

South Plainfield Observer

VOL. 8, NO. 17

50 CENTS

DECEMBER 12, 2003

TIME FOR OUR OWN

Verdin Clock Addition Brings Park Closer to Completion

If you have driven on Plainfield Ave. during the past few months, you may have noticed the progress which has taken place on the site of Monument Park. The Military Veterans Monument, originally in front of Borough Hall, has been moved to its new location and will be the centerpiece of the park. Space to accommodate additional names is now available. The name plates for those veterans are currently being manufactured and the monument will be updated as soon as they arrive.

Footings have been poured to accommodate the police and rescue squad monuments, which will be moved in the very near future.

Flagpoles have been installed to accommodate the U.S. and POW/MIA flags, each branch of the military, as well as the South Plainfield Police Department flag and South Plainfield Rescue Squad flag.

A Navy three foot anti-aircraft gun and an anchor donated by a South Plainfield resident have already been placed in the park.

The Verdin Street Clock was installed last Thursday. Commerce Bank generously donated the \$25,000 to purchase the four-faced Verdin Street



Monument Park committee members accept a check from William Snell, Asst. VP and local branch manager, Commerce Bank (center) for the purchase of the Verdin Street Clock. Pictured from left to right is OEM Coordinator Mike Zushma, Police Chief Bob Merkler, Philip Cortese and William McCriskin.

Clock. It has been placed adjacent to the sidewalk along Plainfield Ave. and positioned so that a clock face will be visible to visitors in Spring Lake Park, the motoring public traveling in either

direction on Plainfield Ave. and the visitors of Monument Park.

A U.S. Army Cobra AH-1G Helicopter has been acquired and is expected to be on display sometime in

January of 2004. According to army records, the Cobra saw extensive action in Vietnam from August of 1970 through January of 1973.

Installation of monument lighting,

street lighting and park benches is also anticipated in the near future.

Landscaping is planned for the spring.

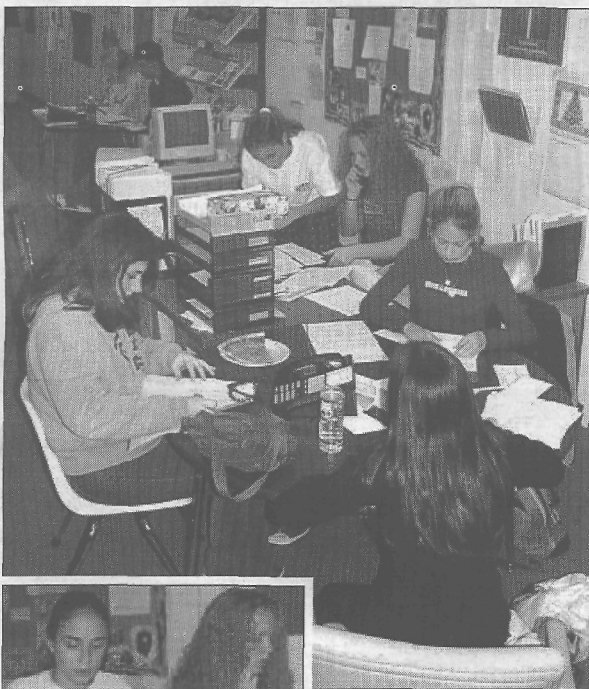
To donate to this project, or for questions about the project, please contact Police Chief Robert Merkler at (908) 226-7676 or OEM Coordinator Michael Zushma at (908) 753-3775.

McCriskin's Tree Lighting Saturday

The annual lighting of the fir tree in front of McCriskin Home For Funerals honoring the men of the 101st Airborne who lost their lives in an air crash in Newfoundland, Canada in 1985 will take place at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 13. The event is sponsored by McCriskin's and the 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles and General Anthony C. McAuliffe chapter.

The public is invited to attend.

SPHS Telethon Nets Record Donations



Story/photos by Patricia Abbott

Competition was fierce at the third annual South Plainfield Education Foundation phone-a-thon. Starting on Dec. 1 and ending on Dec. 4, enthusiastic South Plainfield High School students commandeered the

Guidance Office, turning it into a busy hub of activity.

Working in teams, the high school students telephoned township residents soliciting monetary donations for the foundation. The team raising the most money each night received a prize.

During the course of the week, over 50 students participated. The foundation provided pizza and beverages for the volunteers.

The four evenings raised \$2,555, \$3,785, \$3,310 and \$2,050 respectively, netting the foundation \$11,700, by far most ever raised by the event. Foundation president Marge Reedy was thrilled with the results, expressing thanks to everyone within the high school for their hard work and dedication.

If you have made a pledge please be sure to watch for your pledge packet to arrive in the mail soon. If you don't receive your packet by the end of December or would like to make a pledge call Marge Reedy at (908) 561-3951, evenings.

The Education Foundation sponsors graduation scholarships, Project Graduation, the high school Gold Card program and various other educational initiatives throughout the district.

The next fundraiser for the foundation is the annual art auction, scheduled for May 1, 2004 at the high school.



VFW Post 6763 Commander Harold Evgan (center) and veterans William Tuthill (left) and Louis DeFillipo (right) at the Post's commemoration of Pearl Harbor Day.

VFW Remembers Pearl Harbor

Last Sunday evening, despite the weather, approximately 25 people, mostly World War II Veterans, gathered at the VFW Post 6763 for services marking the anniversary of the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

VFW Commander Harold Evgan spoke of the 3,700 who died at Pearl Harbor on that fateful day. Almost 1,000 are still entombed in the battle-slip Arizona, now a monument.

Auxiliary President Marianne Cortese spoke about the thousands who died fighting for our freedom.

Marines Veteran Bill Tuthill said those who remember Pearl Harbor will always recall where they were and

what they were doing that day.

Reverend Charles Mingle, who served in the Navy, also recalled where he was that day. He was working in a diner in Pennsylvania. "It is important not only to remember—but what we do with those memories—to always stand up for what is right. Don't take our freedom for granted, it has already cost a lot!"

Korean War Veteran Vincent Perry brought a newspaper with headlines of the Pearl Harbor attack, which was passed around to all of those attending.

Chaplain Michael Panza closed with a prayer and the ceremonies

SPHS students work the phones at the annual phone-a-thon, which raised a record \$11,700.



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Observer & would like to subscribe,
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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

2004 Meeting dates to be announced at reorganization

All meetings of the Governing Body are held in accordance with New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 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

December 23

zoning board of adjustment

Meets second and fourth Thursday of the month

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

December 18

board of education meetings

Grant School Gymnasium on Cromwell Place unless otherwise noted

Committee of the Whole meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m.:

Regular Board Meeting held Tuesdays at 8 p.m.: December 16

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? 908-769-0786.

site plan sub-committee

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

December 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

environmental commission

Meets once a month (second Wednesday)

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

Meets once a month (fourth Wednesday) at 7 p.m.

in the Conference Room, Borough Hall

South Plainfield Observer

The South Plainfield Observer is
published every Friday

G&G Graphics, Inc.
1110 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 1B
South Plainfield, NJ 07080

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The South Plainfield Observer (U.S.P.S. 018253) is published weekly, except Thanksgiving week, by G&G Graphics Inc. 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080-2004. Second class postage paid at South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080-9998. POSTMASTER: Forward change of address orders to G&G Graphics Inc. 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080-2004. Subscription rates \$25 per year in South Plainfield; \$30 per year out of town. To subscribe: 908-668-0010.

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: South Plainfield Observer, Editorial Department, 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 sposerver.com or gggnan@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: gggnan@aol.com or fax 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. All letters must be submitted with name and phone number, for verification.

IN YOUR OPINION

Dear Residents,

The Holiday Project run by the Social Services Department in the Borough of South Plainfield is again in full swing. We have numerous South Plainfield families who find themselves in need this holiday season.

We are asking that you look at your situation this year and see if you can spare to buy a new gift for some child or Senior Citizen, or if you would like your family to adopt a needy family, please call Marge Ackerman, director of Social Services, at (908) 226-7625. Deadline for donating is Monday, Dec. 15.

MARGE ACKERMAN

Dear Editor,

The Woodlands Center Genesis HealthCare would like to thank the Girl Scout Troops of Roosevelt School for bringing their holiday spirit to the center. They shared an evening of singing, laughter with the residents and also delivered hand-made ornaments and nut cups that were made by all South Plainfield Girl Scout Troops. It's heartwarming for the seniors to receive the respect and caring from the younger generation.

**THANK YOU,
WOODLANDS CENTER STAFF**

To the Editor,

On Nov. 22, the Home School Association of Sacred Heart School hosted a Longaberger Basket Bingo/Raffle to raise money for the new playground equipment. At this time, we like to extend our heartfelt thanks to each of you for your contributions and support to this year's fundraiser. Due to the generosity of

many businesses, families and friends, Sacred Heart School raised over \$5,400. These are terrific results and we should all feel proud. We are always inspired by the spirit of generosity and caring among our community.

The Home School Association board members wish to thank and acknowledge the following: Father John Paul Alvarado, Sister Cornelia, the teachers, students and parents of Sacred Heart and the businesses listed below for their support and generosity towards this year's successful fundraiser. We couldn't have done it without all of you. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Board members of the Home School Association of Sacred Heart School, Ann Gladysz, Moretti Realty, Applebee's, Mr. and Mrs. Kearney, Au'Some Candies, Nicastro's Garage, Barclay Brand Ferdon, NY Knicks, Becker's School Supplies, NJ Nets, Café Everest, Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. Attorney at Law, Columbia Savings Bank, Pinto Bros. Disposal, Conroy's Funeral Home, Plainfield Animal Hospital, Cornerstone Architectural Grp. LLC, Rosary Society, Dawn Farinella, Sacred Heart Athletic Association, Eddie Santiago, Santoro and Santoro, Entenmann's (Weston Bakeries), School Spirit Promotions, Fleet Bank, South Plainfield Democratic Organization, Flynn & O'Hara (Philadelphia), Sportworld, G&W Labs, TGIF No. Plfd., George Street Playhouse, The Razor's Edge, Gertrude Hawk, Tres Bella, Girl Scouts, Trump Marina, Hall's Warehouse Corp., Tuscan (Union), Harris Structural Steel, Twin City Pharmacy, JoAnn's Dance Studio, Unity Bank, La-Bonbonniere's Bakery, Vessica Tan, McCrisky Home For Funerals, VFW, Metuchen Glass Co., Wachovia Bank, Mohn's Flowers, Wal-Mart, Monte Bros. Sound System, Webelos and Boy Scouts.

May you and your families have a happy and blessed holiday season.

BINGO/RAFFLE COMMITTEE

Dear Editor,

About the memorials, I believe the entire project was not well planned or thought out. My major question is, where do you park to view the Veteran's Memorial or the Firemen's Memorial or any other memorial that is planned?

Instead of collecting donations for this project, money could have been

donated to the organizations to be used to help relieve the burden from the taxpayers.

The Veteran's Memorial was out in front of the town hall for years; it did need to be updated with the many missing names. Five members of my family are missing. They could have easily been kept in front of town hall and made into a memorial park there, with pavers connecting walkways to each memorial. One could have been for the police, one for the rescue squad and one for the fire department.

Just travel to Middlesex and Dunellen. They have very nice memorials honoring all who have served without spending \$100,000 plus. Last weekend it rained. I rode by where the Veteran's memorial is located. It was flooded with water. Soon, it will wash into the stream and it will end up in Bound Brook!

Again, where does a person, or especially an elderly person, park to visit them? Crossing Lakeview Ave. is a four lane road. The geese are the only ones with that ability. Cars stop for them. I don't think that was ever taken into consideration.

Memorials were put in front of the town hall, as that was the town they fought for and represented in all wars. I have nothing against any organization, as again my family is missing five names and my name will also be on the firemen's memorial. They should have taken a ride to each town to view what they have. Middlesex Boro has the best. They have a super firemen's memorial with bronze horse and steamer on top of a granite stone with the names of all exempt firemen. There is also a police officer walking a child in each hand. The town of Dunellen used a bell and they have a very nice memorial to the rescue squad members, plus it is in walking distance to a place to park and sit.

We didn't need an artillery piece, a helicopter, tank or anchor. Those items should have been placed out front of the VFW and American Legion. Also, take into account vandalism. Look what became of our railcar? It was taken away in disgrace. I think those committees should have taken into account what is in hand and what is affordable. You don't need a ton of money to have a nice memorial. All should have been in front of Borough Hall, since that is the town these wonderful people served. I think this entire situation should be brought back to the drawing board. Why is a clock needed? How are you going to get there to see it?

ANTHONY PISANIELLO

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Due to the inclement weather
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Where are the Mail Boxes?

During the past month residents may have noticed that several mail boxes around South Plainfield have been removed and those that have remained have only on pickup a day, at three o'clock.

According to South Plainfield Postmaster Michael Diegnan, he was directed to cut back on the number of mail boxes in town. He added that he doesn't anticipate anymore boxes being removed, but he is studying the possibility of moving some of the remaining boxes to other locations.

Residents can still put outgoing mail in their mail boxes and carriers will pick up when delivering or if a person or business has a large mailing, the post office will gladly pick it up.

The new pickup times have been

posted on all of the boxes. The boxes at the post office note only one pickup at 5 p.m. Several residents have questioned whether mail they place in the box in the evening sits there until the next evening. Diegnan said, "No! The mail is picked up from that box all day, but 5 p.m. is a set time for a pickup."

In all there are 14 boxes located throughout town, two of them are in the parking lot of the post office and one is located inside of the building. Other boxes in South Plainfield are located at: 2323 Plainfield Ave., 904 Oak Tree Ave., 174 Baker Ave., 2480 Plainfield Ave. (Borough Hall), 140 S. Plainfield Ave., 3000 Hadley Rd., 114 Oak Tree Ave., 725 Maple Ave., 1550 Park Ave., 3330 Park Ave., 3461 S. Clinton Ave. and 304 S. Plainfield Ave.

Arrest Solves 29 Burglaries

On Nov. 23, Angel Cruz, 32, of Plainfield was arrested in Clark in possession of a stolen motor vehicle. Cruz was the suspect in numerous car burglaries and thefts in South Plainfield and surrounding towns. Cruz was transported to Union County Jail and held in lieu of bail on additional Plainfield charges.

Detectives Parker and Cassio conducted further investigation and found that Cruz was responsible for 29 burglaries and thefts involving motor vehicles in South Plainfield.

Between June and November of 2003, Cruz had broken into the 29

vehicles and removed stereos, CDs and other items of value in parking lots and various locations on Park Ave.

It was also determined that he was also involved in two motor vehicle pursuits which were terminated in South Plainfield in September and November. Bail was set at \$40,000 for just the South Plainfield charges.

Police also believe Cruz is responsible for additional thefts which occurred in surrounding towns.

He was charged with 29 counts of burglary to motor vehicles and theft from motor vehicles and two counts of eluding.



Pictured with the winning 2003 South Plainfield Lions Peace Poster is Brook Denitzio (center right), an eighth grader at Middle School, her art teacher Diane Kardos (center left), Lions President Bob Desch (left) and Lions Secretary Hank Grabarz (right). Second place winner was Alyssa Roibal. Denitzio will be honored at a Lions Dinner for her winning effort. The poster will be entered in the national Lions contest.

NOTES FROM The Senior Center

by Joann Graf, Director of Office on Aging

Estate Planning Part III... Last but not Least

Everything you own at the time of your death may be considered part of your estate, including your home, bank accounts, insurance policies and any of your other assets. If you haven't already addressed this issue, stop and consider what will become of all that when you're gone? Don't assume that it will be distributed according to your wishes. The fact is that if you haven't done the necessary planning, you don't have much control over what will happen to your estate after your death.

A Last Will and Testament is the most basic of estate planning documents. First introduced in medieval England, wills are basic instructions to a court as to how a deceased person wants his/her money and property (estate) distributed. A will is your last opportunity to decide who gets your money and property when you pass away.

A will should be drawn up by a law-

yer to ensure proper and accurate drafting. A minor mistake may invalidate your good intentions. You should review your will at least once every five years. When you review it, make sure that the people mentioned in the Last Will and Testament are still alive, available and the people you want to be named. The key people are: your heirs, your executor, your alternate executor and your two witnesses. You should know where these people are because when you die, they must be located to attest 1) that they were physically present when you signed the document and 2) you were competent when you signed it. Witness affidavits should be attached to the Last Will and Testament.

The Last Will and Testament goes into effect when you die. That is, when the physician signs your death certificate. Until your death, your executor and heirs have no authority to act on your behalf. Only your agent with Durable Power of Attorney can act on

your behalf prior to your death. The person named in the will as executor will have the responsibility to locate and inventory all of the assets of the Estate; open and maintain an Estate checking account; pay all outstanding debts; pay all administrative, funeral and legal fees; file the appropriate inheritance or income tax returns; have all the necessary paperwork prepared for the transfer of all real and personal property; disburse the Estate funds to the name beneficiaries and file all necessary bonds and releases.

If you haven't already made your will, make a New Year's resolution to take care of it in 2004 and make any appointments with your attorney.

Retraction

In the original press release from 4H Teens on Project Gift, the articles stated that new gifts, clothes etc. could be dropped off at the 4-H center on three days and the last day would be Dec. 17. In fact, the teens will not be accepting gifts on that day. If anyone was planning on donating gifts on the 17, they should call the 4-H office at (732) 745-3446, and arrangements will be made.

Historical Society Seeks Members

The South Plainfield Historical Society is looking for new members. Help is needed on several of the committees in their organization. Dues are as follows: \$10 for an individual, \$15 for a family, \$75 for life, \$50 for an

institution and \$100 and up for corporations.

Send in your check along with your name, address, phone and email to: South Plainfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 11, South Plainfield 07080.

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Events

What's happening in DECEMBER

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 9:00 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

Senior Center EVENTS

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
EVENTS December 13, 12 Noon Christmas Luncheon & Caroling December 15, 9:45 departure Hunterdon Hills Christmas Show				
Adult Crafts 9:30-11:30am Yoga 10:30-11:30am Drawing Class 11:30am-12:30pm Hunterdon Hills - 9:45am	Bingo 10am-2pm Ladies Social 10am Computer Classes 12pm & 2pm Men's Forum 1:30pm	Exercise 8:45-9:45 Line Dancing 10-11:30 Movie Time 11:30am AARP Crafts 1pm Computer Class 11am-1pm	Shopping Day 9am-11am Practical Crafts 10-11am Shopping at Pathmark 9am Practical Crafting 10-11am	Bingo 10am-2pm Pizza Lunch Bridge Club 12:30pm Bingo 10am-2pm Pizza Lunch Bridge Club 12:30pm
15	16	17	18	19
TO SIGN UP FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SENIOR CITIZEN'S CENTER, VISIT THE PAL BUILDING ON MAPLE AVE.				

HOLIDAY events

Breakfast With Santa at American Legion—American Legion Chaumont Post 243, located on Oak Tree Ave., is planning a Breakfast with Santa on **Sunday, December 14** from 8 a.m. until noon. Cost is \$5 for adults, \$3 for kids, children under six are free. All profits are donated to the Legion's Scholarship Fund.

Holiday Sing-a-Long Program – at the Library featuring Mr. Kurt on **Monday, Dec. 17** at 6:30 p.m. Sign up in advance. Call (908) 754-7885 for information and ask for Miss Linda.

Business Association Holiday Luncheon—The South Plainfield Business Association will hold their Annual Holiday Luncheon on **Thursday, Dec. 18** at Sherban's Dinner starting at 12 noon. All members of the Business Association and anyone else interested in joining the group are invited to attend this annual event. The event takes place in the downstairs area of Sherbans. For further information, call (908) 757-8811.

AARP Chapter Christmas Lunch—AARP Chapter #4144 will hold its annual Christmas meeting on **Thursday, Dec. 18** at a luncheon at the Holiday Inn, Stelton Rd., South Plainfield. All members and their guests, who wish to attend, please contact Sylvia Boyd at (908) 561-1899. Charles Reed will entertain at the luncheon with song and music.

Knights Breakfast With Santa Event—The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus will be holding their annual "Breakfast with Santa" event on **Saturday, Dec. 20** from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The price for the breakfast (which includes eggs, bacon, French toast and much more food) will be \$3 a child, \$5 a adult or \$15 for a family. Parents, please bring a gift to give to your children from Santa. Seats are limited, please contact Steve Belanger at (908) 791-0640 or (908) 755-6203 for more info or to make your reservations.

Santa is Coming to South Plainfield—South Plainfield Recreation invites all children ages one to 10 years old to visit with Santa on **Saturday, Dec. 20** from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Senior Recreation Center. (Formerly scheduled at the PAL). Pictures with Santa and gifts for all the children will be handed out. You must register at the PAL for Pictures with Santa. There is a \$5 registration fee.

Breakfast With Santa at the Elks Club—The South Plainfield Elks Club, located at 1254 New Market Ave., will be holding a Breakfast with Santa on **Sunday, December 31** from 8 a.m. to noon.

The breakfast includes pancakes, French toast, bacon, sausage, eggs to order, coffee, tea, milk and juice. Cost for adults is \$6, children ages 5-12 are \$4 and children under five are free. Bring your camera. Santa will be on hand all morning.

Annual Caroling at the Gazebo—Come celebrate the holidays! The South Plainfield High School Chorus and the South Plainfield Recreation Department invite everyone to Caroling in the Park on **Sunday, Dec. 21** starting at 3 p.m. in the gazebo at Spring Lake Park. Refreshments to follow at the Rescue Squad.

Out of Town

Circle Players Presents—Christmas Vacation of Get Me Outta Here, the 2003 holiday musical event at Circle Players, the community theater of Piscataway, is a shimmering evening of American musical theater by the masters, from Irving Berlin to Lerner and Loew to Jerry Herman, creator of "Hello Dolly" and "La Cage aux Folles." Performances are two weekends, **Friday, Dec. 12 and Saturday, Dec. 13 and Friday, Dec. 19 and Saturday, Dec. 20**. Showtime is 8 p.m. and tickets are \$12. Circle Players is located at 416 Victorian Avenue, Piscataway. For tickets and information, call (732) 968-7555.

Alliance Bible Presents Live Nativity—A Live Nativity will be presented at Alliance Bible Church in Warren on **Saturday, Dec. 13 and Sunday, Dec. 14** at 5 and 7 p.m. Admission is free. The church is located at 52 Mount Horeb Rd. in Warren, just off of Interstate 78. For additional information or directions, call our church offices at (732) 469-1425 or visit www.AllianceBibleChurch.com.

Married Couples Chanukah Party—The B'nai B'rith Ketubah Married Couples Unit (40+) will be having their Annual Chanukah Party on **Sunday, Dec. 14** at 4 p.m. at a member's home in South Plainfield. They will be having a Kosher deli dinner and a \$5 gift exchange. The cost is \$18 per member couple and \$25 per non-member couple. If a non-member pays their dues to join Ketubah Unit at the party, they can come to the party for FREE. Please RSVP to Myrna at (908) 757-6099 by December 12.

Festival of Carols at Trinity Reformed—Join us for a special afternoon with the Festival of Carols! Trinity Reformed Church, 401 Greenbrook Road, North Plainfield invites you to a day of great music of the season, fantastic stories and our famous sing-along on **Sunday, Dec. 14** at 4 p.m. There will be other surprises, ending with a delicious light supper. You do not need a ticket, so bring your friends! For more information, call Joan Beil at (732) 563-0966.

Edison Arts Society Holiday Concert—The Edison Arts Society is pleased to present the Edison Symphony Orchestra's Holiday Concert on **Sunday, Dec. 14** at 7 p.m. live on stage at the Middlesex County College Performing Arts Center. Tickets are currently on sale at the Edison Arts Society for \$30/adults and \$25/students, with group rates available. Please call (908) 753-ARTS, Monday-Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to reserve seats. Visa and MasterCard are gladly accepted by telephone.

Sacred Heart to Hold Alumni Mass

December 13

Sacred Heart School would like to invite all all former graduates to the Alumni/Alumnae Golden Anniversary of Sacred Heart School.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, Dec. 13. There will be a 5 p.m. Mass immediately followed by a reception in the school cafeteria.

VFW Plans Country Breakfast

December 14

The VFW Memorial Post 6763 is holding a Country Breakfast on **Sunday, Dec. 14** from 8 to 11 a.m. A varied menu will be available. The donation is \$5 and children under 12 are \$3. For more information, call (908) 668-9751 after 3 p.m. daily and after 12 noon on weekends. The VFW is located at 155 Front St., South Plainfield.

Jr. Baseball Club Trip To Hall of Fame

December 29

South Plainfield Junior Baseball Club is planning a bus trip to the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame on **Monday, Dec. 29**. Tickets are \$65 per person and include deluxe bus transportation, admission to the Hall of Fame and a buffet dinner. (See page 9 for details and on how to sign up.)

AARP Chapter Trip to Hunterdon Hills

January 13

The AARP Chapter #4144 is planning a bus trip on Jan. 13 to Hunterdon Hills Playhouse for lunch and to see "The Rainmaker." The cost of \$60 covers all expenses, including transportation from South Plainfield.

For further details and reservations, call Lee at (732) 968-6613 or Mary at (732) 752-3764.

Rec Plans Trip To See Hairspray

February 22, 2004

South Plainfield Recreation is sponsoring a trip to Broadway to see "Hairspray" on **Sunday, Feb. 22, 2004**. Bus will leave the PAL at 10:30 a.m. and return around 7 p.m. There will be plenty of time to shop and eat be-

fore the show. Tickets are \$100 per person and are available at the PAL between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays. Only 45 tickets are available, so come and get yours now!

Pack 224 Selling Tickets of For Harlem Globetrotters

February 14

Tickets to the Harlem Globetrotters at Continental Arena on **Feb. 14** at 7:30 p.m. game are \$22 each. The tickets are Section 211 upper tier lower. (Seating will be filled on a first ticket purchase availability.)

Make checks payable to Cub Scout Pack 224 and mail to 201 Lane Ave., South Plainfield. Everyone must have a ticket. Tickets orders are due by Dec. 17. Tickets are for admission only, you must provide your own transportation. Admission includes a two hour meet-and-greet prior to the game, Globetrotter University and a badge. You can only attend the meet and greet through a group purchase, not available through ticketmaster purchases.

Rec Plans Trip to New Orleans

Sept. 11-19, 2004

South Plainfield Recreation presents a trip to Biloxi and New Orleans from **Saturday, Sept. 11 to Sunday, Sept. 19, 2004**. The trip includes the following: A guided tour of New Orleans, eight nights deluxe hotel accommodations, including four nights in a luxurious Gulf Coast Casino Hotel, a Jazz Cruise on a Mississippi riverboat, a tour of NASA's Amazing Stennis Space center and much more! The price also includes deluxe motorcoach transportation and 14 meals- eight breakfasts and six dinners.

For info and reservations, contact Mike English at (908) 226-7714. The cost is \$560 per person based on double occupancy. Add \$219 for single occupancy. \$75 is due upon signing. Final payment is due July 6, 2004.

— Out of Town —

Woodbridge WOWs Dance

December 21

The Woodbridge Area Widows or Widowers (WOWs) are holding a fundraiser dance on **Sunday, Dec. 21** from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. All are welcome. There will be a live band and refreshments will be available. The cost is \$8 per person. The dance will be held at the Elk's Hall, 665 Rahway Ave. in Woodbridge.

For more information, call (732) 297-1775.

Moonrakers Tall Club Meetings

February 10

The New Jersey Moonrakers Tall Club, Inc., a social and community service organization serving people of "taller-than-average" stature in the New Jersey/New York metropolitan area, will hold its monthly "Meet and Greet" social at the Saddle Brook Marriott Hotel, located between Rt. 80 and the Garden State Parkway in Saddle Brook, on **Tuesday, Feb. 10** at 8 p.m. Prospective members (women 5'10" and taller and men 6'2" and taller, both over 21) are encouraged to attend.

For further information about the club, or for a schedule of our social events, call our 24-hour hotline service at (973) 267-364

Moonrakers Tall Club

March 9

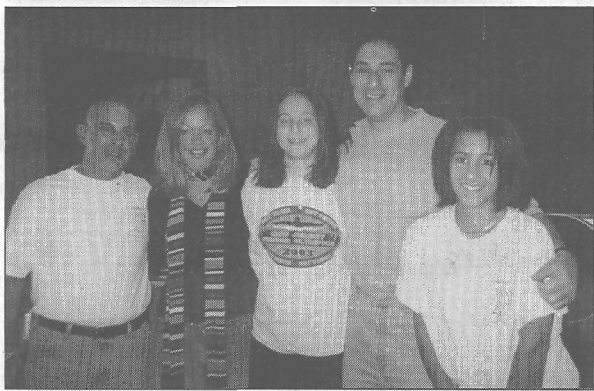
The New Jersey Moonrakers Tall Club, Inc., a social and community service organization serving people of "taller-than-average" stature in the New Jersey/New York metropolitan area, will hold its monthly "Meet and Greet" social at the Saddle Brook Marriott Hotel, located between Rt. 80 and the GSP in Saddle Brook on **Tuesday, March 9** at 8 p.m.

For further information visit our website at <http://www.njtall.org> or email us at newjersey@tall.org.

Send Us Your Events:

Mail or drop off stories and photos to
South Plainfield Observer, 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 1B,
South Plainfield, NJ 07080, fax (908) 668-8819;
or email to ggnan@aol.com.

Arte Fino Holds a Cut-a-Thon



Arte Fino owner Steve Cassavetis, with Jill Rann surrounded by her mom and dad and manager GERALYNN PLACENTI.



Geraldynn Placinti measures Samantha Dichewitz's hair before cutting it for Locks for Love.

Steve Cussavetis, owner of Arte Fino Hair Design on Inman Ave. in Edison, along with his employees, held a cut-a-thon on Sunday, Nov. 30 to raise money for the City of Hope. The cut-a-thon was held in honor of Jill Rann, who is presently fighting leukemia, and also in memory of Maria Casimiro, who died of cancer. Samantha Dichewitz, 10, donated her long hair to Locks of Love to make a wig for someone in need.

The day was a complete success. In just four hours, Arte Fino raised \$1,700 for the City of Hope.

The owner of Arte Fino Hair Design, located on Inman Ave. in Edison, would like to thank his staff, family, dedicated clients and Nick Sotirou, massage therapist from Back in Action.

Pet Photos With Santa

People for Animals, a nonprofit animal welfare organization serving New Jersey, is offering pet photos with Santa on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 20 and 21 from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. at the PETSMART store in the Watchung Square Mall, 1515 Rt. 22

in Watchung.

A donation of \$9.95 is requested per photo. Each photo will include a tree ornament frame. The picture may include your pet and members of the family, if you wish. Customers who purchase a photo with Santa are welcome to take pictures with their own cameras.

Stop the cycle of homeless pets now! Alter your pets and any outside cats that you may be feeding. For low cost spay/neuter information, call the People for Animals Clinic at 908 964-6887. Spay/neuter surgery costs range from \$40 to \$65 and include rabies and distemper vaccinations.

Elks Selling Entertainment Books

The South Plainfield Elks Veterans committee is selling the Entertainment Book for \$30. Contact Lou Peralta, (908) 756-6406.

Our Lady Of Czestochowa R.C. Church

807 Hamilton Blvd., South Plainfield

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Dec 24 - 5:30 p.m. - Children's Mass with Santa

9:45 p.m. - Caroling with OLC Choir

10 p.m. - Christmas Eve Mass

9 a.m. - Mass of the Dawn

11 a.m. - Mass of Christmas Day

Regular Weekend: Sat. eves. 5:30pm, Sunday 8am & 11am



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Help Create Sacred Heart's 100th Logo!

Students in the South Plainfield area are being asked to participate in a contest to create a logo for the 100th anniversary of Sacred Heart Church.

The contest for the new logo will be spearheaded in all classrooms at Sacred Heart School. Also, students in CCD classes, SPHS, Bishop Ahr and St. Joseph's will be asked to participate.

The logo will be displayed throughout the year on letterheads, posters, t-shirts and various publicity materials.

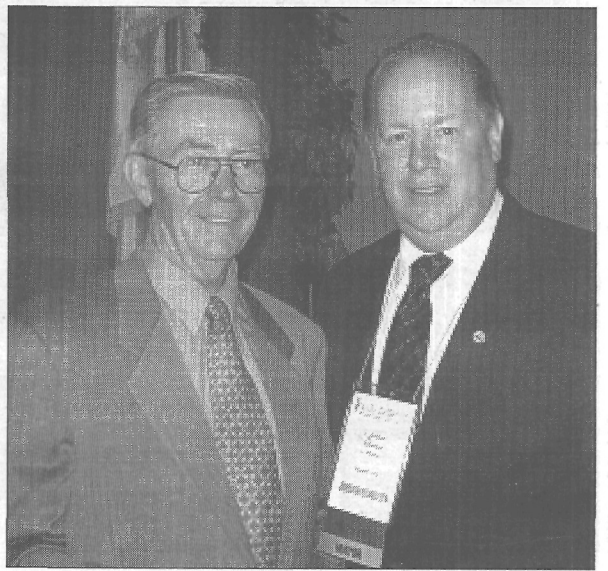
The logo will be judged on its originality, using the theme of the 100th anniversary and Sacred Heart Church. It must be submitted on an 8½ x 11 piece of paper and can be either in color or black and white. Students are encouraged to use their imagination, but they must keep to the theme.

Entries must be in by Jan. 16, 2004 and a winner will be announced on Jan. 30, which coincides with the end of Catholic Schools Week. You need not be Catholic to enter.

Entries will be divided into several groups, K-3, 4-6, 7/8 and high school. Three winners from each group will be chosen and a winner picked from that group will be the winning logo.

Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third places. Prizes and judges will be announced later. A letter containing all of the rules of the contest and the prizes to be awarded will be announced in the near future.

For more information on this contest, call Nancy at (908) 668-0010.



Mayor Dan Gallagher and Elizabeth City Mayor J. Christian Bollwage

Mayor Gallagher Honored At League of Municipalities

Mayor Dan Gallagher was inducted as a Silver Member into the League of Municipalities in Atlantic City last month during their annual convention.

Gallagher served as mayor of South Plainfield from 1987-1990 and was elected mayor again in 1995. He is presently serving his fourth term as mayor. He also served as a councilman from 1983-1986 and 1992-1994.

Induction into the Mayors' Hall of Fame or the Elected Officials' Hall of

Fame recognizes municipal officials who have selflessly guided their communities through the good times and troubled times with little recognition of their sacrifice.

To be eligible for the Mayors' Hall of Fame Silver Level, inductees must have at least 10 years of mayoral service.

The New Jersey League of Municipalities opened the doors of the Mayors' Hall of Fame on Nov. 15, 1995 at the Mayors' Luncheon during the 80th Annual League Conference.

Library Collecting Gloves and Mittens

The Friends of the South Plainfield Free Public Library is sponsoring a collection drive during the Holiday season.

They're collecting new gloves, mittens, hats and scarves. The donated items will be distributed to the needy by the locally-based charitable orga-

nization FISH, Inc. The drive will run through Dec. 15.

South Plainfield Free Public Library is located in the South Plainfield Municipal Complex at 2484 Plainfield Ave. For more information, call (908) 754-7885 or visit the Library's website at www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us.

It's Time for the
South Plainfield
Observer's....

.... Second Annual Holiday
House Decorating
Contest

HOLIDAY HOUSE DECORATING

Deck the
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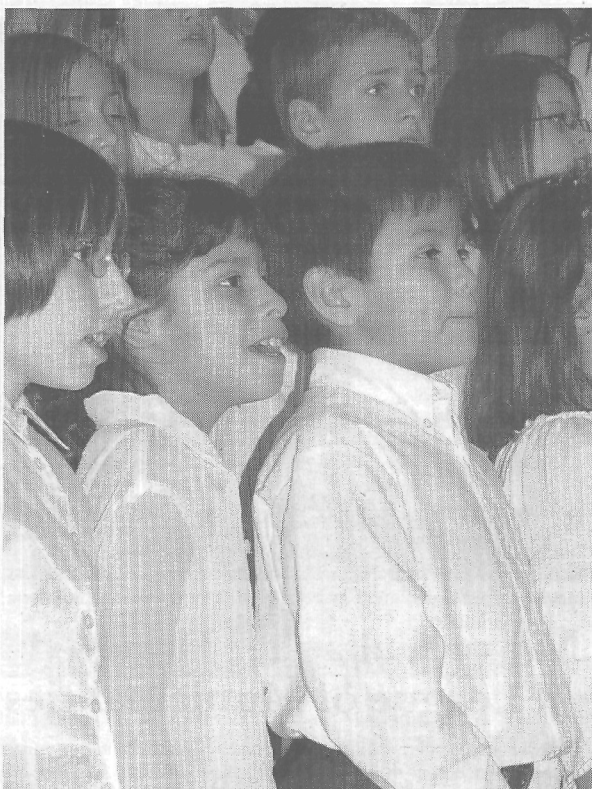
The Observer, along with
Recreation Dept., is sponsoring
a Holiday House Decorating !

Enter your house or nominate another. Include photos, if possible. Entries must be received by Dec. 26. Winners will be announced in January. Grand prize: To be announced in the Dec. 19 issue, and will include a year's subscription to the Observer. Winner's house will be pictured on page one of the Observer. Second prize: a year's subscription to the Observer.

YOUR NAME _____
ADDRESS OF HOUSE _____
TELEPHONE NO. _____

First place winner's house will be pictured
on the front page of the Observer!

Send your entry to South Plainfield Observer, 1110 Hamilton Blvd., Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080.



Students Ring In the Season With Music!

Grant, Franklin Schools Present Annual Holiday Program

Story and Photos by Patricia Abbott

It's concert time in the South Plainfield School District, and over the next few weeks each of the schools will

offer friends and family a chance to experience the talents of young vocalists and musicians. String ensembles, bands and various choral groups will each show off the results of long hours of practice.

On Dec. 3, the annual Grant Elementary School holiday concert (pictured at right on page 7) was held in the South Plainfield High School auditorium. With the addition of the fifth grade to the school, the band, chorus and string ensemble greatly increased in size as did the audience. The huge room was filled to near capacity.

The evening began with the String Ensemble conducted by Mary Beth Clyde. The ensemble performed *Christmas Fiddlers on the Housetop*, *Chanukah Medley* and *Bow-town Blues*.

They were followed by the fifth grade band directed by Tobie Baldwin. Their performances included *Westwind*

Overture, Theme from Maldau and *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*.

Next up was the sixth grade band conducted by Joan Stasio. The youths played *Songs of Chanukah*, *French Carol Festival*, *O, Little Town of Bethlehem* and *The Bells of Christmas*. The evening closed with the Grant School Chorus, also conducted by Stasio. The students sang *Welcome, a Seasonal Greeting*, *It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year*, *Hanukah is Here*, *Our Gift For You*, which was also signed by the youths, and *A Holiday Hand Jive*.

Franklin School (pictured here on page 6) presented their concert on Dec. 8. The String Ensemble began the evening playing *Jolly Old St. Nick*, *Beginner Medley*, *Twinkle Variations*, *Allegro* and *Open String Samba*. The chorus performed *A-Caroling*, *Frosty the Snowman*, *Let the Dreidl Spin* and *Jingle All the Way*. The string ensemble was directed by Bruce Mikolon and the chorus by Glenn Parisi.



Send Santa Your Holiday Wishes

The South Plainfield Recreation Department is again sponsoring "Letters to Santa." A special mailbox has been placed outside the Post Office. If children in your school want to write to Santa, all they have to do is drop the letter in the special mail box at the Post Office.

To guarantee a response, please be sure to include your full name and address in the letter. Santa hopes to hear from all of you!



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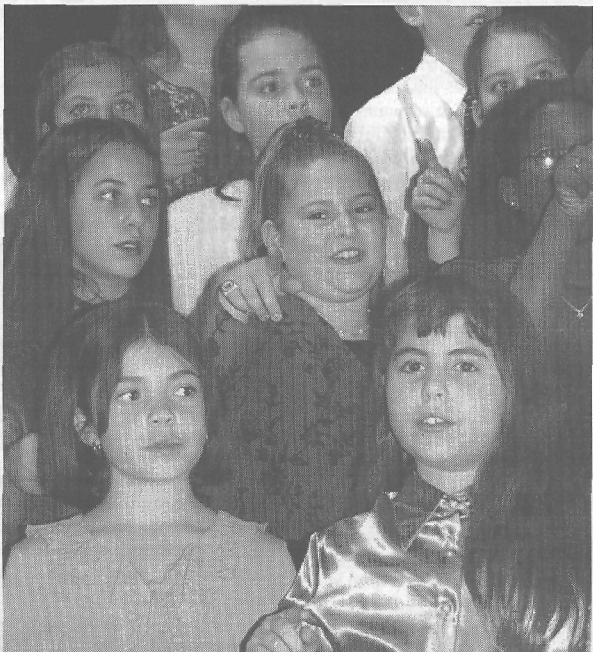
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Save Lives: A Call to Lower the Blood Alcohol Level

From Assembly Majority Whip Peter J. Barnes, Jr.

Two years ago in New Jersey, 189 people were killed as a result of alcohol related traffic accidents, according to State Police Statistics. This sobering statistic is compounded by admission from Mothers Against Drunk Driving that lowering the state's blood alcohol content level from .10 to .08 could have possibly prevented some of these deaths.

Unfortunately, the legitimate safety concerns associated with drunken driving have proved useless in convincing New Jersey to pass such sensible and necessary legislation. But perhaps the potential economic windfall for failure to enact the stricter limit will soon force New Jersey to take this issue more seriously. As co-sponsor of an Assembly bill to lower the legal limit, I certainly hope so.

Recognizing the inherent wisdom in lowering the blood alcohol content level, Congress passed legislation in 2000 that encouraged all states to adopt the .08 standard. It also approved penalties for states that fail to do so by 2004. As such, New Jersey's inaction on this matter will force the state to forfeit much needed federal highway funding in the immediate future. The State Office of Legislative Services estimates that New Jersey stands to lose \$7.2 million for 2004 if it does not adopt the stricter standard. That number will double in 2005 and finally reach \$28 million by 2007.

The possibility of forfeiting federal highway funding will prove especially menacing as NJ grapples with the daunting task of replenishing its depleted Transportation Trust Fund, which funds many transportation projects throughout the state.

Indeed, the impending economic sanctions have proved vital in securing support, albeit reluctantly, from many other states to back the .08 proposal.

According to an October edition of *Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Weekly*, a public policy newsletter, there are currently 45 states that have adopted the .08 federal standard. New Jersey, meanwhile, lags behind. Senator Frank Lautenberg, who was instrumental in crafting the 2000 federal legislation, has been mystified by the State's reluctance to follow suit.

But some legislators do not see the need to act quickly on this matter. Instead, they rely on a portion in the penalty clause of the federal .08 mandate that allows a state that has forfeited federal funding to recover the costs if it enacts the lower blood alcohol content limit by Sept. 30, 2007. This tactic misses one crucial point—NJ's budget crisis has drained the state's transportation system financially thin. Consequently NJ needs every penny it can get from the federal government to upgrade its inadequate transportation infrastructure. Funding for many of these projects cannot wait until 2007.

For years supporters, including former President Bill Clinton and MADD, have long argued that the current .10 standard raises serious safety concerns. According to a 1998 report from the Senate Task Force on Alcohol Related Motor Vehicle Accidents and Fatalities, they are right. The task force found that significant impairment could be clinically demonstrated at a .05, thus increasing the likelihood of alcohol related fatalities.

These compelling and insightful reports indicate one thing - lowering the state's blood alcohol content level could very well innocent save lives. And if this reason was not enough to convince New Jersey to support the change, the potential economic consequences to the state should finally sway it in favor of the federal mandate.

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Temples Travel to Okinawa For Thanksgiving

Okinawa is just a short hop, skip and 25 hour leap away on the other side of the world! Ernie and Georgia Temple of South Plainfield made the trip this Thanksgiving holiday to visit with their son Dan, a major in the USMC and his family, who are living in Gushikawa, Okinawa.

Temple, an 8th degree Black Belt in Isshinryu Karate, worked with the marines on hand-to-hand combat techniques. The Marines have adopted a martial arts program that encompasses every aspect a Marine needs in today's training. Temple was asked to demonstrate and teach submissive holds that could be utilized in restraining aggressors, as well as extraction techniques from vehicles at checkpoints. He also had the opportunity to work out with the head of the Okinawan system of Isshinryu karate, 10th degree Black Belt, Kichero Shimabuku.

Okinawa is a part of Japan that has been totally rebuilt since WWII. The southern and central parts of the island were destroyed during the battle of Okinawa. Homes there are built of concrete in order to withstand the high



The Okuma area of Okinawa, Japan.

winds of the typhoons that hit the islands. The main island is some 70 miles long and 15 miles wide at the widest point.

With no public transit system, trains or subways, travel is slow, in some cases the speed limit is 24 miles per hour. The countryside is beautiful and the living is slow paced. Temple visited six of the seven Marine bases and the main Air Force base at Kadeena.

Thanksgiving was spent at a mili-

tary resort in Okuma on the northern end of the island, reserved for U.S. military personnel and their families, with a private beach, restaurant, rental cabins and campgrounds. Turkey did indeed reach our troops at this remote spot, and was very much appreciated by our servicemen and women.

For information about Ernie Temple's School of Karate in Dunellen, visit www.temple-school-of-karate.com or call 908-561-6464.

OPINION — From Senator Jon S. Corzine

Why the Medicare Bill is Bad Medicine for New Jersey

If you believe the spin being generated by the Bush Administration, the Republican Leadership in Congress and the national leadership of AARP, the Medicare bill which passed the Congress is a good deal for New Jersey seniors and the Medicare program. But spin and facts are two different things.

And here are some of the facts: the bill will force thousands of New Jersey seniors out of Medicare as they know it into HMO plans; it will cost seniors \$3,600 for \$5,000 in drug benefits; the proposal will result in over 90,000 New Jersey retired seniors losing their drug coverage from their former employers; it will cut over \$550 million from cancer treatment in New Jersey to pay for rural health care elsewhere; it does too little to contain drug costs and remarkably, it will not go into effect until the year 2006.

We worked hard to save New Jersey's PAAD and Senior Gold programs— which the original Republican plan would have scrapped. But unlike New Jersey's PAAD and Senior Gold programs, the proposed Medicare plan will have drug formularies that will restrict seniors' access to certain drugs. This means that a senior in PAAD or Senior Gold who now has complete prescription drug access may face lim-

ited drug access or substantially higher costs for their prescribed drugs.

But, it's not just New Jersey's seniors in PAAD and Senior Gold who stand to lose under this agreement. The bill would also subject 186,000 seniors in South Jersey to a risky Medicare privatization experiment.

And New Jersey hospitals are treated unfairly in this bill. While New Jersey has three percent of the country's Medicare population, New Jersey hospitals will receive only 1.7% of the funds allocated to hospitals under the bill. By contrast, Louisiana, which had half the number of seniors that New Jersey has, would receive four times the funds, or \$1.2 billion.

Of course, as in any thousand-page piece of legislation, there are some good things, such as additional drug coverage, though meager, for those who don't currently have it and some relief for doctors serving Medicare patients.

But make no mistake about it: this bill is, in fact, a Trojan horse—offering a limited prescription on drug benefit while laying landmines to undermine the Medicare program. This bill shovels more than \$12 billion in subsidies to the private health insurance industry, giving them an incentive to compete with Medicare—and an ad-

vantage in doing it—by allowing them to cherry-pick the healthiest seniors, leaving older and sicker seniors with higher costs in the resource-depleted traditional Medicare program.

The bill also proposes a cap on Medicare spending that will likely lead to premium increases and benefit cuts in the next ten years. In addition, the bill puts billions of dollars into Health Savings Accounts, which will undermine employer-based health insurance by creating tax incentives for high deductible catastrophic health insurance plans. Experts have estimated that these accounts could cause premiums for employer-based insurance to more than double.

We want to assure the people of NJ that no one fought harder for a real Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit than we did. In fact, we both supported the bipartisan Senate proposal. There was a real opportunity this year to put politics aside and work together to strengthen Medicare and provide a generous prescription drug benefit. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership in Congress and the White House saw fit to produce a half-measure that shortchanges our seniors and puts Medicare on the path to privatization.

The facts and not the spin, required us to reject this proposal.

Sports

By Lee Flanagan

JUNIOR BASEBALL CLUB NOTES

The SPJBC coaches clinics begin on Tuesday, Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. Ray Ciecawicz, head baseball coach at South Plainfield High School, will be conducting the first clinic. Free to all parents and coaches, these clinics are strongly recommended for new coaches wanting to become involved and especially C-League prospective coaches. The clinic will take place at The SPJBC clubhouse.

Junior Baseball Club registration runs from now to Jan. 1, 2004 is \$75. However, there is only one day left to catch this early discount. The day is Monday, Dec. 15 from 6 to 7 p.m.

The registration will increase to \$95 on Jan. 1, 2004. There will be no exceptions. This will have given parents seven opportunities to sign up their son or daughter before the first of the year. We are also selling SPJBC club members cards for \$10. A manager and or coach will not be allowed on the field without a club member card and must have completed the Rutgers Certification Program. If you have an interest to manage or coach a team in the spring season of 2004, this serves as a reminder that you MUST complete the Rutgers Certification Program. For more information about

this course, please contact the Recreation Department.

The Junior Baseball Club is running a trip to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY. Yes, the Baseball Hall of Fame. On Monday, Dec. 29, we will leave

at 6 a.m. by bus, arrive in Cooperstown at 11:30 a.m. and take the complete tour of the Baseball Hall of Fame. We will leave Cooperstown and stop at the Old Country Buffet on the way home. This will be a great trip.

Cost for the entire trip is \$65 per person. This includes transportation, entrance to the Hall of Fame and the buffet dinner. We need commitments from parents for this trip now. It is very important to call Chris Hansen at 755-1475 and secure your spot on this trip.

The SPJBC is always based on volunteer efforts by parents, grandparents, and friends. A big THANK YOU to those individuals that have volunteered their time and effort helping the new executive board during the past three months. Those of you who would like to manage and coach with us; this is a big part of the criteria for being selected to do so.

Anyone interested in sponsoring a sign at the baseball club, call Bill Cochran, 561-6574 or SPJBC, 754-2090.

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(v.t.): 1. to celebrate ceremonially // 2. to notice (something), to pay special attention to // 3. (a) to look at with attention // 4. to perceive, notice, come to know by seeing // 5. to comment, to note attentively

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SPORTS SCHEDULE

JV & VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL 2003-2004

DECEMBER			
13	Sat.	Linden (scrimmage)	Away 10:00
16	Tues.	Cardinal McCarrick (scrimmage)	Home 3:45
19	Fri.	Carteret	Away 5:30/7:00
20	Sat.	Elizabeth @Caldwell College	8:00
26	Fri.	Rahway Invitational	
27	Sat.	(JV) Boonton @Oratory Prep	2:30
27	Sat.	Rahway Invitational	Away
28	Sun.	(JV) @Oratory Prep	3:30 or 5:15
30	Tues.	Rahway Invitational	

JANUARY			
3	Sat.	Colonial	Home 11:30/1:00
6	Tues.	Sayreville	Away 5:30/7:00
8	Thurs.	North Brunswick	Home 5:30/7:00
10	Sat.	Hillsborough	Home 11:30/1:00
13	Tues.	J. F. Kennedy	Away 5:30/7:00
15	Thurs.	Woodbridge	Away 5:15/7:00
21	Wed.	Monroe Township	Home 5:15/7:00
23	Fri.	Carteret	Home 5:15/7:00
24	Sat.	Yorktown, NY	Home 1:00
28	Wed.	Colonial	Away 5:15/7:00
30	Fri.	Sayreville	Home 5:15/7:00

FEBRUARY			
4	Wed.	North Brunswick	Away 5:15/7:00
6	Fri.	J. F. Kennedy	Home 5:15/7:00
10	Tues.	Woodbridge	Home 5:15/7:00
13	Fri.	Monroe Township	Away 5:15/7:00
20	Fri.	Hunterdon Central	Away
		GMC Tournament	State Tournament

FRESHMEN BOYS BASKETBALL 2003-2004

DECEMBER			
19	Fri.	Carteret	Away 3:45
27	Sat.	Boonton @Oratory Prep	11:00am
28	Sun.	@Oratory Prep	12:00 or 1:45

JANUARY			
3	Sat.	Colonial	Home 10:00am
6	Tues.	Sayreville	Away 3:45
8	Thurs.	North Brunswick	Home 3:45
10	Sat.	Hillsborough	Home 10:00am
13	Tues.	J. F. Kennedy	Away 3:45
15	Thurs.	Woodbridge	Away 3:45
21	Wed.	Monroe Township	Home 3:45
23	Fri.	Carteret	Home 3:45
28	Wed.	Colonial	Away 3:45
30	Fri.	Sayreville	Home 3:45

FEBRUARY			
4	Wed.	North Brunswick	Away 3:45
6	Fri.	J. F. Kennedy	Home 3:45
10	Tues.	Woodbridge	Home 3:45
13	Fri.	Monroe Township	Away 3:45
20	Fri.	Hunterdon Central	Away 3:45

JV & VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL 2003-2004

DECEMBER			
12	Fri.	West Morris Central (scrimmage)	Home 4:00
13	Sat.	Middlesex (scrimmage)	Home 10:00am
16	Tues.	Cardinal McCarrick (scrimmage)	Away 3:45
19	Fri.	Carteret	Home 5:30/7:00
27	Sat.	Hightstown Invitational	
29	Mon.	Hightstown Invitational	
30	Tues.	Hightstown Invitational	

JV & VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL 2003-2004 cont.

JANUARY			
3	Sat.	Colonial	Away 11:30/1:00
6	Tues.	Sayreville	Home 5:30/7:00
8	Thurs.	North Brunswick	Away 5:30/7:00
10	Sat.	Hillsborough	Away 11:30/1:00
13	Tues.	Wall	Home 5:15/7:00
15	Thurs.	Perth Amboy	Home 5:15/7:00
21	Wed.	Monroe Township	Away 5:15/7:00
23	Fri.	Carteret	Away 5:15/7:00
28	Wed.	Colonial	Home 5:15/7:00
30	Fri.	Sayreville	Away 5:15/7:00
31	Sat.	Bishop Ahr	Away 11:30/1:00

FEBRUARY			
4	Wed.	North Brunswick	Home 5:15/7:00
10	Tues.	Perth Amboy	Away 5:15/7:00
12	Thurs.	Monroe Township	Home 5:15/7:00
		GMC Tournament	State Tournament

FRESHMEN GIRLS BASKETBALL 2003-2004

DECEMBER			
19	Fri.	Carteret	Home 3:45

JANUARY			
3	Sat.	Colonial	Away 10:00am
6	Tues.	Sayreville	Home 3:45
8	Thurs.	North Brunswick	Away 3:45
10	Sat.	Hillsborough	Away 10:00am
13	Tues.	Wall	Home 3:45
15	Thurs.	Perth Amboy	Home 3:45
21	Wed.	Monroe Township	Away 3:45
23	Fri.	Carteret	Away 3:45
28	Wed.	Colonial	Home 3:45
30	Fri.	Sayreville	Away 3:45
31	Sat.	Bishop Ahr	Away 10:00am

FEBRUARY			
4	Wed.	North Brunswick	Home 3:45
10	Tues.	Perth Amboy	Away 3:45
12	Thurs.	Monroe Township	Home 3:45

JV & VARSITY WRESTLING 2003-2004

DECEMBER			
13	Sat.	Millburn (scrimmage)	Away 10:00am
20	Sat.	Morris Knolls Tournament	10:00am
27	Sat.	Hunterdon Central Tournament	

JANUARY			
3	Sat.	Edison	Away 12:30/2:00
5	Mon.	Boonton	Home 6:00/7:30
7	Wed.	J. P. Stevens	Home 6:00/7:30
9	Fri.	Piscataway	Away 5:30/7:00
12	Mon.	Monroe Township	Home 6:00/7:30
14	Wed.	Perth Amboy	Home 6:00/7:30
16	Fri.	Old Bridge	Home 6:00/7:30
19	Mon.	Bishop Ahr	Away 5:30/7:00
20	Tues.	East Brunswick	Home 6:00/7:30
22	Thurs.	Kittatinny	Home 6:00/7:30
27	Tues.	South Brunswick	Away 5:00/7:00
31	Sat.	High Point	Away 11:30/1:00

FEBRUARY			
6	Fri.	GMC Tournament @Piscataway	6:00
7	Sat.	GMC Tournament @Piscataway	10:00am
11	Wed.	Delaware Valley	Home 6:00/7:30
17	Tues.	Team Sectionals	

JV & VARSITY WRESTLING 2003-2004 cont.

19	Thurs.	Team Sectionals	
21	Sat.	Group Finals	
27	Fri.	Districts	Home 6:00
28	Sat.	Districts	Home 11:00am

MARCH			
2	Tues.	Regions	@Union HS
5	Fri.	Regions	@Union HS
6	Sat.	Regions	@Union HS
12	Fri.	State Championships	Atlantic City
13	Sat.	State Championships	Atlantic City
14	Sun.	State Championships	Atlantic City

BOYS AND GIRLS BOWLING 2003-04

ALL MATCHES PLAYED AT CAROLIER LANES - 3:45 p.m.

DECEMBER			
13	Sat.	Westfield Invitational	9:30am
15	Mon.	South Brunswick	
16	Tues.	Franklin @Strike & Spare	
17	Wed.	Hunterdon Central @Strike & Spare	
18	Thurs.	East Brunswick	
20	Sat.	Joe Romer Memorial	9:30am

JANUARY			
5	Mon.	Colonial	
6	Tues.	Woodbridge	
7	Wed.	GMC Individual Qualifying	
8	Thurs.	South Brunswick	
10	Sat.	Brick Invitational @Ocean Lanes	
12	Mon.	New Brunswick	
13	Tues.	J.P. Stevens	
14	Wed.	GMC Individual Finals	
15	Thurs.	Piscataway	
17	Sat.	Central Jersey Winter Classic	1:00pm
20	Tues.	South Brunswick	
21	Wed.	Hunterdon Central @Strike & Spare	
22	Thurs.	Edison	
24	Sat.	Lakewood Scotch Doubles	
27	Tues.	Old Bridge	
27	Wed.	East Brunswick	
29	Wed.	St. Joseph/North Brunswick	
31	Sat.	Girls Sectionals	9:30am


FEBRUARY			
2	Mon.	GMC Preliminary Round	
3	Tues.	GMC First Round	
5	Thurs.	GMC Second Round	
7	Sat.	Boys Sectionals	
9	Mon.	GMC Semi-Finals	
11	Wed.	GMC Finals	
13	Fri.	State Finals	10:30am

BOYS & GIRLS WINTER TRACK 2003-04

JANUARY			
7	Wed.	North Brunswick	Home 3:45
14	Wed.	Perth Amboy	Away 3:45
18	Sun.	State Relays	@Princeton 1:30
31	Wed.	Monroe Township	Home 3:45
28	Wed.	Carteret	Home 3:45

FEBRUARY			
4	Wed.	Sayreville	Away 3:45
15	Sun.	State Groups	@Princeton 2:00
29	Sun.	Championships	@Princeton 11:00am
		East Brunswick Relays	
		GMC Relays	
		GMC Meet	

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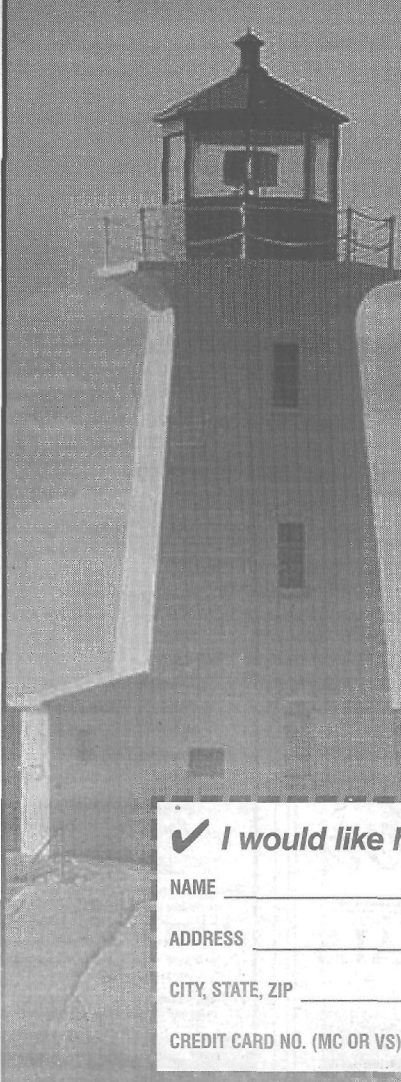


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Obituaries

Chiarina Viscosi, 89

Chiarina Viscosi died on Saturday, Dec. 6 at the Woodlands Care Center in Plainfield.

Mrs. Viscosi was born in Melizzano, Italy and came to the United States in 1967 settling in South Plainfield, where she had lived ever since.

She had been a homemaker and was a member of Sacred Heart Church in South Plainfield.

Her husband, Armando Viscosi, died in 1985. She was also predeceased by all of her sisters and a brother.

Surviving are her son and daughter-in-law, Pasquale and Yvonne Viscosi of South Plainfield and her granddaughter, Alexandra Viscosi.

Funeral services were held at the McCriskin Home For Funerals.

Wilfredo Andrade, 36

Wilfredo Andrade died tragically and suddenly on Thursday, Nov. 27 at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick as a result of a fall.

Born in Honduras, he had been living in Plainfield since 1986 and working construction for various contractors.

He is survived by his parents, Jose Maldonado and Bertha Montalvan of Honduras; two sisters, Vilma Andrade of Plainfield and Bessy Andrade of New Brunswick; a brother, Daniel Andrade of Plainfield; two aunts and his numerous cousins.

Funeral services were held at the McCriskin Home For Funerals.

Jerry S. Iavarone, 29

Jerry S. Iavarone died on Saturday, Nov. 29 at his home in Florida.

Born in Belleville, Jerry resided in Middletown and South Plainfield for a short while before moving to Florida 11 years ago.

He is predeceased by his grandfather, the late Jerry S. Iavarone, who died in 1999.

Surviving are his father, Dr. Joseph Iavarone and his wife, Lori of South Plainfield; two sisters, Kimberly and her husband, Chris of Holmdel and Amanda of South Plainfield; his brother, Joseph of Florida and his fraternal grandmother, Carmella Iavarone.

rone, also of Florida.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin Home For Funerals.

Mary Clemens Smith, 86

Mary Clemens Smith of Piscataway died on Thursday, Dec. 4 at the Rahway Geriatrics Center in Rahway.

Mary was born in Carteret and was a former resident of South Plainfield before moving to Piscataway 28 years ago.

She was a gift wrapper at the former Bamberger's in Plainfield for many years.

Mary was a communicant of Our Lady of Fatima Church in Piscataway and of the Altar Rosary Society. She also loved playing Bingo at the church.

She was predeceased by her beloved husband, Clifford Smith, who died in 1975.

She is survived by two sons, Clifford J. Smith and his wife, Mary Ann and Joseph H. Smith, both of Nutley; two daughters, Mary Ann and her husband, Lawrence Fratesi of Piscataway and Margaret Tiemeyer of Manchester; 17 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren.

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

Edward W. Morris, 78

Edward W. Morris died on Tuesday, Dec. 9 at the NJ Veterans Memorial Home in Menlo Park.

Born in Newark, he had resided in Newark, Irvington and Elizabeth before settling in Piscataway's Sterling Village.

He was a WWII veteran of the United States Navy as a Seaman First Class, serving in the Pacific aboard numerous ships before his discharge in 1947.

He was employed by Engelhard Corporation in Newark for 20 years in their precious Metals Department before his retirement in 1987. He previously worked for the former Fischer Baking Co. of Newark for 24 years.

Surviving are his beloved wife of 58 years, Virginia "Jean" (Lewis) Morris; two daughters and sons-in-law, Carol and Bill Arms of South Plainfield and Mary and Jim Fox of North Carolina; a son and daughter-

in-law, John and Vivian Morris of Milltown; two sisters, Agnes Pollack and Margaret Morris and three brothers, Charles, Thomas and Eugene.

Also surviving are five grandchildren, Danny and Kimberly Arms, Kelly Baron and Andrew and Kevin Fox.

Funeral services will begin on Friday, Dec. 12 at 8:30 a.m. in the McCriskin Home For Funerals, 2425 Plainfield Ave., followed by a Funeral Mass at 9:30 a.m. in St. Frances Cabrini RC Church, Piscataway.

Interment will follow in Hillside Cemetery, Scotch Plains.

Visitation will be held on Thursday from 2-4 and 7-9 p.m. in the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the NJ Veterans Memorial Home, P.O. Box 3013, Edison, NJ 08818.

Arthur L. Spencer, 46

Arthur L. Spencer died on Monday, Dec. 8 in Allegheny, Pa.

Born in Summit, he had resided in South Plainfield for most of his life before settling in Piscataway.

Since 1995, Art was the operator of the Spencer Sign Company of Piscataway. Previously, he was employed as a car salesman for Green Brook Pontiac, where he was named salesman of the year. Art had also worked for Garden State Automotive for 20 years.

Artie is a long time friend of Bill W. His mother, Charlene Spencer, died on Sunday, Nov. 13 of this year.

Surviving are his children, Tara of Philadelphia, Bethany and Artie of Clearmont, Fl. and Steven Carisle of Piscataway; his father, Arthur Spencer, Jr. of Ocala, Fl.; four sisters, Cathleen Spencer, Lynne Shinkle, Kimberley Jackson and Charlene Hall and two brothers, Michael and Mark Spencer.

Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin Home For Funerals.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Spencer children's college fund, C/O 2425 Plainfield Ave., South Plainfield, NJ 07080.

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**In Loving Memory of
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Though his smile is gone forever, and his hand we cannot touch, still we have so many memories of the one we love so much. His memory is our keepsake with which we will never part. God has him in his keeping; we have him in our hearts.

Sadly missed by his Wife, Children, Grandchildren, Family & Friends

Calling All Student Writers! Observer and Hometown Heros to Sponsor Junior Journalist Writing Contest

The South Plainfield *Observer* and Hometown Heros is co-sponsoring a writing program entitled "The Junior Journalist Corner." The program will encourage students to write and then reward them for their efforts.

The program will be coordinated and promoted in all South Plainfield schools. Students will be able to submit their own original poetry, article, opinion piece or essay.

Teachers in all of the schools have agreed to help with and to submit, the students' original writings to Hometown Heros and the *Observer*. After reading and judging students' works, a winner will be selected and his or her article will be published in the *Observer* with a byline each week. Watch upcoming issues for winners and published works.

Students whose articles are selected will win a catered dinner for their families from Hometown Heros, which will be delivered to their homes.

At the end of the school year, win-

ning students and their parents will be treated to a banquet and each will receive a certificate of achievement for their journalistic efforts.

All students are encouraged to submit their essays, poems, opinion pieces or articles to their teachers. Each school has already been notified about the rules on submissions.

We have already started to receive several poems and essays from the schools. If your teacher has not yet handed in your work, please remind them to do so as soon as possible. We will be reading and judging them during the next few weeks and announcing winners soon after. Entries must be submitted to the *Observer* or Hometown Heros by your teacher.

For more information on the contest, or if you would like the name of your school contact, call the *Observer* at (908) 668-0010, or stop by Hometown Heros, located at 340 Hamilton Blvd. or call them at (908) 755-4376.

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This Xmas I'll miss your smiles and gentle voices. God had a special place for me in Heaven, so he called my name and I had to go before I could say good-bye, so I will spend Xmas with Jesus. Please promise me you guys will be happy. I love all of you very much, but gosh it is beautiful in Heaven; some day you'll see. I'll say a special prayer for all of you Xmas Day. Please remember I'm happy. We'll meet again someday in Heaven.

I love all of you, Dad & Pop Pop
Charles Weaver

Merry Xmas Christmas to My Family

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policereport

• On Dec. 2 a South Plainfield Ave. resident reported the theft of a 1988 Mazda GT from the parking lot of his apartment.

• The assistant principal of Grant School reported that two pieces of broken concrete had been thrown at windows on the west side of the building breaking them.

• On Dec. 3 Maria D. Montanez, 19, of Plainfield was arrested for possession of a controlled dangerous substance at a motor vehicle accident.

• A Piscataway resident reported the theft of her purse which was left in a shopping cart outside K-Mart. The purse was returned to the store, however \$1,001 was missing from a hidden compartment.

• Twin City Pharmacy on Park Ave. reported receiving a bad check from a customer.

• On Dec. 4 the manager of Central Transport on New Era Dr. reported the theft of five cartons of men's golf jackets.

• On Dec. 5 a Mahar Ave. resident reported his company vehicle had been entered and a cell phone and credit card were taken from the glove compartment.

• A No. Madison Dr. resident reported the theft of a metal Christmas tree from outside the house.

• An employee of the Gulf gas station on Stelton Rd. reported that a black male had attempted to cash two checks that appeared fraudulent. When told the checks would not be cashed, the suspect became irate, threatened the employee and threw merchandise around the store.

• On Dec. 7 Donald Currie, 52, of Rahway was arrested for driving while intoxicated at a motor vehicle accident.

• Bravo Market on W. 7th St. reported that a customer was attempting to pass a counterfeit \$100 bill. The customer claimed his boss gave it to him as part of his pay.

• On Dec. 8 Calvin Wallace, 54, of Elizabeth was arrested for driving on a suspended license, driving while intoxicated and two outstanding warrants at a motor vehicle accident.

• A Fla. resident reported that his driver's side door handle had been pried out while parked in the Med Tech parking lot on Century Rd.

• An Ada Pl. resident reported the theft of a bank envelope containing \$54, which was left on the couch in the living room.

The front door had been left open while she was taking a shower, and she believes the theft may have happened then.

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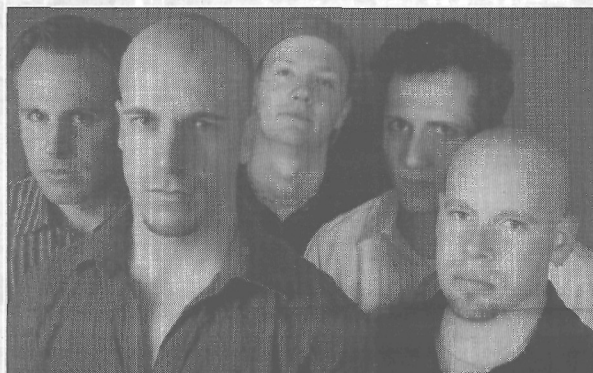
Vote Online For South Plainfield's "Unnamed"

Eric Seiz, Lou Takacs and Eric Witkowski, three SPHS graduates, are asking everyone to vote for their band, Unnamed (pronounced Un-named) in the Hard Rock Ultimate Altitude Buzz contest taking place right now.

After winning the preliminary and final competitions at the Hard Rock Café in New York City, they are now competing against nine other bands across the nation and Canada. Unnamed is representing the New York City Hard Rock Café. Each of the 10 bands has submitted a single original song for the contest which can be listened to online. From the three bands receiving the most votes, one will be chosen to open for the Platinum recording band, Simple Plan, in Steamboat, Colorado on Jan. 24, 2004.

In order to listen to Unnamed and vote, log onto www.unnamed.com or www.hardrock.com/promo/ultimatealtitude.

Voting takes place through Sunday, Dec. 14. Only one vote per email address or the vote will be disqualified!



"Unnamed" hopes to take the top prize in Hard Rock Cafe contest.



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From the South Plainfield Library Bookmarks

By Sunnie Randolph

Special Program—On Dec. 17 at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Kurt will perform at the library. Children and adults of all ages are encouraged to get in the holiday spirit and come to the library and sing-a-long with Mr. Kurt.

Children's Programs—Dec. 15-20 will be children's story times and crafts the week of Dec. 15. They will be held Tuesday morning at 10:30 a.m., Thursday afternoon at 1:15 p.m. and Books-n-Babies on Friday at 10:30 a.m. There will be a special Kidcraft program on Friday, Dec. 19 at 4 p.m. for children six and older. Please call and register for this program.

Books To Keep—Please donate new children's books to the less fortunate children in Middlesex County. The library will be accepting books until Dec. 22. You may also make a monetary donation to the Books to Keep program. For more information, please call the library.

Friends of the Library—The Friends of the South Plainfield Public Library are collecting new warm

hats, gloves, mittens and scarves for the FISH organization. There is a drop off basket in the display area of the library.

Book Donations—Just a reminder that the South Plainfield Public Library is always seeking donations of hardcover and paperback books that are in good condition. We do not accept textbooks, encyclopedias or magazines.

New Books, Videos, DVDs and CDs—The library has recently added many new items to the library's collection. This is the season when many of your favorite authors have new books out. Take a break from all the holiday bustle and read a new book. There are also new videos and DVDs to watch and CDs to listen to while you are cleaning or cooking. Sounds like fun.

Elvis—When the weather is bad and you can't get to the library to return your library materials, call Elvis and renew your items. If Elvis won't renew, please call the library as soon as possible to renew and avoid overdue fines.



Maureen Goldfeder at the recently opened Maureen's Gift Studio, which offers unique gifts.

Funky, Fine Shopping at Maureen's


Maureen's Gift Studio recently opened at 1818 Oak Tree Rd. in Edison, and according to owner Maureen Goldfeder, the store gives her an opportunity to do what she loves best—shop.

She's chosen to fill the former doctor's office, which occupies part of her home, with what she considers to be "funky, fine gifts." Among the collection of items for sale are tapestry wall art and pillows, marble art objects, NYCO gold and silver enamel art, Tiffany pieces, antique style jewelry by famous designers including Anne Koppik, porcelain dolls, decorator Music

and Motion rhythm wall and table clocks and tapestry pet motifs.

Maureen has been a registered nurse at JFK Hospital in Edison for over 25 years and is a certified One Stroke painter who has been teaching the craft for three years. After she is settled in the shop, she hopes to resume giving classes.

The holiday shopping season is here and Maureen's Gift Studio offers some different gift giving ideas so drop in! Her hours are Tuesday from 3-8 p.m., Thursday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 12-4 p.m. or call (732) 205-1818.



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