



South Plainfield Observer

VOL. 8, NO. 28

50 CENTS

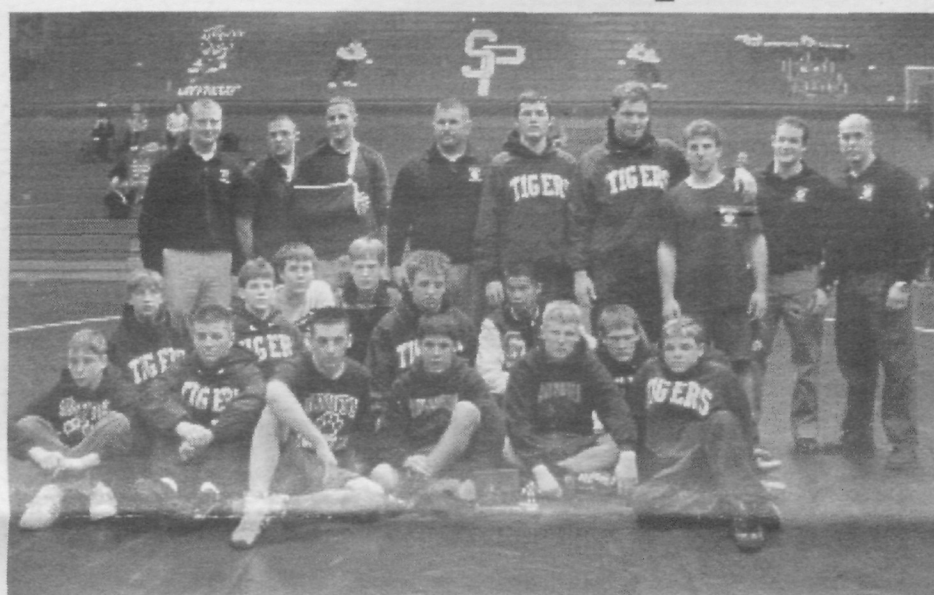
MARCH 5, 2004

TIGERS RULE!

SPHS Basketball, Wrestling Teams Dominate Competitors



Tigers Varsity Basketball Team 2003-2004—kneeling (left to right) are Gary Houston, Darren Smith, Ian Robinson, Jon Buggy and Shawn Brown. Standing (left to right) are Assistant Coach Mike Allocco, Jawaad Caldwell, Mike Richard, Marquis Jones, Jon Hammond and Coach Jeff Lubreski.



South Plainfield High School District 12 Wrestling champions.

Boys Basketball Team Wins First Ever Conference Championship

By Greg Machos

For the first time in school history, the South Plainfield Tigers have appeared in and won the Championship Game of the Greater Middlesex Conference

Tournament. Last Thursday night they defeated a familiar opponent, Colonia, whom they defeated twice during the course of the regular season, including a recent 63-55 win at the Patriots home court on

Feb. 14.

Leading by only three at the beginning of the fourth quarter, 37-34, South Plainfield went on a 20-6 surge in the final period, starting the

Continued on page 9

SPHS Wrestlers Claim 20th Consecutive District 12 Title

By Bob Hunter

The South Plainfield High School Wrestling Team won their 20th consecutive District 12 team title this past weekend. The "streak," which is now the longest in the state, seemed to come particularly easy, after coming off an embarrassing loss to Phillipsburg in the sectional finals.

The Tigers advanced all twelve wrestlers as they entered the Region 3 tournament, which started this week at Union High School.

The Tigers crowned six individual champions and had five runner-ups and one third place winner.

Claiming titles were Jimmy Conroy (103), who pinned Adei Afzal of New Providence at 1:22. Conroy pinned Mike Sarafati of North Plainfield at 2:36 in the semifinals.

The next winner was Sam Martin (130), who won a 2-1 decision over Shane Ricco of Watchung 2-1. Martin pinned Ed Wasleski of North Plainfield at 3:57 in the semifinals.

Peter DeAndrea (140), who really stepped it up, won by major decision over Omar Carter of Plainfield 11-0. DeAndrea pinned Aminoine Thomas of Middlesex at 3:00 in the semifinals. It was the first individual title DeAndrea won this year. He placed third in the three other tournaments

he wrestled in.

Senior Guy Severini (152), put on a clinic when he defeated Dan Fellingner of New Providence by major decision 13-5. In the semifinals, Severini pinned Randy Bisset of Colonia at 0:52.

Rob Maistickle (215), has

Middlesex at 1:18. Elliot pinned Bobby Fink of New Providence in 0:52 in the semi finals.

Claiming second place honors were Billy Ashnault (112), Mike Jakubik (119), Nick Dorey (125) Paul Ritchey (145) and Kevin Crilley (189). Nick

Girls Reach GMC Semi-Finals



SPHS Varsity Basketball team members are (Jessa Jones, Ngozi Okarae and Johanna Hedler (team captains), Danielle Arndt, Coral Willis, Rachael Perez, Asia Hollis, Erika Blaszk, Chaim Tomei, Dani-Jo Dimaria, Jasmine Hessing and Jessica Miller. The team is coached by Bill Shulte; assistant coaches are Taryn Decker and John Greco.

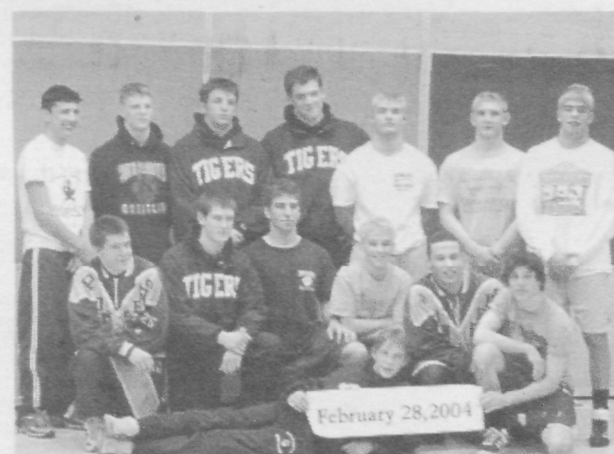
South Plainfield's girls basketball team, who racked up an impressive 18-3 record this season, advanced to the semi-finals of GMC, before losing to J.P. Stevens 44-31. They advanced to the semi-finals with an exciting come from

behind win over Colonia.

South Plainfield lost to Holmdel Tuesday night 57-52, in the opening round of the NJSIAA. This was the same team that eliminated them in last year's tournament.

The SPHS girls team has

had a top flight program this year under Coach Bill Schulte. They won the White Division and earned a fourth seed in the tourney. Danielle Arndt, who scored 10 points in the loss to Stevens, is one of the top players along with Jessa Jones.



After winning the District 12 Team title last weekend, the South Plainfield High School Wrestling Team advanced all 12 wrestlers who competed. After competing in the Region 3 prequarterfinals on Tuesday, five of those wrestlers advanced to the Region 3 tournament this weekend at Union High School.

been a steady force for the Tigers lately. He came up big with a 4-1 decision victory over Alex Plotkin of Watchung for the fifth Tiger title. Maistickle pinned Ricky Natale of New Providence at 3:11 in the semifinals.

Ryan Elliot (275), put the icing on the cake when he pinned Chad Lasala of

Curcio (135), who lost in the semifinals, came back strong and won his consolation final for third place.

Overall, the team looked ready to wrestle and were in good shape, scoring 250 points to win the team title. New Providence was second with 174 points and Watchung placed third with 128.

Mark your calendars

Log on to
southplainfieldnj.com
for the latest
meeting agenda

council meetings

Meets twice a month on the first and third Monday.
Borough Hall Council Chambers • Questions? 908-226-7605

	Agenda Meeting	Public Meeting
Monday, March 15	7:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Monday, April 5	7:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Monday, April 19	7:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, May 4	7:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Monday, May 17	7:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Monday, June 7	7:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.

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

planning board

Meets second and fourth Tuesday of the month
Borough Hall Council Chambers, 7 p.m. • Questions? 908-226-7641
March 9 and 23, April 6 and 20, May 11 and 25, June 8 and 22, July 6 and 20, Aug. 10 and 24, Sept. 21, Oct. 12 and 26, Nov. 16 and 30 and Dec. 14 and 28.

zoning board of adjustment

Meets second and fourth Thursday of the month
Borough Hall Council Chambers, 8 p.m. • Questions? 908-226-7641
March 11 and 25, April 8 and 22, May 13 and 27, June 10 and 24, July 8 & 22, Aug. 12 and 26, Sept. 9 and 23, Oct. 14 and 28, Nov. 4 and 18 and Dec. 2 and 16.

board of education meetings

Roosevelt Administration Gymnasium on Jackson Ave. unless otherwise noted
Committee of the Whole meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m.: March 9 and April 6.
Regular Board Meeting held Tuesdays at 8 p.m.: March 16 and April 13.

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

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 6, May 4, June 1, Aug. 3, Sept. 7, Oct. 5, Nov. 2 and Dec. 7.

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

IN YOUR OPINION

Letter to the Editor,

This is in response to Councilman Petronko's letter of Feb. 22. The Republicans have always supported the Helen Street Project, since its inception many years ago. I am sorry that I was unable to attend the meeting for this on Feb. 11. It seems that Mr. Butrico has done an exceptional job of seeing that the project has been moving forward and I applaud him for that. The Republicans have never had "a secret plan to accelerate the project." We have always been wondering why every year, a promise has been made for a specific date of completion and then that date has been changed after the elections are over. We have not shown a total lack of interest – maybe only to Mr. Petronko and the current council.

I am appalled at the fact that Edison Township has now seen the need to put a stop to the project when it has finally come so far. Where was Edison's concern when a builder put up all those condos, townhouses and a huge bridge right through the Dismal Swamp several years ago? Who was paid off for that project? I work on the south side of town. I know the traffic on Hamilton Blvd. and Belmont Ave. I believe that the Helen Street Project will take the traffic away from Roosevelt School on Belmont Ave., as well as Hamilton Blvd. I do not see why Edison believes that the truck traffic will go into their township. Metuchen Road will be extended to Helen Street – all in South Plainfield. Edison, however, has posted signs in their town pointing trucks into South Plainfield along Maple Avenue and Oak Tree Rd. I guess they don't want trucks in any part of their town, but it is okay for all trucks to be everywhere in South Plainfield.

On another issue – the comments recently made by our Mayor and Superintendent of Schools in the *New York Times*. New business is good for South Plainfield. It gives our residents other choices of eating places and places to shop. With all the development of malls everywhere, it is nice to be able to help local businesses succeed here in town. Olive Garden is not an upscale restaurant. It is similar to Bennigans, which we already have here in South Plainfield. It is a nice family restaurant. Starbucks coffee is another coffee shop that is not upscale – there are Starbucks coffee shops everywhere; my son works for one. The Mayor's comments makes it sound like we are a little hick town. Well, we are not! We are a hard working community that cares about the quality of life for our families. Giving our families options as to where to shop locally is a good thing.

As far as the Superintendents comments – while you may have said everything you claim you said to the reporter from the *Times*, what they do with it before it goes to print is another thing. Again, your comments which were reported, make it sound like the community as a whole is uneducated. Again, portraying us a hick town in the middle of the sticks. We have over 70% of our graduating students going on to some form of higher education. While it would be nice to have 100% doing that, that is not a

Submit Letters to the Editor:

Letters may be submitted to the Observer, 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080, by email: ggnan@aol.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. Limit letters to no more than 400 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.

realistic number. Many students cannot afford college and a number of students have no desire to go on to college. But our school district makes every option available to all students. I have always been proud of our district and what it has to offer. I agree with Andrea LaCerdas's comments also – the value of our properties is largely tied in to how good the school district is – the first question most people ask before moving in to any town, is how good are the schools?

I like South Plainfield. I have lived here for 28 years. I plan on continuing to live here and work here. I am one of the hard working people that will continue to make my voice heard about issues here in town. And while I may not make every meeting of the council and the School Board, I will make every effort to make as many as I can in the future. I encourage all residents to do the same.
MARJORIE M. REEDY

To the Editor,

One of the rules of reporting, whether to make a project report or a newspaper story, is to check the facts. I suggest that the *Times* reporter go

back and check his facts. Then I ask that he take a trip to the high school and look at the "Wall of Fame."

Many of the older generation didn't graduate from college because we were patriotic and went into the service to fight in WWII. Yes, many returnees went on to college under the GI Bill, but many others had to go to work, because we had dropped out of high school and never got that important piece of paper.

Although we are not all the so called "rocket scientists," we are the people that put together the nuts and bolts and wires that made rockets fly.

My children did very well. One daughter is a registered nurse, another has a Masters Degree in Public Health Education. My son went to radio and technology school and is now sales manager for an office business machines company. I thank the good Lord every day that they are doing so well.

My wife has three degrees. I have 27 credits at Middlesex County College and a Master Plumber license.

So, even without that piece of paper which the reporter says is so important, we are doing all right. Yes, with that paper we might be doing better, but who knows.

**SINCERELY
WILLIAM TUTHILL**

To the Editor,

Last week's paper contained a letter from Councilman Ray Petronko. Conventional wisdom is that you don't respond to cheap political potshots, but this one deserved a response.

First, I want to agree with Petronko
(Continued on page 6)

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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: 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 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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Class of 2004 Holds Fundraiser at Uno's



Laura Papp and Kerry Mackie.



Catherine Flannery with mom Nancy

Story/photos by Patricia Abbott

SPHS Senior Class President Brittany DeNitzio always has her eye out looking for creative ways to raise money for the class of 2004. Not long ago she discovered a creative and delicious fundraiser that involved nothing more complicated than gathering friends and family to enjoy a meal at Uno's Chicago Grill on Stelton Rd. On Feb. 5, between 5 and 10 p.m., participants in possession of a special Uno's coupon had 20 percent of their check donated to the Class of 2004. Approximately 100 people found that it was indeed, "A tasty way to raise dough!"

Brittany spotted information on the fundraiser while dining at Uno's with her family. Manager Bill Vasata worked with Brittany to organize the event. The class raised almost \$400. Brittany was told the class did very well compared to other groups who have attempted the fundraiser.

Class Advisors Gina Solazzo and Diana Joffe said, "We're proud of all our seniors for their enthusiasm and support of this activity. Again, this proves that initiative and team work equals success. We would also like to thank Pizzeria Uno for giving us this opportunity to raise funds for the Class of 2004 and the community members who supported us." The money will be used for their prom and other class expenses.



Volunteers served over 200 dinners last Friday at Sacred Heart on the first night of their annual Lenten fish fry. The fish dinners, sponsored by the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, are served from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Sacred Heart Cafeteria and will continue each Friday during Lent.

Indian Temple Wants to Locate in South Plainfield

During the past few months the Board of Adjustment has held several special meetings on the application of the I.S.S.O (International Swaminarayan Satsang Organization) to open a temple in South Plainfield on Fleet Street, located off of Park Ave.

Applicant Dhraval Sheh testified that the church will be open seven days a week, but only hold services on Sundays between 5 and 6:30 p.m. and no weddings or celebrations will be held there. Regular attendance now is 150, but could grow to about 250 people.

Last week's special meeting, held at the senior center, brought out many residents from both Edison and South Plainfield who will be directly affected by the traffic pattern. Molly Swamina-

than, a traffic engineer, reported on the results of a traffic study done in the area of Fleet, Universal and Nevsky streets, which cars will use to enter and leave the temple. She testified it would not create a traffic problem, because they will be holding services on Sunday evenings, when traffic is light. Swaminathan based her report on two traffic studies done of the area, one on Wednesday and the other on a Sunday and included accident reports.

Residents expressed doubts on the results of the traffic study, saying it is difficult for them to turn left onto Park Ave.

The I.S.S.O. hearing will continue on to the Board meeting held on Thursday, March 11.

Local Churches Will Observe the Passion of Christ During Lenten Season

The Christian churches of the South Plainfield Ecumenical Association invite the community to join them during this Easter Season. The Ecumenical Association, a joint worship project among the churches of South Plainfield, have announced that there will be a Lenten Worship Series held at various churches in town. Lenten season is a self-examination period. It is the 40-day period between Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday.

The first of the worship services was held on Wednesday, March 3 at Wesley United Methodist Church. Additional Lenten Worship services will be held at the following locations:

Tuesday, March 9 at The First Baptist Church on Hamilton Ave.

School Board Candidates Will Run Unopposed

This year's school board election candidates have no opponents.

The only candidates who have registered to run are the two incumbents, Board President Pio Pennisi and Steve Bohn and Terry Alexis, who was appointed to the seat vacated by Dawn Jefferys, who resigned suddenly in October. Voters will be allowed to write in candidates, but it is unlikely to have an effect on the election.

Voters will also asked to approve the 2004/2005 school budget. On Tuesday, March 9, at the Committee of the Whole meeting, the board is scheduled to adopt a tentative budget. The meeting, which starts at 7 p.m., is held at the Roosevelt Administration Building. The school board elections will be held on Tuesday, April 20.

Craft Vendors Needed at Riley

Vendors are needed for a Craft Fair on Friday, April 2, from 5-9 p.m. at the John E. Riley Elementary School.

For additional information, call (908) 561-2530 and ask for Laura.

Wednesday, March 17 at Sacred Heart Church on South Plainfield Ave.

Tuesday, March 23 at St. Stephens Lutheran Church on Park Ave.

Wednesday, March 31 at the Rescue House of Prayer on Roosevelt Ave.

Tuesday, April 6 at The St. Stephens Proto Martyr Church on Lane Ave.

Everyone is invited to establish a spiritual discipline at this season and sharpen their spirituality with your community. All services begin at 7:30 p.m.

Still seeking the Passion of the Christ? Find it at Wesley United Methodist Church located at 1500 Plainfield Ave.

Wesley Church encourages everyone to reach out to those in need of His love during its Five Weeks of Lenten Love program during Sunday worship at 10:30 a.m. Each week a different area of love will be emphasized. They will begin with love and prayer and later love and presence, love and gifts, love and service and love and the heart.

This five-week Lenten observance will conclude with a Prayer Vigil to be held at Wesley Church on Saturday,

April 3 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. All are welcome.

Wesley also invites everyone to come back on Palm Sunday, April 4 and on Easter Sunday, April 11 at 10:30 for Sunday worship services.

Wesley Church will host a Maundy Thursday Service on April 8 at 7:30 p.m. Share with us the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

On Good Friday we will join other Christians of the South Plainfield Ecumenical Association to celebrate the Lord's Tenebrae on Friday, April 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Our joy is found as we conclude with South Plainfield's traditionally held Easter Sunday Sunrise Service on Sunday, April 11 at 6:30 a.m. at Spring Lake Park. This is a rain or shine community event.

Mark Your Calendars

The April 2 Observer will be mailed to **EVERY HOME** in South Plainfield. To reserve space, call (908) 668-0010. DEADLINE IS MARCH 22

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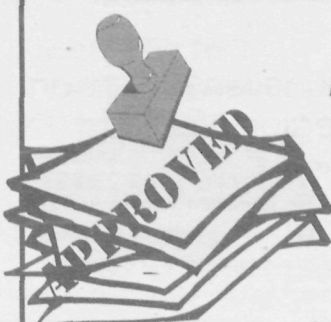
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Events

VFW Country Breakfast

March 7

The VFW Memorial Post #6763, located on Front St., will be hosting a Country Breakfast on Sunday, March 7, from 8 to 11 a.m. The donation is \$5 and children 12 years and under are \$3. For more information, call (908) 668-9751 after 3 p.m. daily and 12 Noon on weekends.

Jr. Baseball Club Presents Pro Wrestling

March 8

The South Plainfield Junior Baseball Club will hold a fundraising Pro Wrestling match at the South Plainfield Middle School on March 6. Doors open at 7 p.m., bell time is 8 p.m.

Cost of tickets are \$25, \$20 and \$15. Tickets are available at Sportworld or at the door.

SPHS Athletic Booster Club Meeting

March 9

The next SPHS Athletic Booster Club meeting is Tuesday, March 9 at 7:30 p.m. in the high school cafeteria. They will be discussing officers for next year, special track meet, Senior Letter winner dinner, any requests from the coaches and any topics about the student-athletes. Winter Sports Awards will be held Wed. March 17, 2004 at 7 p.m. in the high school auditorium. See you all there! Go TIGERS!

Fibromyalgia/Chronic Fatigue Support Group

March 9

If you suffer from CFS and/or Fibromyalgia, please join us at our next support group meeting on Tuesday, March 9 from 7-8:30 p.m. at Pilgrim Covenant Church, 3121 Park Ave. For more information, please contact Jeff Wassen at (908) 561-7341.

Morris Ave. Seniors Atlantic City Trip

March 9

The seniors at 151 Morris Ave. are planning a bus trip to Atlantic City on Tuesday, March 9 to the Showboat Casino. The cost is \$15 and you receive \$15 from the casino. The bus leaves the senior residence at 151 Morris Ave. at 9 a.m. and returns at 7:30 p.m. The trip is open to the public. Bring a friend. For information or to purchase a ticket, contact Frank (908) 753-1083 or Cricket at (908) 753-7027.

SPHS PTA Auction/Raffle

March 13

The SPHS PTA's Project Graduation Auction/Raffle will be held on Saturday, March 13 in the South Plainfield High School Gymnasium. All pro-

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

Senior Center EVENTS

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Monthly meetings will now be on the third Thursday of the month				
EVENTS				
March 17—Hunterdon Hills Playhouse "The Rainmaker"				
April 7—Atlantic City Trip to Taj Mahal				
May 26—Hunterdon Hills Playhouse "Everyone Loves Opal"				
Adult Crafts 9:30-11:30am 8 Yoga 10:30-11:30am Drawing Class 11:30am-12:30pm	Bingo 10am-2pm 9 Ladies Social Group 10am Lunch Available Income Tax Prep 9am-Noon Computer Class 12-2pm	Exercise 8:45-9:45 10 Movie Time 11:30am AARP Crafts 1pm Computer Class 11am & 1pm Line Dancing 10am Atlantic City Trip	Shopping Pathmark 9am 4 Practical Crafting 10am to 11am Income Tax Preparation 9am-Noon Pinochle Club 1pm	Bingo 10am-2pm 5 Pizza Lunch Bridge Club 12:30pm
Weekly Shopping at Pathmark 9am 11 Practical Crafting 10-11am Income Tax Prep 9am-Noon Pinochle Club 1pm	Bingo 10am-2pm 12 Pizza Lunch Avail. Bridge Club 12:30pm			

TO SIGN UP FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SENIOR CITIZEN'S CENTER, VISIT THE CENTER.

ceeds benefit the SPHS Class of 2004's Project Graduation.

For tickets or auction information, call (908) 756-3731 or (908) 756-6512 or email ando1932@aol.com.

Elks Holding Corned Beef Dinner

March 13

The South Plainfield Elks Veterans committee will be sponsoring their annual Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner at the Elks Club on New Market Ave on Saturday, March 13 from 4:30 to 9 p.m. The all you eat dinner is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and includes beer, soda, coffee and cake. For information, call for in (908) 756-6406.

AARP Chapter 4144 Meeting

March 15

The South Plainfield Chapter of AARP will meet on Monday, March 15 at the senior center at 12:30 p.m. The program will feature the RSVP entertainers Mel Sherwyn, stand-up comedian and Jocelyn Hill, cabaret singer. The defensive drivers course scheduled for Mar. 10, 11, 13 and 20 is filled. Another course will be scheduled in a few months.

Knights of Columbus St Patrick's Party

March 20

The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus will hold their annual St. Patrick's Day Party on Saturday, March 20 at the Knights hall at 334 Hamilton Blvd. from 8p.m. to 12 p.m. The cost is \$20 per person, which includes a corn beef and cabbage dinner. It also includes an open bar (beer, wine and soda) and a DJ will be playing classic Irish music. If interested please contact Jim Shea at (908) 756-0478 for tickets because seats are limited.

Franklin PTA Auction/Raffle Night

March 20

The Franklin School PTA is sponsoring their annual Auction/Raffle Night. The event will be held on Saturday, March 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the South Plainfield High School Gym.

Every advanced ticket sale receives a complimentary ticket for grand prize drawing. Food is welcomed and soft drinks will be available for purchase.

Price of the tickets are \$7 in advance

and \$10 at the door. For more information or to purchase tickets, call Dorothea at (908) 753-7117 or Terry at (908) 753-2864.

Troop 207 Chili Fest

March 21

BSA Troop 207 from the Knights of Columbus will hold their 5th annual "All You Can Eat Chili Fest" on Sunday, March 21 at the South Plainfield High School Cafeteria from 3 to 7 p.m. Tickets are \$4 each and are can be purchased from any Troop 207 Scout or at the door. This fundraiser benefits the troop to help them in purchasing camping supplies that are needed. Please come and support our Troop and enjoy the Chili.

For additional information please call (908) 753-2562. Hope to see you there!!!!

Columbiettes Easter Bunny Brunch

March 21

The South Plainfield Columbiettes will hold their annual Easter Bunny Brunch on Sunday, March 21 in the cafeteria of Sacred Heart School, off South Plainfield Ave. Doors will open at 12:30 p.m. and a buffet style-luncheon will be served at 1 p.m.

Cost is \$12 for adults and \$10 for children ages one to 12. All youngsters through age seven will receive a basket from the bunny and there will be games and prizes for all ages.

Reservations must be made in advance and will be accepted on a first come, first served basis, as the event does sell out. Please give the ages of the youngsters when reserving because the baskets are age-appropriate. For tickets and information, contact either Annemarie at (732) 549-2643 or Geri at (908) 753-2032.

Czestochowa Plans Chicken Dinner

March 27

The Annual Parish Chicken Dinner will be held on Saturday, March 27 from 4 to 7:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish Hall on Hamilton Blvd., sponsored by the Rosary Society. The donation is \$7 for adults and \$3.50 for children five through 12. Children under five are free. For pickup orders call the OLC Hall at (908) 753-4077 on Saturday, March 27 after 3 p.m. No tickets are necessary to attend the event.

— Out of Town —

Touchstone Open Forum for Educators

March 5

On March 5 local teachers, students, artists and administrators will converge at the Touchstone Café in reaction to the No Child Left Behind Act and other issues that pose challenges for our public educational system. The Open Mic takes place from 8 to 11 p.m.

Admission is a suggested donation of \$5 per person, payable at the door. Free parking is available next to the theatre. Touchstone is located at 321 East Fourth St. For information, call Touchstone Theatre at (610) 867-1689.

Blues Rising Stars Perform

March 6

Blues will perform at the Paramus Picture Show-35 Plaza, 65 Route 4 West in Paramus. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., show starts at 8 p.m. Price is \$16. For more information, call (800) 594-TIXX or (201) 845-6112.

Edison Symphony Finale Concert

March 6

The Edison Arts Society has announced that the Edison Symphony Orchestra Season Finale concert will be presented at 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 6 at the Middlesex County College Performing Arts Center.

Reserved seats for this concert are on sale: adults at \$30 each and students at \$25. Ask about our special Movie Magic dinner/concert package offered at \$45 per person in conjunction with the Sheraton Edison Hotel. Group rates are available and both Visa and MasterCard are accepted.

Call the Edison Arts Society office at (908) 753-ARTS now to reserve best seating!

Dunellen American Legion Breakfast

March 7

The Dunellen American Legion Post 119 is sponsoring an 'All You Can Eat Breakfast' on Sunday, March 7, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The menu includes eggs/omelets, homemade pancakes, waffles and French toast with whipped cream and fruit, bacon and sausage, country style biscuits and gravy, homefries, toast, coffee cake and coffee and tea. Donation is \$6.

The breakfast will be at the Dunellen American Legion Post 119, located at 137 New Market Rd. in Dunellen.

Chinese Auction at Resurrection of Christ

March 7

A Chinese Auction will be held at the Resurrection of Christ Church, 649 Bound Brook Rd. Rt. 28 in Dunellen on Sunday, March 7. Doors open at 12 noon, calling begins at 2 p.m.

A large variety of items are offered, including Easter items, perfumes, household items and gift certificate. The kitchen will be open to purchase food. Free coffee and cake is available and there will be door prizes. The donation is \$5 a person.

For more information, call (732) 873-1731 or (732) 752-5741. Snow date is Sunday, March 14.

Wardlaw Hartridge Skill Sessions

March 7-14 & 21

Wardlaw Hartridge School in Edison is offering three "skill" sessions on Sunday, March 7, 14 and 21, from 10 a.m. to 12 Noon. The cost of all three sessions is \$100. They are open to boys and girls grades five through 12. For questions, call Shotman Basketball at (908) 917-8385.

Middlesex East WOWs Meeting

March 9

The Middlesex East Widows or Widowers will hold their business meeting on Tuesday, March 9, starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Carteret Community Center located at Pershing and Cooke Avenues, Carteret. Light refreshments and socializing to follow. For more information, contact Tony at (732) 727-1410 or Lois at (908) 757-0515.

Moonrakers Tall Club

March 9

The New Jersey Moonrakers Tall Club, Inc., a social and community service organization serving people of "taller-than-average," 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.njtail.org> or email us at newjersey@tall.org.

Woodbridge WOW's Business Meeting

March 10

The Woodbridge Area Widows or Widowers (WOWs) will have a business meeting and social on Wednesday, March 10 at 7 p.m. in the main Public Library, George Frederick Plaza, Amboy Ave. in Woodbridge. Light refreshments will be served.

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

B'nai B'rith Plans Trip to Museum

March 14

The B'nai B'rith Ketubah Married Couples Unit (40+) will be going to the Montclair Art Museum in Montclair on Sunday, March 14 at 1:30 p.m. The cost is \$6.50 per person. Prospective members are welcome to come. R.S.V.P. to Elaine at (908) 232-0062 by March 12.

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.**



At the February Girl Scouts Leaders Meeting held at the Elks Club, Junior Girl Scout Troop #136 from Franklin School performed the flag ceremony for leaders, family and friends. Pictured from left to right: (back row) Crystal Hay, Jesse Doyle, Jessica Bohn, Gabriella Lewis, Jenna Cianfrocca, Allyson White, Alexis Cargill, (front row) Monika Tarnawska, Olga Jastrzebski, Jennifer Tercek and Kaity Stainings.

Council Unresponsive to Second Senior Residence

At a recent informal hearing in front of the Borough Council, Sam Bitonti of Bitonti Development introduced a plan to build a second senior residence next to the present 100-unit building on Morris Ave.

The five story building would be located on the wooded property next to the current senior residence and would also contain 100 units and 120 parking spaces.

However, the mayor and members of the council were not too responsive to the plan, citing the fact that a school is located directly across the street and another 100 unit residence is right next door, which would produce another 100+ cars entering and leaving the parking lot. They also felt two five-story buildings and a school would make that neighborhood too dense.

Supporting the plans was Council-

man Ed Kubala, who said the waiting list at the present senior residence is almost 100. He said the council should study all of the benefits before rejecting the plan, explaining that seniors need an affordable place to live so they won't be forced to move out of town. Having 100 additional units available would benefit many seniors who could not otherwise afford to stay in South Plainfield, he concluded.

Frank Mikorski, commenting on the plans, said that traffic would not be a problem, because the school board allotted \$1 million to study and create new safety traffic patterns around the schools. Mayor Gallagher replied that traffic is only one of the problems with building a new residence on that property.

The council asked that Bitonti look to see if another 3-4 acre site could be found in the Borough.

Oppelt Named to Dean's List

Hartwick College senior Sarah A. Oppelt of South Plainfield, daughter of Richard and Joanne Oppelt, has been named to the fall term Dean's List at Hartwick College.

Inclusion on Hartwick's Dean's List is an indication of excellent academic work, including the completion of a full course load with at least a 3.5 grade point average, based on a 4.0 scale.

Oppelt is majoring in Biology.

Hartwick College is an innovative, private, coeducational institution of 1,450 students. Its "liberal arts in practice" tradition engages students in practical, course-related activities throughout their college careers. The College is a leader in integrating advanced technology into the classroom and among small colleges, its study-abroad program is ranked nationally in the percentage of students who study abroad.

Bishop Named To Dean's List

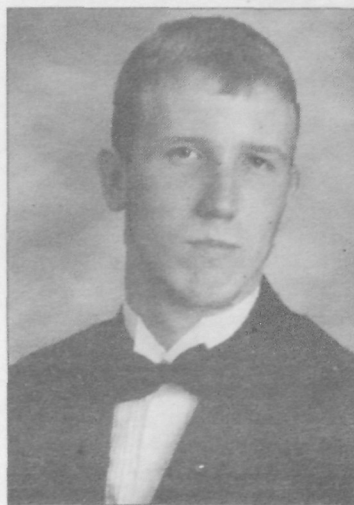
Kimberly Bishop was named to the Dean's Honor List at Kean University for the Fall 2003 semester. Kimberly is enrolled in the Early Childhood Education Program. She is the daughter of Scot and Debra Bishop.

Thomas Troia on Dean's List

Thomas Troia of South Plainfield was named to the Dean's List for the fall 2003 semester at Pratt Institute, School of Art and Design in Brooklyn, NY. Thomas is the son of Thomas, Sr. and Gina Troia. He is currently a sophomore majoring in Communications Design.

southplainfieldpeople Milestones

Veinott Placed on Academic Honors List at California University of Pennsylvania



Philip Veinott

Philip Veinott's grades for the Fall semester of 2003 were of such high quality that he has earned a place on the Academic Honors List for California University of Pennsylvania. This Honors List is restricted to full-time students who earn a grade point average of 3.25 or higher. Philip's grade point average was 3.5.

Philip is a member of the California University's basketball team. The team is third in the East Region, first in the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference and 16th in the nation.

Philip was a graduate of the South Plainfield High School's Class of 2003. He is the son of George and Maureen Veinott, both of South Plainfield.

Local Students Shine in "Guys and Dolls" Production at Wardlaw-Hartridge

Melissa DuPont of South Plainfield, playing Adelaide in "Guys and Dolls" tries to get the attention of Greg Moran of Plainfield, who plays Nathan Detroit, in the March 4-6 Wardlaw-Hartridge Upper School production of the Frank Loesser show.

With a nightly curtain of 7:30, the musical, which features such well-known songs as *If I Were a Bell*, *Luck be a Lady Tonight* and *A Bushel and a Peck*, is open to the public.

Adult tickets are \$5 and may be purchased at the door.

For more information, please call (908) 754-1882 during school hours.



Melissa DuPont and Greg Moran

Photo by Susan Dougherty

Enter Design a T-Shirt Contest!

The Clean Community Advisory Board of South Plainfield is holding a Design a T-Shirt Contest for its 2004 Annual Spring Clean Up. The contest is open to any child in grades K-12 who resides in South Plainfield and wishes to enter and comply with the rules and regulations.

T-shirt designs should demonstrate this year's theme: "Clean Streets Equal Clean Streams." Designs must be received in Borough Hall by March 22 and should be marked "Attention Alice Temple."

Prizes will be awarded according to age and distributed at the Clean Up Picnic on April 17. A free t-shirt will be given to the first 40 children who preregister and participate in the

clean up on April 17.

To receive an application, contact Alice Tempel at (908) 226-7521. Questions may be directed Marie Markey at (908) 755-3213.

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FAMILY CHICKEN FIESTA \$16.50

12 PIECES OF CHICKEN

1/2 lb. Salad of Your Choice

Double Order of French Fries or Mashed Potato & Gravy

CHICKEN & SHRIMP \$16.50

8 PIECES OF CHICKEN

20 PIECES OF SHRIMP

1/2 lb. Salad of Your Choice

Single Order of French Fries or Mashed Potato & Gravy

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8 PIECES OF CHICKEN

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1/2 lb. Salad of Your Choice

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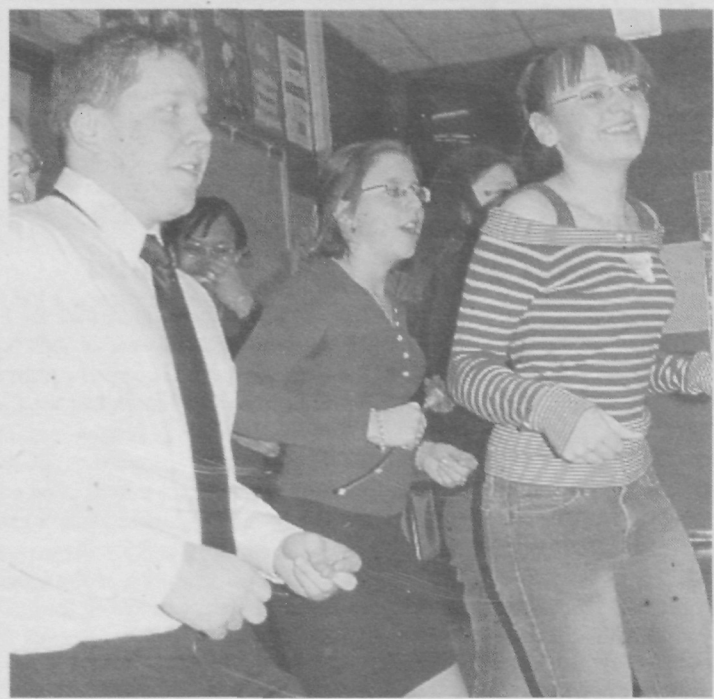
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SPHS Students Get Special Valentine's Day Delivery

South Plainfield High School chorus members played cupid the day before Valentine's Day, delivering dozens of singing "telegrams" throughout the school. For \$3 to \$5 students could send a message and have a song dedicated to that special someone. Participating students split into several groups, each with a list of dedications and a CD player with recorded music. This year Chris Abbott, Joshua Jackson and Joe Rodriguez added something extra to the serenades—live music. Joshua or Chris played guitar while singing with Joe.

—By Patricia Abbott



Students Become Ornithologists for the Winter

Who says birds fly south for the winter, besides social studies teacher Terry Allen?

The students in Mr. Cefalo's Science Class at the Middle School know better. They are participating in the Classroom FeederWatch Program. This part of the seventh grade science curriculum uses technology via the Internet to track birds that are indigenous to Central Jersey.

In conjunction with Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, students observe birds feeding at the birdfeeders they made in class, which were placed in trees throughout the Middle School's courtyard.

The young observers then enter their data via the Internet, which is tied into Cornell's database in Ithaca, New York. At the end of March, they will share their results with about 200 other middle schools participating in the program.

"It was cool to make the birdfeeders, and the project is interesting. I can't wait to go out there and look," says student Matt Kopchak.

Mr. Cefalo agrees. "The kids are really into this project. They might not enjoy going out there in the cold, but it's a great experience for them."

Coffeehouse to Benefit Haunted Tour 2004

Almost Famous Players, the theater troupe that brought South Plainfield the Putnam Park Haunted Woods Tour, is gearing up for Halloween 2004. On March 27 at the PAL they will sponsor an evening Coffeehouse featuring the music of Justina, accompanied by Steve Ambielli. Also scheduled to appear are Abby Falato and other local talent including Katie Mott, Joe Rodriguez and Chris Abbott. The music is sure to please people of all ages. A PAL card is not needed to at-

By Joan Delman

March is Women's History Month, and the library has many biographies appropriate for elementary and middle school students on a wide variety of famous women, as well as other books of women's history and biography suitable for older students and adult readers. Additional materials on women's history may be found in the reference collection. If you can't get to the library but have home access to the internet, there are many good websites on women's history, such as the National Women's Hall of Fame (www.greatwomen.org) and the National Women's History Project (www.nwhp.org). To look at these and other relevant sites, go to the library's homepage at www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us, and click on 'Websites of the Month'.

Our 'Websites of the Month' page offers timely links for all kinds of holidays, events, and observances. In addition to Women's History Month, the March page features links for Saint Patrick's Day and National Nutrition Month, as well as our regular feature on each month's Literary Birthdays.

This Week at the Library:

Adult Programs—Drop-in computer and Internet training—Mondays, 7:15-8:45 p.m. Stop by to speak to our li-

tend the show.

The Coffeehouse runs from 7-10 p.m. Tickets are \$5; Tiger gold card and SPHS Gold card holders pay \$4, and may be purchased in advance or at the door. Reserve tables for groups of six or more. Refreshments will be sold. Proceeds will benefit *Almost Famous Players*, helping the group purchase materials for sets and costumes for their second annual Haunted Halloween show.

To reserve tickets, call (908) 756-8011 and leave a message.

From the South Plainfield Library

Bookmarks

brarian on duty with questions about using a computer, learning how to use a mouse or just how to gain confidence on the Internet.

Children's Programs: Storytime and craft for ages 3 and up: Join Miss Linda for stories and a fun craft. Tuesday mornings at 10:30 a.m., Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. and Thursday afternoons at 1:15 p.m.

Books-n-Babies for ages up to three: Join Miss Linda for nursery rhymes and simple songs on Fridays 10:30-11 a.m.

On Display—Handmade Dolls by Vivian Lee and Historic Hadley Airport photographs by the South Plainfield Historical Society.

Coming Soon!—Antiques Appraisal, Sunday, March 14, 2-4 p.m. Certified antiques appraiser, Alan G. Snyder, president of A.G. Snyder & Associates of Watchung, is a long-time professional in the field of antiques and appraisals. Each participant is limited to two items. No registrations is required. Free!

Visit us on the web: www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us

Junior Baseball Club Scholarship Applications

The South Plainfield Junior Baseball Club is now accepting applications for their college scholarship. Applications can be picked up at the guidance department of the South Plainfield High School or by contacting the SPJBC at (908) 754-2090.

The applicant must be a graduating high school student this June. Must be a South Plainfield resident and must have participated in the South Plainfield Junior Baseball Club for a minimum of five years.

Please note that the filing deadline is April 1.

IN YOUR OPINION

(Continued from page 2)

on two things. The Helen St. project is important, and I too wish I had been at last week's meeting about it.

Unlike the many council meetings I've attended where Petronko and his fellow Democrats act like bobble-head dolls chanting "yes" to party leaders, the Helen Street meeting sounds like it had some substance. That's no excuse for not attending. Again, I wish I had been there. But it's ironic that the man who could not find time to debate last year is the same one writing letters and criticizing others.

Contrary to Petronko's implication, Republicans support the Helen Street project. Our chief criticism, however, is that we should not be risking everything on one endeavor. We've been talking about Helen Street for over a decade, and in the meantime the council has not taken a single step to lessen traffic.

That being said, I still must comment on the remainder of Petronko's letter. If nothing else he has gall. How he and his fellow Democrats can throw stones when it comes to Helen Street is unfathomable. They bungled the project so badly that it's now ten years—that's right, ten years—behind schedule. (Originally completion was promised for 1997; now it's promised for 2007).

Maybe a little history is in order. Newspaper clippings show the following: When running for council in 1996 Democrats Vokral and Kubala promised completion of Helen Street by 1997. It never happened. Then, four years later (when running for council in fall 2000), Ray Petronko promised completion by the end of 2002. One must question the sincerity of that

promise, because just two months later—after the election—Democrats admitted the project would take at least another five years. I can see why Petronko didn't mention these things in his letter. It's not easy to admit that you and your party have repeatedly misled the public.

Criticizing someone for missing a meeting is one thing, but misleading voters to get elected is another. So is sitting on your hands while your party holds an illegal meeting at which it discriminates against a job applicant because she is a working mother. And what about sitting idly by while your party doles out no-bid contracts to people who give big bucks to your election campaign? Or turning your head when fellow Democrats on the council give favors (i.e., Borough-owned land) to a builder who is a campaign mega-contributor?

Yes Ray, you show up at meetings. But given what you allow to take place when you're there, does your presence make a difference?

ROBERT JONES, JR.

Dear Editor,

Democratic Councilman Ray Petronko complains about poor attendance at the Helen St. Project meeting. He elaborates that such an important project should have created more interest. I have to agree with Mr. Petronko. It is an important project for the betterment of this community.

As past Republican candidate, we made a suggestion to open Hollywood Ave. to Metuchen Rd. Trucks would make a right turn off Hamilton Blvd. onto Ryan St., which runs into Hollywood Ave. This was indicated on your plans Helen St. Project. In which

is a start to get rid of truck traffic from Roosevelt School. Hollywood Ave. ends two hundred yards from the Recycling Center. From that point to Metuchen Rd. is excavating and a small bridge across the brook.

But our Mayor stated NO!

So why should anyone attend a meeting, give their views on this project, when in reality you're going to say no to any suggestion.

So Mr. Petronko, if you're upset and annoyed because no one attended your meeting, then find out where the fault lies.

You must agree for 20 years your political party has been using this project in every election with dates of completion. In fact members of our present council didn't live in town. And some were still in high school.

It's my opinion Helen St. story is worn out. People like myself would have rather gone to the high school basketball game.

When you plan on construction that enters wetlands, you are opening Pandora's Box. Without mentioning additional cost.

You made reports of DOT paying for this project. But that was untrue. Now you're saying the federal government is paying for it. But who from the federal government made this commitment?

Then we hear this project is no cost to the taxpayer. This is also untrue.

Tell us how much money was spent on this project, with nothing to show for it other than plans in Borough Hall? If any, money used on this project is still taxpayers' money.

Maybe you should have the next meeting at Dunkin Donuts.

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JAKE CATALDO

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Ladies Workout Express Opens in Town

By Jane Dornick

Ladies Workout Express opened their doors on Feb. 16. Located at 902 Oak Tree Rd., across from Mc-

Donalds, the woman's only gym offers a complete 30 minute exercise workout at affordable rates.

The club is owned and operated by two husband and wife teams. Shawn

and Amy Paterno have been athletic trainers for many years. Shaw has been a trainer at Union Twp. High School for eight years and his wife Amy is a physical education teacher in Bernardsville. Co-owners Pat and Kim Smith, along with the Paterno's, spent a week attending classes at the Ladies Workout of America Health Club University in Ft. Lauderdale prior to opening the facility, learning about fitness, nutrition and how the equipment works. Ladies Workout Express has been growing in popularity throughout the country for 20 years.

Express's 30 minute interval circuit training offers resistance training on various equipment geared specifically towards woman. The difference between Express and other clubs is that they change the equipment around, vary the length of time you spend on each machine and the resistance level, so you don't get bored. The first 100 members pay no money down. So give them a try!

Ladies Express Workout is open Monday through Friday 7 a.m. until 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. They are open Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and closed on Sunday. For further information call (908) 756-9911.



Co-owners Shawn Paterno and Pat Smith show new member Barbara Zirger how the equipment works.

Juniorettes Collecting Prom Dresses

By Patricia Abbott

The South Plainfield Juniorettes latest project is a special one. The girls are seeking donations for Catherine's Closet, a New Jersey not-for-profit corporation dedicated to providing inner city girls in New Jersey and New York with prom gowns. The dresses can be any size and should be new or no more than three years old. Plus size dresses 14 and up are desperately needed according to the website info@catherinescloset.org. Additional qualifications are; age appropriate styles and the dresses should be new or worn

only once. Shoes and accessories are also accepted. Items can be brought to the South Plainfield Public Library from Monday, March 8 through Saturday, March 13. Donations will go to the organization's Wayne, New Jersey office. For more information contact njjuniorettes@yahoo.com or call Jessica at (908) 756-7487.

The organization was founded by a friend of Catherine Johnson, an honor student and valedictorian of her class at Clifford Scott High School in East Orange, who was killed by a 14-year-old in a stolen vehicle. Catherine's prom had been a special memory and

she was buried in her prom dress. In 2002, over 1,000 prom dresses were distributed in NJ and NY. In 2003 approximately 1,500 prom gowns were given to girls throughout the tri-state area.

The Juniorettes, girls ages 12 to 18 are part of the New Jersey Women's Club. Money raised this year will help fund Canine Companions, specially trained dogs that help handicapped people to function more efficiently with day to day life. In another recent project the girls made over 100 homemade dog biscuits which were donated to the Plainfield Humane Society.

Juniorette officers are Jennifer Vasquez-president, Jessica Vasquez-secretary, and Colleen Kamen-treasurer. Advisors are Kathleen Raiti and Kathy Winner. Members include: Jennifer Vasquez, Jessica Vasquez, Colleen Kamen, Jennifer Mocerino, Kim Bosse, Nicole Heilman, Anushree Doshi, and Krina Shan. New members are always welcome.

Junior Journalist Corner



Jenna Smith Named "Junior Journalist"

High school senior Jenna Smith's, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," is this week's winning entry in the Observer/Hometown Heros Junior Journalist Program. Jenna will receive dinner for her family courtesy of Hometown Heros.

Students are encouraged to submit their original poetry, articles, opinion pieces or essays. Entries should be given to teachers.

Winners receive a catered dinner from Hometown Heros and will be invited to an end-of-year banquet with their families.

For information on the program, or for the name of your school contact, call the Observer at (908) 668-0010 or Hometown Heros at (908) 755-4376.



Jenna Smith, South Plainfield High School senior, with Ms. Pecora, English teacher.

Somewhere Over the Rainbow

By Jenna Smith

"I know you're gay," is one sentence in my life I will never forget. Those words from my mother's mouth made my heart stop. I stood there in front of her car, helpless, not knowing what I should say next. Should I lie? Tell her she did not know what she was talking about? I was too scared to think clearly. "What makes you say that?" I said. She told me it was obvious, since the night before, Alicia (my girlfriend) slept over. She told me she had had a suspicion about it for a long time. I thought she was angry so I immediately got defensive and said, "So what, do you want me to move out now?" She looked at me in disbelief. She said, "How could you ever think that? I love you no matter what. If you're gay or straight, it does not matter to me. You're still my daughter and that is all that matters." At that moment I felt a tremendous burden lift from my shoulders. My mother accepting my lifestyle was something I wanted more than anything in the world. I felt as if I was a different person after our conversation, a different person for the better.

My mother changed my life that day. She showed me that being different is acceptable. I do not have to hide who I am anymore. Since my mother was fine with me being gay, it meant for me that everyone else would soon accept me for who I am. The rest of that day, I kept my head up high. I had confidence in myself and I did not care what people thought anymore. I decided to "come out of the closet" my

senior year. I was headed toward a new year with strength in myself. I was not going to be pushed around anymore or treated as if I was different. It is going to be a wonderful year for me and even more importantly, a wonderful life.

Now that I am a stronger individual, I can take life by the horns and embrace it. As my last high school year ends, I will be going into college with so much determination, whether I end up being a photographer, mechanic, or writer. I know nothing will get in my way. I will be an asset to any college I attend, either through education, sports, or just my positive outlook on everything. Every day I thank God for my mother. Without her in my life, I would be a bitter, disorganized person. I can wake up every morning now and smile when I look in the mirror. I am going to hang my rainbow air freshener in my car and be proud of who I am. With my mother on my side, I am going to take the world by storm. Watch out! Here I come!

Thank You

Brownie Troop 530 would like to thank the First Baptist Church of South Plainfield for so generously opening up its doors, putting on the heat and allowing us to use its facilities to perform two plays for our family and friends. The actresses and audience both enjoyed the evening and appreciate the support and warmth of the church members that made the night possible.

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Junior Journalist

Win a catered dinner for your family from Hometown Heros through the Observer/Hometown Heros Junior Journalist Contest! To enter, see story above or ask your language teacher at school.

Sports



BY LEE FLANAGAN

JUNIOR BASEBALL CLUB NOTES

Pony League Director Tony Casano conducted the Pony B draft this past Monday night. Pony B is strictly a 13-year-old league. Announcing the team names, managers, coaches and players on each team:

Blue Jays: Mgr. Pat Muglia, Coach Pat Kelly; Douglas Avery, Alex Cihanowyz, Patrick DaCosta, Patrick Dezzmin, Brian Erhardt, Mark Garcia, Garrett Kelly, Nicholas Levendusky, Joseph Mennuti, Al Miranda, Tim Moskal and Michael Muglia.

Indians: Mgr. Danny White, Coach Alan Szumski; Michael Boyle, Kyle Buck, Christopher Fulton, A.J. Kunie, Joseph Lacerda, Anthony Moscato, Matthew Perkins, Jordan Petriello, Richard Sierzega, Ryan Szumski, Erik White and Timothy Yuill.

Rangers: Mgr. Rick Walton, Coach Ken Lesniak; Taylor Curtis, Jared Christopher, Justin Ditmars, Matthew Kopchak, Chris Lesniak, Tramane Miller, Alex Nieradka, Joshua Rivera, Anthony Salerno, Teddy Skwiat, Chris Steger and Richard Walton.

Rockies: Mgr. Dominic Papa, Coach Tom Pryor; Kenneth Breslau, Vincent Fazio, Nick Jeglinski, Michael Maiorino, Dominic Papa, Jeffrey Pryor, Brian Pullen, Kyle Quail, Kyle Schroeder, Rocco Severini, Ryan Voelkel and Steven Wiczorek.

A manager and/or coach will not be allowed on the field without a club member's card and completion of the Rutgers Certification course. This includes the third and fourth coach that

is in the dugout. This situation will be monitored during the season. Call Mike English to register for this course if you need it at (908) 226-7713.

The months of March and April are big planning months. With the "New Beginning," there are many new ideas. Saturday is our big tryout day for Small Fry players. Tryouts are at the PAL Building: 8-year-olds-8:30 to 10 a.m.; 9-year-olds-10 to 11:30 a.m.; 10-year-olds-12 to 1 p.m.; 11-year-olds-1 to 2:30 p.m. and 12-year-olds-2:30 to 3:15 p.m.

The night of March 5 is "Base Brawl 2004" Jersey All Pro Wrestling Show at the Middle School Gymnasium. Bell time is 8 p.m. Advance tickets are available at Sportworld. We will have a table set up at tryouts also, along with some special guests.

Volunteers are needed for our annual pre-season work details, beginning at 8 a.m. on March 13 and 14. We need as many volunteers as possible to start getting the complex ready for the upcoming season. Please do not use the fields at the Complex; you can use the batting cages. When the red flag is up means to stay off the fields. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

March 27 at Franklin School will be our Pancake Breakfast. Apr. 17 at Roosevelt School is the spaghetti dinner. Apr. 24 at the Complex is our flea market. Vendors are needed.

Middle School Boys' Basketball Team Continues to Win

The team took a trip out in the country to play a team in Basking Ridge. The boys' team went into the game without three of its starters due to injuries. It was time for the bench to step up and did they ever. The boys fell behind 4-0 as they faced an exceptional Basking Ridge center. Once they figured out they could stop him, the team went on a tear, scoring the next six points to take the lead and stretched the lead to 10 points at halftime. After that the team tightened up the defense using their press and put the game-out of reach, winning 57-40.

The next game, in the second round of the Dunellen Tournament against a strong Middlesex team, was very close in the first half with a lot of lead changes. The Tigers enjoyed a five point advantage at the half. Then a much spirited Middlesex team fought back and took the lead. It went back and forth with no more than a four-point Middlesex advantage until the last two minutes. Middlesex was ahead 40-38 until the Tigers scored a basket, tying the game at 40-40. Middlesex came down but the defense got a big stop. With about 20 seconds left, the Tigers scored on an outside jumper to go ahead by two. As soon as Middlesex crossed the midcourt line, they called a timeout with 10 seconds to go. They set up a play and the Tigers set up their defense. The Tigers' defense did not give them a good look at they threw up several prayers and the Tigers held on to win 42-40.

Come out, support the Tigers on March 5 at Fabor School in Dunellen (off of Walnut St.) at 6:30.



Photo courtesy of Brian Cole, Olschool Productions

The Middle School Boys Basketball team continues its run with a victory against Basking Ridge and Middlesex.



Ponytail Softball Batters Box

By James Bishop

Reminder Dates: The Rutgers Safety Clinic will be held on March 11 and 18. If you have never attended this clinic and you want to coach you must attend one of these sessions. Please contact the SP Recreation Department at (908) 226-7713.

Games will begin on April 12 and opening day ceremonies will be on April 17.

Tag dates are set for May 6 through the eighth.

On Saturday March 20 at 9 a.m. we will begin to clean up the fields in

preparation for the coming season. Parents we could use your help. Any one willing to help, please bring your leaf blower and a rake.

The next SP Parents Ponytail Association meeting will be held on March 23 at 7:30 p.m. in the Middle School Library.

All Star coaches have been chosen for the SP Ponytail summer All Star season.

Good luck to 14U-Rich Szeliga, 12U-Mark Sutherland and 10U-James Bishop.

Dining Out!

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For more information, call 908-668-0010.



ADVENTURES IN DINING: Pho 99, A Vietnamese Restaurant

Looking for a new place to dine? Visit Pho 99, a Vietnamese restaurant, located in the Golden Acres Shopping Center, on the corner of Park and Oak Tree avenues.

Linh and Sam Le, the husband and wife team who own and operate the eatery, live in South Plainfield with their two children. Lihn and Sam came to the United States with their parents in 1979. Lihn says she learned the restaurant business on her mother's apron strings. Their parents set up a restaurant on Front St. in Plainfield, which was the first Vietnamese restaurant in New Jersey.

Pho 99 features a wide variety of Vietnamese cuisine on their menu; many items feature vegetables and soups. There are no stir-fry items and most meat dishes are cooked on a grill. The only thing that is deep-fried are the egg rolls.

Come in to Pho 99 and try a distinctive and different taste.

Sports

SPHS Boys Basketball Team Claim 20th Consecutive District 12 Title

(Continued from page 1)

ter with a 7-0 spurt, highlighted by a three-pointer by senior reserve guard, Jonathan Buggy to make it 44-34. Marquis Jones later finished the Patriots off with four technical free throws late in the game. In addition to Buggy's heroics, Shawn Brown, who was on the JV roster a year ago, came up with 12 points on five of five shooting, six rebounds, two assists, a steal and a charge. Jones ended up 17 points, six assists, four steals and three rebounds.

South Plainfield reached the GMCT Championship by beating two teams they've never beaten since joining the conference in its inaugural season in 1985-86. First, the top seeded Tigers had to withstand a pesky and tough ninth seeded Piscataway team in the quarterfinals, after advancing there with a 71-46 victory over North Brunswick in the first round. Then, SPHS jumped out to an early 26-12 first half lead against St. Joseph's, before hanging on to beat the fourth seeded Falcons, 58-56 in the GMCT Semifinals.

Prior to defeating the Piscataway Chiefs in overtime, 59-56 on Saturday night at South Brunswick High

School in the GMCT Quarterfinals, the closest the Tigers ever came to beating Piscataway was in the 1991-92 GMC Tournament, when Piscataway connected on a three-pointer in the final seconds, beating the Tigers, 48-46. As a matter of fact, the last great South Plainfield Boys Basketball team, the 1990-91 team, lost to Piscataway twice.

The first time, South Plainfield, ranked 15th in New Jersey at the time according to the Star-Ledger, had their nine game winning streak to start the season snapped as the Chiefs won on their home court, 65-56 in January 1991. Then, after getting the second seed and reaching the semifinals of the GMCT for the first time in school history, the 1990-91 Tigers lost to the third seeded Chiefs, 70-54 in their only appearance at the RAC until last Thursday night's contest with Colonia.

St. Joseph's was another team the Tigers had their share of troubles with in the past. Since joining the conference, the Tigers had never beaten St. Joseph's, including a loss in the first round of the 2000-2001 Tournament to a St. Joe's team that reached the finals. The closest SPHS came to de-

feating the Falcons was in the inaugural season of the GMC and Joey Thompson's senior season in January, 1986, when the star forward, who went on to play at Vermont and Rider, scored 39 points. In that game, the Tigers jumped out to a 17-2 lead before St. Joe's came back and won, 72-68.

With its sweep of victories in each of the rounds of the Greater Middlesex Conference Tournament, along with their win over Colonia in the regular season finale on Valentine's day, and another win over Northern Highlands in a tune-up game for the state tournament, the Tigers now have a 25-0 record, which is the best start ever by a South Plainfield High School Boys Basketball team. The first round win over North Brunswick broke the previous mark set by the 1959-60 team, which won 20 straight games from the start of the season before losing to Carteret in the Central Jersey State Tournament that season at the Old Rutgers Barn.

The key to this season's success has been South Plainfield's ability to create a lot of opportunities for themselves with a tenacious defense that produces a ton of turnovers. For example, in the three wins over Colonia (20 turnovers), Piscataway (31 turnovers), and St. Joseph's (19 turnovers), the Tigers have forced their opponents to commit 70 turnovers alone, which averages to over 23 a game. In all three of these games, South Plainfield was out-rebounded by a combined total of 95 to 62 in those three games, so the extra chances from turnovers, as well as clutch shoot-

ing from the likes of Marquis Jones, Darren Smith, and Gary Houston have been a big help.

This team has been very special because each one of the players starting with Corey Gilmore and Shawn Brown, going down the line to Jones, Smith, Houston, and Ian Robinson as well as reserves Jonathan Buggy, Jawaad Caldwell, Mike Richard, Kevin Seidenburg, and Jon Hammond, all embrace Head Coach Jeff Lubreski's philosophy of defense first no matter what happens on the floor. Despite some distractions during the course of the season and the pressure to maintain their undefeated record while trying to win the school's first conference title, the team has held up magnificently, which is a testament to the coaching staff, players, parents, and those like Mike "SHOTMAN" Lanza, who help out during the AAU and Fall League seasons.

We can talk all day about the varsity boys basketball team, but we also need to mention other SPHS basketball teams who are also having great successes this year. The SPHS Girls team, which has always had a top flight program under the guidance of Bill Schulte, reached the GMCT Girls Semifinals before losing to top seeded J.P. Stevens, 44-31 on Tuesday night at Middlesex County College. The

girls have compiled an 18-3 mark, won the White Division, and earned a four seed in the tourney. Danielle Arndt, who scored 10 points in the loss to Stevens is one of the top players along with Jessa Jones.

On top of that, this year's freshman boys team ended the season with a record of 19-3, and got another basketball championship for SPHS by defeating Sayreville in the Championship Game of the Perth Amboy/GMC Freshman Tournament by the score of 51-48. They also defeated Piscataway, 54-45, in the semifinals of the Freshman Tournament, connecting on 29 of 41 free throws, including 24 of their first 29, before going five of 12 down the stretch. The Little Tigers were out-rebounded 43-30 and had fewer assists, steals, blocks, and field goals, but managed to force the Little Chiefs to commit 29 turnovers. Piscataway also went only five of 12 at the foul line, while South Plainfield had more three pointers. Meanwhile, in the final, Chris Stallone collected a double double with 16 points and 10 rebounds in the win over Sayreville.

Greg Machos covers the South Plainfield Boys Basketball team as well as other teams in the Greater Middlesex Conference for his web site, <http://www.gmchoops.com>.

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Obituaries

George C. Herbst, 93

George C. Herbst of South Plainfield died on Saturday, Feb. 28 at home.

George was born in Bronx, New York and had resided in South Plainfield for the last 64 years.

He was a machinist for the former Walter Scott & Sons in Plainfield, then worked for Wood Industries in Plainfield for 20 years before retiring in 1972. George was a member of the National Machinist Union Local 167 in North Plainfield.

He was a member of the South Plainfield Polish National Home and the local chapter of AARP and a communicant of Sacred Heart Church.

He was predeceased by his wife, Julia Welc Herbst, who died in 1989.

He is survived by two daughters, Elizabeth and her husband, Lester DePol of Edison and Suzanne and her husband, Daniel Mele of Edison; six grandchildren, Karen, Alison, Vincent, Christian, Richard and Elizabeth and four great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at the McCriskin Home For Funerals.

Anna P. (Melichalek) Tiemeyer, 91

Anna P. (Melichalek) Tiemeyer of Piscataway died on Thursday, Feb. 26 at Somerset Medical Center in Somerville.

Anna was born in the Bronx and was a former resident of South Plainfield before moving to Piscataway 30 years ago.

She was a communicant of Our Lady of Fatima RC Church in Piscataway.

Anna loved animals, especially her dog, Maxie.

She was predeceased by her beloved husband, Walter Tiemeyer, who died in 1986 and by a son, Walter Tiemeyer, Jr., who died in 2000.

Anna is survived by two sons, Frederick and his wife, Marianna

Tiemeyer of North Plainfield and Lou Tiemeyer of Piscataway; a daughter, Louise Powell of Piscataway; a daughter-in-law, Josephine Tiemeyer of Washington (NJ); six grandchildren, Debbie, Cindy, Linda, April, Frederick, Jr. and Lisa and also six great grandchildren.

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

Richard E. Adams, 70

Richard E. Adams died on Monday, Feb. 23 at the Grand Strand Regional Medical Center in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Born and raised in Jersey City, Richard lived in South Plainfield for seven years and in Plainfield for 22 years before moving to South Carolina eight years ago.

Richard was employed as a com-

puter programmer and later became supervisor of manufacturing operations with General Motors and EDS in Linden; a position he held for 33 years before retiring in 1993.

A veteran of the Air Force during the Korean Conflict, he served with the 611th Field Maintenance Squadron and with the 5th Fighter Squadron as an instrument mechanic. He was a member of the 50th Armored Division National Guard in Jersey City and a member of Sampson's Air Base Veteran's Association in New York.

He was also a member of the South Plainfield Elk Lodge #2298, South Plainfield American Legion Chaumont Post 243, where he served as vice commander and a member of the Ise- lin American Legion Chaumont Post 471.

Richard is predeceased by his son, Richard V.; a brother, Peter C. and a

grandson, Robert M. Buccino.

Surviving are his wife, Mary (nee Nievelt) of 47 years; four daughters, Eileen Buccino and her husband, Robert of Westfield, Patricia Willcox and her husband, Kevin of Gouldsboro, Pa., Diane Deschaine of South Plainfield and Susan Spiridigliozzi and her husband, John of Hampton and three sons, Kevin and his wife Corinne of Westfield, Michael and his wife Judy and Scott and his wife, Theresa, both of South Plainfield. Also surviving are 18 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Funeral services were held at the McCriskin Home For Funerals.

LEGAL NOTICES

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY LEGAL NOTICE

An appeal has been filed by Eric Wordel requesting a variance from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the Borough of South Plainfield to permit (1) a proposed garage addition lacks required 8' side setback, 6.2' proposed; (2) a proposed second floor cantilever lacks required 30' front setback (3) a proposed new covered porch lacks 30' front setback 24.2' proposed; and other variances that may be required, said property being located at 117 W. Nassau Ave. Block 234, Lot 22 on the South Plainfield Tax Map.

For the purposes of hearing objections to or protests against the granting of said appeal, the South Plainfield Zoning Board of Adjustment will hold a public hearing on Thursday, April 8, 2004 in the Council Chambers, Borough Hall, at 8:00 p.m.

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

\$35.00 March 5, 2004

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

February 26, 2004

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action was taken by the South Plainfield Planning Board at its meeting held on February 24, 2004.

A. Case #668-Middlesex Crossroads, Block 528; Lot 46; 6000 Hadley Rd. The applicant's request for preliminary site plan approval was hereby GRANTED with conditions.

B. Case #679-Harris Realty, Co., LLC, Block 286; Lot 1; 1641 New Market Ave. The applicant's request for preliminary site plan approval with a parking space variance was hereby GRANTED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Beth Khidre
Recording Secretary-Planning Board

ATTEST:
Vincent Buttiglieri/Municipal Clerk

\$26.25 March 5, 2004

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

An appeal has been filed by Eleanor Stoner requesting a variance from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the Borough of South Plainfield to permit a proposed front porch with roof that lacks required 30' front setback, 20.7' proposed; and other variances that may be required, said property being located at 328 Norwood Ave. Block 219, Lot 6 on the South Plainfield Tax Map.

For the purposes of hearing objections to or protests against the granting of said appeal, the South Plainfield Zoning Board of Adjustment will hold a public hearing on Thursday, April 8, 2004 in the Council Chambers, Borough Hall, at 8:00 p.m.

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

\$35.00 March 5, 2004

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY ORDINANCE NO. 1651

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, THAT:

Ordinance #1651 entitled: A CAPITAL ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$30,000.00 FROM THE SEWER UTILITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR THE PURCHASE OF A GENERATOR FOR THE NORTH PUMP STATION was adopted on first reading and advertised in The Observer on Friday, March 5, 2004 and that a public hearing be held on Monday, March 15, 2004 at 8:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080

ORDINANCE NO. 1651

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$30,000.00 FROM THE SEWER UTILITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR THE ACQUISITION OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS MORE SPECIFICALLY FOR THE PURCHASE OF A GENERATOR FOR THE NORTH PUMP STATION FOR THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD, COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY as follows:

Section 1. That there is hereby authorized pursuant to applicable statutes of the State of New Jersey, as a general improvement, the following improvements in the Borough of South Plainfield, County of Middlesex, New Jersey:

Purchase of a generator for the North Pump Station

Section 2. That the improvements described in Section 1 hereof shall be authorized as sewer utility capital improvement for the Borough of South Plainfield in the County of Middlesex, New Jersey.

Section 3. It is hereby determined and declared by this Mayor and Borough Council as follows:

A. That the maximum estimated amount of money to be raised from all sources for the purposes stated in Section 1, hereof, is \$30,000.00.

B. That the cost of said projects shall be financed from appropriations in the SFY 2003 Sewer Utility Capital Improvement Fund, of which said funds are available for said purposes.

C. The estimated useful life of said improvement is hereby determined to be fifteen (15) years.

Section 4. That the total amount of the appropriation to be expended for architectural and inspection costs, legal costs, advertisement of ordinance and other expenses as provided in Section 48:2-20 of the Revised Statutes, is not to exceed \$2,260.00.

Section 5. This law shall take effect after final passage and publication in accordance with the law.

ATTEST:
Vincent Buttiglieri/Municipal Clerk

\$71.75 March 5, 2004

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY ORDINANCE No. 1649

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, THAT:

Ordinance #1649 entitled: AN ORDINANCE VACATING A PORTION OF AUDUBON AVENUE IN THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD was presented for adoption after a public hearing was held thereon by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of South Plainfield at 8:00 p.m. on Monday, March 1, 2004 in the Municipal Building, South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080

ATTEST:
Vincent Buttiglieri/Municipal Clerk

\$21.00 March 5, 2004

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

February 27, 2004

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action was taken by the South Plainfield Board of Adjustment at its meeting held on February 26, 2004.

A. Case #01-04-Pilgrim Covenant Church, Block 95; Lot 3; 3121 Park Avenue. The applicant's request for a variance to construct a freestanding sign measuring three feet by four feet was hereby GRANTED with voluntary conditions.

B. Case #02-04-Elizabeth Austin, Block 182; Lot 7; 400 Lane Ave. The applicant's request for (4) setback variances was hereby GRANTED with voluntary conditions.

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

\$35.00 March 5, 2004

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY ORDINANCE NO. 1650

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, THAT:

Ordinance #1650 entitled: AN ORDINANCE CREATING THE POSITIONS OF SUPERVISING PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR AND CHIEF ASSISTANT ASSESSOR was presented for adoption after a public hearing was held thereon by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of South Plainfield at 8:00 p.m. on Monday March 1, 2004 in the Municipal Building, South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080.

ATTEST:
Vincent Buttiglieri/Municipal Clerk

\$21.00 March 5, 2004

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Deborah E. Silvio, 52

Deborah E. Silvio died on Saturday, Feb. 28 in her home.

Born in Elizabeth, she resided in Irvington before moving to Piscataway 30 years ago.

Debbie was a homemaker.

She is predeceased by a brother, George Decker, who died in 2001.

Surviving are her husband, Dennis M. Silvio; two children, Amy and Michael Silvio, both at home; her mother, Evelyn Decker of Piscataway; three sisters, Valerie Guiliano of South Plainfield, Josephine Perron of Jacksonville, Fl. and Stephanie Trumbauer of Whiting and a brother, Joseph Decker of Sparta.

Funeral services were held at the McCriskin Home For Funerals.

Donations to the family would be appreciated.

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police report

• On Feb. 24 Cornelius R. Kasday, 26, of Edison was arrested on Durham Ave. for driving while intoxicated.

• Sohn Yakeem O'Connor, 25, of Plainfield was arrested on Clinton Ave. for exhibiting a fraudulent document.

• A W. Crescent Parkway resident reported that the passenger side rear tire on her vehicle had been punctured.

• An Avon Ave. resident reported that an old rug, foam padding and bed frame had been dumped on his lawn.

• A High School student reported the theft of his wallet and the vehicle's registration and insurance cards from his unlocked vehicle.

• On Feb. 25 a Westfield resident reported that the rear window of her vehicle had been smashed in the parking lot of Regal Cinema.

• On Feb. 26 a High School student reported that her vehicle had been broken into and the radio face plate, a CD case and \$20 in cash had been taken.

• Mary M. Hatcher, 37, of N. Brunswick was arrested at Kohl's for shoplifting a \$54.99 pair of Reebok sneakers.

• A Palmer Ave. resident reported the driver's side sun visor with a CD case and lighted mirror had been ripped out of her vehicle, as well as a cell phone and 40 CD's.

• Bushwick Metals on New Market Ave. reported the theft of a 40 foot long red flatbed trailer from the parking lot.

• On Feb. 28 Bryan A. Joyner, 30, of South Plainfield was arrested on Durham Ave. for driving while intoxicated, speeding, careless driving and no insurance.

• Hobbs Tarley, 18, of Plainfield was arrested at Quick Chek on Sampton Ave. for the theft of a cell phone from an unlocked vehicle.

• Saumil D. Patel, 19, of Piscataway was arrested at Macy's for shoplifting \$73 worth of merchandise.

• A Lucy Ct. resident reported a fraudulent charge from AOL on her credit card and a Florence Pl. resident reported that two fraudulent credit cards had been opened in her name.

• On Feb. 29 a Mahar Ave. resident reported that the front driver's side window of her 2002 Chevy Impala had been broken out and the car ransacked. Nothing was taken.

• On March 1 Alejandro Solis, 31, of Plainfield was arrested on Clinton Ave. for exhibiting a fraudulent drivers license, unlicensed driver, expired registration and falsifying an application for a driver's license.

• Sitco Importing Co. on Hadley Rd. reported the theft of a Panasonic portable DVD player from his locked office.

• A Middlesex resident reported that the driver's window had been smashed out, while parked at Regal Cinema. A radar detector was taken.

• Shanco International Inc. on Hadley Rd. reported that two office doors had been pried open. Nothing was taken.

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There are many photos that have never been published! The following files will be deleted in March: SP Fire Dept. 02 & 03 FD concerts, FD Circus, 03 fifth grade class pics, 02 & 03 high & middle school graduations, '02 & '03 Jr & Sr. Proms, election 02 & 03, Girl Scout Gold Awards, 02 & 03 Bike Rodeo, All District Concert, SPS Anything Goes, SPMS Yearbook, Grant's ANNIE Jr., MS girls basketball Grant 6th basketball, Kennedy Grandparent's Day, Bands for Riley, Skatepark, PAL concert, school concerts & events, Nat. Honor Soc. inductions, Franklin K&J and Suess, Dare Graduations, 02 & 03 Labor Day, MS Peer to Peer, SDW Footloose, 42nd St. SPS players, Anything Goes! Hello Dolly!, Damn Yankees, Tommy, & many other files. For detailed info or to see proof sheets call 908-756-8011 or email Pattie at angelonly@aol.com.

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By
Joann Graf

NOTES FROM The Senior Center

How well will we live out our retirement years is an issue that everyone thinks about to some extent throughout adulthood. The closer a person gets to the reality of retirement, the more important and sometimes urgent that reality becomes. Are you looking forward to the day you retire? Or do you dread the thought? How you answer this question is probably affected by your age and how well you prepared or are preparing for your retirement years.

As seniors seek to live out their lives in comfort, they often find their lifestyles altered by unexpected emergencies, rising debt and ensuing expenses. For those on a fixed income, such costs can be financially crippling, often forcing seniors to lower their standard of living or even sell their homes. One financial option that is emerging as a very viable alternative to this situation, one which could help ensure that seniors can remain comfortably in their own homes for the rest of their lives, is a Reverse Mortgage.

A Reverse Mortgage enables a senior homeowner 62 years and older to convert a portion of the equity of their home into tax-free funds without making a monthly payment. Senior homeowners can use these funds in any way they wish—to supplement retirement income, cover medical ex-

penses, make home improvements, travel, etc.

In order to be eligible for a reverse mortgage, the primary borrower and any co-borrower must be at least 62 years old, occupy a home as the primary residence, own the home free and clear or have a small remaining balance that could be paid off with the proceeds from the Reverse Mortgage.

Most importantly, no monthly payments are made on the reverse mortgage during its term. It simply becomes repayable with accrued inter-

est when the home is sold or vacated for any other reason. Any excess proceeds belong to the senior homeowner(s) or the estate.

To help our seniors learn more about Reverse Mortgages, we have scheduled a very informative program for Wednesday, March 24 at 1 p.m. at the Senior Center. Matt Casamasina and Gary Prendergast of Wells Fargo Home Mortgage will be the guest speakers. Please mark your calendars and make it a point to join us. You won't regret it. I'll even bake a cake!

First Class Travel Donates Cruise to Project Graduation

By Jane Dornick

First Class Travel, located at 129 South Plainfield Ave., is making a generous donation of a cruise to be given away at this year's Project Graduation Annual Auction/raffle.

Celebrity Cruise Lines held a contest and asked their agents to write about the best non-profit organization which they could donate a cruise towards. Owner Michele Kunie has a daughter, who is a senior at South Plainfield High School and wrote

about what a wonderful program Project Graduation is for the students and she won the cruise!

The prize includes a California coastal cruise for two and will be paired with two airline tickets provided by the PTA. Both will be raffled off at the Project Graduation auction to be held on Saturday, March 13. For information on tickets see page 4.

Project Graduation provides students with a safe, fun, substance free environment on graduation night each year.

Police Respond to Robbery, Assault at Bravo Supermarket

Last Friday, police responded to Bravo Supermarket on a report of an assault and an apparent robbery. Dispatch also advised police that the suspects had left the scene and the license plate of the car.

When Officer Grasso arrived, he was met by Walter Escalante and a store employee. Escalante was sitting on the floor in the produce aisle, bleeding from the face and appeared disoriented. There were three 32 oz. bags of raw shrimp on the floor next to him. He told police that he was assaulted by a black male who was attempting to steal the shrimp. Jesus Herrera, an employee of Bravo, said that the man fled the scene in an old model maroon Dodge and gave the officer the license plate of the car. This information was then relayed to responding officers and to central dispatch. Escalante had a laceration to the left side of his face, but said he had not lost consciousness.

Escalante said that he observed the man walking up the produce aisle, heading towards the door of the supermarket. The man was described as approximately 5'9"-5'10", short hair, wearing black clothes and a black jacket. He appeared to have numerous bags of shrimp under his jacket.

When Escalante asked the man what he was doing, the suspect struck him in the face with a closed fist. The suspect then dropped three bags of shrimp and fled the scene in a waiting vehicle. The vehicle left the scene and headed east on West Seventh Ave.

Det. Born and Det. Noonan arrived to process the scene. South Plainfield Rescue Squad transported the victim to Muhlenberg Hospital. Det. Born and Noonan are continuing the investigation.

Officer Grasso asked the Bravo Supermarket Store Manager Michael Musleh to take an inventory of the shrimp. It was determined that seven bags were stolen, not including the three that were already recovered.

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