

South Plainfield Observer

VOL. 6, NO. 29

50 CENTS

MARCH 21, 2003

Emergency Management Prepared

With the United States about to invade Iraq at any moment, Emergency Management Coordinator Mike Zushma said the borough is prepared.

Ever since the terrorist attacks on September 11, South Plainfield, as well as the surrounding communities, have been updating their plans on what to do in an emergency.

Zushma has provided every school with plans which cover the many scenarios that could take place and what plans the schools should incorporate. This past week the schools have reviewed their plans and some held lock down drills.

Emergency Management recently moved into their new building, located on the corner of Hamilton Blvd. and South Plainfield Ave., the former home of the Senior Citizen Center. Renovations were paid for with a grant from the state.

Previously, when an emergency was declared in South Plainfield, the courtroom in Borough Hall had to be converted into an emergency staging area. With the new building, Emergency Management is always set up and ready to meet a crisis. Although we have not had any terrorist threats locally, we have had to declare emergencies several times due to flooding and weather related damage.

Members from all of our emergency agencies have been trained in how to respond to the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

Rescue Squad Captain Ron Sward said, "Because of the support and confidence the squad has received from the mayor and council, we feel we are competent to handle almost any emergency." Last year the squad received a new rig and the fire department received a new fire truck.

Residents can find out the latest information on what to do to prepare for an emergency by logging on to the Borough's website at www.southplainfieldnj.com/oem.



Pictured L-R are Josef Rodriguez, vocalist; Adam Toth, accompanist and Adam Tamzoke, vocalist holding the Mariana Paunova Ensemble Award they received at the NJ All State Opera Festival

SPHS Students Winners at All State Opera Festival

Story/photos by Patricia Abbott

South Plainfield High School junior Josef Raoul Rodriguez was named among the top winners at the 30th Annual NJ All State Opera Festival recently. Rodriguez won the Governor's Award in Arts Education as the top scoring male vocalist. The award will be presented at a spring ceremony in Trenton. Josef and classmate Adam Tamzoke also took home the Mariana Paunova Ensemble Award. It was the first time the festival has offered an award for an ensemble performance. The two awards have made Tracy Glerin Murray, Choral director at South Plainfield High School, a very proud man. It has been six years since SPHS has won the Governor's Award.

Josef's solo was *Una Furtiva Lagrima* from *Elisir D'amore* by Donizetti. The ensemble piece performed by Josef and Adam Tamzoke was *O Mimi, Tu Più Non Torri* from *La Boheme* by Puccini. They were accompanied by Junior Adam Toth.

Also attending from SPHS were Cassandra Krajcik, Jamie Morris, Katie Mott, Wajdi Kanj and Natalie Tamzoke. Twenty-eight students from across the state participated in the festival.

Auditions scheduled to be held in February were canceled due to one of the many snow storms, leaving the festival coordinators with a difficult decision. Instead of canceling the festival, it was decided to allow all the students who were to audition to perform. This gave more students a chance to participate.

2003-2004 School Budget Introduced

School portion of taxes reflects an increase

The 2003-2004 school budget, introduced a few weeks ago, was the topic of discussion at Tuesday's Board of Education meeting. Since its introduction a few weeks ago, several adjustments were made and the changes were presented to board members and the public.

The 2003-2004 school budget totals \$42,771,797, an increase of \$740,376 over last year's amount. An increase of at least 18 percent in health benefits and the cost of last year's arbitration agreement with the teachers, along with the fact that state aid will remain flat this year, means there will be an increase of nine cents in the school tax rate.

Last year's school tax rate was 2.103 per \$100 of assessed value. For the average home in South Plainfield, which is \$117,110, last year's school portion of their taxes was \$2,568. This year's proposed school budget means the average homeowner will pay \$105 more in school taxes.

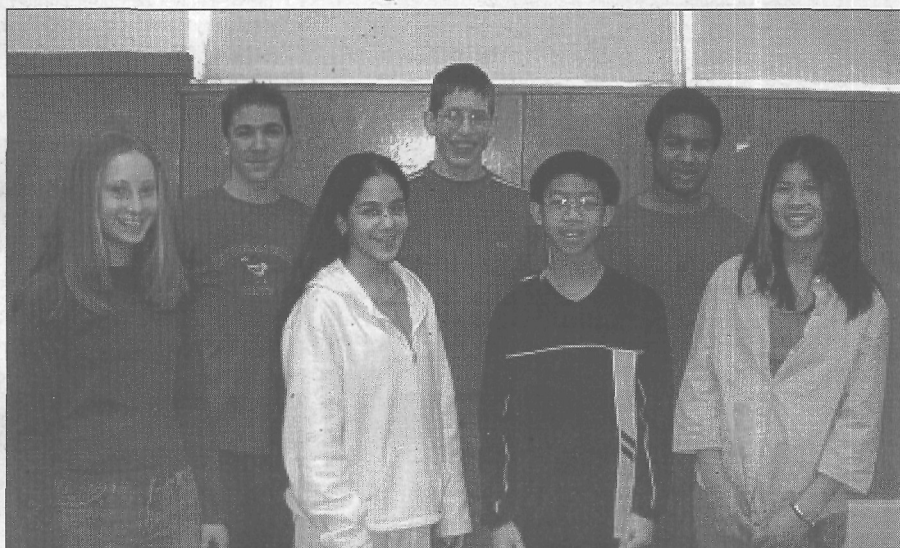
A final vote on the school budget will take place later this month.

Board President Frank Mikorski stated that last year the State Legisla-

ture passed a bill to pay all costs over \$40,000 (per child) for special education children. However, Governor James McGreevey withheld these funds this year due to budget restraints. Mikorski said this is just not fair to the school districts. He is asking residents to write their state representatives and ask them to release these funds. Mikorski feels that all state mandates should be funded by the state. Many state mandates are voted into law without any funding. The school districts in turn must then find a way to pay for them out of their local budgets.

A resolution passed by the board at Tuesday's meeting urges Governor McGreevey and members of the General Assembly and State Senate to support passage of SCR-89/ACR-161, which would direct the leaders of each house of the legislature to convene a special session that would be dedicated solely to addressing property tax reform. A second resolution supports restoring state funding for cultural and heritage programs in the New Jersey State Budget.

Middle School Band Students Perform in Regional Concert



Middle School Band students, left to right in back row: Wael Kanj, Danny Becker, Barney Johnson. Front row: Kate Reichert, Alex Viscosi, Ray Lee, Brittanie Wong.

On March 16 at Bridgewater Middle School, seven Middle School band students performed in the Region II Junior High Band and Orchestra Concert. The students who participated in the band were Kate Reichert on bassoon, Raymond Lee on clarinet, Alexandra Viscosi on clarinet, Brittanie Wong on bass clarinet and Daniel Becker on trombone. The students

who participated in the orchestra were Wael Kanj on horn and Barney Johnson on tuba.

It is a tough road to qualify for either of these ensembles. Preparations started back in September when the requirements were publicized. The students had to learn a difficult solo, many scales and some sight-reading. The students competed against approximately 700

of the best band and orchestra students from Middlesex, Union, Monmouth, Somerset and Hunterdon Counties.

The auditions were held at the South Plainfield Middle School on Feb. 1 and four rehearsals, each lasting four hours.

Congratulations to the students who participated in this event.



Riley students sang their hearts out at last Friday's Grandparents Day Breakfast. See page 6 for story and pictures.

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, 7 p.m. (New Time) • Questions? 908-226-7605

AGENDA MEETING **PUBLIC MEETING**
..... Thursday, March 20

Monday, April 7 Thursday, April 17

Monday April 21 Thursday, April 24

All meetings of the Governing Body are held in accordance with New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act (NJS 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, 7 p.m. • Questions? 908-226-7641

March 25, April 8, April 22, May 13, May 27, June 10, June 24

zoning board of adjustment

Meets second and fourth Thursday of the month

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

March 27, April 10, April 24, May 8, May 22, June 12, June 26, July 10, July 24, Aug. 14, Aug. 28, Sept. 11, Sept. 25, Oct. 9, Oct. 23, Nov. 13 and Dec. 11.

board of education meetings

Grant School Gymnasium on Cromwell Place unless otherwise noted

Committee of the Whole meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m. April 1

Regular Board Meeting held Tuesdays at 8 p.m. April 8.

taxpayers advisory group

The Taxpayers Advisory Group (TAG) meets the fourth Tuesday of every month at

Borough Hall, 2480 Plainfield Ave. at 7 p.m. Questions? 908-668-0538

siteplace sub-committee

Meets once a month on the third Tuesday of the month, 8 p.m.

April 15, May 20, June 17, July 15, Aug. 19, Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 16

recreation commission

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

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

April 1, May 6, June 3, September 2, October 7, November 11 (November 4 is Election Day) and December 2.

environmental commission

Meets once a month (second Wednesday except August)

Borough Hall Conference Room, 8 p.m. • Questions? 908-226-7621

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

IN YOUR OPINION

To the Editor,

Many opportunities were not readily available to women growing up in rural Scotland, Illinois during the 1930's and 1940's. Wilma L. Vaught, however, defied that perception. Her never say "can't" attitude helped her persevere and earned her the distinction of being one of only three women in U.S. history to earn the status of Brigadier General in the U.S. Air Force. Vaught's military accomplishments highlight one of the many significant achievements made by women in the last century, and the month of March gives us a chance to honor them.

In an effort to recognize the achievements of women like Wilma L. Vaught, the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County Commission in California created Women's History Week in 1978. March 8, now known as International Women's Day, was the focal point of the week and was created to ensure that the weeklong celebration would commemorate the important role that women played in the paid workforce, as well as foster a connection between and among all women. Expanded in 1987 as National Women's History Month, the month of March is a time to educate the public about the numerous contributions women have made to American culture.

National Women's History Month, therefore, serves two purposes. First, it honors women who have made valuable contributions to American society. Secondly, it is an attempt to educate the public about the tremendous impact that women have had to our culture. Consequently, standing at the gateway to the Arlington National Cemetery is the Women in Military Service for America Memorial, which was designed to honor the 1.8 million women who served in the U.S. military.

The establishment of the Women's Memorial and the inspirational story of Wilma Vaught, one of the most highly decorated military women in United States history, serve to remind us of the indelible mark that women have made on American culture.

SINCERELY,
ASSEMBLYMAN PETER J. BARNES, JR.

Dear Editor,

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the mayor, council and the South Plainfield Police Department for maintaining order on the streets near the West Nine Golf Course during the snowy days this past winter. Contrary to those who have written to the paper and felt that "we should grin and bear it," they fail to see the danger on these icy streets. When cars are parked on both sides, young children try to maneuver their sleds on those icy streets and vehicles try to get around them. Unlike other areas in the town that are inconvenienced when there is a parade, an activity in the park, or a festival, a snowfall is usually unpre-

Thank You

The family of Paul Israel would like to thank the many friends and families and all those in South Plainfield who expressed their condolences.

Throughout this sorrowful time, your compassion and consideration has been tremendous. Our family is grateful for your thoughtfulness and kind expression of sympathy.

THE ISRAEL FAMILY

dicted. Others who are inconvenienced know the exact day(s) and time(s).

Residents living around the golf course never know when or for how long the traffic jams will occur. I am glad we have a mayor, council and police department who worry about the safety of its residents and especially the children, first and foremost.

CHERYL NAGEL-SMILEY

To the Editor,

I am writing about the very nice article Patricia Abbott wrote about the March 8 Blood Drive. Just one correction — the blood drive was sponsored by the South Plainfield Girl Scouts Community and the New Jersey Blood Services. Troop 318 was the troop who organized and worked the blood drive this year, but we were not the sponsor. The South Plainfield Girl Scout Community sponsors this annual event.

EILEEN LORANCE
LEADER, TROOP 318

To the Editor,

I believe the purpose of a local board of education is to oversee educational standards and to establish the procedures needed to provide the community with the best possible school system. The board must make sure that every student has the opportunity to succeed. I believe that they serve as the eyes and ears of the public-at-large and that they are responsible to know what parents, teachers and students want and need. It is not the job of any board member to micro-manage the day-to-day operations of the school system. People are being paid good money to do that job and they should be allowed to do it without personal interference.

Board of education meetings should be held at places where everyone is excited and encouraged to discuss items of interest and concern. There should be an acceptance and an acknowledgment of respect between board members, school supervisors, teachers, parents and students. Making members of the public wait for hours at a time while the board meets privately is not acceptable. Of course, there are items that must be discussed privately, but I believe that these sessions should have a time limit on them. If all the items cannot be covered then they should be discussed after the public portion of the meeting.

I believe our grading system should be revisited at a future Board of Education meeting. Our marks are based on a numerical standard that is more restrictive than other school systems. This means that a South Plainfield student may be denied access to a certain college even though that student may have performed better in the classroom. Some have charged that we would be lowering our standards. Tell that to the student who gets rejected when his actual marks were better. Let's give our students an even chance to compete.

If you agree or disagree with my ideas, please take the time to discuss them with me. And if you are so inclined, please vote for Sue Peck, Pat Kelly and me on Tuesday, April 15. Thank you for reading this letter.

RESPECTFULLY,
MIKE ENGLISH

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank the following individuals and/or businesses in town for their donations to the South Plainfield Basket for the recent High School Project Graduation Auction/Raffle. The event, held annually, directly benefits Project Graduation which provides an all night substance free party for the graduating class of South Plainfield High School on the night of their graduation. All seniors are invited free of charge to this celebration. It is held at The Club at Ricochet, where food and entertainment is provided.

First and foremost, many thanks to Nancy Grennier and the *Observer* for their donations of a full year subscription to their newspaper, the recently published book *Images of America, South Plainfield* and a ceramic coffee mug. Next to the South Plainfield Public Library for their donation of a canvas book tote, and to author Richard Veit for signing the South Plainfield book. A green license plate holder which states 'Pride in our Youth-South Plainfield' (available through John E. Riley School PTSO) and a Build A Bear Tiger rounded out the basket.

These people and businesses show exactly what it is that makes South Plainfield a great place to live—will- ingness to support community events and to show this by example, demonstrating their community involvement and spirit. Thank you for your generosity for a very worthy cause.

SINCERELY,
LINDA KELLY

Submit Letters to the Editor:

Letters may be submitted to our office: South Plainfield Observer, 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080, by email at our website at spobserver.com or faxed to 908-668-8819. Deadline is Monday, 5 p.m. Letters must be accompanied by a name and telephone number for verification. Please limit letters to no more than 500 words. We reserve the right to edit for clarity or length. We reserve the right to limit the number of letters submitted by one individual on the same subject. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher.

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SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES

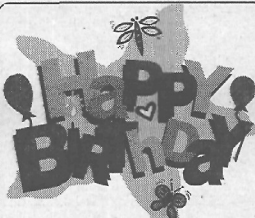
We look forward to hearing from all of you and encourage you to send in your stories and photos. The *South Plainfield Observer* is your paper. Please let us know what you would like to see in it.

To get an article published in the 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 at spobserver.com or ggnan@aol.com or ngrennie@ix.netcom.com. Include your name, address, telephone number.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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March 23

Happy Birthday
Alan Abbott!

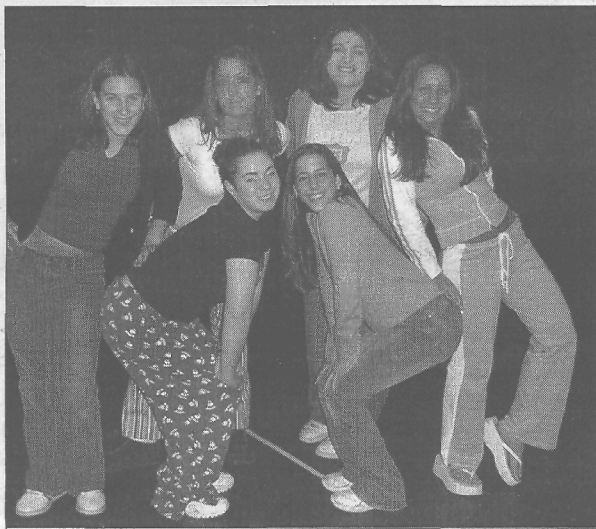
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High School Students Set Sail For *Anything Goes*



The steamer trunks are packed and the passengers are stepping on board for the South Plainfield High School spring musical "Anything Goes."

Rehearsals have begun for this popular Cole Porter musical, featuring songs such as "You're the Top," "I

Get A Kick Out Of You" and "Blow, Gabriel, Blow."

The cast includes Natasha Kurilew as Reno Sweeney, Cassandra Krajcik as Hope Harcourt, Kim Arend as Evangeline Harcourt, Dave Garatino as Lord Evelyn Oakleigh, Josef

Rodriguez as Elisha Whitney, Chris Baron as Billy Crocker, Chris Imbrosio as Moonface Martin and Jamie Morris as Erma.

Reno's Angels are Jacqueline Muglia, Katie Mott, Marissa Judd, Eva Humber, Nicole Aguilar, and Natalia Tamzoke.

Rounding out the cast is Chris Abbott and Patrick Pryor as Luke and John, Greg Publik as the Captain, Alex Tierney as the Purser, and Danny Sierzega, Wajdi Kanj, John Roesh, and Jeff Seesselberg as the Crew Quartet.

The other passengers and crew are Vincent Carubia, Paul Nicolosi, Eric Reiner, Eric Rhode, Tristan More, Steven Tietjen, Shannen Rivers, Chrisann Zushma, Jessica Musolino, Anna Ferrer, Christina Martin, Nicole Cortese, Katie Fasolo, Leslie Sideck and Takara Kaczowski.

"Anything Goes" is directed by Lory Alcaro and Bill Seesselberg, with choreography by Patti O'Brien and vocal direction by Joan Stasio. Mark Tweed is the orchestra director.

Show dates are May 8 and May 10, and each night the show starts at 7 p.m. Look for more information in the coming weeks.



All-District Music and Art Festival At SPHS

The South Plainfield Public Schools' Fine Arts Department will hold their 34th Annual All-District Music and Art Festival on Friday, March 28 at South Plainfield High School, starting at 7 p.m. The festival will feature music performed by instrumental and vocal ensembles as well as displays of artwork by the many talented art students from each of the town's schools.

The music program will feature performances by the Elementary String Ensemble under the direction of Carleen C. Tedeschi and Bruce Miko-

lon; the Elementary District Chorus directed by Barbara Habeeb, Glenn Parisi, and John Zazzali, accompanied by Joanne Gursky and Sharon Perez; and the Elementary District Band under the direction of Tobie Baldwin, Kristin LeVine and Joan Stasio. These young musicians will be followed by the Middle School Orchestra directed by Mrs. Tedeschi. The Gems, an all-girl chorus from the Middle School, and the Middle School Festival Chorus under the direction of Rebecca Lerner and accompanied by Chen-Wen Deng will then perform, fol-

lowed by the Middle School Concert Band and Middle School Jazz Band led by Andrew Veiss. The concert will continue with performances by the High School Orchestra, directed by Bruce Mikolon; the High School Chorus, directed by Tracey Murray and the High School Stage Band and Concert Band, both under the direction of Mark Tweed. The concert will conclude with a grand finale performed by all of the vocal groups accompanied by the High School Band.

The art display will be a delightful combination of styles and techniques. All grade levels will be represented so you may see the artistic development and interests of students both young and old. The works on display are done in oils, acrylics, pen and ink, watercolor, temperas, markers and crayons.

Denise Timinski, High School art teacher; Diane Kardos, Middle School art teacher, and the elementary art teachers, Kara Giorgio, Barbara Harris, Mary Ellen Kopf, and Glenda Posey, thank all of their students who have made the display possible.

American Revolution Program at Library Sunday

The South Plainfield Historical Society is hosting the program, "New Jersey in the American Revolution," on Sunday, March 23 at the South Plainfield Library. The 2 p.m. program is presented by award-winning author, Arthur S. Lefkowitz, of Piscataway.

The 50-minute slide presentation is based on Lefkowitz' book, "The Long Retreat," which focuses on the British invasion of New Jersey in late 1776. The culmination of that invasion was Washington's Christmas night raid on Trenton.

Lefkowitz will discuss that the closest the British forces ever came to winning a military victory during the Revolution was at nearby New Brunswick on December 1, 1775.

The speaker is also the author of "Washington's Indispensable Men," due in March from Stackpole Books. He is currently writing a book about the 1775 Benedict Arnold expedition, which was an attempt to capture Quebec City from the British. *The Long Retreat*, available from Rutgers University Press, was cited as the "Best Book on the American Revolution Published in 1998" by the American Revolution Round Table.

The free program is made possible in-part by the New Jersey Council on the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Log on to: <http://communitynj.com/cc/sphistoricalociety> for information on this and future programming.

Senior Residents Celebrate Saint Patrick's Day

Seniors living at the Senior Residence facilities located on Morris Ave. got together Monday evening to enjoy a dinner of the traditional Irish dinner of corned beef and cabbage.

More than 55 seniors filled the room, wearing green fashions of every kind. Tables were decorated with four leaf clovers, shamrocks and green centerpieces. Smiles were visible on each and every senior as they enjoyed their dinner.

The affair was organized by Dominic DiNardo, a long time South Plainfield resident. Many hours went into the planning of this dinner.

Leprechaun cooks were Dorothy Owens, Rose Contey and Catherine Horan. Meal servers were Linda Kahoe, Rose Contey and Fran Strobeck. The guests were served by Doris Baio and Flo Jacobelli.

The dinner was fabulous and a



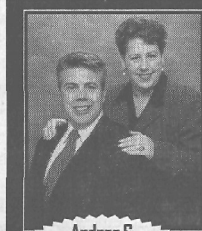
good time was had by all. This is just the first of many great dinners planned for the coming year.

TERRA NOVA

Club News

The Terra Nova Garden Club will hold its monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 26, at 7 p.m. at North Edison Library on Grove Ave. in Edison. The program for the evening is "Water Gardening for Everyone." John Meeks of Waterford Gardens will present several plans for incorporating water features into your garden, from a pond to small patio container. The presentation is free and open to the public.

The Garden Therapy committee will meet at 1 p.m. on March 26 at the Muhlenberg Adultcare Facility in Plainfield.



Andrea & Jesse Lacerda
"The Lacerda Team"

**Sunday, April 6, 2003
at 6:00 PM
Rain or Shine
Spring Lake Park
South Plainfield**

A Twilight Stroll for Life

Open Your Heart to Children Battling Cancer Foundation Inc. is a non-profit volunteer organization founded by a group of Century 21 Moretti Realty associates in 1999. The foundation supports the Institute for Children with Cancer and Blood Disorders located in New Brunswick, NJ at the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital.

**FOR INFORMATION CALL
Andrea or Jesse Lacerda
908-755-5300 Ext. 302**

**Sponsored by
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Email: LacerdaA@Morettiirealty.com

Since the foundation's inception we have raised in excess of \$75,000 for children with cancer. Please join us to support this worthwhile cause.

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Events

Franklin School to Hold Auction/Raffle

March 22

The Franklin School PTA is sponsoring the Seventh Annual Auction/Raffle Night on Thursday, March 22, 6:30 p.m. at South Plainfield High School gym. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Advanced tickets are \$7 or \$10 at the door. For tickets, call Dorothea at 753-7117 or Terry at 753-2864.

Fashion Bug Plus Size Fashion Show

March 22

25,000 women across the country will take to the runway on March 22 at 2 p.m. for the 2003 Spring Plus Size Fashion Show, a chain-wide fashion show hosted by Fashion Bug, a women's retailer. Women of plus size are encouraged to become a model for a day by signing up at any Fashion Bug store in the country. All models are women who live in the communities surrounding Fashion Bug stores.

The community fashion show features looks for all walks of life and will highlight the best plus size looks from the Spring 2003 Fashion Bug collection.

For the store closest to you, call 1-888-289-8284, or contact your local Fashion Bug at (908) 757-0770.

Columbiettes Hosting Fashion Show

March 23

On Sunday, March 23, the Columbiettes are sponsoring a fashion show and luncheon at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Hamilton Blvd. The catered affair will include a relish tray, salad and chicken, beef, pasta, potato and vegetable dishes. Coffee, tea and soda will be provided. Dessert will follow. Fashions will be by Dress Barn and Dress Barn Women, both in South Plainfield. Doors open at 12:30 p.m. and the luncheon begins at 1 p.m.

Cost is \$20 per person. For reservations, call Geri Diagnan at 908-753-2032. Deadline is Thursday, March 20.

Columbiettes Easter Bunny Luncheon

March 30

The Columbiettes Annual Easter Bunny Luncheon will be held on Sunday, March 30 at Sacred Heart School, off South Plainfield Ave. The location was changed this year due to the increase in the number attending.

Doors open at 12:30 p.m. Buffet lunch follows. Cost is \$10 for all ages. Children seven years and under will receive Easter baskets from the Easter Bunny. There will be prizes and drawings for all ages.

Bunchi's

All About Arts & Crafts

... on Front Street will host birthday parties for Shannon Hubbard, who will be nine years old and Chand Patel, who will be five years old, on March 22 and 23, respectively!

Congratulations!



What's happening in MARCH

Daily Events
9-11 AM Coffee & Cake
9 AM-4 PM Cards & Pool
(908) 754-1047

The Senior Citizen's Center is open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
NOW OPEN SATURDAYS 8:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

Senior Center EVENTS

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
EVENTS Tax Prep Assistance, Tuesdays & Thursdays 9 a.m. to noon.			Shopping at Pathmark 9am Practical Crafting 10-11am AARP Tax Preparation 9am-Noon	Bingo 10am-2pm Pizza Lunch
Adult Crafts 9:30-11:30 Yoga 10:30-11:30am Caring & Sharing	Bingo 10-2 PM Lunch Available AARP Tax Preparation 9am-Noon	Exercise & Walking Club 8:45-9:45am Movie 11:30am AARP Crafts 1 PM	Shopping at Pathmark 9am Practical Crafts 10-11am AARP Tax Preparation 9am-Noon	Bingo 10am-2pm Pizza Lunch
24	25	26	27	28

TO SIGN UP FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SENIOR CITIZEN'S CENTER, VISIT THE PAL BUILDING ON MAPLE AVE.

Space is limited. Reserve in advance. Call Geri at (908) 753-2032. Please give the ages of all children attending. Deadline is Thursday, March 27.

Rescue Squad Presents Basket Bingo

April 6

The South Plainfield Rescue Squad Ladies Auxiliary will hold their Annual Basket Bingo on Sunday, April 6. Doors open at noon and calling begins at 1 p.m. sharp!

The event takes place at the South Plainfield Rescue Squad building located on Plainfield Ave.

Ticket price is \$20 and includes: 17 games, three specials and door prizes. There will be a 50/50 raffle. Extra boards also available. Proceeds from the event will benefit the South Plainfield Rescue Squad. Sixteens years and up only.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call Denise at (732) 261-8942 or Tracy at (732) 841-4844.

Lions to Host Annual Gourmet Breakfast

April 13

The South Plainfield Lions Club will hold the Annual Gourmet Breakfast at SPHS cafeteria on Sunday, Apr. 13 from 8 a.m. to noon.

This breakfast is known for its many gourmet items, which include french toast, pancakes and made-to-order omelettes, all dished up by members of the South Plainfield Lions Club.

The South Plainfield Lions Club is known for helping the visually and hearing impaired.

* The cost of the breakfast is only \$5 and it's a great way to start the day on Palm Sunday. Tickets may be purchased at the door. For information call (908) 755-2289. See you there!

Rainbow Academy Open House

April 19

Rainbow Academy Child Care Center, located at 2177 Oak Tree Rd., will hold an Open House on Saturday, April 19, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Rainbow Academy offers a variety of programs to fit your child's needs, from ages six weeks to 10 years. There is lim-

ited space available for the infant, nursery, pre-kindergarten, half-day preschool and summer camp programs. Everyone who registers will receive one free month of ParentWatch, an internet viewing service. For a demo of their video services, visit their website at www.parentwatch.com.

You are also invited to visit the center for a tour during normal operating hours (7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday). For directions and additional information, visit their website at www.rainbowacademy.com.

Recreation Plans Trip to Aida

April 27

South Plainfield Recreation is sponsoring a trip to Broadway on Sunday, April 27 to see *Aida*.

The bus leaves the PAL at 11 a.m. The musical starts at 3 p.m. You will have time to shop in NYC. Tickets are \$75 per person.

Purchase your tickets (only 45 available) at the PAL on Maple Ave.

Senior Center to Visit Lancaster, Pa.

May 29 & 30

The South Plainfield Senior Center will offer an overnight trip to Lancaster, Pa. on May 29 and 30. The bus trip includes transportation, one night's hotel accommodations at the Hawthorn Inn, tickets to a performance of "Daniel" at the Sight and Sound Theatre, shopping at Kitchen Kettle Village and Rockvale Square outlets, dinner on Thursday, breakfast on Friday, hotel tax and service. The cost is \$159 per person based on double occupancy. For reservations, stop by the Senior Center at 90 Maple Ave. A deposit of \$59 per person is required.

— Out of Town —

Art/Music Programs for Children With Autism

Through April 12

Classes for the Parent/Child Workshops in Music/Movement and Art for Children with Autism or Autistic Behaviors have resumed. Workshops will be held Saturdays through Apr. 12, in New Brunswick, Morristown and

Waldwick. The program is sponsored by VSA Arts of NJ, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing accessible arts opportunities to children and adults with disabilities.

Saturday sessions provide young people with experiences in music and art, while developing communication, social and cognitive skills. Young people ages three to 17 are invited.

Contact Karen Singer at VSA Arts of NJ at (732) 745-3885, 745-3913 (TTY) or info@vsanjan.org.

Mendham Rotary Antique Show

March 22-23

Mendham Rotary Club's 22nd Annual Spring Antique Show will be held March 22-23. More than 45 antique dealers from New Jersey and New York gather to offer collectors a selection of furniture, prints, glass, quilts, porcelain, tools, linens, brass and books. Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. The \$6 donation supports humanitarian and scholarship projects. The event takes place at the West Morris Mendham High School, Rt 510/124, Mendham. For more information call (973) 543-2552.

CHATS Meeting

March 24

ADOPTION SUPPORT, CHATS (Connected Hearts Adoption Triad Support), will meet 7:15 to 9:15 p.m. on Monday, March 24, at Watchung Avenue Presbyterian Church, 170 Watchung Ave. in North Plainfield. Open sharing of adoption-related stories and light refreshments. Check our Web site at <http://communitynj.com/cc/chats> or call Alyce at (732) 227-0607 for information.

Discussion On Family Issues Dealing With Depression & Bipolar Illness

March 25

The Depression And Bipolar Support Alliance monthly lecture meeting on Wednesday, March 26 will feature Jeff Brandler, licensed counselor, who will lead a group discussion on family issues dealing with depression and bipolar illness.

The educational meetings take place

at 7:30 p.m. at the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship, 21 Normandy Heights Rd. (about one block east of the Morris Museum) in Morristown. Meetings are open to the public; a nominal donation is requested from non-members.

Peer group support sessions led by experienced facilitators are held on the first and third Tuesday evenings of each month in Morristown (at the Fellowship) and on the second and fourth Tuesday evenings of each month at the Madison Medical Center.

Visit our website at <http://communitynj.com/cc/1stnjdmtdsg> to learn more about the chapter and to view links to other sources of helpful information. For local info, call (973) 994-1143 or the NJ Self-Help Clearing House at (800) 367-6274. In case of severe weather conditions, call 973-994-1143 after 6 p.m. on March 26 for status of the meeting.

"Birthday Bash" Tricky Tray Auction

March 28

"Birthday Bash", to honor Union Catholic's 40th Anniversary year, is the theme of the annual "tricky tray" auction sponsored by the Parents Guild of Union Catholic High School.

The auction is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. March 28 in the Union Catholic cafeteria, located at 1600 Martine Ave. in Scotch Plains.

Baskets that will be available at the various theme tables include seasonal, food, recreational, craft, sports, local restaurant gift certificates, etc.

An \$8 admission fee includes one sheet of bid tickets, light refreshments, coffee and tea. You are also welcome to bring your own snacks to enjoy during the auction. There is ample parking and the cafeteria is handicapped accessible. No children under 18 years old will be admitted. For more information call (908) 889-1600.

Paterson High School Class Reunion

March 28

The 1963 January and June Classes of Paterson Central High School have combined to celebrate our 40th anniversary of graduation.

This gala reunion event will be held in the Wayne Manor, 1515 Route 23 in Wayne, on March 28 at 7 p.m. \$50 per person for a million dollars worth of fun, such a bargain!

Contact Vivian (Gray) Allen, 87 Boyle Ave, Totowa, NJ 07512 or Dave Mayo, P.O. Box 381 Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927 or MayoSearch@aol.com.

If you do not wish to attend the reunion, please contact us anyway so we can stop searching for you.

Monmouth Symphony All-Russian Concert

March 30

The Monmouth Symphony Orchestra will present a concert on March 30 at 3 p.m. in the Count Basie Theatre, Red Bank. Pianist Marina Yung will be featured in Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto. In addition, Roy D. Gussman will conduct the Festive Overture by Shostakovich and the Suite No. 3 in G Major by Tchaikovsky. Reserved seat tickets are \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors (age 60 and over), and \$5 for college students. School-age children accompanied by an adult may obtain free tickets. Please call the theatre box office at (732) 842-9000.

Send Your Events...

South Plainfield Observer,
1110 Hamilton Blvd., South Plainfield, NJ 07080;
fax (908) 668-8819; email ggnan@aol.com.

One Woman Show at Swain's Gallery



Pat Garhart Butynski at Swains Gallery

Photo by Christopher Abbott

By Patricia Abbott

South Plainfield resident artist Pat Garhart Butynski is currently enjoying a one woman show of her work at Swain's Gallery in Plainfield. A collection of her first year's paintings, the exhibition is appropriately called "The Painted Year." The show opened on March 1 and runs through the 31st.

Butynski's incredible talent garnered her the show at Swain's, but fate also played a hand. After 15 years of self-employment, Pat took a much needed break to spend more time at home with her family. Her life-long passion for drawing and painting bubbled back to the surface. She explained, "After a while the creative juices started exploding and I thought I'd dabble in some recreational painting." She began to visit area galleries. While visiting Swain's Gallery she was captivated by one particular painter's watercolors, Patricia Brentano Bramnick. She returned to see the paintings several times.

Inspired by the beauty and energy of the work, Pat signed up for a watercolor class at the duCret School of Art in Plainfield. Prior to starting she was informed the class would be taught by a new instructor at duCret. Pat made a surprising discovery, the new instructor was Patricia Brentano Bramnick. Pat thrived under the tutelage of Bramnick. While at duCret, the school's director suggested she send samples to a gallery in High Bridge. Within a week Pat had an invitation to exhibit in a March 2 show. Her first painting sold within ten minutes of her arrival.

She has participated in seven shows over the past year. Her works at

Swain's show the evolution of her first year as a professional painter. Pat said, "I have ironically and perfectly completed the circle, I have come back to Swain's again, not as a patron but as a painter."

Pat was born and raised in South Plainfield. She attended Franklin Elementary School, Cedarcroft School and graduated from SPHS in 1973.

Pat describes art as a way of life. As a child she drew on anything and everything, including garage walls and mahogany tables. Talent in the arts runs in the family. Her mother, an oil painter, was a concert pianist in her youth. Her father was a self taught jazz drummer and a school teacher, and her two older brothers are musically talented. Despite her love of art she did little in high school. According to Pat her mother's attempt to provide formal art training failed. She said, "I was

brought into an adult art class where the subject was dead sunflowers. I hated it and refused to go back."

After she graduated from high school she left for the art community of California to become a painter. Here Pat discovered the age-old adage about starving artists to be a reality and she headed back to the East Coast. She attended Middlesex County College, School of Visual Arts, New York City and Parsons School of Design, also in New York. She worked as a graphic designer for companies such as Sperry Univac, AT&T and Exxon. Prior to becoming self-employed, Pat was the creative director of advertising at Webcraft Technologies in North Brunswick.

Armed with 12 years of experience in the field, Pat opened a studio in Metuchen, Pat Garhart Design Works, and later moved the business to Maple Ave. Her clients included The Seeing Eye, The Direct Marketing Association (DMA) and Lucent. She received numerous awards from many New Jersey advertising organizations, but her heart lies in her painting.

Pat said, "Awards are great if you need your work validated... but validation for me is realized more honestly in whether or not the piece of advertising fulfilled the intention. If it did, the success of it cannot be denied. And I guess the same is true of painting. If the viewer is not moved in some way, the painting, no matter how technically correct it is, will always lack a soul. My intention is not to recreate what 'everyone' sees. Rather, my intention is to expose what's so utterly extraordinary in the most ordinary things... and hope they see it too."

New Jersey Youth Summit 2003

There is still time to register and be part of the NJ Youth Summit on March 29. The early bird registration cost of \$35 for individuals and \$30 per person for groups of five or more participants from the same group has been extended.

Teens and adults from around the state are invited to participate in this unique opportunity to discuss solutions to issues facing today's youth. The NJ Youth Summit 2003 will be held at Georgian Court College in Lakewood, NJ. The Summit begins with registration at 9 a.m. and continues through dinner at 5:15 p.m.

Attendees will participate in educational and action workshops as they meet people from different youth serv-

ing organizations, schools and agencies. Participants will also have the opportunity to share programs they are doing. And all participants will leave the Summit inspired to make New Jersey a better place for youth.

The cost of the summit includes a continental breakfast, lunch and dinner. Registration brochures are available through the Office of Continuing Professional Education, Cook College. They can be reached at (732) 932-9271, or can be downloaded at www.nj4h.rutgers.edu/leadership/youthsummit.html. From that website you can also link to on-line registration.

The NJ Youth Summit 2003 was initiated by participants of the State and National Conversations on Youth Development that were held in 2002 to celebrate the centennial of the 4-H program. As a result of the Conversations, New Jersey participants identified a need to share the youth programming that is happening around the state. They also recognized the need for youth serving organizations and agencies to communicate and cooperate on a regular basis to better serve New Jersey's youth. The Youth Summit is the first step in addressing these needs.

The 4-H Youth Development Program is part of Rutgers Cooperative Extension. 4-H offers educational programs to all youth, grades K-13, on an age-appropriate basis, without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. To find out more about the 4-H Youth Development Program go to www.nj4h.rutgers.edu.

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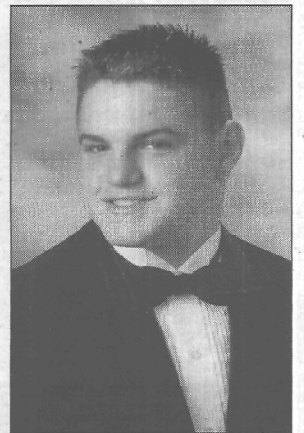
southplainfieldpeople Milestones

Steven Porcelli Honored by Rotary Club

The Rotary Club of Metuchen, recently held their 12th Annual Linemen Awards Dinner and honored Steven Porcelli as one of their "Outstanding Linemen."

Porcelli, a 5'8" 185-pound lineman/fullback, is a senior at South Plainfield High School. He was captain of the varsity football team, as well as the freshman team. He played football all four years at SPHS and before that he played Pop Warner Football. He called the defensive plays and scored two touchdowns when playing offense.

Steven has not decided which college he will attend, but will major in criminal justice. Some colleges Steven is considering are Lebanon Valley, Kean, Farleigh Dickinson, Wagner and St. John's.



Steven Porcelli

Chosney and Dean Do It Again!



Jill Dean (left) and
Ashleyanne Chosney

For the third consecutive season, Ashleyanne Chosney and Jill Dean of the Bridgette's National Gymnastics Team from Feigley's School of Gymnastics in South Plainfield, will compete in the United States Junior Olympic Regional Championships. Last week at the New Jersey Level-9 State Championships, Dean posted an all around score of 36.675, while Chosney posted an all around score of

36.20.

As the two top level gymnasts on the Bridgette's National Gymnastics Team, Chosney and Dean have been teammates for more than five years. Club Gymnastics (levels 1-10) is the most demanding level of gymnastics requiring the highest level of skill. While many gymnasts strive to qualify for the state championships and only a percentage survive, Chosney and Dean have qualified and excelled at States and Regionals at every level of competition.

Jill Dean of North Edison, a freshman at Bishop Ahr High School, just completed an outstanding season of High School Gymnastics as a member of the Bishop Ahr powerhouse team. Ashleyanne Chosney an eighth grader in the South Plainfield Middle School will join Dean at Bishop Ahr in the fall and once again become teammates, this time as members of what everyone is already describing as: "An awesome High School Gymnastics Team!"

Summer Drama Offering Scholarship

South Plainfield Summer Drama Workshop (SDW) is offering a scholarship to college bound seniors who plan to major or minor in the field of performing arts and/or technical theater arts. Applicants must be South Plainfield residents and have participated in at least two Summer Drama Workshop productions in the capacity of performer/band/crew.

It must be noted on the application the student has participated in SDW productions. Students must write an

essay of approximately 500 words describing what he/she has learned through their experience in SDW and explain how they will use that knowledge in college and beyond. Please do not specify roles and shows. Essays must be legible.

Applications are due in the guidance office by April 4.

Summer Drama is utilizing the high school's standard scholarship form which is available in the guidance office.

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Sunday 8:00, 9:30, 11:30 a.m.

Weekdays 9:00 a.m. (church)

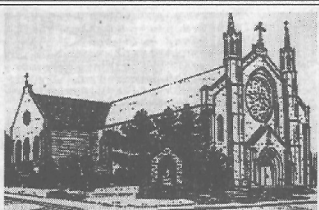
Monday Eve. Mass with Miraculous Medal Novena Prayers 7 p.m.

Holy Days 7 p.m. (Vigil); 7 and 9 a.m., 12:10 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

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Grandparents Treated to Breakfast and Show at Riley

Last Friday hundreds of grandparents filled the gym at Riley School to attend the Annual Grandparents Day Program. They enjoyed a breakfast served by class mothers and fifth grade students and were treated to a show put on by students from kindergarten, first and second grade.

Both the grandparents and the students were decked out in green in honor of St. Patrick's Day. Each class donated several baskets filled with food, candy and toys, which were raffled off before the concert. The 50-50 prize winner took home over \$300.

A special guest this year was Anthony Sincavage, who was Riley's principal from 1973 to 1994. He arrived with

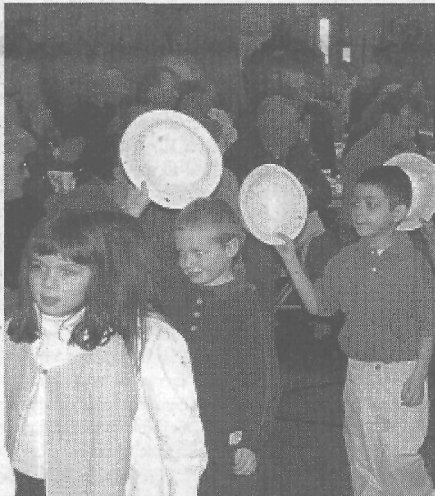
"They kiss and hug me a lot and that makes me feel loved. They cheer me on at my games. They come to my house and call me on the phone, listen to me, take care of me and love me."

— Joshua Rockette, second grader Riley School —

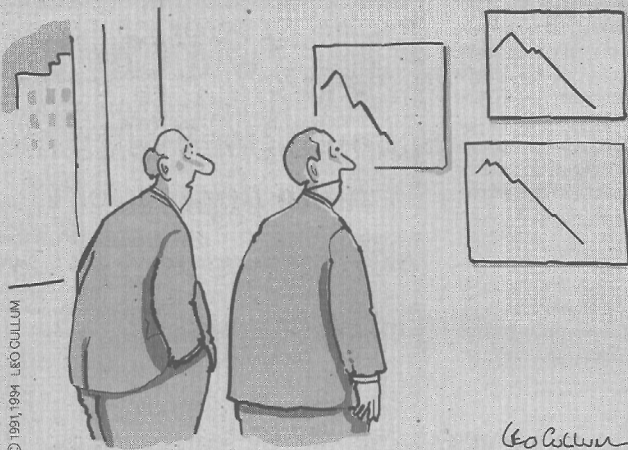
camera in hand to watch his grandchild perform. Also on hand were Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert Rosado, Assistant Superintendent Mario Barbieri, School Business Administrator Ed Izbicki, school board members Frank Mikorski and Tom Delaney and school board candidate Jeff Seider.

Barbara Harris's art class spent many hours creating a place mat for each and every guest. Each student was asked to write a few sentences about why their grandparents were so special, which Al Rue expertly made into a booklet and placed on each table.

After the program grandparents were encouraged to tour the students' classrooms.



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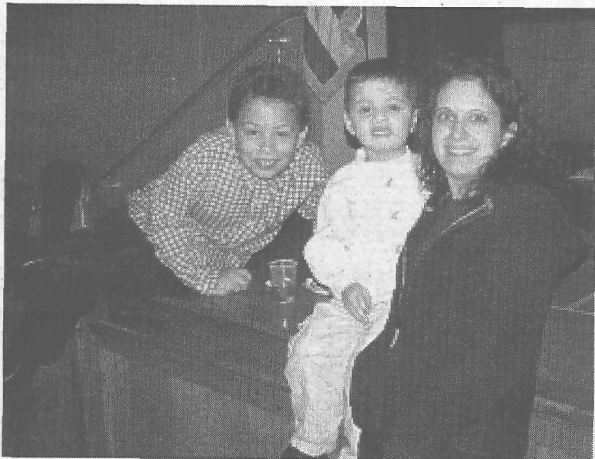
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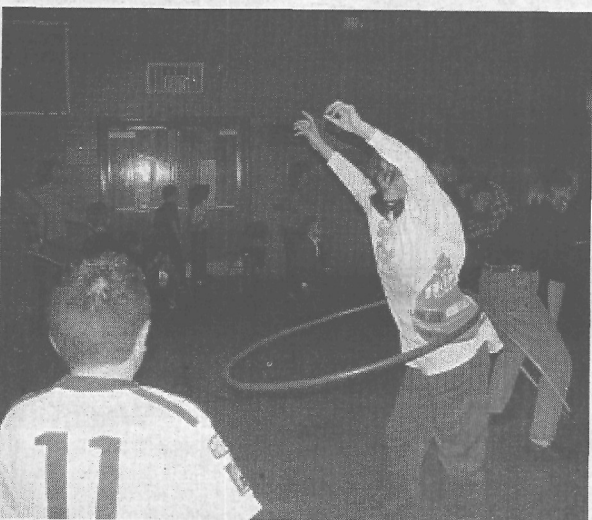
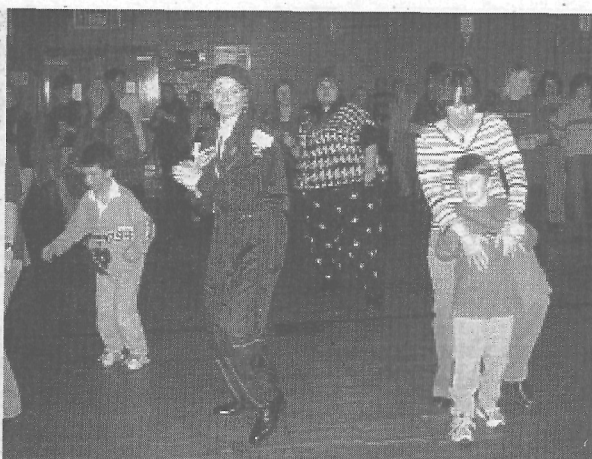
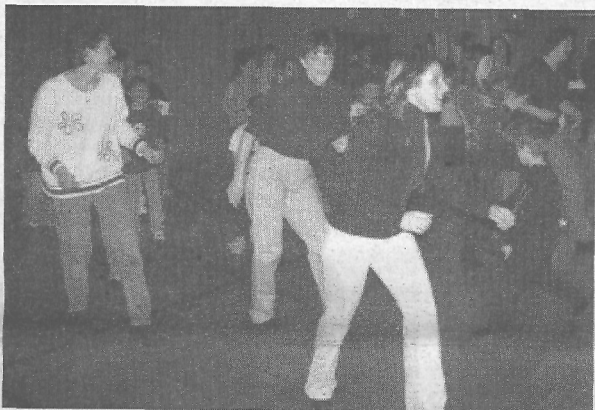


The DJ Didn't Show, But the Moms Come Through

The Mother/Son Dance held at Riley School recently could have been a disaster when the DJ failed to show up.

Moms and their sons waited around patiently, but it soon became apparent that the evenings planned dance, along with the games and activities would not be happening.

A few quick thinking moms got together and decided the evening could still be saved. A CD player was quickly found and several props, which could be used for dancing and games, appeared. In no time at all the dance floor was filled with kids dancing and it didn't take long for everyone to join in the fun. Great job moms!



Sports

WRESTLING By Bob Hunter

Conroy Takes Third at State Tournament

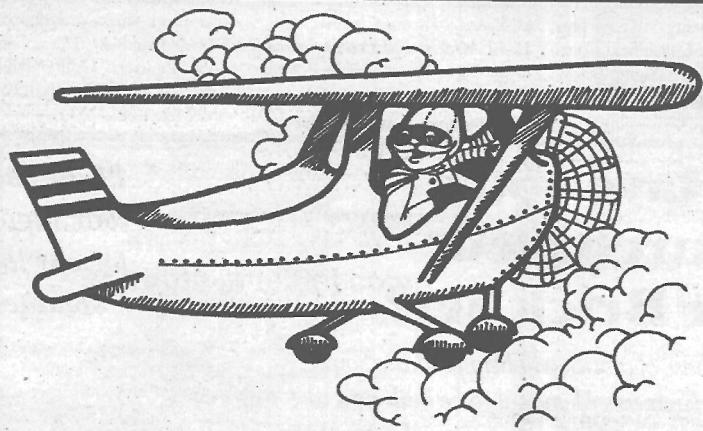
SPHS freshman Jimmy Conroy (103) came home from Atlantic City with a third place finish at the recent New Jersey State Wrestling Championships at the Boardwalk Convention Hall. Conroy won his opening preliminary match with a 4-2 decision over Brad Coccozza of River Dell. In the pre-quarter final round he then defeated Brandon Sharp of Eastern by major decision 8-0 to advance to the quarterfinals. He then faced Nick Mattia of Belleville and took the junior into overtime before giving up a takedown and losing a 4-2 decision. Conroy battled on and defeated Kellen Bradley of Kittatinny 7-3. In the third round of wrestlebacks Conroy defeated senior Andrew Gewain of Hillsborough by fall in double overtime at 7:29. In the fourth round of wrestlebacks Conroy kept his medal hopes alive when he won a 5-3 decision over David Smith of Paulsboro to reach the consolation finals. There, Conroy had to face Darrion Caldwell of Rahway and came out strong scoring a first takedown and then an escape in the second period. Conroy gave up a stalling point at the end of the match and won 3-1 for third place. It is the first time in South Plainfield wrestling history that a freshman has placed in the state tournament.

Junior Guy Severini (152) won his opening match by decision 13-6 over Jason Davidson of St. Joseph's, Montvale, then faced Mike Galente of Ocean City and lost by major decision 15-6. In the first round wrestlebacks Severini got caught and pinned by Bowen Daly of Lacey to end his shot at a medal.

Senior Glenn Gross (160) had some sweet revenge when he defeated Tom Perry of High Point 6-3 in the opening round. Gross lost to Perry during a dual meet during the regular season. In the pre-quarters Gross defeated North Hunterdon standout Andrew Cosgrove 5-2. In the quarterfinals Gross faced eventual state champion Vin Salek of Tom's River East and got pinned at 4:49. In the wrestlebacks Gross lost a heartbreaker to Joe Schmid of Southern 8-7 in OT.

Senior Steve Johnston (171) lost his preliminary match to Brian Ahern of Audubon 5-3. Junior Ryan Elliot heavyweight also lost his first match by fall to Diego Crespo of Garfield. With state tournament experience Conroy, Severini and Elliot will look to improve in next year's tournament.

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Sports



Ponytail Softball Batters Box

By Sharon Miller

Field Clean-up & Snack Bar Opening—March 22

The date for the spring cleanup of the Pitt Street Park Complex and the opening of the snack bar is Saturday, Mar 22. We will meet at the snack bar area at 8:30 a.m. Much preparation is necessary in order to get the fields in playing condition for the 2003 Softball season. With the start of games just two weeks away, we will need the help of many volunteers. Please come out and join us in support of the Girls Ponytail Softball League. We need all Field Maintenance and Snack Bar Committee members to attend the clean-up. In the event of rain, the field cleanup will be held Saturday, March 29.

Ponytail Softball Association Meeting—March 25

The South Plainfield Parents' Association will hold their next meeting on Tuesday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m. in the South Plainfield Middle School library. We would appreciate the attendance of all current members as the start of softball season is just a few weeks away and we have a great deal to accomplish. If you are interested in becoming a member and being involved in girl's Ponytail softball, please join us on March 25. New members are always welcomed.

Ponytail Softball Pictures—April 5

All individual and team pictures will be taken on April 5. Order forms will be distributed by the coaches. Coaches will also make arrangements to distribute uniforms prior to this date. Additional info (location) will be provided in upcoming publications of the Batter's Box.

Start of Games—April 7

Softball games will begin on Monday, April 7 at 6 p.m. All games will be played at the Pitt Street Park Complex. There has been a change in fields. All "A" league teams will play on the middle field (scoreboard). "B" league games will be held on the street field and "C" league will play on the back field near the woods.

Opening Day—April 12

It is hard to believe, but after a long, cold snow-filled winter, it is time once again for the fun and excitement of softball. Please join us at the Pitt Street Park Complex on Saturday, April 12 for the Opening Day festivities. Additional info such as time will be provided in upcoming publications of the Batter's Box. In the event of rain, Opening Day will be held on April 19.

All-Star Try-outs—May 3 and 4

Try-outs for the summer All-Star teams will be held on Saturday, May 3 and Sunday, May 4 the afternoon (time not yet known) at the Pitt Street Park Complex. Players will be chosen for the 10 & under, 12 & under and 14 & under teams. One team per age group will be formed.



Pre-Season Myrtle Beach Warm-up Champions

Left to right are George Jones, Joe Kravetsky, Mike Kavka, Jack Sosnak and Frank Chirichillo. Low score in the unofficial opening event of the golf season was an 81 by Mike "The Maestro" Kavka at the granddaddy of all Myrtle Beach courses, Pine Lakes Country Club.

Calvin John Smiley Competes for St. Joseph's Team

St. Joseph High School's Varsity Swim Team defeated Seton Hall Prep (110 - 60) on March 2 at the College of New Jersey winning the Parochial A State Title. This is the 20th state title for St. Joseph High School making it the only school, public or private, to win that many state titles. Scotch Plains resident Eric Swenson swam the 100 Breaststroke in 58.73 placing him first and giving him an All American Time. Swenson also placed first in the 200 Individual medley (1:59.94). These times are the best in the state.

South Plainfield resident Calvin John Smiley placed second in the 100 Freestyle and 50 Freestyle. Rahway resident Stefan Rosales, Scotch Plains residents Eric Swenson and Brian Gartner, and Calvin John Smiley placed first in the 200 medley relay. Smiley, Swenson, Edison resident Bobby Savulich and Monroe Township resident Mike MacDonald placed first in the 200 Freestyle Relay. The Varsity team finished their season winning the Pirate's Meet in West Windsor, Eastern Individual Meet in Long Island, Greater Middlesex Conference Championship and Parochial A State Meet.

SWIMMING

Blue Dolphins Win Division A Championship

The JCC Blue Dolphins completed another undefeated season in dominating fashion winning the Division A Championship by a 113 point margin. The Dolphins posted a total of 546 points. Raritan Valley placed second with 433 points. The meet was controlled by the Dolphins from the beginning to the end. In the 20 relay races that were competed the JCC Blue Dolphins placed either first, second or third in 18 out of the 20. There were 12 gold medal relay team winners alone.

Calvin John Smiley and Dylan McDermott won gold medals in all four events they competed. The 6+ under events were swept. Kate McLaughlin won both the girl's free-style and backstroke. Aidan McDermott and Sean Cullen teamed up to win the 6+ under boys free-style and backstroke. South Plainfield swimmers posted exceptional performances and are preparing for the South Plainfield Community Pool summer league. Below is a listing of winning relay teams. Individual results were unavailable at this

time.

8+ Under Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Girls—Gold: Maggie Valentino, Kelly McLaughlin, Kate O'Brien and Meilan Keshava—Gold: Maggie Valentino, Kelly McLaughlin, Michelle O'Sullivan and Meilan Keshava.

8+ Under Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Boys—Gold: David Brzozowski, Kevin Jan, Johnny Dean and Alex Lin; Gold: Anthony Guerrieri, Kevin Jan, Johnny Dean and Zach Smith.

9-10 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Girls—Gold: Emily Piekarski, Chelsea Cullen, Bridget Malivert and Erin Arroyo; Gold: Emily Piekarski, Chelsea Cullen, Bridget Malivert and Sharlina Keshava.

9-10 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Boys—Gold: Dylan McDermott, Ian Mulhgeier, Eric Chung and Derek Chen; Gold: Dylan McDermott, Ian Mulhgeier, Eric Chung and Ian McKenna.

11-12 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Girls—Bronze: Abby Petritsch, Gabby Consola, Brenna Dean and Rachel Gold; Silver: Joanna Luzny,

11-12 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Boys—Bronze: Emmett Marsili, Philip Luzny, Taylor Donovan and Bryan Yip; Bronze: Emmett Marsili, Ari Gershman, Taylor Donovan and Nick Lantieri.

15-17 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Girls—Gold: Nina Byard, Becky Brzozowski, Caitlin Cassidy and Amy Updike; Bronze: Nina Byard, Claire Donohue, Allison Banas and Amy Updike.

15-18 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Boys—Gold: Calvin John Smiley, Patrick Donovan, Travis Carson and John Lantieri; Gold: Calvin John Smiley, Patrick Donovan, Travis Carson and Mike Lee.

Julianne Herron, Brenna Dean and Rachel Gold.

11-12 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Boys—Bronze: Mike Boyle, Caleb Tou, Zachary Carson and Marc Ruggiero.

13-14 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Girls—Gold: Megan Boyle, Kristen Dabrio, Caitlin Cassidy and Ashley Muniz.

13-14 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Boys—Bronze: Emmett Marsili, Philip Luzny, Taylor Donovan and Bryan Yip; Bronze: Emmett Marsili, Ari Gershman, Taylor Donovan and Nick Lantieri.

15-17 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Girls—Gold: Nina Byard, Becky Brzozowski, Caitlin Cassidy and Amy Updike; Bronze: Nina Byard, Claire Donohue, Allison Banas and Amy Updike.

15-18 Medley and Free-style Team Relays—Boys—Gold: Calvin John Smiley, Patrick Donovan, Travis Carson and John Lantieri; Gold: Calvin John Smiley, Patrick Donovan, Travis Carson and Mike Lee.

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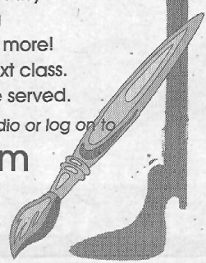
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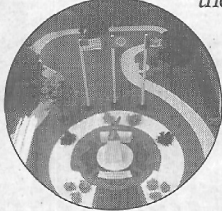
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Sports

BASKETBALL

By Greg Machos

SPHS Boys Basketball Season Comes To An End

The South Plainfield High School Varsity Boys Basketball Team came to an end on March 6 as they lost to Red Bank Regional in the quarterfinal round of the NJSIAA/First Union Central Jersey Group III Tournament despite 17 points from Phil Veinott as he came off the bench to hit several three pointers, go four of four at the foul line and two of two field goals.

With the loss, the Tigers ended their season at 18-6 overall along with an 11-3 mark in the GMC White Division. They captured their first GMC White Division crown in 12 years as well as their first Greater Middlesex Conference Tournament semifinal berth. They also knocked off Rahway, one of the top teams in Union County this year back in the Tri-County Holiday Tournament in December.

In addition, the Tigers had the longest winning streak in at least 30 years by winning 14 consecutive games before they lost to Cardinal McCarrick in heartbreaking fashion, 65-63 in the GMCT Semifinals on Feb. 25 at East Brunswick High School. McCarrick, a school formerly known as St. Mary's Regional High School in South Amboy, went on to win its first ever GMC Tournament as they defeated St. Joseph's in the Championship, 67-56.

Important to note, this year's 14 game winning streak is not the longest in school history. We were informed by a number of people that the longest streak in school history was done by the 1959-60 team, which won 20 straight before losing to Carteret in the state tournament that year. Meanwhile, the 1963-64 team, which was led by former all time leading scorer, Wally Cirafesi, won 18 straight before losing to Dunellen. They then went on to finish the season with eight straight wins to claim the Group 3 State Title in Atlantic City.

Prior to their loss in the quarterfinal round of the Central Jersey Group III

State Tournament, South Plainfield took on Mater Dei of the Shore Conference, and the top seed in the South Jersey Parochial B tournament. In this tune-up game, the score didn't reflect how dominant the Tigers were as they won easily, 54-42. Mater Dei went on to lose in the semifinal round of their tournament to Wildwood Catholic, which lost to Cardinal McCarrick in the championship game at Lakewood High School, 67-51. McCarrick takes on St. Patrick's for the state crown at the Duhnn Center in Elizabeth on Saturday, March 15.

In the game against Red Bank Regional, another solid team from the Shore Conference, and a sixth seed in the CJ Group III field, the Tigers fought an uphill battle all the way as they trailed throughout much of the game. They were able to catch up and break even after three quarters with the score tied, 49-49, but Red Bank pulled away with a 25-13 surge in the final quarter, and won 74-62 at the Anthony J. Cotoia Gymnasium in South Plainfield.

In addition to the previously mentioned 17 points by Veinott, Marquis Jones added 13 while Darren Smith chipped in with 11. Ian Robinson had eight points, Corey Gilmore had six and Mike Allocco pitched in with four points. Red Bank, which went on to play Franklin in the championship game and lost, was led by Keyron Sheard, who had 17 points on the night.

Going back to the GMCT for a minute, the Tigers took it to top seeded McCarrick for much of the game as they jumped out to a 8-0 lead in the first quarter, led 26-21 at half-time, and 41-39 after three. Then, Jonathan Buggy, who came off the bench to give the Tigers a big lift with seven points, got a conventional three point play for a 44-39 lead with about six minutes or so left in the game.

Cardinal McCarrick would then outscore the Tigers 26-19 the rest of the way for the win as the Tigers missed key foul shots down the stretch and couldn't stop Mika Wilson, the eventual GMC Tournament MVP, who had 28 points, 16 rebounds, five blocks, and three assists. Jose Rosario, Billy Wagner, and Ed Fulham all came up with big scores to help put away the Tigers, 65-63. Marquis Jones led the Tigers with 17 points, eight rebounds, and four assists while Ian Robinson added a double-double of 18 points and 12 rebounds while drawing two charges.

Darren Smith added 11 points and three steals while Corey Gilmore and Gary Houston scored eight and two points respectively. Gilmore also added two rebounds, three assists, two charges and two steals on top of great defense while Houston added two rebounds and an assist. The game capped a great night of semifinal action in the GMCT at East Brunswick High School as St. Joseph's rallied from a 13 point deficit with 3:55 remaining to defeat second seeded New Brunswick at the buzzer, 64-62.

The Tigers had a tremendous season. Every player including Marquis Jones, Corey Gilmore, Gary Houston, Darren Smith, Ian Robinson, Mike Allocco, Phil Veinott, Jonathan Buggy, Ryan Decker, and Mike Richard. Special congratulations go out to the coaching staff including Head Coach Jeff Lubreski, who is closing in on his 200th career victory at SPHS, Mike Allocco, Bob Jones and Tim Serbe.

Greg Machos covers the South Plainfield Tigers as well as other Greater Middlesex Conference Varsity Boys Basketball for his web site, GMC Hoops at <http://www.gmchoops.com>

By Kevin Lykes



juniorbaseballclubnotes

C League Orientation Rescheduled for this Saturday



The C League Orientation, postponed from last week due to field conditions, has been rescheduled for this Saturday, March 22 from 9 to 10 a.m. (time approximate). C Leaguers should come to the complex and meet with their respective coaches about 15-20 minutes ahead of time. The Orientation will give C League players a chance to get out on the field, and since a lot of work continues, this might be the only chance available before their first game. We will also be going over some of the things they can expect during the season, and this is an opportunity for youngsters and parents alike to acclimate themselves a little bit with our complex.

On the weather front, things are looking a bit better after the nicer temperatures we have been experiencing the past week. We got off to a great start at last weekend's work detail, but much remains to be finished before opening day. Again we will be out this Saturday at 8 a.m. continuing our work. We are requesting volunteers who are willing to help us with this, especially at the Pony level where, despite the field condition, much other work in and around the batting cages needs to be completed. So if you're available please stop down and lend a hand, even if only for an hour or so.

Currently everything is on schedule for Opening Day, scheduled for Saturday, April 5. Our three Small Fry fields are looking better each day. Barring any lengthy rain we don't anticipate any problems there. The Pony Field, presently under some major re-construction, has a bit further to go. However, as of March 18 the company doing the work is standing by their promise that it will be ready for April 5.

The parade, for Small Fry Divisions, from Borough Hall to the complex will begin at 10 am, followed by Opening Day Ceremonies, the first pitch and the first games. Individual and team photos will be taken throughout the day, each coach will have his team's scheduled time. A banner contest will be held with the winner in each Small Fry League receiving a sum in a snack stand account available for post game drinks, food and goodies.

Women's Auxiliary Announces 2003 Little Miss Baseball

Due to the entry of only one nomination this year, voting will not take place for the Little Miss Baseball fundraiser.

However, we are proud to announce that Rachael Scrudato will be

crowned Little Miss Baseball 2003.

Rachael will receive her crown during the opening day ceremonies on Saturday, April 5. Rachael will receive a \$25 mall certificate from the Woman's Auxiliary.

2003 T-Ball/Teener Ball Registration

Registration for T-Ball/Teener is open to all South Plainfield resident boys and girls in grades K-2.

T-ball is for children who were five as of Oct. 1, 2002. Teener ball is for children 6-7 as of Oct. 1, 2002. The fee is \$25 per participant (no refunds).

In Teener Ball girls play softball and boys play baseball.

Registration began Feb. 18 and ends on April 7. Register at the PAL, located on Maple Ave. Birth certificates are required for new registrants. All others must show proof of residency.

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Obituaries

Henry J. Constantine, 87

Henry J. Constantine of South Plainfield died on Saturday, March 15, at the home of his daughter in Dacula, Ga.

He was born in Trenton and was a former resident of Harrison before moving to South Plainfield 52 years ago.

Henry was a manager for ARA Food Service of Philadelphia, Pa. for 37 years before retiring in 1982.

He was a veteran of WWII serving in the United States Army as a staff sergeant. He was a member of the VFW Memorial Post 6763 in South Plainfield.

Henry was an active communicant of Sacred Heart Church in South Plainfield. He was a member of the parish Holy Name and the St. Vincent De Paul Societies, a member of the Sacred Heart Funstival committee and was an usher at the church for many years. He was a member of the South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council 6203.

He was predeceased by his beloved wife Sadie Spinello Constantine, who died in 2002.

He is survived by two daughters, Theresa Barkkume of Dacula, Ga. and Andrea Ostrofsky of Veazie, Maine; a sister, Louise Manfhetka of Iselin; five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

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

Marion L. Vail

Marion L. Vail died on Friday, March 14 in Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield.

She is predeceased by a sister, Jane E. Vail, and three brothers, A. Clifford, Edward A. Jr. and David K. Vail.

She is survived by a brother, H. Eugene Vail of Brooklyn and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin Home for Funerals.

Joseph A. Guaracci, Sr., 64

Joseph A. Guaracci, Sr. died on Saturday, March 15 in Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield.

Born in Plainfield, he was a lifelong resident of South Plainfield.

Joe was a member of the Italian American Club in South Plainfield.

He was employed by the State of New Jersey, working at Green Brook Rehabilitation Center as a senior maintenance man. Previously, he worked for the state at the Children's Reha-

bilitation Center in Avenel. For the past seven years, Joe was also working for Hall's Warehouse of South Plainfield as a security guard.

Surviving are his wife, Judith A. (Brady) Guaracci; two daughters, Ann Marie Pacheco and Cindy Guaracci; two sons, Joseph, Jr., and Richard Guaracci, all of South Plainfield; a sister, Victoria Guaracci of E. Brunswick; three brothers, John and Thomas Guaracci, both of South Plainfield and Salvatore of Rahway; a stepson, Michael Guaracci of Jackson and a stepdaughter, Lisa Monks of South Plainfield.

Also surviving are 11 grandchildren and one great granddaughter.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin Home for Funerals.

Alfred J. Hellriegel, 80

Alfred J. Hellriegel died on Monday, March 17 at Veterans Medical Center in East Orange.

Mr. Hellriegel was born in Newark and had lived in Bayville and Rahway before moving here in 1975.

He had worked for the U.S. Post Office in Bayville as a letter carrier, where he worked for over 25 years. He retired in the early 1970's.

Al was an Army Vet of WWII. He had been attached to the 101st Airborne and had seen combat action in the European Theater, including the D-Day invasion of Normandy Beach. He had been awarded the Purple Heart five times. He also earned the Distinguished Unit Award.

He was a member of the New York Chapter of the 101st Airborne Association of Piscataway, a life member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the American Legion Post 261 of Piscataway and a life member of the VFW Post 2319 of North Brunswick. He also belonged to the Disabled American Veterans NJ Chapter 52.

He is survived by his wife of 22 years, Helen Pyatt Hellriegel, and a daughter and son-in-law, Doreen and Bruce Karns of Stillwater, Pa.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, March 21 at 11 a.m. in the McCriskin Home for Funerals.

You are shining down from heaven on us, Lorraine



Lorraine Merrick
Sadly Missed
March 22, 1993

Ronald, Jacqueline & Jessica

The Chicks Have Hatched!

By Jane Dornick

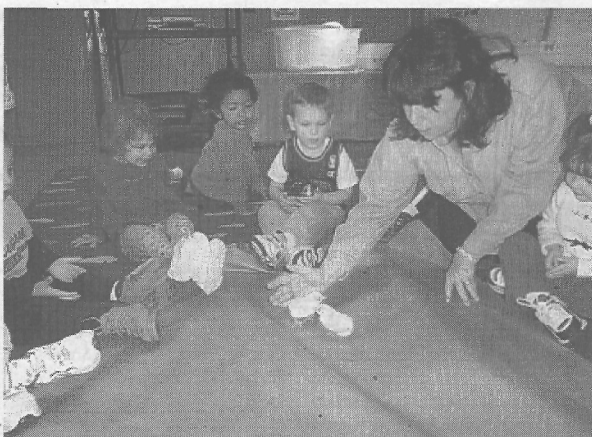
In separate events Future Stars Preschool and Sacred Heart School students learned which came first—the chicken or the egg. Quiver Farms brought their egg hatching projects to each class and the youngsters loved it!

While teachers and students anxiously watched and waited for the chicks to appear, they learned how to monitor the eggs in the incubator and to care for the little ones after they are born. When the chicks were dried and fluffy, the children gathered around and watched them run around and gave them an occasional pet.

This was the first year that the Sacred Heart Home School Association decided to participate in the project. Mrs. Goetz's second grade class and Mr. Galespi's fifth grade students also received an incubator with 12 eggs.

The older children were more excited than the preschoolers at the arrival of their newborn friends. They couldn't wait until it was time to let them loose so they could watch and hold them.

The baby chicks had to be sent back to the farm a week after being born, which made for some difficult good-byes for all.



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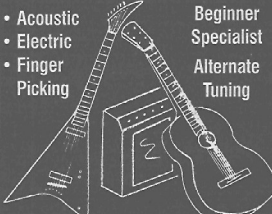
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policereport

• On March 11 a Jackson Ave. resident reported the theft of her purse from her unlocked vehicle.

• On March 12 Diego Alfredo Guerra-Gomez, 40, of Elizabeth was arrested for having no license, being an uninsured and unregistered driver, having altered temporary license plates and a fraudulent Ecuador ID at a motor vehicle stop.

• Matilde I. Robles-Bolano, 28, of Perth Amboy was arrested for shoplifting \$231.81 worth of merchandise from K-Mart.

• Penske Truck Leasing on South Clinton Ave. reported the theft of a 24 ft. truck from their lot.

• A Spring Lake Heights resident reported the theft of \$12,710 worth of items from her vehicle, which was parked at Oak Tree Commons. The window of her vehicle was smashed, and items were taken from the back seat. It appears she may have been followed there from several other stops she had made that day.

• On March 13 a W. 7th St. resident reported her home had been burglarized. The front door was forced open and an unknown amount of cash, a CD boom box, two Gameboys and cartridges and assorted jewelry were taken.

• On March 14 Jong J. Kim, 35, of Edison was arrested for driving while intoxicated, no insurance and being parked within 50 ft. of a stop sign during a motor vehicle stop.

• A Hamilton Blvd. resident reported the theft of his 1988 Isuzu Trooper from his driveway. The car was unlocked and a set of keys was under a mat.

• A Lucy Ct. resident reported that two of her credit cards had been used to purchase merchandise over the internet without her knowledge. She was contacted by a detective in California, where the merchandise was being shipped, as they are investigating individuals who are hacking into computers.

• Regency Awnings on South Clinton Ave. reported that a company van window had been smashed and a Ryobi drill and saw set were removed.

• On March 15 Adrian Mena, 29, of Plainfield was arrested for driving while intoxicated, possession of a false ID, hindering apprehension and displaying false ID after being involved in a motor vehicle accident.

• Esmeranza Margaret Skyers, 52, of Plainfield was arrested at Pathmark for shoplifting \$27.58 worth of items.

• On March 16 Jatinchan S. Desai, 38, of Fairport, NY was arrested for driving while intoxicated and reckless driving at a motor vehicle stop.

• An Oxford Ave. resident reported the theft of 11 to 12 boxes full of CDs from his van.

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LEGAL NOTICES

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

March 14, 2003

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action was taken by the South Plainfield Planning Board at its meeting held on March 11, 2003.

Case #02-09--VEV. Properties, Inc. Block 136; Lot 26; South 11th Street. The applicant's request for two (2) waivers previously noted was hereby GRANTED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Beth Khidre
Planning Board Secretary

\$20.00

March 21, 2003

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

March 14, 2003

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action was taken by the South Plainfield Zoning Board at its meeting held on March 13, 2003.

A. Case #02-03--Marc J. Stasio; Block 128; Lot 13;

1931 So. Central Ave. The applicant's request for a front yard setback variance of 24.9 ft. to erect a roof over an existing 6 foot deep by 8 foot wide porch was hereby GRANTED with a voluntary condition.

B. Case #05-03--Kevin B. Keane; Block 96; Lot 9; 134 W. Golf Ave. The applicant's request for a 4.8 foot easterly side yard setback in order to construct a one story addition measuring 20 feet by 20 feet; a separate easterly side yard setback of 5 feet for the proposed deck which will measure approximately 20 feet in width by 16 feet in depth (irregular) and a separate lot coverage variance for over coverage of 109.4 square feet was hereby GRANTED with a voluntary condition.

C. Case #51-01/S--Michael Ciardiello; Block 450; Lot 2; Block 459; Lots 1 & 7; Seymour Street. The applicant's request for a use variance to permit a contractor's storage yard to remain on the property, together with the addition of a prefabricated metal storage building measuring 30 feet by 60 feet and with a height not to exceed 20 feet and a continuation of the existing radio tower with cellular antennas was hereby GRANTED with conditions.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Beth Khidre
Secretary/Zoning Board of Adjustment

\$40.25

March 21, 2003

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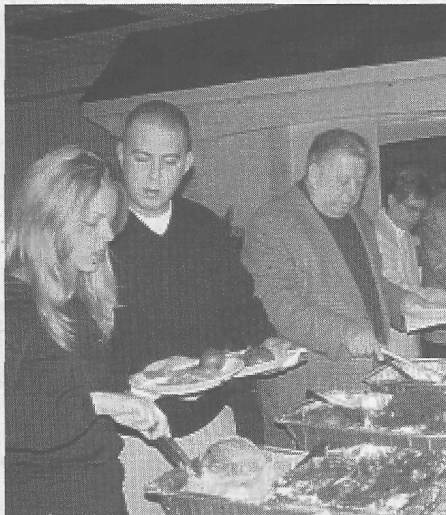
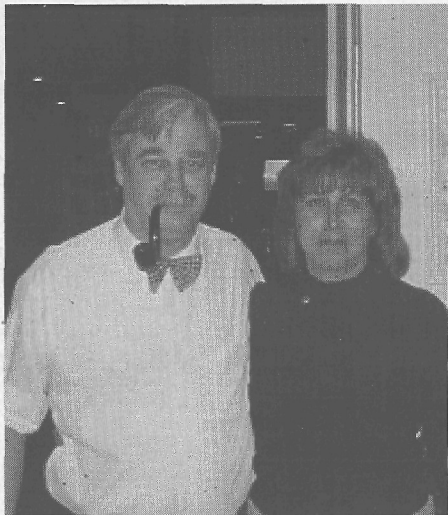
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Irish for a Day South Plainfield Celebrates St. Patrick's Day

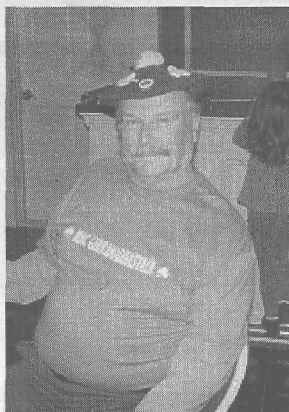
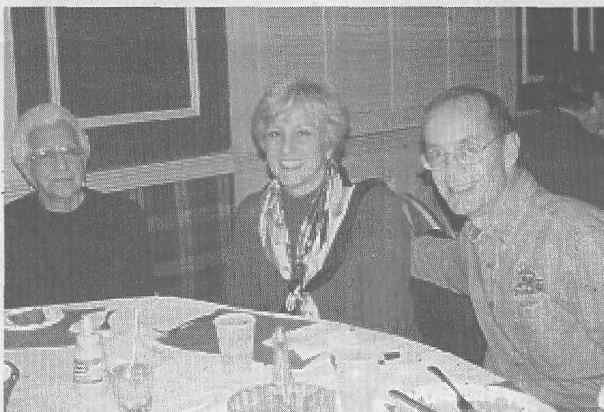
St. Patrick's Day was celebrated all over South Plainfield last weekend.

Corned beef and cabbage was on the menu everywhere on Monday, including the VFW, American Legion, Elks and Knights of Columbus.

Each venue was filled with Irish and Irish-wannabes, enjoying the food and company, and some even had dancing.

There was no shortage of green hats of all shapes, shirts, hair and a few even had shamrocks painted on faces.

The celebrations pictured here were held at American Legion and Elks Club.



Red Cross Emergency Preparedness Information

Is your family prepared in the event of a disaster? Do you have a plan in place for your home or workplace? Today, it is more important than ever that all of us be prepared for possible emergencies. Natural disaster or other disasters can strike suddenly, at any time and anywhere.

There are five action steps that everyone can follow for emergency pre-

paredness that can help make a difference. Our program is called "Together We Prepare" and it focuses on the following five action steps that could help a family be prepared in the event of any kind of disaster.

The five action steps are:
1) Make a plan. 2) Build a kit. 3) get trained. 4) Volunteer. 5) Give blood.

If your school, church, business or community group would like more information on "Together We Prepare" or to schedule an informational session, please call Victor Webb Jr. at (908) 756-6414, ext. 21.

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SEE PAGE 11

Find it all right here in the Business & Professional section of the Observer!

From the South Plainfield Library

Bookmarks

By Kenneth Morgan

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

We'll start today with our children's programs. First, there's this month's Kidcraft program this afternoon at 4 p.m. It's for children ages six and over, or children who are able to use scissors. The Library will provide all of the craft materials. We ask that you sign up your children for this program. Next, we have our normal schedule of children's Storytime programs. They're for children ages three and over; no pre-registration is required. Each program lasts about an hour and features stories and a craft activity. The programs are held on Tuesday morning at 10:30, Wednesday evening at 6:30 and Thursday afternoon at 1:15. For more information, please call us at (908) 754-7885 and ask for Miss Linda.

Don't forget about our special program, New Jersey in the American Revolution on Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. Author Arthur S. Lefkowitz will speak about the British invasion of New Jersey in 1776. Everyone is welcome to attend this free program. It's presented by the South Plainfield Historical Society, and is made possible in part by the NJ Council on the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Please call us for more information, or visit the Historical Society's website at <http://community.nj.com/cc/sphistorical-society>.

We've also got another special program coming up. It's called "Walt Whitman: New Jersey's Good Gray Poet" and it's scheduled for Sunday, March 30, at 2 p.m. Author & teacher Edward M.

Cifelli, Ph.D., will speak about Whitman's poetry and personal life, particularly his years in New Jersey. There's no charge for this program; all are invited to attend. It's being presented by the Friends of the Library and the aforementioned NJ Council on the Humanities.

Thursday will be the last day of availability for the March group of Circuit videos. Titles this month include *Matilda*, *John Q*, *Thick as Thieves*, *Glitter*, *Tea & Sympathy*, *Chasing Amy* and, on DVD, *Changing Lanes*. Videos and DVDs may be borrowed, four at a time, for two days.

We've just added several new audiobooks to our collection. New titles include *Unnatural Exposure* by Patricia Cornwell, *Tail of the Tip-Off* by Rita Mae & Sneaky Pie Brown, *The Cat Who Brought Down the House* by Lillian Jackson Braun, *To America* by Stephen Ambrose, and, on CD, *Prey* by Michael Crichton. Audiobooks may be borrowed, four at a time, for two weeks.

Finally, a reader asked that we pass along details regarding One Book New Jersey. This is a new program from the New Jersey Library Association and the NJ State Library to promote public interest in reading and literacy. The idea is to urge people to read a particular book and participate in discussions and other activities about that book; the program's current selection is *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. For more information about One Book New Jersey, you'll find a link to the program's website on our own homepage at www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us.

That's about all for this week. See you next week for more.

Walt Whitman Program at Library

The South Plainfield Free Public Library will host the program "Walt Whitman: New Jersey's Good Gray Poet" on Sunday, March 30, at 2 p.m.

The speaker for the program will be author and teacher Edward M. Cifelli, Ph.D. Dr. Cifelli is a former Professor of English at County College of Morris, and holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from New York University. He will speak about Whitman, focusing on his final years in New Jersey. He'll address Whitman's then-revolutionary poetry and personal life, as well as the many influences on them.

The program is presented free of charge, and has been sponsored by the Friends of the South Plainfield Library and the NJ Council for the Humanities, a state partner of the

National Endowment for the Humanities.

For more information, please call the Library at (908) 754-7885, or visit the Library's website at www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us.

Kindergarten Enrollment

Kindergarten Enrollment in the South Plainfield School District for the 2003/2004 school year will be held during the week of May 12-15 at each neighborhood Elementary School.

Please call the Enrollment Center at 908-754-4620, ext. 223, for exact date and time for your school.

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