

South Plainfield Observer

VOL. 5, NO. 14

50 CENTS

DECEMBER 7, 2001

Santa's Waiting For Your Letters

A special mailbox has been set outside of the South Plainfield Post Office for letters to Santa.

Area kids can send their letters to Santa and he has promised that he will respond.

Letters must be mailed by Dec. 19.

Armed Robbery at Quick Chek

On Nov. 29 at about 2 a.m., Quick Chek located on Sampton Ave. was robbed at gunpoint by two unidentified suspects.

The suspects fled the scene after taking an undetermined amount of cash from the safe and register. One man held a clerk at gunpoint while demanding that the safe be opened. The other unarmed suspect then removed cash from the safe. The suspects also stole the cash register.

There were no shots fired and no injuries reported. No arrests have been made. The suspects are described as black males, one was 5'7" about 130 lbs., the other 6'2" and about 210 lbs.

If anyone witnessed or observed anything about that time, please contact Capt. Ferraro at 226-7667.

Local Police Officer in Auto Accident

On Friday, Nov. 30, John McConville, a six-year veteran of the South Plainfield Police Department, was involved in a single motor vehicle crash on Plainfield Ave. near Thomas Street.

Preliminary investigation revealed that Officer McConville had been traveling east on Tompkins Ave. and lost control of his vehicle and struck a tree. At the time of the accident, the roads were wet and visibility was described as poor due to fog conditions.

There were two passengers in McConville's vehicle at the time of the crash. Ernest Lawrence of South Plainfield was a front seat passenger and was not injured. Bethany Guldin of Dunellen, seated in the rear of the vehicle, sustained lacerations to her head and leg. Officer McConville complained of pains to his chest area. He and passenger Guldin were taken by the South Plainfield Rescue Squad to Robert Wood Johnson, where both were treated and released.

Due to the odor of alcohol, Officer McConville was asked for and consented to the taking of blood for the purposes of alcohol analysis. Results are pending.

High School Students Donate \$10,000 to Middletown FAVOR



(L-R) Michael LoCurto, electronics technology teacher; Rich D'Urso, graphic arts teacher; Tracy Rogers, FAVOR secretary and Toni Day and Sara Crysanthopoulos.

By Jane Dornick

Just days after the Sept. 11 disaster, South Plainfield High School teachers Rich D'Urso, and Michael LoConte, came up with the idea of producing patriotic buttons to raise money to help the victims. They were inspired by co-worker Toni Day who had made bumper stickers during Desert Storm.

Sophomore Dave Allara helped to design the buttons and over 100 students took part in the actual making of the buttons. They produced 5,000 buttons, using just two presses. The buttons were sold around town for \$1 each and the proceeds were designated to be donated to a worthy organization.

Sara Crysanthopoulos and her husband, who own VA Designs in South Plainfield, also wanted to help the victims of the tragedy in their own way. They teamed up to help in the distribution of the buttons. Sara, asked her son, whose is a junior at SPHS, if he knew of any fundraising drives going on locally and he told her about the high school buttons. As a season ticket holder of the NY Yankees, she personally became involved, handing out buttons to fireman and police officers at the games.

The students raised \$4,200 from the sale of the buttons. Sara's company, VA Designs, generously contributed \$5,800 to bring the total amount raised to \$10,000.

The students and adults involved were determined to see that the money went directly to local area victims. Mr. LoConte learned about the Middletown FAVOR organization (Friends Assisting Victims of terror) after hearing a request on a local ra-

dio station and contacted the group's secretary, Tracy Rogers.

Rogers and several other Middletown residents also wanted to do something for their friends and neighbors who had lost loved ones in the disaster. Middletown lost 34 men and women on Sept. 11, one of the largest number of residents in New Jersey. They formed a non-profit organization called Middletown FAVOR. All money raised goes directly to Middletown victim's families. To date, the group has raised \$85,000 in cash donations, of which some has already been disbursed to the families in need. They have also received numerous donations of goods and services from local area businesses.

The SPHS teachers decided that this was the perfect organization they had been looking for and on Tuesday morning Tracy Rogers was on hand at the high school to accept their generous donation.

Rich D'Urso commented, "We stand tall here in South Plainfield as students, teachers, administrators and business owners, knowing that we have made an impact on the lives of our neighbors in Middletown. It has been a tremendous experience working with our students. They have shown true patriotism and compassion for their fellow human beings. My sincerest thanks goes out to Toni Day for her dedication helping this campaign materialize and to Sara Crysanthopoulos from VA Designs, without her help this large amount of money could not have been possible. But most of all, my thanks go to our students in the graphic arts and electronics classes who gave their devotion and workmanship to cre-

ating these buttons."

Middletown FAVOR is currently holding a raffle for an autographed acoustic guitar from Bon Jovi, a patriotic guitar, a 1996 and 1997 World Series autographed baseball, an autographed American League Yankee baseball and a WTC Memorial Quilt. Raffle tickets are \$5 each and 100% of the proceeds will be donated to Middletown FAVOR and WTC Victims of Hazlet. The drawing is Dec. 14.

Anyone interested in raffle tickets or to learn more about Middletown FAVOR contact Tracy Rogers at (732) 957-9512.

Hamilton Blvd. to be Expanded

Plans were unveiled for widening and repaving Hamilton Blvd. from the Piscataway border on Stelton Rd., to the intersection of New Market Ave. The upgrades were unveiled at Monday night's council agenda meeting by Gregg Fodale, a consulting engineer for CME Associates.

According to Fodale, the section of Hamilton Blvd. that runs along Rt. 287 past Home Depot all the way to Durham Ave. will be expanded to two lanes, with sidewalks. A stop light will be installed at the intersection of South Clinton Ave. to help with traffic congestion.

At the intersection of Durham Ave., the present light will be modified and two lanes will be made to turn right onto Durham.

New lights will be installed at both Ryan St. and St. Nicholas Ave., with left turn lanes at each intersection. When Hamilton Blvd. enters the residential portion, it remains the same width, with two way traffic.

Another major intersection to be modified is at New Market Ave. The building on the corner will be demolished and the intersection will be completely redone, widening New Market Ave. Restriping will also be done on overpass lanes heading south.

The entire length of Hamilton Blvd. will see new curbing and storm drains will be installed, where needed.

Middlesex County is handling the entire project. South Plainfield will only be responsible for the acquisitions needed for widening the road.

According to Fodale, the county should be going out to bid on the project sometime in 2002 or 2003.

Council members voted to accept the planned expansion plans.



Future Stars Top Seller—Special thanks to student Brooke Barry and her parents for being our top seller in our fall Kastle Kreations fundraiser. Brooke's family sold over \$600.

Mark your calendars

Log on to
southplainfieldnj.com
for the latest
meeting agenda

council meetings

Meets twice a month on the first and third Thursday.

Borough Hall Council Chambers, 8 p.m. • Questions? 908-754-9000

PLEASE NOTE: A SPECIAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON

Wednesday, December 19, 2001 at 6:00 PM

All meetings of the governing body are held in accordance with New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act (NJSA 10:4-6 et seq) in the Council Chambers at 2480 Plainfield Avenue.

planning board

Meets second and fourth Tuesday of the month

Borough Hall Council Chambers, 8 p.m. • Questions? 908-226-7641

Dec. 11, Dec. 25 (no meeting).

zoning board of adjustment

Meets first, third and fifth Tuesday of the month

Borough Hall Council Chambers, 8 p.m. • Questions? 908-226-7641

Dec. 18.

taxpayers advisory group

The Taxpayers Advisory Group (TAG) meets the fourth Tuesday of every month at Borough Hall at 2480 Plainfield Ave. at 7 p.m.

siteplace sub-committee

The fourth Thursday of the month as follows:

Dec. 27

recreation commission

Meets once a month on the second Tuesday of the month, except July and August

PAL Building, Maple Ave. 7 p.m. • Questions? 908-226-7716

environmental commission

Meets once a month (second Wednesday)

Borough Hall Conference Room, 8 p.m. • Questions? 908-561-8280

Dec. 12, Jan. 9, 2002

board of education meetings

Grant School Gymnasium on Cromwell Place unless otherwise noted

Committee of the Whole, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. (in High School Cafeteria)

Regular Board Mtg. Dec. 18 at 8 p.m.

business advisory group

Meets once a month (first Wednesday)

Borough Hall Council Chambers, 5 p.m. • Questions? 908-757-8100

Traffic safety advisory commission

Meetings, held at 7 p.m. in the Conference Room, Borough Hall

Dec. 26.

South Plainfield Observer

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SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES

We look forward to hearing from all of you and encourage you to send in your stories and photos. The *South Plainfield Observer* is your paper. Please let us know what you would like to see in it.

To get an article published in *South Plainfield Observer*:

1. Type (double spaced) the article you wish published.
2. Mail, fax or drop it at: Editorial Department
South Plainfield Observer, 1110 Hamilton Blvd., Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080 or drop it in the box at Mohn's Flowers on Plainfield Ave. or at (908) 668-8819 or e-mail us on our web page at spobserver.com or ggnan@aol.com or ngrennie@ix.netcom.com. Include your name, address, telephone number.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters may be submitted by mail to South Plainfield Observer, Editorial Dept., 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080, by email at our website at spobserver.com or faxed to 908-668-8819. Letters should not exceed 400 words. We reserve the right to edit for clarity or length. It is the editor's discretion to limit the number of letters submitted by one individual on the same subject. The opinions expressed in "Letters" do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Observer. Letters must be submitted with name and phone number, even if they request name their name be omitted when published.

IN MY OPINION

To the Editor:

On Friday, Nov. 16, J.F. Kennedy School parents and students received a notice from Ellen B. Johnson, Board of Education Secretary/Business Administrator, saying that the school playground at Kennedy School was going to be demolished. The notice said that the equipment wasn't safe. When we read the note, we didn't understand why the Board of Education wanted to take it down. If it's not safe, then why can't someone fix it or replace the parts to make it safe, instead of getting rid of it?

The Kennedy School Playground is well known and used by many children. Kids play there at recess, after school and on the weekends. We think that taking away the equipment is really sad for the little kid's of the school. They love to play on the equipment at recess. Without the equipment they would not know what to do. They would just be running around, getting in trouble, and getting hurt because they would have nothing to do.

The parents and students of Kennedy School worked very hard to raise money and buy the equipment for all the kids to enjoy. It's not fair to just take it away from the school. If the Board of Education is going to take the equipment down, they should find the money to replace it. They should be able to get money to fix or buy new equipment for all the schools. If the Board of Education doesn't have the money then maybe they can get big companies to donate money to help.

The equipment is like new. If it is taken down, what will happen to it? If we have to take it down, maybe people would buy the equipment or just the wood from the school. It cost many thousands of dollars for the equipment, so the school should try to get some money for it. This money could be used to buy new equipment.

We think we should keep the school's playground because it makes the school a better place. The members of the Student Council are fourth and fifth graders who will be leaving Kennedy School soon. Getting rid of the playground will not be so bad for us because we will not be students at J.F. Kennedy for much longer. The Student Council is asking the Board of Education to rethink their decision of demolishing the playground. We hope they think of a different solution to try to fix and save the playground instead of getting rid of it. We're not asking for us, we're asking for the younger kids at our school. We want them to enjoy recess because it's their time to have fun with their friends. Taking away the playground is like taking the fun out of recess and out being a kid.

SINCERELY,

THE STUDENT COUNCIL OF J.F. KENNEDY SCHOOL,

Erik White, president; Jorge Alvarez, vice president; Dominic Papa, treasurer; Holly McDede, secretary; Jimmy Bijlani, Jared Czech, Steven Coppi, Kristie Crilly, Logan Green, Arham Jain, Harrison Lee, Parin Mody, Kirsten Nuber, Danielle Ranger, Amber Rogers, Fanuel Ulacia and Ricky Walton, representatives. Mrs. Luck and Mrs. Friedman, student council advisors

To the Editor:

In the coming months decisions will be made in Washington that will affect New Jerseyans health, as well as their pocket books, for years to come. Energy policy has understandably

moved off the front pages recently. It has, however, been front and center in Congress. Already numerous attempts to attach riders pushing for, among other things, drilling in the Arctic have been defeated in the Senate. The Senate will continue to be important because of what has already happened in the House.

Unfortunately, the energy plan passed by the House of Representatives last August does nothing to protect consumers or solve our current energy challenges. Instead, the bill would give away \$38 billion in taxpayer subsidies and tax breaks to the fossil fuel, auto, and nuclear industries and open the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling. At the same time, the Environmental Protection Agency is moving to weaken or even eliminate a key element of the Clean Air Act known as the New Source Review, which requires old and dirty power plants to meet modern pollution standards.

Senators Corzine and Torricelli deserve congratulations for supporting energy policies that promote clean, renewable energy and increased energy efficiency, and the EPA should reject proposals to weaken enforcement of the Clean Air Act. By requiring SUV's to meet the same fuel economy standards as cars, we could save more than twice as much oil as would ever come from the Arctic Refuge. By enforcing the Clean Air Act on our nation's old and dirty power plants, we could eliminate enough air pollution to prevent 21,000 asthma attacks and 758 hospital visits in New Jersey. We need clean energy solutions from Washington, not more pollution.

Signed,
SAM BOYKIN, FIELD DIRECTOR
NJPING CITIZEN LOBBY

Kennedy Playground Equipment Is Unsafe

A letter sent home to the parents of John F. Kennedy School this week told parents news about their playground no one wanted to hear.

As the result of an inspection done by Ed Miller of Corby Associates on the playground equipment in question, Principal Allen Czech was told the equipment cannot be saved.

The board had scheduled the equipment to be torn down a few weeks ago, but the school was given time to see if the equipment could be brought up to code. The pieces scheduled for removal are the ship, castle, orange climber, flagship, A-frame climber, metal slide and wood train.

Czech is asking parents to form a playground committee and begin to work together to build the finest playground in town. The cost of finding items to replace the equipment could be as much as \$20,000. Any parent who is interested in becoming a member of the playground committee, should get in touch with Mr. Czech at (908) 754-4620.

Free 911 Cell Phones For SP Seniors

On Jan. 15, 2002, the South Plainfield Police Department, along with the Recreation Dept., will be handing out free 911 cell phones to South Plainfield Senior Citizens at the PAL building on Maple Ave. between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12 noon.

The phones are set up to dial 911 only. No other calls can be made or received on these phones. Anyone interested may contact the Community Policing unit at (908) 226-7716 or Sue Mischka at (908) 754-1047.

Donations are Needed for "Christmas Project"

This holiday season brings a somewhat different attitude toward our fellow citizens. We have all been touched by the terrible tragedy of Sept. 11, some more than others.

In South Plainfield, many families have been affected in different ways, such as layoffs and cutbacks in their employment. We have all been asked to give in so many ways over the last few months and maybe we can't do anymore.

Every year the Social Services Dept. in the Borough of South Plainfield organizes a holiday project that in-

cludes food and gifts for the working families of our community who are having a difficult year.

This year the need is greater than ever. If you can give either by adopting a family or a single child, or by checking in with the Social Services Dept. to see what items are most needed, it would be greatly appreciated.

If you think you can help us this year, please call Margaret Ackerman, director of Social Services, (908) 226-7625 or stop by the Municipal Building.

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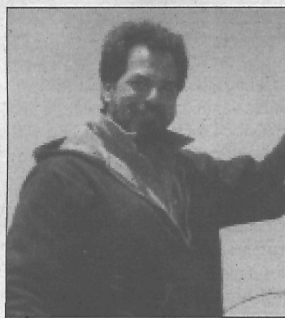
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Milestones



Bill Weaver

Bill Weaver Celebrates 50th Birthday

Fifteen months have passed since Bill Weaver hung a big white sheet from the roof of the White Star Diner asking his sister, Shirley, if it was "nifty to be fifty." Well, after 15 months of thinking about it, Shirley has realized that Bill is 50 now and she wants to know, "Is it nifty to be fifty Bill?"

Happy Birthday Bill!

Virtual Classroom Next Step for School District

Since the beginning of this school year, many innovations have been introduced for both teachers and students in the South Plainfield School district.

Students and teachers can log on to several programs to help them increase their knowledge during the school year.

The newest is the "virtual classroom." This online program will allow students to learn "anytime, anywhere." The course and instruction are provided through Advanced Academics, an Oklahoma City-based company.

The virtual classroom concept allows children to take classes over the

Internet. Students have been unable to sign up for certain courses because of scheduling problems or not enough students sign-up for a course or there are just no teachers to teach the course.

Now students will be able to take those previously unavailable courses on the Internet. The courses include lectures, homework, lessons and a human teacher that will be available to answer questions, either by email or telephone. All staffed teachers are certified to teach in every state.

Dr. Krewer expects the virtual classes to begin courses in the 2002-2003 school year. The first year 250 students will be enrolled and 250 more will be online in 2003-2004.

Borough Seeks Board, Agency, Committee and Commission Members

The Mayor and Council are accepting Letters of Interest and resumes from anyone interested in serving on a Borough board, agency, committee or commission for the calendar year 2002.

The following boards, agencies, committees and commissions are looking for members.

- **Business Advisory Group** (business owners only) meets first Wednesday of month, 5 p.m.

- **Cultural Arts Commission** meets second Wednesday of month, 8 p.m.

- **Environmental Commission** meets second Wednesday of month, 8 p.m.

- **Health Advisory Board** meets second Tuesday of month, 7:30 p.m.

- **Planning Board** meets second and fourth Tuesday of month, 8 p.m.

- **Public Celebration Committee** meets first Wednesday of month, 8 p.m.

- **Recreation Commission** meets at the PAL Bldg. on first Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.

- **Taxpayers Advisory Group** meets fourth Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.

Please forward your resume along with the board(s) you wish to serve to Mayor Daniel J. Gallagher or Council President James Vokral at 2480 Plainfield Ave., South Plainfield 07080.



Local Scouts Receive Merit Badges, Advance in Rank at Court of Honor

At a Court of Honor held on Nov. 19, Troop 124 Scoutmaster George Smith awarded the following merit badges: Bob Parillo, Electricity; Prasanna Srifharan, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Communication and Personal Management; Nicholas Green, Backpacking, Electricity and he achieved First Class Rank; Kyle Williams, Communication and Personal Manage-

ment; Nicholas Hogan, Painting, Woodwork and Electricity; Colin Slattery, Electricity, Painting and Woodwork; Ryan Woods, Collections, Communications, Fish and Wildlife Management, Soil and Water Conservation, Nature, Orienteering and Personal Management; Martin Diamant, Personal Management and he achieved Life Rank.

The scouts, assisted by Frank

Krause, Harry Chiovarou Jr., George Smith and Herman Nitzsche, participated on Nov. 10 and 17 in Scouting for Food. They collected over 600 food items to be distributed by Sacred Heart Church.

The scouts will also participate in a hike at the Delaware-Raritan Canal and on Dec. 17, there will be a Christmas Party for the scouts and their families, with a visit from Santa.



Vision 2001 was the recipient of a \$1000 donation from two local Fleet Bank branches. Pictured is (left to right) Karen Harrison, Fleet branch manager and assistant V.P., Oak Tree Avenue; Emil Leporino, Vision 2001 president and Lurdes Anastacio, Fleet branch manager and assistant V.P., Hadley Center.

Win Gift Certificate in Vision 2001 Holiday Contest

With 2001 drawing to a close and 2002 around the corner, Vision 2001 is looking for a new name and asking students in South Plainfield for suggestions.

The naming contest is open to all South Plainfield Public School Students, K-12. The grand prize winner will receive a \$100 gift certificate to Menlo Park Mall/movie theatre.

The rules are as follows:

- Keep vision as part of the name;
- Select a name that will last a while;
- Choose a name that is memorable; possibly an acronym;
- Be creative

Remember that it has to be a representation of our educational foundation.

All entries are due by Friday, Dec. 14 at Dr. Munger's Office. Her office is located in Grant School, Room 5.

The winner will be notified and presented with a \$100 Gift Certificate, before winter vacation and in time for the holidays.

Caroling in the Park Returns

Once again the residents of South Plainfield are invited to join a sing-along led by the South Plainfield High School Chorus under the direction of Tracy Murray.

This is the perfect opportunity for

the entire family to take a breather in their hectic schedule and begin enjoying the holiday season by singing some classic holiday carols. The only thing required is your spirit and your voice. Rumor has it Santa will also be there.

The Christmas caroling will take place in the gazebo at Spring Lake Park on Sunday, Dec. 23 starting at 6 p.m. After the caroling everyone is invited to the Rescue Squad directly across the street for hot chocolate and cookies. Be sure to wear warm clothes, since this could be a chilly night.

Herald Biblical Theatre Group
under the direction of JoAnn Havrilko
presents
A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Saturday, December 8 at 8 p.m.
Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, So. Plainfield
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Happy Holidays From All of Us at
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Events

Holiday Craft Show at John E. Riley School

December 7

The John E. Riley School Stokes Committee will be hosting a Holiday Craft Show on Friday, Dec. 7. Show hours will be from 5 to 9 p.m. The show will feature new and handcrafted merchandise. Refreshments will be available. Come do your shopping at Riley School!

For vendor information, please call (908) 755-4349 or (908) 668-8252.

Breakfast With Santa at K of C

December 8

The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus are having a Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, Dec. 8 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The prices are \$5 for an adult, \$3 for a child and \$15 for the whole family.

Please call Steve at 908-541-6204 for more details and reservations. Advance reservations are required.

OLC Christmas Celebration at

December 8

The Herald Christian Theatre Co., under the direction of JoAnn Havrilko, will be presenting a celebration of Christmas at Our Lady of Czestochova Church on Saturday, Dec. 8 at 8 p.m.

The Musical reaches back in time to the Old Testament, when the Prophets of old declared the coming of the Messiah. It looks at the reality of God's promise and the revelation of the incarnation through a virgin named Mary.

The cast reminds us that God's grace was not only for a people and time long ago, but also for mankind everywhere through all the ages past and to come. The celebration continues as we are reminded of the greatest promise of all, "For God so loves the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes on him, shall have eternal life."

Come join Herald as they joyfully tell the Christmas story.

Everyone is invited to enjoy and live this eternal hope at Our Lady of Czestochova Church on Saturday, Dec. 8, at 8 p.m.

Elks Pancake Breakfast with Santa

December 9

The South Plainfield Elks Lodge #2298, located on New Market Ave. will hold their annual pancake breakfast with Santa. The breakfast takes place on Sunday, Dec. 9 from 8 a.m. until noon and Santa will be available for the kids all morning.

The cost is \$6 for adults and \$4 for children. Children under five are free.

PAL Planning Trip to Atlantic City

December 9

The Recreation Department will be taking a trip to Atlantic City on Sunday, Dec. 9, 2001; leaving at 11 a.m. Come enjoy the casinos and have fun at the Resorts with a free \$13 worth of coins. Register at the PAL. Only 45 tickets will be sold. The fee is \$10 per person.

Historical Society Plans Meeting

December 11

The South Plainfield Historical Society will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the SPHS library. Residents can bring in old photos of South Plainfield. All are welcome.

Wesley Methodist To Present Christmas Show

December 20

"Catalyst: Music That Ignites the Spirit," will be presented at Wesley United Methodist Church on Thursday, Dec. 20 at 7 p.m. Wesley Methodist is located on Plainfield Ave.

This seasonal program features songs which tell the Christmas story, but with a modern twist. Audiences will be challenged by the example of Mary, Joseph, the wise men and the shepherds. Through their sacrificial commitment to care about a child, we can learn how to be more compassionate to the children in our world.

Take a break from your holiday

planning and spend an hour remembering what Christmas is all about.

For additional information, contact Michelle Biggs at (908) 754-5791.

Santa to Visit the PAL

December 22

Santa will be coming to the PAL on Saturday, Dec. 22 and he would like to meet with as many South Plainfield children as possible.

Pre-registration (at the PAL) is required. The fee is \$5 per child.

Roosevelt School Blood Drive

January 5, 2002

Roosevelt School is having a community blood drive being held on Jan. 5, 2002. Anyone interested in donating blood, please contact Theresa Montuori, (908) 769-5270 to schedule a time.

Rec Going to See "Naked Boys Singing"

February 3

For those who would like an alternative to watching football on Super Bowl Sunday, the South Plainfield Recreation Department is planning an a trip to Broadway to see "Naked Boys Singing."

The trip takes place on Sunday, Feb. 3 and costs \$45 per person. Bus leaves the PAL at 11 a.m.

Register at the PAL, Monday through Friday.

South Plainfield Recreation Winter Dinner Show

February 7, 2002

The South Plainfield Recreation Department will be sponsoring a trip to a Winter Dinner Show at the Hunterdon Playhouse in Feb. 7, 2002. The bus will leave from the PAL Building at 10 a.m. The fee is \$45 per person and includes dinner and the show.

Tickets can be purchased at the PAL, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

— Out of Town —

Entertainers Theatre to Present More Than Meets the Eye

Through December 9

Entertainers Theatre will present *More Than Meets the Eye*, a hilarious comedy by Fred Carmichael, weekends beginning Friday, Nov. 30, and continuing through Sunday, Dec. 9. The curtain rises at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and Dec. 2 and 9 Sunday matinees at 2:30 p.m.

Local talent starring in the play include Christopher Massimine of Somerset; Linda Morton of Plainfield; Christy Trainer of Milford; and Blaire Wagner of Hillsborough. Other members of the cast include Robin Attaway of Bridgewater; Lori Dahlberg of Basking Ridge; Philip Hochman of Plainfield; Sarah Levy of Warren Township; and Marion Saunders of Belle Mead.

The Entertainers Theatre performs at the Edward A. Chandler Theater, located in the People Care Center, at the intersection of Findern Ave. and Route 28, Bridgewater.

Tickets are \$10 for all performances; seniors at matinees are \$5.

For information, directions, or reservations, call (732) 846-5032.

Residents' Artwork At United Family

December 7

Art work, including water colors and paintings completed by residents of the Park Hotel will be on display at United Family and Children's Society in Plainfield on Friday, Dec. 7 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. This third annual art exhibit will feature various original works painted by the residents under the instruction of local artist Fermin Martinez.

According to Tom Reedy, agency executive director, the first two years of the art show were very successful and the artists have been preparing for the event for the past twelve months. All are welcome to visit the display and light refreshments will be served. United Family is located at 305 West Seventh St. in Plainfield. The agency also provides professional counseling, outpatient mental health services for children, adolescents and families, programs for pregnant teens and infant foster care.

Call (908) 755-3636 for directions or more information.

Alliance Church to Perform Bethlehem's Treasure-A Live Nativity

Dec. 7, 8, 9, 14, 15 & 16

Bethlehem's Treasure-A Live Nativity will be performed at Alliance Bible Church in Warren on Dec. 7 and 14 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 8, 9, 15 and 16 at

both 5 and 7 p.m. Admission is free.

This is the third year that Alliance Bible Church has produced the live nativity. Last years' production was played (in the rain) to over 900 community residents. Because *Bethlehem's Treasure* is fast becoming a Christmas tradition with many area families, the two Friday night performances were added.

From parking lot attendants dressed in full shepherd costume to home baked cookies at the cafe, months of preparation have gone into the production.

Six new musical arrangements will be used to enhance this year's production of *Bethlehem's Treasure-A Live Nativity*. A thirty voice Angel Choir, directed by Viva Wallace will be featured singing "Gloria-Angels We Have Heard On High" by Michael W. Smith.

The church is located at 52 Mount Horeb Rd. in Warren, just minutes off Interstate 78. Take exit 33 off I-78 and proceed toward Martinsville. Travel three miles and turn left onto Mount Horeb Rd. The church is one mile on the right.

For additional information or directions, contact the church office at (732) 469-1425.

Old-Fashioned Christmas Planned

December 8

"An Old-Fashioned Christmas," a free holiday program for the whole family will be held on Saturday, Dec. 8, from 1 to 2 p.m. at the Dunellen Theater on North Ave.

"Many people seem to agree that we've lost the true meaning of Christmas," explained Pastor Jeff Wildrick of the First Presbyterian Church. "This program is our gift to the community. For information, call (732) 968-3844.

NAACP Metuchen-Edison Area Branch Hosts Kwanzaa Extravaganza

December 13

The NAACP Metuchen-Edison Area Branch will host its Seventh Annual Kwanzaa Extravaganza on Thursday, Dec. 13. The event will be held at the Edison Job Corps Academy, 500 Plainfield Ave. in Edison, beginning at 7 p.m.

Included in the festivities will be entertainment, free food and vendors. Among those providing entertainment will be Noah's Ark Forces of Triumph Step Team. There will also be a candle-lighting ceremony conducted by Bill Davis, during which the origin and principles of Kwanzaa will be explained.

Although not required to attend the event, attendees are asked to bring a new, unwrapped toy for their holiday toy drive.

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IF THERE IS SOMEONE YOU KNOW WHO MAKES A DIFFERENCE in South Plainfield? Thank them by letting us know.

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SUGGEST A BUSINESS FOR US TO SPOTLIGHT. If you have had great service in South Plainfield share it with your neighbors through the newspaper.

SUBMIT LETTERS TO THE EDITOR to allow readers to discuss and react to issues.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS. If you have an event, take a photo, write a caption identifying the event and people and send it to us via mail. The best photos record action and don't include so many people that it is impossible to identify anyone. Please don't send us photocopies or laser prints. They don't reproduce well.

HOW TO CONTACT US. By mail: 1110 Hamilton Blvd., Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080; By phone: 908-668-0010; By fax: 908-668-8819; By email: ggnan@aol.

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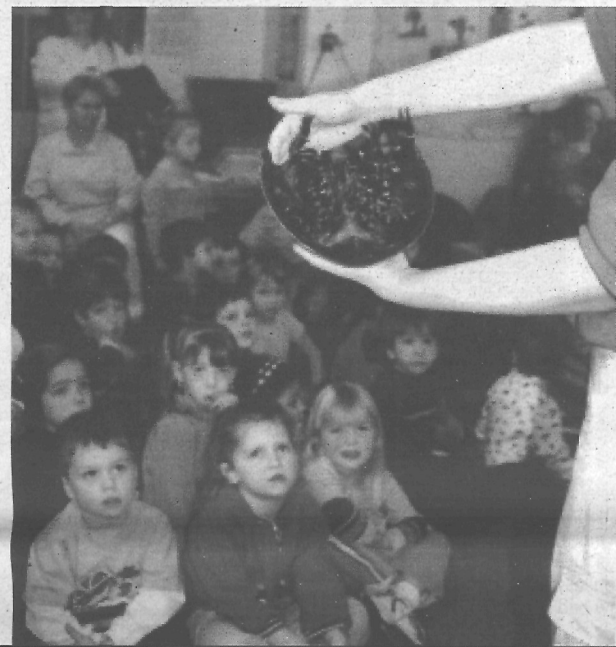
HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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"I" is for Invertebrates

Future Stars Preschool recently hosted a visit from Jenkins Aquarium in Point Pleasant and learned all about invertebrates. The students were able to see and touch sea stars, horse shoe crabs and many other invertebrates of the sea. The students favorite were the sea stars. This program was presented during "I" week, to go along with their regular lesson plans.

A special thanks to the Parents Group for organizing this event and to our parents that made this possible through their fund raising effort.

From the South Plainfield Library

Bookmarks

By Kenneth Morgan

Here's the latest news from the South Plainfield Library.

Due to the recent departure of staff member Gladys Hector, we won't be offering notary service until further notice.

We're continuing to offer courses in basic computer usage. The courses include how to access e-mail, navigating on the Internet, and other simple computer functions. Space is limited for these classes, so you must register in advance. For details, please call us at (908) 754-7885 and ask for Allan Kleiman.

Speaking of Allan, he'll be leading a class on "Resumes and Cover Letters for Beginners." The class is scheduled for Thursday morning at 10:30; it's part of our ongoing programs related to our Job Information Center. Pre-registration is required for this program.

We'll follow our normal schedule of children's Storytime programs next week. The programs are held on Tuesday morning at 10:30, Wednesday evening at 6:30 and Thursday afternoon at 1:15. They're for children ages three and over; no pre-registration is required. Turning to other upcoming children's programs, this month's Kidcraft program is set for Friday, Dec. 14, at 4 p.m. This program is for children ages six and over; the Library will provide all materials. And, on Wednesday, Dec. 19, there's the Holiday Sing Along with Mr. Kurt at 6:30 p.m. We ask that you sign up in advance for these two special programs. For more information on any of our children's activities, please call us and ask for Miss Linda.

The next meeting of the Library Board of Trustees is scheduled for

Tuesday evening at 7:30. The public is invited to attend; refreshments will be served.

We've got a new group of Circuit videos available. Titles in this group include "Where the Money Is", "Snow Day", "High Fidelity", "Hollow Man" and, on DVD, "Space Cowboys." This group will be here until Dec. 24.

We've also added several new videos and DVDs to our own collection. New titles in the General section include new tapes in the "Horatio Hornblower" series, the second season episodes of "The Sopranos," several classic movies starring Marilyn Monroe (including "Bus Stop" and "The Seven Year Itch" and, on DVD, "Chocolat." In the Juvenile section, we now feature tapes from the "Between the Lions" series, "Dr. Dolittle 2," a new VHS copy of "The Wizard of Oz," "Spy Kids" and, on DVD, the original "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." Videocassettes and DVDs may be borrowed, four at a time, for two days.

You still have time to contribute to the two charity drives based at the Library: the Friends of the Library gloves/scarves/hats/mittens collection and the Books to Keep in gathering of new children's books. But don't hesitate too long; the Friends' collection runs until Wednesday, and Books to Keep will be collecting until Saturday, Dec. 15.

Finally, you can still pick up a reasonably priced Holiday gift at the Library. We still have Terra Nova Garden Club cookbooks and Library tote bags (both for \$10 each), and you can still place your order for Library sweatshirts for \$15 each. Stop by the Circulation Desk for more details.

That's all for this week. See you next Friday.

\$500 for Ear Plugs... And Still Going

Unity Bank Helps WTC Cause in Ways Large and Small

On November 30, Unity Bank sent a check for several thousand dollars to the American Red Cross, reported Kelly Stashko, senior vice president of marketing for the Bank. "Unity Bank went into action almost immediately after September 11," Stashko noted, "Within a very short time, we had organized fundraising in all twelve branches."

Larina Lippincott, IT analyst at the bank, initiated the idea and then made up signage and donation canisters for all twelve bank branches in the first days after the disaster. Customers have responded generously and continue to do so. Canister donations are deposited weekly into a special WTC account and proceeds go to the Red Cross periodically.

Unity's work on behalf of the WTC victims was not limited to canisters, however.

In an unusual move, the bank published an announcement in September that it would do no advertising for 30 days. In memory of the lives

lost, all of the monies ordinarily budgeted for advertising during that month were donated to the WTC fund.

Individual bank branches chose to do even more. In Flemington, for example, Head Teller Tara Rausch organized a bake sale, and several colleagues gathered at her home to bake. Their cookies, cakes and pies, many of them with patriotic decorations, sold for more than \$300 during a two day sale in the branch's lobby. Rausch says that these proceeds were all sent to the American Legion, which was collecting specifically for the children of Hunterdon County Victims.

John Celmer, branch manager at Union, dedicated the Unity Bank table at the annual Italian American Feast to the WTC effort. At that popular street fair, bank employees collected \$750 for the WTC fund.

In South Plainfield, Assistant Manager Tino Fontes organized a car wash during Saturday banking hours. Many of the staff got good and soapy for the cause and the American Red Cross

gained another \$225 for their WTC work.

Stashko said that the prize for originality went to the Whitehouse Branch. At a regular meeting of the entire bank, Whitehouse employees were scheduled to sing a "Team Unity" song that they themselves had written. Before they began to sing, however, they announced the raffle of a single pair of ear plugs for the benefit of the WTC fund. According to Branch Manager Colleen O'Brien, spirits were running high. The bidding started at \$10; the price ran up quickly with several people participating, and Davis Dallas, Chairman of the Board, finally "took home" the prize ear plugs for \$500.

In addition to its ongoing work in response to the World Trade Center tragedy, Unity Bank is conducting other seasonal holiday charitable drives. All branches are collecting unwrapped toys for children in conjunction with Foster and Adoptive Family Services, a nonprofit New Jersey agency, as well as the Marine's Toy's for Tots.

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BUNCHI'S BULLETIN
"Craft Projects" and "Art Lessons" will begin first week of December. Registration is now open, but seating is extremely limited. Call and ask for Mrs. Ralwins.

Copy deadline for the Observer is Monday, 5 p.m. for the following Friday's publication. Please mail, fax or email your copy, (preferably typed in upper and lower case and double spaced). Send to South Plainfield Observer, 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080. Fax to (908) 668-8819, email us on our web page at spobserver.com.

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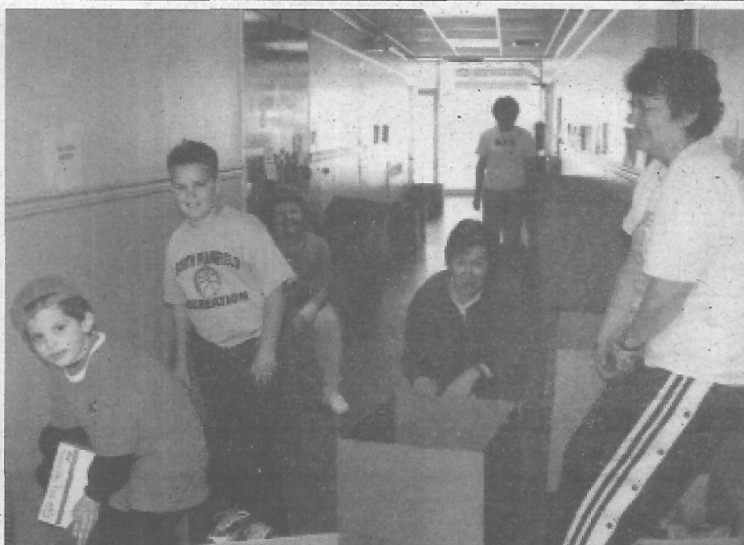
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Scouting For Food Gives Thanks—On behalf of Pack 224, we would like to thank all of the Scouts, volunteers and families who either volunteered their time, or left food by their door to make this program a success. During the month of November, bags were left at homes in around South Plainfield asking for food donations and then picked up the following week. Many families were provided with the items needed to make their Thanksgiving meal thanks to this program.

Grant Central Sixth Students Write About Sept. 11

That Day

by Vincent Raimondi (3rd place)

I thought it was a regular morning on 9-1-1.
Who knew the tragedy had already begun.
September 11 will stay in our heads.
As the families mourn for those who are dead.
That night I thanked God as I lie in my bed,
That my family was safe and home instead.
The next day our country united as one,
To show a war that had already begun.

The Grant Central Sixth Elementary School recently held a writing contest to allow students to express their feelings about the tragedy that struck our country on Sept. 11. The language arts teachers at Grant asked the sixth grade students to write about their feelings in either a poem or short story. The students chose the five best.

Last Tuesday

by Joseph Khalaf (4th place)

(Joseph has only been in America for one year)
Last Tuesday morning I was in school. Suddenly I see my teacher crying. At first, I don't understand why! I ask her why she cry? She tried to tell me what happened in New York. I was surprised and I feel very sad. When I come back home I see my mother crying too. She tell me what happened. We sat and watched TV. We saw how the planes hit the building and how the building fell down. I crying so much when I see that, because the building was very beautiful They are marvel in the world. I saw how much people killed there. I saw people cried and they feel so much sad. Everybody loves America. God Bless America.



Twin Towers

by Jesse Woodruff (5th place)

I got hurt, my brother is crying.
I am crying too.
It hit my brother.
A plane, it hit me!

I never imagined...

I am very sad, and he is too.
People are running away from us.
My sides are shaking! I can't stand it anymore!

My brother lay down before me.
I'm too weak to stand up. I can't take off my hat.
I have to lie down.

Burned Into My Eyes

by Elizabeth Diamant (1st place)

It's burned into my eyes.
It's forever in my mind.
It's like a curse put on me.
Even though it didn't happen to me.
I feel helpless and paralyzed.
Like I am no one, in a world full of no ones.
As if my life doesn't matter.
We are all humans although we act uncivilized.
Is this the world I live in?
Is my world going to die?
Will it slowly disintegrate like the rest of our lives?
I ask you all, is this what you want?
Is this what all the wars have been fought for?
People feared for their lives.
Will our faith in humanity ever be restored?
The questions that I ask will always be in my mind.
The picture that I saw will continue to be burned into my eyes.
And still, I am powerless and helpless in this world of mine.

The Leaning Towers of America

by Nick Marino (2nd place)

As I watched the TV on September 11, 2001, I became extremely disturbed. With Tower One on fire, I was not sure what to think until plane number two plowed into Tower Two. With complete disbelief, not a tear in my eye, I followed the story from our deep blue sky. As minutes went by, now my heart in my throat, devastated so badly I didn't know how to cope. Now tears strongly flowing now knowing what was going on, I prayed and prayed. Please God let us be strong. I stared into space wondering what to expect. Oh, Bin Laden, you are next. As of today, what we all must do is pray for the victims, heroes and America. May God Bless us all.

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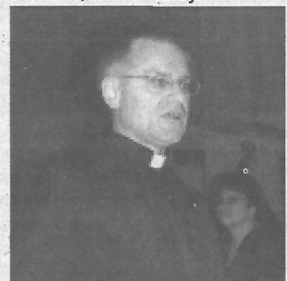
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THE ORCHESTRA OF ST. PETER BY THE SEA Christmas Tour recently filled Sacred Heart Church with sounds of the season. The return of this renowned group once again filled the church to capacity. The orchestra conducted by Rev. Alphonse Stephenson offered a wide variety of musical favorites including: *Night Christ was Born*, *What Child Is This*, *Ave Maria*, *Joy to the World*, *Waltz of the Flowers* from *Nutcracker*, *the National Anthem* and much more. The concert featured tenors Anthony Buonauro, Thomas E. Bethman III and Baritone, Thadd Shirey.

Photos by Pattie Abbott



Bumback Annual Christmas Party/ Reunion

By Patricia Abbott

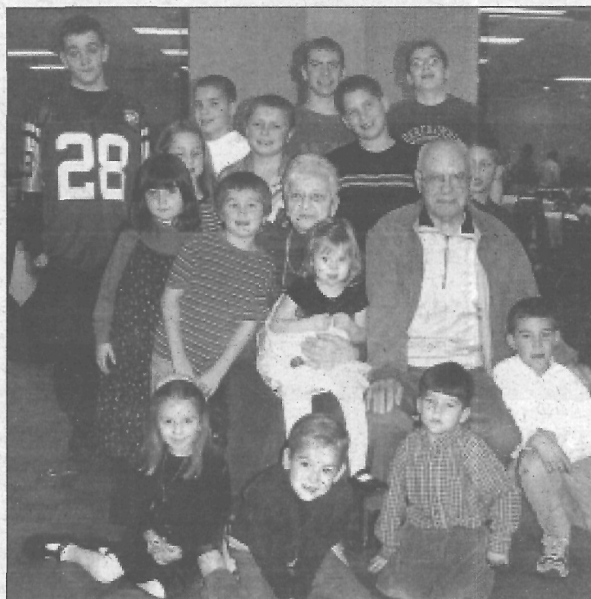
In 1978 South Plainfield residents Frank and Christina Bumback held a Christmas family reunion. That party became an annual event that is still going strong. The early parties were hosted in the homes of one of their six children. As the families grew the party was moved to larger facilities.

To say their family has grown over the year's is an understatement. The Bumback's have three sons, Tony, John and Ralph Cotone and three daughters Louise Doyle, Grace Cotone and Kimberly Honnick. There are eight grandsons and nine granddaughters, ranging in age from nine to 42 years. There are also 19 great grandchildren. Fourteen great grandsons and five great granddaughters ranging from 18 months to 26 years.

The 23rd Annual Bumback Christmas Family Reunion recently held at the Italian American Club had 60 guests coming from as far as New York, Pennsylvania and Arizona. The event is traditionally held on the first Sunday in December. The room filled with greetings, smiles and excited youngsters. The group enjoys food, entertainment and a chance to catch up with family.

The highlight of the party for the younger set is an early visit from Santa, complete with presents.

As photos were taken of each group a call went up, "All children and spouses!", then "All grandchildren!" and finally "Next the great grandchildren!" Amidst the confusion a small voice was heard, "Am I a great grandchild?" and the 23rd Bumback Family party was off to a great start.



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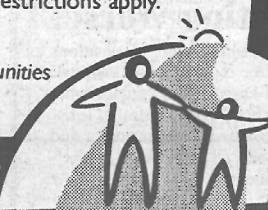
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Riley School Walks Off Their Thanksgiving Meal

By Patricia Abbott

A handful of determined Riley School students, along with their parents and siblings, took a walk in the park to raise money for "Operation: Help Feed America's Heroes." The theme and the very worthy cause just happen to be about food. They chose the day after Thanksgiving and called their walk-a-thon the "Walk Off The Turkey Trot." An appropriate name for exercise after a day of turkey and all the trimmings.

Kim McMahon, co-president of the Riley School PTO explained, "The idea for this came about after Franklin School held a walk-a-thon shortly after the Sept. 11 tragedy. They were extremely successful! Our PTO agreed to give it a try because this was something the children could truly be involved in." Kim contacted Franklin School Principal Nancy Erickson, who graciously offered them the much needed information to get their walk-a-thon off the ground. The PTO wanted to keep their Thanksgiving theme and didn't have much time to organize the event. The flyers were sent home the Monday before Thanksgiving. Walkers sought donations from friends and family over the holiday.

PTSO member Hope Cotone discovered a newspaper article about "Operation: Help Feed America's Heroes," a group of volunteers who cook and serve gourmet meals to the rescue workers at Ground Zero in New York City. She brought the article to the attention of the PTO. They finally knew they hit on just the right combination.

Mother Nature offered the group a sunny autumn day. A dozen families gathered at Riley School and set out

for Spring Lake Park. They traveled by foot, in strollers and by wagon. The walk took them around the lake and back to the school. Kim noted that the South Plainfield Police Department were incredibly supportive. Police Officer Dave Franchak escorted the group by bike. He also made a donation to the cause. Officer Brad Bullard helped the crowd safely cross Cedarbrook Ave. The walkers were surprised and delighted to have Police Chief Merkler join them.

Back at Riley School Girl Scout Troop #431 ran a "fitness stop" on Riley's playground. Parents and children made a donation to the troop to exercise on playground equipment. When the walkers returned to Riley School Troop #431 was waiting for them with a \$15 donation. The Walk Off The Turkey Trot raised \$515. The event ended in the gym where the walkers feasted on donuts, apple cider, tea, coffee and hot chocolate. The refreshments were donated by Freihofer's and Stop & Shop of Edison.

"Operation: Help Feed America's Heroes," based in Somerville, is run by Tom O'Leary, the executive director of the Samaritan Homeless Interim Program (SHIP). O'Leary lost a cousin, who was a firefighter, in the September 11 tragedy.

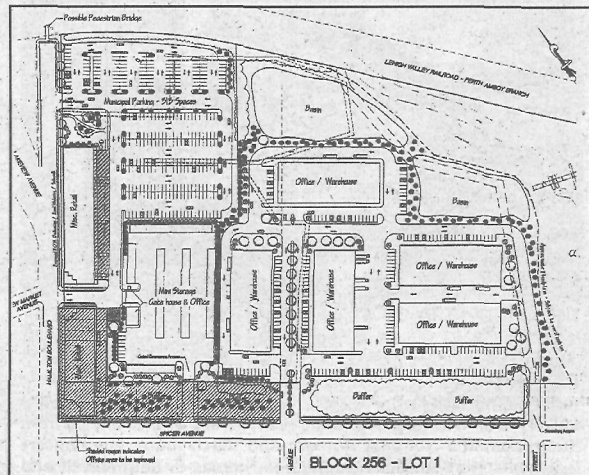
Kim McMahon, co-president of the Riley PTO was pleased with the outcome of the walk-a-thon. She said "The whole thing was organized at the last minute. Despite the size of the group, the amount of money that we raised was a pleasant surprise. The kids understood that this was going to benefit the world trade center in a different way by feeding the Heroes at Ground Zero. We hope to do this again next year."

Hamilton Boulevard Industrial Park Redevelopment Plan Presented to Council

A case study of a successful Superfund Redevelopment project was presented at Monday nights Council agenda session as part of the discussion on redeveloping the Hamilton Boulevard Industrial Park site. Several business owners surrounding the site were also on hand to hear the presentation and ask questions.

The South Plainfield site, formerly owned by Cornell-Dubilier Electronics, Inc. and Dana Corporation, was designated a Superfund site by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in 1998. Monica Conyngham, attorney for Cornell-Dubilier, and Michael Last, representing Dana Corporation, presented an informational case study of the Raymark Site in Stratford, Connecticut, a 34-acre industrial area contaminated by waste from more than 70 years of manufacturing activities. In addition to addressing the site's environmental condition, the redevelopment of the Raymark Site into a retail shopping center will create a significant number of jobs, increase local tax revenues and provide additional retail options for the community.

"While there are certainly differences between the Raymark project and the one being considered for Hamilton Boulevard Industrial Park, the case study illustrates the potential economic, aesthetic and environmental benefits of a successful redevelopment project," explained Last. "In



Hamilton Boulevard Industrial Site is located on Hamilton Blvd. across from New Market Ave. intersection.

addition, the Raymark project was completed in just over two years, a much shorter timeframe than traditional Superfund cleanup projects."

"The key to the success of the Raymark project was the commitment of all the interested parties to work together to achieve their goals," stated Conyngham.

In April, the Borough Council unanimously passed a resolution directing the Planning Board to make recommendations on the 27-acre Hamilton Boulevard Industrial Park property. Lester Nebenzahl, town planner for the Borough, conducted the study, which took into consider-

ation the conceptual redevelopment plan previously endorsed by the Borough Council. The plan involves small retail stores along Hamilton Blvd., office and industrial space on the southeast portion of the site, storage units on the south side and 40 percent of the property left as open space.

On Oct. 9, as a result of the study, the Planning Board unanimously recommended naming the Hamilton Boulevard Industrial Park Site as a part of a Redevelopment Area. The next step is for the Borough Council to vote on the Planning Board's recommendation.

Red Cross Stills Needs Your Help

Every American was profoundly affected by the events on Sept. 11, which continue to play out daily. On a national level, the American Red Cross has spent \$154 million to date, an unprecedented charitable effort. The Red Cross has helped 25,000 families and individuals who suffered losses in the Sept. 11 tragedies.

But do you know what your local chapter has done to help your neighbors? In the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the Tri-County Chapter of the American Red Cross has engaged in a relief effort that is the largest disaster response in its history.

In addition to direct assistance to families of the victims of Sept. 11, the Tri-County Chapter deployed a Disaster Response Team to Ground Zero within two hours of the initial attack on the World Trade Center. "Our director of disaster service remained in NY as part of the relief effort for two full weeks," said Trish Mulligan, Tri-County Chapter Executive Director.

The Tri-County Chapter established a compassion center at the Marriott Hotel for Port Authority employees and their families. The Center provided a quiet oasis of tranquility for visitors to rest, reflect or talk privately with a grief counselor or spiritual care provider about the tragic events.

Key to the operation was the establishment of two emergency shelters to house over 300 commuters

unable to return home as a result of road, tunnel and bridge closings within the area. During this time, the Chapter provided over 15,000 meals and snacks to stranded commuters, travelers and families. "We've been providing mobile feeding units at funerals, memorial services and vigils to support the families of the victims," said Mulligan. "The incredible generosity of the people throughout the tri-county area has made this possible," she added.

From a single family fire to a community-wide catastrophe such as the

World Trade Center disaster, the American Red Cross is there to relieve suffering. The Tri-County Chapter responds to many different disasters; home, apartment and commercial fires, industrial accidents, floods, airplane crashes and tornadoes. Staff and volunteers are on call and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, ready to be at the scene to provide services. To make a donation to the Tri-County Chapter of the Red Cross call (908) 756-6414 or (908) 353-2500.

Plfd. Animal Hospital Accepting Donations For Needy Pets

The Plainfield Animal Hospital is accepting pet food donations to be distributed to needy pets for the holiday season. Bring canned or dry pet food to the drop-off box at the hospital, at 2201 Park Ave., South Plainfield, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.,

Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays. Food will be distributed to "People For Animals", a local non-profit organization.

For more information call (908) 755-2428 or visit their website at www.plainfieldanimalhosp.com.

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Sports

SPHS Athletes Honored for Their Hard Work and Success

By Jenevieve DeLosSantos

With the conclusion of the fall sports season, SPHS athletes were rewarded for a job well done and a season of success. Several athletes have recently been honored by being named to specific selective teams.

First off, our girls Field Hockey Team, who showed an enormous amount of success this season, had three of their principle players named to the All-GMC Field Hockey Team. Juniors Meghan Schweers and Danielle Skoba, along with sophomore Ngozi Oparacke, have been recognized for a tremendous season; making South Plainfield's first appearance at the GMCT finals since 1989 and a dramatic conclusion to a hugely successful year.

The SPHS girls tennis team, with a record of 11-3, had three of their players commended for a well-played

season. They were selected by the Division Coaches and named to the GMC White Division Team.

Also receiving an honorable mention for the 2001 *Home News Tribune* All-Area Girls Tennis Team were: Heather Barrett, Elayne Russell, Eva Rodriguez, Tamika Limerik, and Marissa Judd.

In gymnastics two girls have been named to the 2001 *Home News Tribune* All-Area Gymnastics Team; Kim Dziomba to the first team and Vicky Zappi to the second. Kim Dziomba was spotlighted as one of the top gymnasts in the area, qualifying for the NJSIAA Meet of Champions. She had an overall score of 34.8, finishing second on the floor exercise at the GMC Meet. Unfortunately she was unable to compete at the NJSIAA Meet due to a scheduled knee surgery.

Congratulations, your hard work and dedication sure paid off.

SOCCER

South Plainfield Hotspurs Rout Rockets

The South Plainfield Boys U-8 Hotspurs finished their season Saturday with a powerful 7-1 win over the Middlesex Youth Rockets. It was their second straight victory and gave them a high note to finish off the season.

From the start you could tell that this would be South Plainfield's day as they were able to control virtually all of the offensive action during the game. In their biggest offensive output of the year, the Hotspurs received two scores from striker Eric LaVerne and one off the foot of left winger Ryan Marcoux. However, it was Quinn Bolivar who stole the show with four big goals (and a big pay-off) as he was able to get free and take advantage of excellent passing for his first scores of the season. Overall, the play of Marcoux, LaVerne and Bolivar kept constant pressure on the opponent's goal and never allowed the defense a time to rest.

The defense once again played a great game, allowing a lone first half goal and consistently clearing the ball

out of their zone and up to midfield where the offense was able to take control. Goalie Daniel Lyew with full-backs Albert Vill, Zachary Noll, A.J. Celentano and midfielders Taylor Born and Paul Seyffart all played with intensity throughout the match. Vill, Born and Celentano also helped on the offensive end helping to break down the Rockets defense as Noll and Seyffart each cut off attacks by Middlesex on different occasions.

In a season that began slowly for the team, the nine young athletes along with their excellent and knowledgeable coach only lost one game over the last five contests giving them a positive outlook as they will look towards the spring season to pick up where they left off.

To Coach Bolivar and the team, thanks and congratulations on a fun and exciting season, the parents are proud of all of you!

Power and Sonics Celebrate

On Saturday Nov. 24, the U-10 Girls Power and the U-9 Boys Sonics held an end of the fall season celebration. Over ninety players, parents, siblings and extended families attended the luncheon held in the private party room at the China Buffet in South Plainfield.

Every player received a certificate and a participation trophy. Thank you plaques from the players were given

to the Sonic coaches Bruce Hunt, Mike Gillen and Mike Sticco and the Power coaches Ernesto Rodriguez, Sam Pauls and Keith Heckel.

The coaches from both teams wish to extend a sincere thank you to the players for their hard work and commend the parents for their dedication to their children. It was through their support that both teams had successful seasons.

By Kevin Lykes

juniorbaseballclubnotes

INTRODUCING WWW.SPJBC.COM—As promised, thanks to the efforts of Chris Hansen, <http://www.spjbc.com> is now up and running. It's not 100% just yet, but you can access our website using this new address. It's much easier to use and remember than the old one. If you encounter any problems with links you may have to try the old www.members.aol.com/spjbc/spjbc.html address for the time being. Rest assured <http://www.spjbc.com> will be 100% fully functional soon. You can check our website to stay updated on club activities, (coaches clinics, meetings, tryouts, etc.) and a lot more, like: schedules, rosters and standings, once the season gets into gear. Also to participate in trivia contests and even to see our complex from an aerial view.

Coaches clinics are continuing with the next one scheduled for Tues. Dec. 11 at 7:30 at the complex. Please attend if you can especially if you are a new coach.

Anyone interested in or knowing anyone else who might be interested in supporting the club through our sign sponsorship program should contact Charlie Decker, Jr., or leave a message at the clubhouse: 754-2090.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING DATES:

Tuesday, Dec 11, at 7:30 p.m. Coaches Clinic, JV Coach Tim Gallagher discussing hitting, along with Dennis Lonnegan, all state catcher from New Providence, who will also discuss catching techniques.

Monday, Jan 7, at 7:30 p.m. General Meeting

Tuesday, Jan 8, at 7:30 p.m. Coaches Clinic featuring former major leaguer Bill Leahman discussing pitching and practice organization.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Jan 10, 11, 12, Winter Registration; times Thurs. and Fri., 6 to 9 p.m., Sat 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., (tentative). This is also registration for managers, assistant coaches and NEW umpires.

Monday, Feb 4th, at 7:30 p.m. General Meeting.

Tuesday, Feb 12, at 7:30 .m. Coaches Clinic, topic TBD.

Monday, Feb 25, at 6:45 p.m. Rutgers Certification course, (Certification Required for all Managers and Assistant Coaches).

Week of Feb 26 to March 1, League Manager meetings.

Saturday March 2, tryouts at PAL, (Small Fry only).

Week of March 4, Draft nights/player notification.

Monday March 4, at 7:30 p.m. General Meeting

Tuesday, March 12, at 7:30 p.m. Coaches Clinic, at SPHS practice, site TBD.

Saturday, March 16, at 9:30 a.m., "C" League Orientation, Field 1.

Monday, April 1, at 7:30 a.m. General Meeting.

Thurs, Fri, Sat, April 4-6, Booster Weekend (All Small Fry players).

Saturday, April 13, OPENING DAY!

As we are a volunteer organization, we are still looking for some people to help assist committee heads with: The Scholarship Awards, Booster Weekend, Raffles, Snack Stand, Tournament and The Sign Committee. See any Board member or call the clubhouse and leave a message for information.

Recreation is Sponsoring Ski Trip To Hidden Valley Resort

The South Plainfield Recreation will be sponsoring a trip to Hidden Valley Resort this winter on Sunday evenings, Jan. 13, 27, and Feb. 14.

Hidden Valley Resort, located in Vernon, New Jersey, is less than an hour from South Plainfield. The recreation department is offering this

package, which includes: all three trips, round trip coach transportation and a free lift ticket. The cost of the trip varies depending upon the package you choose. The price for each lift, ticket and transportation is \$75 and the price for lift, rental and transportation is \$115.

Parents interested in taking their

children can sign up to be a helper and receive a free lift ticket and rental.

All payments are due on Dec. 16. Checks can be mailed or brought directly to the PAL building, made out to South Plainfield Recreation (Attn: Mr. English).

Call 908-226-7714 for more information.



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Obituaries

Julia A. (Colinek) Colucci, 91

Julia A. (Colinek) Colucci of Sea Bright died on Saturday, Dec. 1, at her home.

Born in Lost Creek, Pa., she had resided in Carteret and then settled in South Plainfield where she resided for most of her life. Mrs. Colucci maintained a summer residence for numerous years in Sea Bright, before becoming a permanent resident in 1970.

She had worked in the gift shop at Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield during the mid and late 1960's.

Mrs. Colucci had traveled extensively and was a member of an international travel club. She also held a great love for painting art.

Mrs. Colucci was a former member of the Suburban Woman's Club and the Little Silver Women's Club.

She is predeceased by her husband, William, who was the former owner of the Esso Station on Park and Maple avenues in South Plainfield and an active member of the South Plainfield community for numerous years. He died in 1966. She is also predeceased by her brother.

Surviving are a daughter, Diane Diemer of Piscataway; two sons, Charles and his wife Mary of Monmouth Beach and William Colucci of Sea Bright. Also surviving are three sisters and her grandchildren, Michael Diemer, William and John Colucci and a great granddaughter, Courtney Diemer.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin Home For Funerals.

Cherry Hill and John Simonelli of North Carolina and five grandchildren, Joseph, Keith, Jared, Leslie and Danielle.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin Home For Funerals.

Memorial donations in her memory may be made to the JFK Haven Hospice c/o 65 James St. Edison, NJ 08818.

Julia M. (Benedict) Callea, 86

Julia M. (Benedict) Callea died on Tuesday, Nov. 27 at JFK Haven Hospice in Edison.

Born in Olyphant, Pa., Mrs. Callea grew up there before coming to New Jersey, residing in Plainfield and settling in South Plainfield 45 years ago.

She had been employed with A&P in downtown Plainfield for 25 years as a meat wrapper. She later worked for Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield in their dietary department.

Mrs. Callea is a communicant of Sacred Heart RC Church in South Plainfield.

She is predeceased by her husband, Vincent, who died in Nov. 2000.

Surviving are her step son, Carmen Callea; her sister-in-law, Margaret Benedict; three nieces, Judith Ann Benedict, Patricia Hammock and Kathleen Smith; two nephews, Robert and Louis Benedict; her one grand nephew along with her two step grandchildren and two step great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at the McCriskin Home For Funerals.

Mary A. (Simonelli) Dubin, 80

Mary A. Dubin (Nee Simonelli), died on Sunday, Dec. 2, at JFK Haven Hospice in Edison.

Born in Newark, Mrs. Dubin had resided there for 78 years before residing, with her daughter since January of 2000.

Mary was employed at the Newark School District for 22 years, working in Barringer Prep as a cashier, retiring in 1994.

Mary was a former communicant of St. Lucy's RC Church in Newark.

She was predeceased by her husband, the late Stanley Dubin; a sister, the late Pauline Person and a brother, the late Anthony Simonelli.

Surviving are four children, Alice and her husband Anthony Dembia of South Plainfield, Carol and her husband, Roy Cole of Hurleyville, NY, Richard and his wife Marsh Dubin of Mt. Juliet Tenn.; a sister, Rose Pietrucha of Fanwood; two brothers, Joseph Simonelli of

Karen A. Smith, 49

Karen A. Smith of South Plainfield, died on Monday, Dec. 3, at her home.

She was born in Bethlehem Pa. and was a former resident of Dunellen before moving to South Plainfield 46 years ago.

Karen was a sales clerk at the former Bradlees in South Plainfield for twenty years.

Karen had a great love for music and dancing.

She was a communicant of Sacred Heart Church in South Plainfield.

She was predeceased by her father, Kevin J. Smith Sr., who died in 1990.

She is survived by her mother Lillian Scanlon Smith of South Plainfield; a brother Kevin J. Smith Jr. of Roselle Park; two sisters, Norine E. Haines of Clark and Kathleen Zawatski of Piscataway; two nephews, Kevin J. III and Stephen and a niece Kathleen.

Funeral services were held at James W. Conroy Funeral Home.



This photo is one of many that has no caption. Can you help identify any of these people?

Your Old Photographs are Needed to Help Create Historical Book of South Plainfield

The South Plainfield Historical Society is inviting the public to submit old photographs of South Plainfield and its residents for inclusion in Arcadia Press' book series called Images of America. These popular volumes can be found in local book stores. Historical pictorials of many New Jersey towns including Edison, Woodbridge, Dunellen, Metuchen, Perth Amboy, Rahway and North Plainfield are now in print.

The publication of a book on the Borough would be a first. Images of South Plainfield have been included in other publications, but our town has never been a subject of a book.

The book editor is Richard P. Veit, Jr., an assistant professor of anthropology at Monmouth University, and Director of the Center for New Jer-

sey History. He grew up in South Plainfield, graduated from SPHS, and attended Drew University, graduating *summa cum laude*. Dr. Veit obtained his doctorate in anthropology from Penn State. He also directs Monmouth University's summer archaeological field school.

The public is invited to bring individual or even their shoeboxes of photos to meet with Dr. Veit on Tuesday, Jan. 8. Photos accepted for publication will be considered on loan, and will be returned. However, the South Plainfield Historical Society will gladly accept donations, or reprints of photos for their files for use in future publications. There are several in the works. Written information (date of photo, place or address of site, names of those in photo) should

be included with each submission.

The Jan. 8 meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. in the South Plainfield High School cafeteria. The school's Jersey-an Club, under the direction of Fran Flannery and Barka, are providing refreshments and assistance. Please come and enjoy this evening with friends, family and neighbors and contribute your lasting memories to the first book on South Plainfield's history.

For further information, please contact Dorothy Miele at (908) 754-3073. If you are unable to attend the meeting, arrangements can be made to view picture submissions at more convenient times and places.

Legal Notice

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD NOTICE TO BIDDERS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that sealed bids will be received by the Borough of South Plainfield, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, on JANUARY 3, 2002 at 10:00 AM prevailing time in the Council Chambers of the municipal building 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, New Jersey at which time and place bids will be opened and read in public for:

LIVE SCAN SYSTEM

Specifications and other bid information may be obtained at the Clerk's office in the municipal building at the above address during regular business hours 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M..

Bidders are required to comply with the requirements of P.L. 1975, c.127 (N.J.A.C. 17:27 et seq.), the New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act, N.J.S.A. 34:11-56.25, Employment on Public Works N.J.S.A. 10:2 EOE, ADA.

Vincent Buttiglieri, Municipal Clerk.

\$26.00 December 7, 2001

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

An appeal has been filed by Jeffrey Sutton requesting a variance from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the Borough of South Plainfield to permit the erection of a 16x12 wood deck, proposed deck lacks the required 30' front setback from Clifford St., 22.7' being proposed and any other variances that may be required, said property being located on Block 41, Lot 13 on the South Plainfield Tax Map.

For the purposes of hearing objections to or protests against the granting of said appeal, the South Plainfield Zoning Board of Adjustment will hold a public hearing on December 18, 2001 in the Council Chambers, Borough Hall, at 8:00 p.m.

The maps and documents pertaining to this appeal are available for public inspection in the Building Inspector's Office, South Plainfield Borough Hall, Monday through Thursday, between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm.

\$35.00 1T December 7, 2001

Volunteers Needed to Share American Culture With Exchange Visitors

Each year thousands of American families open their homes and hearts to international exchange visitors from around the world. You may even know families in your own neighborhood who are already hosting an au pair. Can you help these families prepare for their foreign visitor? Can you help these bright, receptive young people from many different countries adjust to their new families, new community and child care duties?

EurAupair needs expertise. Your expertise! Are you proud of your local community and heritage? Are you understanding and flexible? Do you understand family dynamics? Perhaps you have interacted with people from other countries. If you are this type of person you can make a difference and have fun too!

As a volunteer Community Coun-

selor, you will provide helpful orientations and guidance to au pairs and host families, gain new friends (both locally and internationally), help to instill an appreciation for the United States and Americans, show the world your home town, and work to cultivate tolerance and understanding on a people-to-people level; in short, help to bring the world closer through cultural exchange. EurAupair provides training, support and guidance and reimburses for expenses.

If you are interested in this important role with the non profit EurAupair Intercultural Child Care programs, please contact Susan Borely at (610) 269-6290 or (800) 901-2002, or email at eurapair-east@eurapair.com.

Find us on the internet, www.eurapair.com.



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policereport

• On Nov. 27, a Plainfield man was arrested at K-Mart for shoplifting three CD's worth \$51.97.

• On Nov. 28, Dave Butchelder of Fourth MML Partnership in Linden reported the theft of \$300 worth of plywood from a job site at 440 Kenneth Ave.

• An Arlington Ave. resident reported that her wooden lawn mailbox had been blown up. No evidence of what type of explosive or fireworks may have been used.

• A Board of Education employee reported that her black cloth pocketbook, which included a cell phone was missing from her office.

• On Nov. 29, a Roselle man was arrested at K-Mart for shoplifting \$206 worth of DVD disks.

• On Friday, a South Plainfield Ave. resident reported that two

men in a black car threw a bottle at her vehicle damaging the driver's side mirror.

• On Saturday, a North Plainfield resident reported the theft of a vinyl checkbook containing \$80 from her pocketbook, while watching a movie at Regal Cinema.

• An Oak Tree Ave. resident reported the theft of two children's mountain bikes that were in her backyard.

• On Monday, a Calderone St. resident reported the theft of his laptop and cable from his apartment. There were no signs of forced entry.

• A UPS driver, who was parked at Just Packaging on Oak Tree Ave. reported the theft of his digital camera, UPS vest and his jacket from his truck.

PD Accepting Applications for Communication Operators

The South Plainfield Police Department is currently accepting applications for the position of full- and part-time Communications Operator. The requirements for this position are:

- 18 years of age or older.
- Graduation from high school or possession of an approved high school equivalent certification.
- A citizen of the United States.
- Applicants that have completed the Basic Tele-

communications, Emergency Medical Dispatch and CPR courses will be given a preference.

• Be able to accurately type a minimum of 30 words per minute.

• The ability to work weekends, holidays and a minimum of 40 hours a month filling in for full-time personnel.

If you are interested in applying, submit a resume to Lt. Michael Grennier at (908) 226-7673.

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Police Dept. Accepting Applications for Police Exam

The South Plainfield Police Department is accepting applications for the examination for the position of police officer. The application is published by and must be returned to the N.J. Department of Personnel. Specific instructions regarding application fees, eligibility requirements and veterans preference are delineated in the application. The announcement and application is also available on the Internet at www.state.nj.us/personnel. Applications may be obtained any time of the day at the South Plainfield Police Department communications center.

The filing deadline is Feb. 15, 2002

Candidates must be a resident of South Plainfield as of the closing date for filing the application and must maintain residency up to and including the date of appointment. Other requirements are listed on the application. The starting salary is \$37,265.

A summary of benefits are posted at the police station.

A brief summary of duties & responsibilities is also available at the police station.

Any questions, please contact Sgt. Chuck Siedenbarg at (908) 226-7674.

The Borough of South Plainfield is an Equal Opportunity Employer

**Deadline For Classified Ad Submissions Is Monday, 5 P.M.
Call 908-668-0010.**

Color Photos Still Available—Limited Time Only

Color photos taken by *Observer* photographer Patricia Abbott are available for sale, including many photos not published. Photos from the following events will be permanently deleted as of Dec. 31. If interested in a photo call Pattie at 756-8011 or email angelonly@aol.com.

To be deleted—all graduations/promotions 2000 & 2001; Father/Daughter dances/ Riley & Kennedy 2000 & 2001; Mother/Son Dance Kennedy 2001; Project Graduation Auction 2000 & 2001; Story Teller at Riley; Roosevelt School plays; Dragon Heart (1999); Rerun Run Around (2000); Pirates & the Princess (2001); VFW picnic 2000 & 2001; Fire Dept Open House 2000; Riley Chili Fest; Spbs Homecoming 2000; Franklin Block Party 2000 & 2001; Franklin Beach Party 2000 & 2001; ALL grade school DARE promotions; DARE Picnic; 8th Grade Dinner Dance 2001; Library Mr. Kurt, Mr. Tim; SPHS Band Fest 2000; Kennedy Carnival; 2001 Jr. Prom; 2000 Senior Prom; Sacred Heart Fair 2000 & 2001; OLC Feast of St Anthony 2000 & 2001; Bike Rodeo 2001; Grant 6th play *School House Rock* and all school concerts/chorus/band 2001 school year and (some from 2000).

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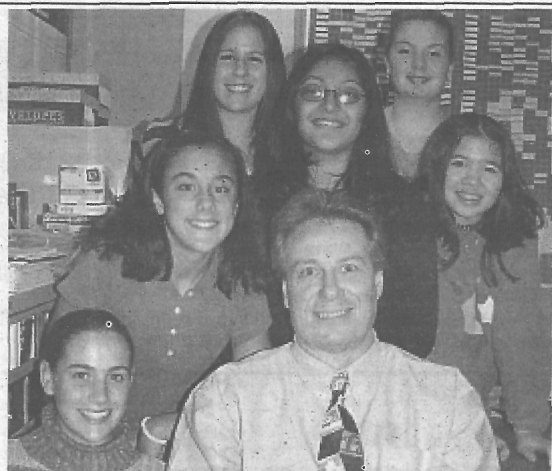
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Gold Card students who worked at this weeks phon-a-thon were Lori Cushner, Jessica Honeywell, Brittany DeNitzio, Rupel Patel, Sara Sukenik, Jamie Morris with Ed Keegan. (Phon-a-thon story next week.)

Crime Prevention Tips for the Holidays

The holiday season is rapidly approaching and it's the time of year many of us head out to overcrowded stores and malls to purchase gifts for our friends and relatives. We are also making plans for holiday trips away from home. All our holiday planning should also include planning to protect ourselves from holiday miscreants.

Statistics prove there is an increase in crime around the holidays. Using some simple crime prevention strategies when shopping for holiday gifts can thwart a crook's holiday plans — at least at your expense.

For instance, park in well lighted areas, preferably within close distance to the store or mall where you intend to shop. Never carry large amounts of cash; use your checkbook, credit or debit cards to make most of your

holiday purchases. Don't carry your ATM or other debit card with your personal identification number. If carrying a purse, carry it on the inside of your arm, on the side that is furthest from the street. Inside coat pockets are an excellent location to carry wallets or checkbooks.

Let someone know where you are going shopping and what time you expect to return. Shopping with a friend is a relaxing, fun method of increasing your personal safety while you shop. Avoid known trouble spots when you shop. Sometimes it's better to put off some shopping trips until the weekend to do some of your shopping in the daylight.

If you think you are being followed in a shopping center, find a store's security guard or manager and advise them of your concerns. Many stores

and malls employ additional security people, including off-duty police officers, during the holiday season to increase the safety of their customers.

If you think you are being followed in your car, drive to the local police station or use a cellular telephone, if available. If you are approached by a robber, remain calm and give up the items the robber wants. Nothing you are carrying is worth risking your life or safety.

If traveling, keep your plans quiet before you go. Only people needing to know should be informed of your holiday travel plans. There will be plenty of time to tell them of the wonderful time you had after you get back.

Ideally, you should consider placing your jewelry and important documents, including a backup of any computer files, in a safety deposit box at a bank. Other valuables and firearms should be out of view, and locked away. A home safe is a good investment for this purpose.

Arrange to have mail and newspaper deliveries either stopped or picked up by a trusted friend. Schedule someone to check on your home periodically and to shovel snow, cut grass or perform other work to avoid having the "on vacation" look.

Your telephone's ringer should be turned down to its lowest setting to avoid being heard ringing from outside. An answering machine with a message that is noncommittal as to whether anyone is home, and when to expect a return call, is best. Electronic timers that turn radios, televisions, and lights on and off add to the appearance of an occupied home. Alarm systems are a good investment for year-round protection.

Before leaving, ask your local police department to place your home on their vacation watch list. If someone will be checking on your home during your absence, pass this information along to the police. Do a last walk around to insure your timers are set and doors and windows are secure.

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Safety Tips for Shopping At Malls

These are a few safety tips from the South Plainfield Police Department on women shopping at Malls.

Try to shop in groups. If that's not possible, join other shoppers when entering or leaving the mall.

Park as close to the entrance as possible. Wait or drive around if you have to, until a good space is available. If that's impossible, park in a well-lit area and always be alert.

Back into your parking space so you can move quickly, if you must. Like practicing fire drills at home, practice getting in and out of your car as quickly as possible. Have your keys in hand when you come out of the mall. Don't walk straight to your car, but make a wide circle around it, surveying the area to be sure no one is hiding next to or behind your car.

If you have packages and children, don't secure your child in the car first. Cars have been stolen with children in them. Wait until all packages are in (if you use the trunk, place a mirror there so you can see behind you). Then put yourself and the child in together.

Board of Ed. Meeting Location Changed

The Committee of the Whole Meeting, originally scheduled for Dec. 11, in the Grant School gymnasium, has been changed to the High School Cafeteria at 8 p.m.



Member FDIC