be cut in half to accommodate a host of process-specific spaces. Two rooms for handling trace evidence — one for the victim and one for the perpetrator — will be carved out, along with space for a training maze.

Already, the unit takes in processing work from other counties, adding to the workload and inefficient quarters.

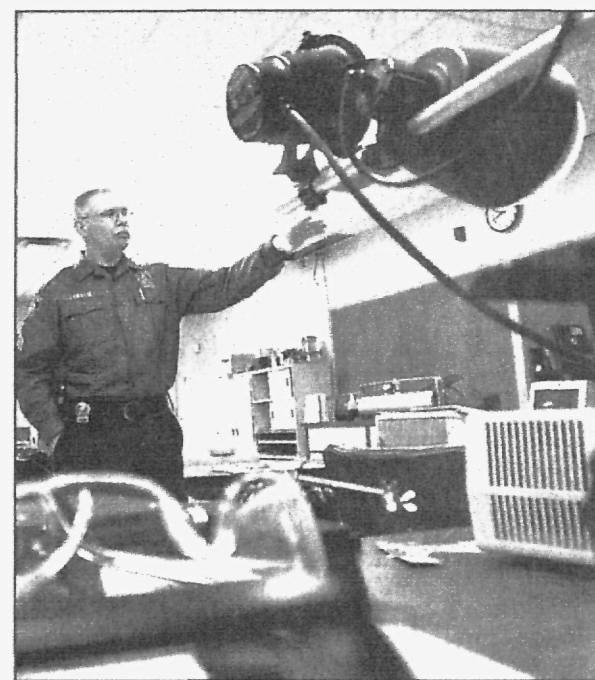
"We've started to work much more closely with Hunterdon County," said Detective Sgt. Barry Jansen. With a State Police task force in the works, Somerset County's four-member unit might even be called on to do work elsewhere in the state, and a revamped facility would aid in that process.

According to blueprints, the other side of the building, currently classrooms converted to labs and storage space, will be rebuilt as offices and lab space to house the state-of-the-art Integrated Ballistics Imaging System, which compares bullets to an international database and the Automated Fingerprint Identification System, which compares fingerprints to a statewide database, as well as the microscopes and photographic equipment.

In the fingerprint lab, an old partition separates the "dirty" side, where the dusting takes place, from the "clean" side, which deals with photographs and analysis. The equipment resides on home-made stands, and plans call for new cabinetry.

The renovation, set to take about nine months, will happen in three phases, allowing the labs to move without an extensive disruption before building the offices and changing the garage.

"It's going to be challenging to work around it, but it's worth it," said Jansen. "We only have to move once."



Wanted: Computer savvy super sleuths

By ALLISON ELYSE GUALTIERI
Staff Writer

NORTH BRANCH — Blood spatter, fingerprints, DNA ... and hard drives? There's more to forensics than the just working in a crime lab, and it's a growing field both in the public and private sectors.

Sandy Gabriel describes herself as a computer private eye.

Incriminating e-mail? She can read it. Deleted documents? She can prove it was there.

Illegal activity or evidence of it can be erased or hidden on a computer, but not for long. Gabriel's detection skills have been put to the test in the Enron case, in the Tyco case and in many others, where she has searched computer hard drives, palm pilots and servers to find evidence of illegal activity.

Gabriel, the owner of consulting service MNB Advance Technologies in Holmdel, is teaching her skills to others in the field as an instructor at Raritan Valley Community College, in a course called "Digital Forensics."

It's a growing field, and most companies have

a right to their employees' data no matter how high up the corporate ladder, she said.

"I've opened, many a time, e-mails to CEOs and executives," she said. Companies are increasingly tracking employees' electronic activity, and experts like Gabriel are in demand by private companies, attorneys and law enforcement.

"Even if the user has deleted and reformatted the machine, we can find if not the data, then enough of the data to prove what was there," Gabriel said.

While she can hack passwords, she usually doesn't need to, as companies control access, not the user. "We can get on a machine without people knowing we're on the machine," she said, but with permission from the company. "I'm not allowed to snoop."

Gabriel, who has been working in the digital forensics field for five years, fell into it by accident.

"I had gone on maternity leave, when I was working at Lacent, and I got hit with a layoff," she explained. Her husband's company needed

a consultant to retrieve e-mail, and he encouraged her to go for the job.

"At the time, all I knew about e-mail was how to get it, opening it, close it and move on," she said. "My husband said, 'I'll teach you what you need to know before the interview,'" and she got the job.

A six-week consulting job turned into a two-year assignment, and now Gabriel is teaching others how to follow in her footsteps.

"There's a challenge to teaching adults. It's not so much teaching as having an open discussion," she said of her classes at the college, where her course is one of those offered by the department of corporate and continuing education. While most of her students have experience in the field, how much differs from student to student. "The level of knowledge varies."

Gabriel's course meets from 6-9 p.m. on Wednesday evenings at Raritan Valley Community College. For more information, contact the college's department of corporate and continuing education at (908) 218-8871.

President and Social Security focus of Q&A

By CAITY FODOR
Correspondent

BRIDGEWATER — Elections are held every year, but not everybody has the opportunity to meet the person they voted for.

He regularly be in office, but residents may already get the opportunity to meet the man they voted for to represent New Jersey's 11th Congressional District.

A small crowd gathered at the Jewish Community Center recently to get to know Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, R-11th, better and hear his opinions on some of the most important issues affecting the United States. Those in attendance had the opportunity to ask their questions and hoped to get the answer they were looking for.

"I've never met the congressman and I was curious to learn more about the man that represents me," Bridgewater resident David Kritz said.

Many of the questions centered on social security and health care. Frelinghuysen said that the issue with social security is that there are less

"I've never met the congressman and I was curious to learn more about the man that represents me."

David Kritz
Bridgewater

people working and more people drawing on social security, but that the problem has not been lost on those at the federal level.

"Thank God we have someone talking about a potential crisis," Frelinghuysen said.

Frelinghuysen noted that while there is no potential for a bi-partisan solution during this election year, but that citizens need to put their views on the president aside and recognize that there is a crisis at hand.

"We need to separate what people think of the president and the potential crisis," he said.

One person in attendance was concerned that the current administration is anti-science. He cited an article he had read about the government

editing reports from science-driven agencies and wanted to know how Frelinghuysen felt about it.

Frelinghuysen said he disagrees with that type of behavior.

"The White House shouldn't be censoring anything of that kind," he said.

Frelinghuysen also addressed a concern some had with the amount of power the president has today, and the impact of that on how power is spread across the three branches of federal government, which exist like a system of checks and balances.

Citizens were concerned that the president has trampled on the responsibilities of the House of Representatives and that he has violated constitutional law, in particular the approval of the National Security

Agency to conduct wire taps without first seeking a warrant, something some say is illegal.

Marty Stark of Bridgewater said he is concerned about the policies of the Republican Party, and where the party is leading this country.

"I'm afraid that under the Republicans, we might lose our freedoms," Stark said.

Frelinghuysen agreed that a president's power must be kept from becoming too far-reaching.

"He'd be a much better president if he'd been kept in check," Frelinghuysen said.

Ellen Stark of Bridgewater said she felt that not everyone in the room got their views across. Still, she said she was happy to meet the man that represents her. "I wanted to see how he'd respond to matters that affect me," she said.

Abby Ages of Bridgewater said she felt it was important to be an engaged citizen and was thankful Frelinghuysen took the time to meet with them. "If your representative is taking the time to do that, you should go out," Ages said.

Obituaries

Annette Barbati; longtime librarian

BOUND BROOK — Annette M. Barbati, a longtime librarian with the Bound Brook Memorial Library, died Feb. 8 at the Greenbrook Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Green Brook.

Mrs. Barbati, who was age 86, spent 20 years at the library on East Second Street until her retirement in 2002. The Bound Brook library joined the Somerset County Library System on Jan. 1 of this year.

She also established the parish library at St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church and was a member of her parish's Altar Rosary Society. Mrs. Barbati was active with the Catholic Daughters of the Americas and a member of its speakers bureau.

As Annette Geiger she began her career as a news

editor with the Bound Brook Chronicle newspaper. She spent World War II with the Red Cross as a club director overseas and eventually was stationed in Wiesbaden, Germany. After the war she worked in Manhattan as an editorial assistant with Musical Digest magazine and as a secretary with the Maryknoll Fathers.

Following her marriage to Elia C. Barbati Sr. at St. Joseph Church on May 1, 1954, she worked in the advertising department of American Cyanamid Co. in Bridgewater.

The librarian graduated from Trinity Preparatory School in Ilchester, Md. She attended Notre Dame Academy in Moylan, Pa., and the Grailville Center and Home in Loveland, Ohio.

Mrs. Barbati was born

Aug. 28, 1919 in Somerville, a daughter of the late Michael A. and Antoinette M. Fuss Geiger, and lived in Bound Brook all her life.

Preceding her in death was a sister, Loretta.

In addition to her husband, surviving are a son, Elia J. of Bound Brook; four brothers, Michael A. Geiger of Oldsmar, Fla., John Geiger of Greeley, Pa., James Geiger of Manasquan and Richard Geiger of Southport, N.C.; two sisters, Miriam White of Dubuque, Iowa, and Sister Jane Geiger of Baltimore, Md.; and many nieces and nephews.

Services were held Tuesday at the Hagan-Chamberlain Funeral Home, followed by a funeral Mass at St. Joseph Church. Burial was in Resurrection Burial Park, Piscataway.

Mary Louise Cunningham

BOUND BROOK — Mary Louise Cunningham, 78, died Jan. 21, 2006 at Palms of Pasadena Hospital in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Born in West Brownsville, Pa., she lived in Bound Brook before moving in 1987 to Gulfport, Fla.

A registered nurse, Mrs. Cunningham worked in public health and chemical dependency situations in New Jersey. She also was an Army cadet nurse during World War II.

She graduated from the nursing program at Providence Hospital in Detroit, Mich., and received a

bachelor of science in nursing degree from Thomas Edison State College.

Mrs. Cunningham was a former member of the New Jersey Task Force for Women and Alcohol. She was a member of the Suncoast Parkinson's Group; the Pasadena Yacht and Country Club, in Gulfport; and the women's group at Most Holy Name of Jesus Roman Catholic Church, in Gulfport.

Preceding her in death was her husband, Charles A.

Surviving are a son, John of Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; two daughters, Katherine of North Haledon and Barbara

Neville of Thornton, New South Wales, Australia; two brothers, William Hunt of Saline, Mich., and James Hunt of Cincinnati, Ohio; and six grandchildren.

A funeral Mass was held Jan. 27 at Most Holy Name of Jesus Church. Burial was Feb. 2 in Bound Brook Cemetery.

Arrangements were by the David C. Gross Funeral Home in St. Petersburg. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to The Midland Foundation, P.O. Box 5026, North Branch, NJ 08876. To send a condolence, visit www.davidcgross.com.

Joseph S. Paul

EDISON — Joseph S. Paul, 65, died Feb. 13, 2006 at JFK Medical Center.

He was born in New York City and lived in Texas before moving to Edison.

Dr. Paul was a software engineer who published nearly 45 papers in his career; he was associated with Lucent

Technologies until his retirement in 2000. At one time he was a graduate instructor of quantum mechanics in the University of Texas system. He also worked for Watson Research Laboratories, IBM Corp. and AT&T Corp.

He held a bachelor's degree from the City College of New York, a doctorate from New York University and an honorary degree in mathematics from Rice University.

An accomplished pianist, Dr. Paul also was a chess player who played against interna-

tionally ranked champions.

Surviving are his wife of two years, Elizabeth C. McHenry Paul; two daughters, Maryann of El Paso, Texas, and Jennifer of Princeton; and two sisters, Mary Reggio and Faith, both of New York state.

Services were held Thursday at the McCriskin Home for Funerals, in South Plainfield. Donations may be sent to American Heart Association, 2550 Route 1, North Brunswick, NJ 08902 or the American Lung Association of New Jersey.



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Parsippany, New Jersey 08859
(908) 662-0700
ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF
File #22387,107 jk

SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
CHANCERY DIVISION
MIDDLESEX COUNTY
DOCKET NO. F-18197-03

CIVIL ACTION

NOTICE TO REDEEM

WACHOVIA BANK N.A. C.T.M.D. SASS
MUNICIPAL FINANCE PARTNERS-II,
L.P. (a First Union National Bank
C.T.M.D. SASS Municipal Finance Partners-
II, L.P.,

Plaintiff,

v.

SALLY CARLISLE, et al.,

Defendants.

TO: Sally Carlisle, her heirs, devisees and personal representatives and her, their or any of their successors in right, title and interest; Alice Farmer, known her, Cheryl Carlisle, her heirs, devisees and personal representatives and her, their or any of their successors in right, title and interest, A Tech Diagnostics Inc.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that by Order made on the 31st day of January, 2006, the Superior Court filed that on March 17, 2006, between the hours of nine o'clock in the forenoon and four o'clock in the afternoon, prevailing time, at the office of the Tax Collector of the City of New Brunswick, at 78 Bayard Street, New Brunswick, New Jersey, as the time and place when and where you may pay to the Plaintiff the amount so found due for principal and interest on its Certificate of Tax Sale as follows:
Lot 18, Block 269 on the tax map of the City of New Brunswick. Total amount required to redeem is \$81,636.08, together with interest from September 30, 2005.

And that unless, at the same time and place, you or one of you redeem by paying the aforesaid sum so found due to Plaintiff, then you, and each of you shall be deemed and foreclosed of and from all right and equity of redemption of, in and to the lands and premises above set out and described in the Complaint and every part thereof, and that the Plaintiff be vested with an absolute and indefeasible estate of inheritance in fee simple in said lands and premises.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding, redemption shall be permitted up until the entry of Final Judgment including the whole of the last date upon which judgment is entered.

SHERMAN, SILVERSTEIN, KOHL, ROSE & PODOLSKY, P.A.
By: Edward J. Hootner, Esquire
Attorneys for Plaintiff
\$25.16 \$25.17 2/18/06

N.J. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SEALED BIDS will be received from bidders classified under N.J.S.A. 27:35-1 et seq. in the NJDOT MULTI-PURPOSE PROGRAM. The Department of Transportation, 1035 Parkway Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08625, until 10:00 A.M. on 3/16/06 and opened and read for
Underground Structures for Electrical Facilities, Contact South 2006 Various Locations, Counties of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland.

Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Salem
Region South
100% State
DP No: 05452

Bidders are required to comply with the requirements of P.L. 1975, c. 127 N.J.A.C. 17:27.
Effective October 15, 2004. Pursuant to P.L. 2005, c. 51 (formerly known as, Education Order 134) apparent low bidder must provide a completed, signed Contractor Certification and Disclosure of Political Contribution Forms within seven (7) state business days from the project bid date.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:32-44, Business Registration, 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. 34:11-56-48 et seq. (P.L. 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. 49 C.F.R. Parts 21 and 23 issued pursuant to such Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 will afford 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.bids.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 contracting organizations at our various Design Field Offices at the following locations:
200 Stern Court
Mt. Arlington, NJ
973-770-5141

Route 79 and Daniels Way
Freehold, NJ
732-308-4225

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
PO Box 605
Trenton, NJ 08625
\$69.36 \$25.37 2/18/06

NOTICE OF ORDINANCE ADOPTION
ORDINANCE NO. 1683-06

AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING CERTAIN SEX OFFENDERS FROM LIVING OR RESIDING IN AREAS WHICH ARE IN PROXIMITY TO AREAS WHERE CHILDREN REGULARLY MEET AND CONGREGATE
Notice is hereby given that the following Ordinance was adopted at a Public Meeting of the Borough Council of Middlesex, in the County of Middlesex, New Jersey held on the 14th day of February, 2006 in the Municipal Building, 1200 Mountain Avenue, Middlesex, New Jersey.
Kathleen Arango, Mayor
Borough Clerk
\$2.82 \$2.17 2/18/06

Middlesex County News

Learn to paint with acrylics

EDISON — The Edison Arts Society offers a class in acrylic painting at the North Edison Branch of the Edison Free Public Library, 777 Grove Ave. Classes meet at 1 p.m.

Wednesday for six weeks beginning Wednesday. Acrylic artist Roy Steinberg helps you learn color theory, ways to use a palette knife and composition for a painting.

Cost is \$125. Discounts are available for Arts Society members and senior citizens. You must provide a canvas and a small set of acrylic paints.

Registration is required; e-mail edisonarts@aol.com or call (908) 753-ARTS.

Merchants group schedules meeting

DUNELLEN — The Dunellen Merchants and Professionals Association holds a general meeting at 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 27 at the Dunellen Public Library on New Market Road.

All business owners and professionals in the borough are invited. Dunellen residents are also welcome.

For more information, call (732) 713-6068.

Shrove Tuesday ham and pancakes

DUNELLEN — The Dunellen United Methodist Church serves a ham and pancake dinner on Shrove Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Servings are from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the religious education building at 316 Jackson Ave. The menu also includes potatoes, beverage and dessert. Cost is \$9 for adults and \$4 for children.

For more information, call Betty Hixon at (732) 752-7250.

Social event held for Christian women

EDISON — Starlight Socials sponsors an event for Christian professional women from 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, March 1 at the Fox & Hound Pub & Grille, located in Menlo Park Mall.

There is no cover. A casual weight loss chat, support group and pool tables are available. Finger foods are free.

Registration is required; e-mail StarlightSocials@aol.com or call (732) 764-9073.

Knights are offering Lenten fish dinners

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Knights of Columbus Council 6203 and Sacred Heart Church sponsor fish dinners every Friday night in Lent.

Servings are from 5-7 p.m. March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7 at Sacred Heart School, 149 South Plainfield Ave. The menu includes fried fish, broiled fish, fish Parmigian, garden salad, rice pilaf, French fries, cole slaw, coffee, tea, soda and dessert. Pizza is available as well along with macaroni and cheese.

Cost is \$8 for adults, \$7 for seniors and \$4 for children.

Takeout is available.

In addition, Sacred Heart Church holds Stations of the Cross at 7 p.m. each Friday in Lent.

Camp Middlesex holds open house

EDISON — The summer recreation program at Middlesex County College will be ushered in 1-4 p.m. March 5 when the Camp Middlesex Open House will be held at the Technical Services Center on the Edison Campus.

Children from 6 to 18, along with their families, are invited to sample some of the programs and activities that will be offered this summer. Once again, there will be a raffle for a \$100 reduction on camp tuition.

"We're showcasing the camps that have been the kids' favorites, and we've added many exciting new ones," said Lynn Lederer, director of Professional and Community Programs at the College. "We want everyone to come to the camp fair and see what we have in store."

"The Camp Fair offers a fun-filled day where kids can get a feel for what Camp Middlesex will be offering this summer," said Elaine Berlin, assistant director. "There will be face painting, balloons for kids, opportunities to decorate pretzels with chocolate and excerpts from the ever-popular theater camp. Snacks of donuts, pop corn and juice will be served, respecting the dietary traditions followed by all of our campers."

Staff and administrations will be present to answer questions and many programs will be demonstrated.

Because so many camps fill before the summer season begins and many children miss out on their favorite programs, on-the-spot registration will be available at the Camp Fair. Parents must bring their children's immunization records in order to complete the process.

Reservations for the Camp Fair on March 5 are not required. For additional information, or to request the complete Summer Fun brochure, contact the camp registration office at (732) 906-2556.

Learn to make a practical craft

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Learn "Practical Crafting" at the South Plainfield Public Library at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday, March 6.

Ronda Wisniewski shows you how to make origami gift boxes using paper-folding techniques. Bring a ruler, a pencil and a glue stick. Fee is \$1.

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

Borough kindergarten holding registration

MIDDLESEX — Middlesex Public Schools have scheduled kindergarten registration for the 2006-07 school year.

Registration is at Hazelwood School on Hazelwood Avenue, Parker School on South Lincoln Avenue and Watching School on Fisher Avenue. Hours are 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday, March 9-10.

Children entering kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before Oct. 31.

Registration packets are available at each elementary school. To find out which school your child would attend, call Nancy Johnson at (732) 317-6000, Ext. 20303.

Juried craft market held at folk festival

Applications are now accepted for a juried craft market to be held as part of the 32nd annual New Jersey Folk Festival.

This year's festival is on Saturday, April 29 at Douglass College, on the New Brunswick campus of Rutgers University. "Korean-American Heritage" is the theme.

Craftspeople may submit color slides or digital images of their work to be considered for the craft show. While the primary focus of the craft show is on traditional folk crafts, all craftspeople are encouraged to apply. A knowledgeable, impartial panel of jurors will review all submissions.

For an application, rules and fees, visit njfolkfest.rutgers.edu or call (732) 932-5775. All entries must be received by Wednesday, March 15.

Junior Baseball Club sponsors scholarships

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — The South Plainfield Junior Baseball Club is accepting applications for its college scholarships.

Applicants must live in South Plainfield, be graduating from high school in June and have participated with the Junior Baseball Club at least five years.

For an application, call (908) 754-2090 or visit the guidance department at South Plainfield High School. All applications must be returned by April 1.

Show off your garden during a summer tour

EDISON — The Edison Arts Society holds its first "Art in the Gardens" tour on Saturday, Aug. 19.

Five unique gardens will be featured, showing the variety of plantings created as an extension of the owners' homes.

"We are in search of beautiful gardens in the Metuchen-Edison area," said Linda LaStella, a trustee of the Arts Society and chairman of its Visual Arts Committee.

"We are considering gardens of any size, personally planted or installed by professionals," she said. "We want to show the range of gardens that flourish in our local neighborhoods."

If you want to showcase your garden in the tour, e-mail Claysongs@aol.com or call (732) 906-4137.

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Somerset County

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Classified in-column deadline: Monday at 5 p.m.

Announcements

Adoption 105

Adoption: A childless married couple seeks to adopt newborn. Will have a stay-at-home parent. Financial security. Expenses paid. Alison & Dean. (ask for erin/adam). 1-800-841-0804

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Announcements 110

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LAND AUCTION 240 Props Must be Sold! Low Down/ EZ financing. Free Catalog 800-765-0367 www.LANDAUCTION.COM

Employment

Education 201

CUSTODIANS

Full time night. Black seal preferred. Applications are available in Bd. of Ed. Office, Holland Brook School, 52 Reading Road, Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889 (908-534-2195) EOE/AA

Child Care 202

ASSISTANT TEACHERS

Caregivers: Immediate openings for our new, beautiful Pre School in Warren. Must be enthusiastic and loving. Call: 908-222-7620

Employment Agencies

205

Immediate Job Openings! STAFFING ALTERNATIVES Call 732-246-1687

Drivers 230

DRIVER

Home Daily. Great Pay. Insurance, 401K. CDL Class A 2 yrs experience. Inter-Coastal Bob: 1-800-200-5424

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General Help 240

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Customer service support needed for busy 8 person staff of the New Jersey Newspaper Network, the advertising service of the New Jersey Press Association.

FENCE

Installers, Laborers, Sub-contractors & sales. 1-800-262-3245

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FT in Gladstone. Dishwasher/utility. 36 hrs/wk. \$10/hr. Mon-Fri day s, some overtime. Please call 908-234-1611 x254

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Up and coming day spa looking for a dedicated and self motivated massage therapist. National certification preferred. Please call 908-996-3395

MEDICAL RECEPTIONIST

F/T busy OB/GYN Office experience necessary. Benefits available. Send resume and salary requirements to: PO Box 352, Flemington, NJ 08822 or Fax to: 908-788-6483

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for professional Optometric Offices in Hopewell/Lambertville. Experience preferred but willing to train. Full benefits offered. Call: 609-466-0055 or Fax: 609-514-0663

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Part Time DELIVERY DRIVERS

HAVE A BIG VAN OR SMALL BOX TRUCK? Provide your full size cargo van delivering newspaper bundles to stores, machines, and Post Offices. Work approximately 8 hours on Wednesday afternoons and evenings. Knowledge of Hatterden County towns and surrounding areas helpful. Interested? Call John at (908) 782-4747 x607

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General Help 240

RECEPTION/BOOKKEEPER

Somerville Manufacturing company looking for person to answer phones and do light bookkeeping. Quick Books experience preferred. Please fax resume & salary requirements to 908-707-8810

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

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Full time, Piscataway Early Childhood Program, CDA or AA in ECE preferred but not req'd. \$9-\$11/hr & good benefits. EOE. 732-445-4747

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Title Examiner/Reader (FT) needed for Greenbrook based Co. Must have license & a min. of 5 yrs exp. Title Express a+. Great work environment. Email resume with salary requirements to resumes@extensian.com EOE

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Medical Help 250

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Part Time Help 255

BUS/VAN \$1,000 Sign on Bonus + benefits. Hunterdon & Somerset areas. Must have CDL P. Will train. Call: 908-782-1864 9:00-2:00pm M-F.

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Professional Help 260

ACCOUNTANT

Chatham CPA firm seeks Staff Accountants; work independently; public exp. flex hrs; partnership potential; benefits. Fax resume to (973) 635-0992 or call (973) 635-2111

Trades 275

Painting Positions

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Situations Wanted 280

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Acres & Lots 305

EAST AMWELL - 7 acres, ready to build. Well & septic done. Call 908-466-0977

Commercial Property For Sale 315

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Condos & Townhouses

320

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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. To report discrimination, call the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at 1-800-669-9777. The HUD TTY telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-202-726-1455.

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Real Estate Wanted 360

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Real Estate Rentals

Apartment 405

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FLEMINGTON ARMS - A 2BR

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FLEMINGTON Cottage 1 BR

