

South Plainfield Observer

VOL. 12, NO. 17

MEMBER NEW JERSEY PRESS ASSOCIATION

50 CENTS

DECEMBER 26, 2008

Pee Wees Fly to National Victory!



The Eagles Pee Wee Cheerleaders were honored by the Borough Council at their meeting on Monday evening. The team took first place in the the Pee Wee Small Novice Division of the 2008 Pop Warner National Cheer Championships. For story and additional photos, see pages 6 and 7.

Students Perform at 35th Annual Tuba Christmas

South Plainfield students performed at the 35th annual Tuba Christmas Concert on December 13 at Rockefeller Center in New York City.

Approximately 500 tubas, baritone, and euphoniums performed Christmas carols on the ice rink under the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree. The conductor of the celebration was C. Christian Wilhjelms, who is

the former conductor of New York's Famous Goldman Band and is the current conductor of the Ridgewood Concert Band. Participation at the event has become a tradition at the middle school and throughout the district for the past six years.

Middle School students playing were Jake Rotella, Joanna Marston and James O'Connor. Isaac Blanco, Willie Hartmann, Matt Brazza, Sean

Coffey, Richard Rotella, Brendan Berry, Emily Roseo, Eric Nuber and Marvin DeLaCruz represented the high school. Grant School was represented by Tim Nuber and all were accompanied by Middle School Music Teacher Andrew Veiss and South Plainfield High School alumni Francisco DeLaCruz.

The concert was conceived by tuba virtuoso Harvey Phillips to honor his

teacher, the late William J. Bell and presented in Rockefeller Center in 1974, and was conducted by Paul LaValle of Band of America fame. This unusual Christmas tradition is firmly established in over 200 cities around the world. Enthusiastic audiences become an important part of the concert by singing along with Christmas carols especially arranged for the tuba choir by American composer Alec Wilder.



Middle School music teacher Andrew Veiss along with students who participated in the annual Tuba Christmas Concert at Rockefeller Center.



All are
Invited!

Come & Experience a Festival of Cultures

The South Plainfield Coalition of Cultural Diversity will host the second annual Festival of Cultures at Riley Elementary School auditorium on Monday, Jan. 19 from 5 to 8 p.m. All are invited.

The festival, a celebration of the diverse people who call South Plainfield their home, includes dance, music, food and more.

The event will feature comments by Mayor Charles Buttrico, leaders of Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Hindu communities and SPHS Principal Dr. Kenneth May, as well as fabulous cultural dances, culminated by a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ethnic food will be served throughout the program. All are invited to attend.

The evening schedule is as follows: cultural expo and music and gathering-5 to 5:30; cultural music and dances (Native American, Irish, German, Hungarian, Indian, Middle Eastern, Jewish, Chinese, Filipino and others)-5:30 to 7:30 and a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.-7:30 to 8 p.m.

The South Plainfield Coalition of Cultural Diversity was organized in 2007 in response to the existing and increasing diversity of people living in South Plainfield.

For information, call Coalition President Nehemiah Thompson at (908) 251-3992 or Vice President Chris Sienkiewski at (908) 561-8057.

SPHS Drug Testing To Begin in January

By Libby Barsky

Random testing of high school students will begin in January with 25 students scheduled to be tested during the month. Under the new drug policy established in September, students who are members of a sports team, a co-curricular club or who park in the school lot are among the pool of candidates to be chosen for testing.

At the December 17 Board of Education meeting, the board approved the contract for Sport Safe Testing Service, Inc. to provide drug and alcohol testing services. The cost for each urine substance abuse panel is \$2. Each panel has an add-on testing cost: \$10 for alcohol; \$3 for ecstasy testing; \$90 for anabolic steroids and \$9 for nicotine. Cost of initial testing will be borne by the BOE. If a student tests positive (or refuses the test, which is interpreted as

“The new drug policy was enacted to help deter students from experimenting with drugs,” explained SAC Rhonda Greene.

positive), parents or guardians will be responsible for the cost of a test certifying the student is negative.

In addition to removal from extra-curricular activities and revocation of parking privileges for a minimum of one week, a student who tests positive must meet with the student assistance counselor (SAC) a minimum of six times and attend an early intervention program. The student can return to school after being evaluated by a physician, with a written report certifying that substance use no longer interferes with the student's ability to participate in school.

A group of parents upset by the impending program met with school principal, Dr. Kenneth May; assistant principals Robert Diehl and Lisa Parker and SAC Rhonda Greene on December 18.

(Continued on page 10)

In My Opinion

The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of the publisher, nor do we guarantee their accuracy.

Submit Your Letters to the Editor:

Send your letters to South Plainfield Observer, 1110 Hamilton Blvd., Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080, or fax to 908-668-8819, or via E mail: spobserver@comcast.net. **Deadline is Monday, 5 p.m.** Letters must be accompanied by a name and telephone number for verification. Limit letters to no more than **200 words**. We reserve the right to refuse a letter, to edit for clarity or length, and to limit the number of letters submitted on the same subject. Submission is not a guarantee of publication. We do not accept anonymous letters. Letters are strictly opinion.

Dear Editor,

I want to send out a thank you, a public thank you, to all the people who have contributed to the Tri-County Red Cross holiday gift drives. In this year of economic turmoil there are many more people who are in need of our assistance, and fewer people who are able to provide the resources we need to provide that assistance.

Our 2008 Thanksgiving basket drive gave out more than 250 turkeys with all the fixings to families in the

Plainfield and Elizabeth areas, a significant increase over previous years. Every single turkey and side dish was donated by a generous person or organization not for the credit but because they care about their neighbors. In total, we gave out more than three tons of food that fed well over a thousand people on our nation's oldest holiday.

Today we are giving away toys to children in the Plainfield area who may not get presents otherwise, and tomorrow we will do the same in Elizabeth. Because of the astonishing generosity of our donors—from schools to businesses to anonymous folks who leave the toys without fanfare—we are providing an average of three toys a child to 250 families. These 750 or so children are more than we've ever been asked to help.

I can't tell you what it means to me to see this kind of generosity of spirit and materials, to see the impact these gifts have on the folks who need a little hand up this year. It makes me proud to be a small part of the effort, and proud to be from Central New Jersey.

The Tri-County Red Cross is a volunteer led organization funded by financial and material contributions from local individuals, businesses and organizations. Sometimes our donors and volunteers don't get to see the good they do, the suffering they help prevent or alleviate.

So this is a personal thank you for everyone who contributed by donating a can of vegetables for Thanksgiving, a teddy bear for the holiday toy drive, or \$100 for disaster relief to make the Tri-County Red Cross mission possible. You are all heroes in our community, and you deserve a lot of credit.

**BEST REGARDS,
NATHAN RUDY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
TRI-COUNTY RED CROSS**

Library to Host Tax and Financial Seminar Sunday

The library will host a tax and financial seminar on Sunday, Dec. 28 at 2 p.m.

Sponsored by H&R Block, the program will focus on the financial concerns of the unemployed and those faced with losing their job. The subjects discussed will include insurance, job hunting, allowable deductions, and changing locations. The program is being presented free; no pre-registration is required.

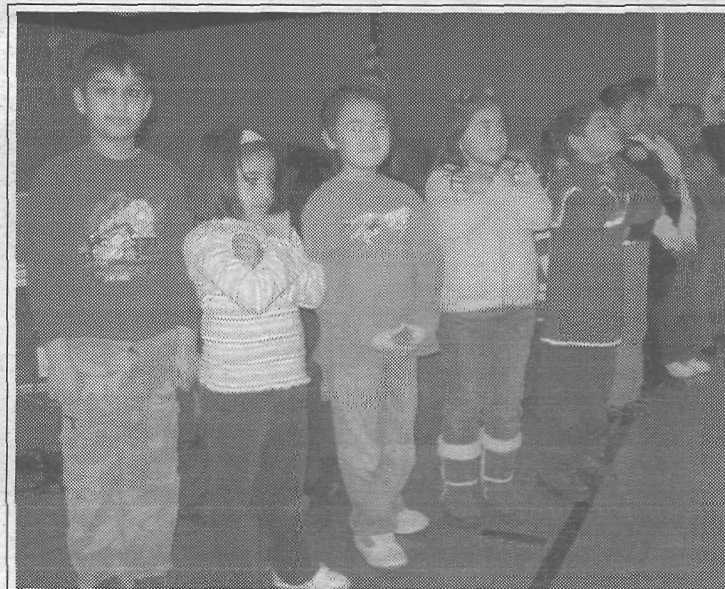
For more information, call (908) 754-7885, or visit the library's Web site at www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us.

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Roosevelt School students created an interactive Internet program with artwork and performed a song with sign language motions at the December 17 Board of Education meeting.

BOE Okays Replacing High School Air Conditioning Units

By Libby Barsky

After years of patching up the aging high school air conditioning units and spending dearly for a temporary fix, the Board of Education has started the process to replace them.

The board accepted a proposal from the architectural firm DiCara/Rubino of Wayne to prepare plans for replacing eight large rooftop air conditioning units, including the plumbing, HVAC and electrical system at a cost of \$175,000, plus reimbursable services. These plans are necessary in order to go out to bid.

The bid documents are important so the board can meet the deadline of January 20, 2009 to be eligible for a 40% reimbursement from the first Regular Operating District Grant allowed under the Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act.

Business Administrator Richard Guarini warned the board not to go out to bid for the work itself, or it would

compromise the district's ability to receive the reimbursement. The estimated cost for the eight units on the high school rooftop is \$2.2M.

In addition, the board is also applying for the 40% grant from the same source to enable the district to install double pane windows at all elementary schools, except Roosevelt, and the middle school. Guarini estimated that cost at \$5.2M.

Plans will also be drawn up as part of the application to upgrade the district elementary schools, middle school and high school with HVAC systems, temperature control and electric service projects. Guarini estimated this cost to be \$10.7M.

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SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES

We encourage the submission of stories and photos. To get an article published: Type (double spaced) the article and mail, email or fax. Include name, address and telephone number. **Deadline for submission is Monday, 5 p.m.**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Submit letters to the editor by mail, email or fax. Letters should not exceed 200 words. We reserve the right to edit for clarity or length. Letters must include name and phone number, for verification.

To comment on the content or to suggest a special story idea, contact the publisher at (908) 668-0010.

The publisher is not responsible for typographical errors.

Checkers the Penguin Visits Sacred Heart



Carla Demarest holding Checkers with Student Council President Stephanie Kearney, Rose Bach and Vice President Colleen Faede.

Carla Demarest, a staff member at Jenkinson's Aquarium, visited Sacred Heart School on December 17 to talk about penguins. However, the guest she brought with her was the real star of the visit. Checkers, a 17 year-old female African Penguin, was the center of attention by all.

Students and teachers, all wearing penguin t-shirts designed by eighth grader Rose Bach, were an attentive audience for Demarest as she held a question and answer session on penguins, after which she brought out Checkers to greet the students. Checkers was a little shy in front of the large crowd, but the students got a chance closeup to watch her waddle around,

clean her feathers and flap her wings before the visit ended.

Earlier this year Sacred Heart students adopted a penguin named Sabo at the aquarium and were hoping he would also be visiting, but according to Demarest, he stills need work on his "people behavior" before being allowed to visit the school.

Jenkinson's Aquarium, a privately owned facility located on the boardwalk at Point Pleasant Beach, opened in 1991. The aquarium is dedicated to educating the public on all aspects of marine life and conservation. Each exhibit is designed to promote awareness of the animals, their habitats and conservation.

They exhibit Atlantic sharks, Pacific sharks, coral reefs, penguins, alligators and seals and give the public the opportunity to get up close to animals from around the globe.

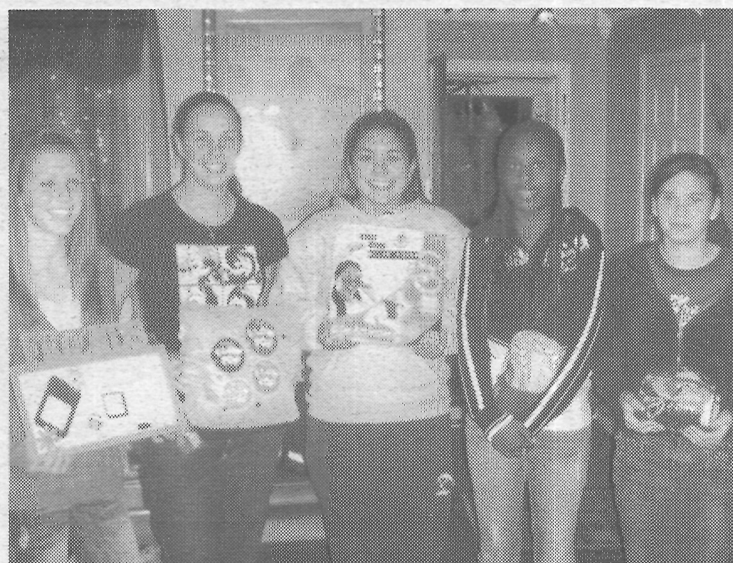
Another attraction, the touch tank, allows visitors to touch live animals ranging from a sea star to a juvenile shark.

In addition to the educational exhibits, the aquarium offers workshops for children of all ages, as well as professional development workshops for teachers and group tours for schools and scout groups.

For those who wish to volunteer their time, they have an extensive volunteer program for those over the age of sixteen. The aquarium staff, including volunteers, participate in many community programs including Adopt-a-Highway and N.J. Community Water Watch.

Jenkinson's Aquarium is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). AZA is America's leading accrediting organization for zoos and aquariums, and accredits only those institutions that have achieved rigorous, professional standards for animal welfare and management, veterinary care, wildlife conservation and research, education, safety, staffing, and more.

For information on the aquarium, educational workshops or outreach program, call (732) 899-1212.



Juniorettes donated gifts for teens at Foster and Adoptive Family Services.

Juniorettes Grant Christmas Wishes

On December 7 the South Plainfield Juniorettes gave teen girls in New Jersey a Christmas to remember. Foster and Adoptive Family Services hold a holiday party each year and the goal of the celebration is not only to spread good cheer, but also to have a gift for every child. Teen girls are often overlooked, but the South Plainfield Juniorettes always purchase gifts for them. Profits from the sale of Lucinda

pins allowed the Juniorettes to provide a truly joyous Christmas.

The Juniorettes are also coordinating a book drive through the high school, middle school, Kennedy, Riley, Roosevelt and Franklin schools. Students may drop off books in the main office until January 30. Any and all books will be accepted.

Submitted by Lindsay Barton

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AROUND TOWN

SENIOR CENTER Calendar

Coming Up.....

Christmas Luncheon
Canceled due to inclement weather to be rescheduled

MONDAYS

Silver Sneakers 8:30 am
Crocheting 9:30 am
Yoga 10:30 am
Art Class 11:30 am

TUESDAYS

Bingo 10 am-2 pm
Ladies Group 10 am

Daily Activities: Morning coffee, pool, cards, board games, crafts.

WEDNESDAYS

Aerobics 8:30 am
Computer 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm
Tai Chi 2 pm

THURSDAYS

Closed New Years January 1
Pathmark 9 am
Computer 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm
Exercise Class 1:15 pm

FRIDAYS

Closed December 26-27
Bingo 10 am-2 pm
Lunch Served Monday-Friday.

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Closed Sundays

"Striking 12" at EVP

Through December 31

Edison Valley Playhouse, 2196 Oak Tree Rd. in Edison, presents the New Jersey premiere production of the new holiday musical, "Striking 12" on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 26, 27 and New Year's Eve, Wednesday, Dec. 31 (includes a special New Year's Eve party; call for details.) Great for all ages and even better as a pre-New Year's Eve party primer event! Tickets: \$20 adults; \$15 students/seniors; dinner package available.

For tickets, call (908) 755-4654 or visit www.evplayhouse.com to order online. Visa/MC accepted.

Sacred Heart New Year's Eve Gala

December 31

Sacred Heart Church will hold a New Year's Eve celebration in the school cafeteria on Wednesday, Dec. 31 from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Cost is \$40 and includes a hot buffet, setups, dessert, coffee, champagne, party hats, noise makers and streamers. Bring your choice of beverage (BYOB). DJ music for dancing by The Filos. Big band and Broadway tunes will be pre-

formed live by Allan Castro. Champagne toast at midnight. Maximum seating at tables is 10. Reserve early.

For tickets, call Virginia at (908) 562-1550 or Lisa at (908) 756-0633, ext. 10.

2009 Borough Reorganization Meeting

January 2

The Borough Council Reorganization meeting will be held on Saturday, Jan. 2 at noon in Borough Hall.

Second Annual Festival of Cultures

January 19

The second annual Festival of Cultures, a celebration of dance, music and food presented by The South Plainfield Coalition of Cultural Diversity, will be held at Riley Elementary School auditorium on Monday, Jan. 19 from 5 to 8 p.m. Cultural dances, culminated by a touching tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ethnic food will be served throughout the program. All are invited to attend.

For more information contact Coalition President Nehemiah Thompson at (908) 251-3992 or Vice President Chris Sienkiewski at (908) 561-8057.

Boy Scout Troop 125 Monster Truck Show

January 31

Boy Scout Troop 125 is sponsoring a trip to the Monster Truck Show at Izod Center on Saturday, Jan. 31. There will be a pit party on the arena floor from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. before the 2 p.m. show. Pit party pass is \$5

and available to guests with 2 p.m. show tickets (one pass per show ticket). Children under two do not require a pass if accompanied by an adult with ticket and pit pass. Pit party pass allows guests to walk the track, meet competitors and get photos with the monster trucks. Seating will be assigned once tickets are purchased. Tickets: \$25-adults; \$14.50-children under 12; \$5-pit party passes (while supplies last). Price does not include parking or transportation.

Checks should be made out to Boy Scout Troop 125. Mail to Marie Markey 201 Lane Ave., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080. Paypal is also available; add \$2 to each ticket price to cover fees. Paypal address is markey@comcast.net or drop off orders on Monday nights at the VFW on Front Street from 7:30-9 p.m.

— Out of Town —

"Video Games Live" at the NJPAC

December 27

"Video Games Live" will be presented at New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) on Saturday, Dec. 27 at 2 and 8 p.m. An entertaining new way to celebrate the holidays—featuring a symphonic celebration of classic video game scores—and interactive audience participation. This show combines the power and excitement of a rock concert with the energy and emotion of a symphony orchestra—spiked with the cutting-edge visuals, technology, interactivity and immersive fun that only video games can provide.

For tickets visit www.njpac.org or call 1-888 GO-NJPAC.

AALL Stamps and Collectibles Open House

December 27 & 28

AALL Stamps and Collectibles, of 38 North Main St. in Milltown, will hold an open house on Saturday, Dec. 27 and Sunday, Dec. 28 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. A huge selection of collectors' supplies and accessories, as well as numerous lots and collections at special sale prices will also be available.

Further information can be obtained by calling (732) 247-1093.

New Year's Eve Party

December 31

Singer Hall, 220 Somerset St. in North Plainfield, is holding a New Year's Eve party on Wednesday, Dec. 31 beginning at 9 p.m. Nora and Raegner Moen will provide the music. Cold

buffet, hats, noisemakers and a complimentary drink to toast in the new year will be provided. Tickets are \$25.

Make your reservation by calling Joan at (908) 647-0819 or Victor at (908) 276-8572.

Adopt a Pet

January 3 & 4

People for Animals, a nonprofit animal welfare organization serving New Jersey, will sponsor pet adoption events on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 3 and 4 from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the Petsmart store in Bridgewater's Promenade Mall, intersection of Route 28 and Route 287.

For low cost spay/neuter information, call the People for Animals Clinic at (973) 282-0890.

Elderly Care Support Group Meeting

January 5

A support group for those caring for elderly or chronically ill loved ones meets on Monday, Jan. 5 at 8 p.m. in the parish center of St. Helen's Church on Lamberts Mill Road in Westfield. These are information and sharing sessions.

For more information, please call Marilyn Ryan at (908) 233-8757.

Collegiate Fair at Rutgers University

January 7

New Jersey's largest collegiate career fair, sponsored by the Office of Career Services at Rutgers University, will take place at the Rutgers Student Center and Brower Commons on College Avenue from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 7. The event is free and open to the public. Free shuttle buses will transport candidates to and from the Louis Brown Athletic Center on Rutgers' Livingston Campus in Piscataway between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Parking is not available on the College Avenue Campus.

For more information, directions, parking instructions, resume submittal, job hunting tips and a roster of participating employers, visit <http://careerservices.rutgers.edu>.

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Planning Board Considers Applications

By Libby Barsky

Architect Jerry Rubino from Di-Cara Rubino Architects of Wayne, representing the Board of Education, appeared before the Planning Board recently to explain the replacement of an existing switchgear at the South Plainfield High School. The electrical switchgear controls all electric activity in the building, including the lights and power for computers, explained Rubino. The current switchgear was enclosed in a 9 x 14 ft. electrical room when the high school was built in 1974.

In order to contain the new switchgear, the dimensions of the room will be expanded to a 16 x 9 ft. room. Building a replacement electric room is expected to take place in September 2009, Rubino added.

The cost for the new switchgear and its installation is set at \$600,000, with 40% or \$240,000 of the amount to be covered by a state grant and the remaining \$360,000 by the board.

In other business, the planning board unanimously approved the application of William Wilkins to subdivide a 100 x 154 ft. lot containing a fire damaged a 2½ story home at 121 West Golf Ave. Wilkins plans to demolish the existing home and build two single family homes, each with a garage and driveway wide enough to park two cars. The borough requires a residential lot to have a frontage of 100 ft., but when the surrounding homes were built on West Golf Avenue, 14 out of 16 were on 50 ft. lots. The applicant argued that the two new homes met all requirements for rear, side and back setbacks and the 50 ft. frontage would be consistent with the neighborhood, and would upgrade it.

The board granted permission to GBR Middlesex LLC (Middlesex Mall) 4971 Stelton Rd. to bring in a Drug Fair in the space once held by Blockbuster Video and Radio Shack. The board also agreed to the installation of a drive through window in the back to service customers picking up prescriptions to be competitive with CVS and Rite Aid stores.

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SEND US YOUR PHOTOS. If you have an event, take a photo, write a caption identifying the event and people and send it to us. The best photos record action and don't include so many people that it's impossible to identify anyone. Please don't send us photocopies or laser prints. They don't reproduce well. Digital photos should be 150 dpi or higher.

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Middle school students were asked to contribute 25 cents during lunch period on December 12 for "Quarters & Dollars for Darfur." The school raised \$275 which will be used to purchase much needed stoves through the high school chapter of Help Darfur Now. Principal Steve Novak said, "I am very proud of our students. They learned about genocide and the Holocaust and giving to others."

SCHOOL BOARD Notes

Students from Roosevelt Elementary School presented a reading and musical presentation at the December 17 Board of Education meeting.

The board recognized the following teams: varsity boys soccer-GMC Blue Division champions, cross country-GMC White Division champions, varsity gymnastics, volleyball, soccer and field hockey co-champions and Allyson Peterek-statewide winner of the New Jersey Association of School Libraries.

The Board of Education approved the following: revised curricula for the 2008/2009 school year; second reading of Reg. 2460.7-special education-free and appropriate public education; Reg. R-R-2460.8-transition from early intervention programs to pre-school programs; Reg. R2460-special education-maintenance access to and confidentiality of pupil records; Reg. R2460.14-special education-in-service training; Reg. 3432-sick leave; Reg. 4240-employee training; regulation No. 8630-emergency school bus procedures; revised policy 2340-field trips and the first reading of Reg. R4281-inappropriate staff conduct.

• High school business education teacher Maria Nesgood will retire effective February 1, 2009.

• Resigning are middle school special education teacher Arleen Seamon effective February 6, 2009 and accounts receivable clerk Mary Jo Walsh effective January 1, 2009.

• The board appointed the following: Desiree Sparone as Franklin School contractual elementary; Laura Orlando

as Roosevelt school special education long term substitute, middle school winter coach Mike Battista as weight room club supervisor, Mariela Hidalgo as Roosevelt School ESL, Danielle D'Ambrosio to prepare the NJ ASK in Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics at Roosevelt School; Jessica Crincoli as middle school social studies long term substitute and Shannon Lorenzo as adult high school ESL teacher;

• The board voted to join the Educational Risk Insurance Consortium-North.

• A contract with Sport Safe Testing Service was approved.

• The board accepted a proposal from DiCara/Rubino Architects to provide architectural/engineering design services for the replacement of eight large rooftop air conditioning units servicing classrooms in the high school.

• The board voted to: apply for the first Regular Operating District Grant for replacement of eight large rooftop air conditioning units servicing classrooms in the high school; to apply for the first Regular Operating District Grant for windows, HVAC systems, temperature control and electric service projects at Franklin Elementary, Grant Elementary, Kennedy, Riley, middle school and high school (excluding windows) and to declare as surplus, maintenance vehicles.

Congratulations to the directors and students of the high school, middle school and Grant School winter music concerts. An excellent job to all those involved.

Thank you to the PTO Yankee Candle Fundraiser coordinator Eileen Brady for all her extensive programming efforts. Congratulations to Anthony Cotoia on his induction into the NJSIAA Hall of Fame.

Fourth Annual Celebrate NJ Writing Contest

Fourth grade "journalists" from local schools will match their writing skills against thousands of other New Jersey students in a statewide Webquest challenge. Before February 27, students must choose a topic, conduct research, and write an article that informs, entertains and inspires other fourth grade students about the Garden State.

Celebrate NJ, a non-profit organization located in Freehold, whose mission is to promote and preserve the best of New Jersey, hopes students will also develop an increased appreciation for what makes New Jersey a great home state. The organization has recently announced its largest class of over 10,000 fourth grade students enrolled in this year's interactive online program.

Students from Franklin Elementary School and Kennedy Elementary School will be participating.

"Students learn about New Jersey in fourth grade, and literacy skills are a key component of state tests, so this online writing program is a natural fit," said Karen Hatcher, executive director.

Each student who writes and submits an article as part of the statewide writing contest will earn a complimentary baseball ticket to the Somerset Patriots on June 2 and participate in a special pre-game parade for students. A Celebrate NJ! Awards Event is being planned to recognize local students whose articles are selected as "The Best of the Best" from the thousands submitted. Judging will be completed by March 15, 2009.

Celebrate NJ! will also produce an online newspaper showcasing the students' writing, available on their Web site, www.CelebrateNJ.org. To register, teachers may contact Karen Hatcher at (732) 333-0452 before January 5.

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Kennedy School staff stuffing stockings for children.

Kennedy Stuffing Stockings

This holiday season the children of the Oakwood Plaza Apartments in Elizabeth had stockings filled with candy, books, toys, mittens, gloves, and socks, thanks to the generosity of the John F. Kennedy School staff. The entire staff contributed items and money, and met after school to fill 175 stockings for the children, ranging from infants to teens.

Ann Witkowski, who donates her time and effort all year long to the New York City Relief, which services the low income community in Elizabeth with food, clothing and various

ject and delivered the stockings and gifts in December.

John F. Kennedy Student Council sponsored a holiday drive to benefit soldiers in Iraq. Through the generosity of the students and faculty they were able to fill 60 boxes to brighten the soldiers' holidays. The donations were packaged and sent to Dr. Frank Light, an anesthesiologist and a volunteer for Healing the Children, who organized this worthy cause.

We hope these boxes of gratitude and good wishes will lift the spirits of the servicemen and women.

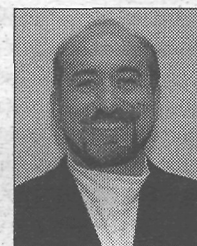
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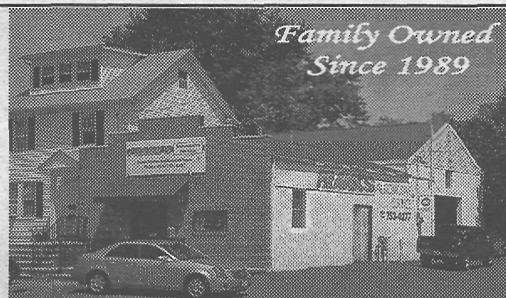
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**National Champions – SP Eagles Pee Wee Cheerleaders –
Take First Place in PW Small Novice Division**



2008 National Championship Photo—Eagles Pee Wee cheerleaders and coaches—Top Row: Coach Kelly Addario, Yesenia Montalvo, Alyssa Capone, Taylor Brinks, Lauren Dicellis, Head Coach Melissa Smith. Second Row: Chelsea Housel, Ashley Franchak, Taylor Maistickle, Katie Addario, Shayna Hodge, Coach Amy Fonti. Third Row: Coach Doreen Massaro, Jamie Donato, Diana Pender, Jennifer Teece, Wiktorja Blazejowicz, Brittany Della Salla. Fourth Row: Brooke Barry, Emily Smith, Kara Podlovits, Lauren Zekas, Zoe Falcone, Alexis Cavaliere.

Disney's Wide World of Sports, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.—On a balmy Tuesday in December, in one of the most magical places in the world, 20 girls made magic of their own. South Plainfield's very own Eagle cheerleaders have put themselves forever in the Pop Warner history books. After overcoming strong competition from 19 of the best teams in the nation, this group of 20 young athletes was crowned National Champions, taking first place in the Pee Wee Small Novice Division.

After rising from their hotel beds before dawn, the girls opened up the second day of Pop Warner's National Cheer competition with a bang, setting a standard that would not be beaten. Their performance was amazing, one-legged liberties, pyramids and tumbling runs performed in perfect unison. They were confident, they dominated, and the judges clearly took notice.

Four hours later, as they waited on the floor of Disney's Milk House Stadium to hear the results of the competition, jittery nerves overtook them. Assistant Coach Kelly Addario was waiting with the team to hear the results. "It was almost agonizing as the announcer called through the places," said Addario. "It was like, 'fifth place, not us; fourth place, not us. Could this be happening? Are we really in the top three? Third place, not us... second place. Okay, maybe we're in second place. Wait, Millstone Eagles are in second? Could this be happening. Are we really in first place?'"

"I still can't believe I heard the announcer say, '2008 National Cham-

pionship trophy goes to... South Plainfield Eagles' ", said Chelsea Housel, a 12 year-old on the squad. "We all started jumping and screaming and hugging; it was unbelievable! We worked hard all season for this, but it was worth it!" Head Coach Melissa Smith was also amazed. "This has been such an incredible year. I knew these girls had the potential to win, but you can never take your competition for granted. There were a lot of talented squads out there, but our girls delivered one of their best performances ever."

Jackie Dickerson, cheer commis-

sioner for the Eagles, was at Disney's Wide World of Sports with the other 100 or so parents, family members, and friends who attended to cheer the squad on. "This being my first year as commissioner, it was an amazing feeling to actually be a part of that moment," said Dickerson. "When I watched them, it was as if Tinker Bell was sprinkling fairy dust on those girls as they performed. They truly sparked out there. I would like to thank the parents and family members who supported them and made sure they were able to follow their dreams. I am honored to be a South Plainfield

Eagle."

Kelly Dunn, president of the South Plainfield Eagles Football and Cheer organization, was also impressed. "When you consider that there are over 5,000 cheer and dance squads in the nation, its amazing to think our group of fifth and sixth grade girls came out on top—they are the best in the nation. I am so proud of these girls and their coaches!"

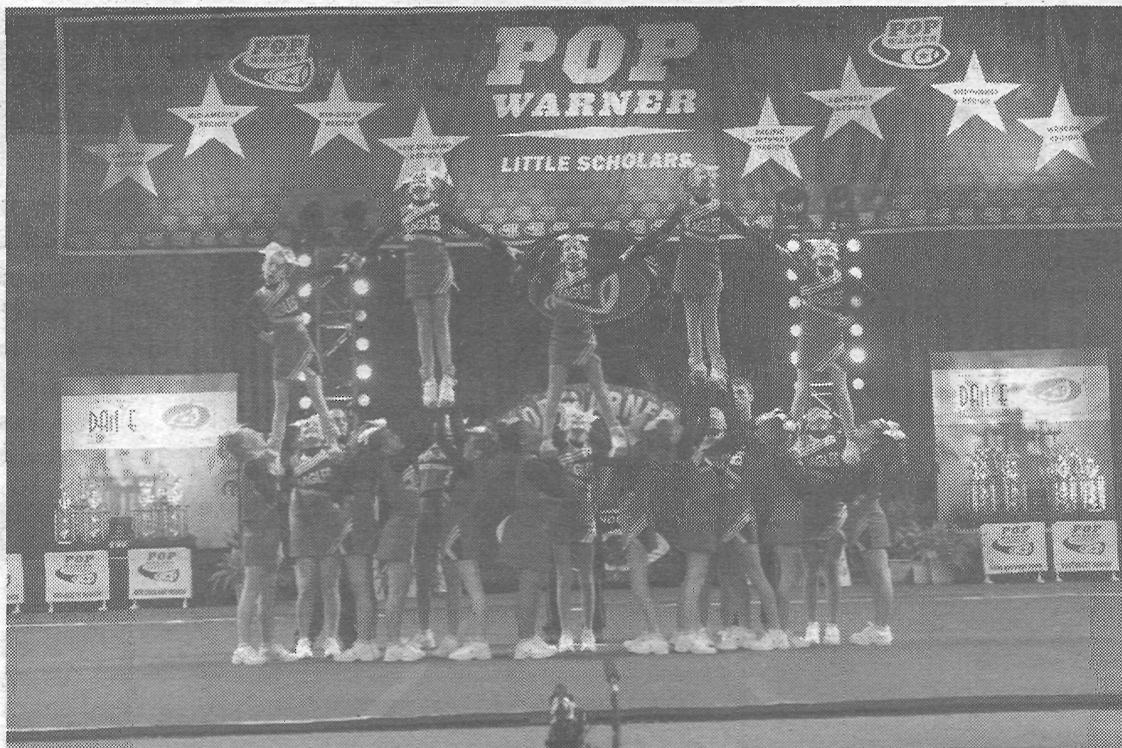
Pop Warner National Championships brings teams from the eight Pop Warner regions across the country to Disney World each December. Football teams, as well as cheer and

dance squads, compete for the title of National Champion. 2008 was the first time South Plainfield has been represented at the National Championships.

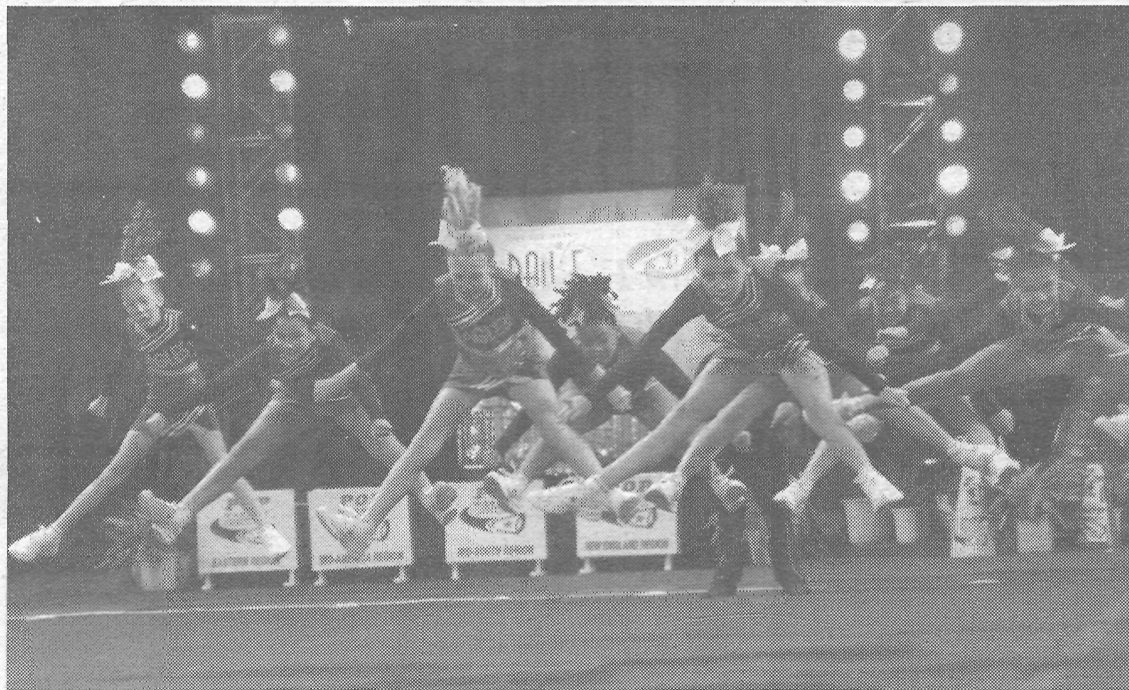
This squad of cheerleaders has been well tested this year. In order to make it this far, the squad placed first in the Mountain Valley Conference competition, then placed first at the Regional Qualifier. They then placed second at the fiercely competitive Eastern Region competition, earning them the right to compete at the Nationals. At many of these competitions they beat out teams who had made it to the Nationals in prior years.

Many people said this day would never come, that South Plainfield would never send a squad to the Nationals, let alone win there. But the girls and their coaches always believed it was possible. Assistant Coach Amy Fonti remembers the journey that brought them here. "Our goal at the end of last year was simply to get to Nationals. But as the girls progressed through the season, our goal changed from going to Nationals to being national champions; their hard work and determination made it happen." Assistant Coach Doreen Masarro added, "What a year it has been. I am so very proud of each and every girl. Each one of those 20 girls was a critical component of that team. This dream is one I will never forget."

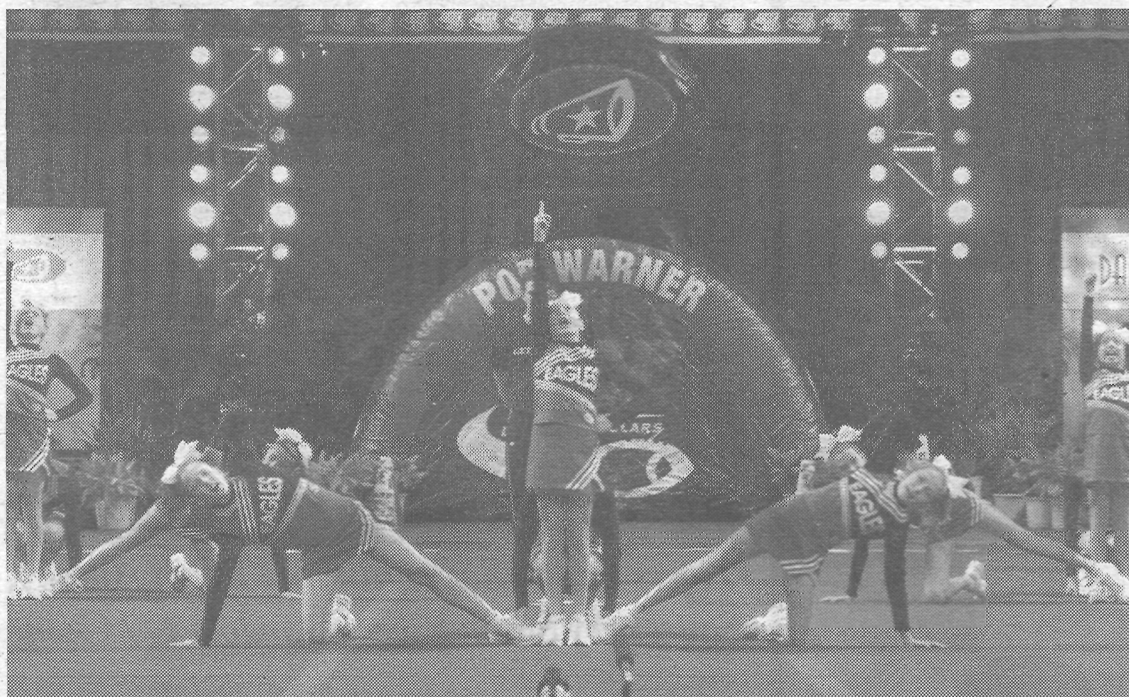
The competition in Florida was not without its challenges. One of the girls, Taylor Maistickle, fractured a finger 10 days before the competition, so was not able to do any tumbling or stunting in the critical practices leading up



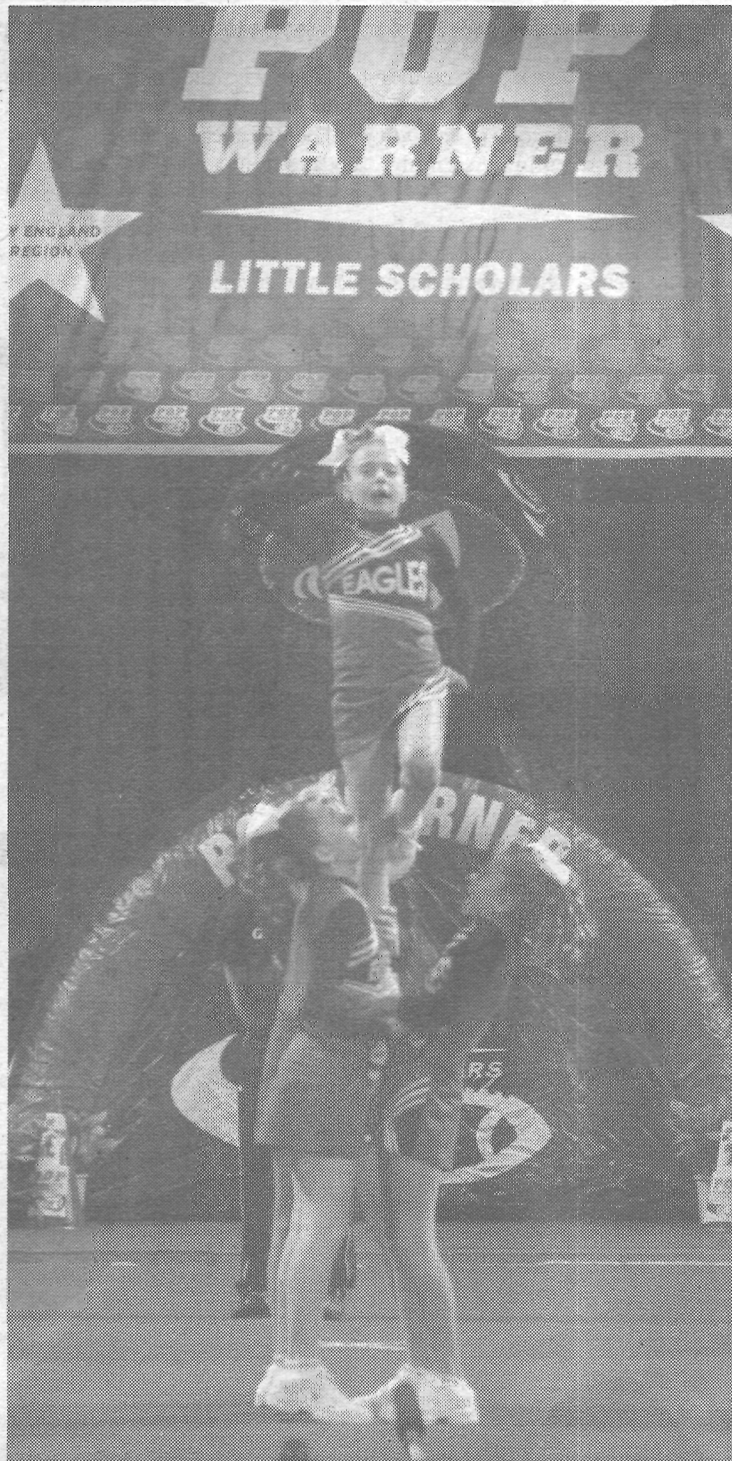
The squad performs a pyramid with two full lifts.



The girls are airborne doing split-jumps.



Kara Podlovitz (center), flanked by Shayna Hodge and Brooke Barry, chant "best in the nation."



From left to right, fliers Jenny Teece, Kara Podlovitz and Emily Smith perform one-legged liberties.

"I still can't believe I heard the announcer say, '2008 National Championship trophy goes to... South Plainfield Eagles.'"

—Chelsea Housel, Eagles Pee Wee Cheerleader

to the competition. Taylor re-broke her finger during the actual competition, but you wouldn't have known it from her, and the entire squad's, impressive performance. Several other girls were suffering from stomach viruses in the days leading up to the competition. There was also all the distractions that Disney World has to offer. But this amazing squad of 11 and 12 year-olds was able to put all these distractions aside, focus and perform flawlessly.

Despite the challenges and months of hard work, the girls and their families had a great time in Florida. Pop Warner threw a private party at Disney's Hollywood Studios on December 10. And plenty of fun was had at the other Disney parks, not to mention the hotel pool and ar-

cade room, both before and after the competition.

Disney World was fully decorated in its holiday best. Every inch seemed to be lit up with lights and greenery. In all, the setting was a bit surreal, but the trophy and medals that came home with these 20 girls from South Plainfield proves it all happened. These girls are true champions, many of them having dreamed of this moment since they first started cheerleading in kindergarten. They remind us that dreams do come true—and that when you put hard work, dedication and talent all together, that magic can happen. Go Eagles!

—Submitted by Terry Housel

Thoughts from the National Champions...

"We worked so hard from the beginning to the end and we believed that we can make it this far. We all really love each other and we're like family!! We will never forget 2008!"

—Wiktoria Blazejowicz

"Going to Nationals was a great experience! It felt so good to win 1st Place! Our trip was amazing! This has been such a magical time for us! Wow!"

— Jamie Donato

"The most memorable moment was when they called South Plainfield Eagles as national champs... and getting our gold medals and coming off the bus and watching our parents cheer for joy!"

— Alexis Cavaliere

"Winning the National Championship in Disney was so exciting! I am very proud of my team and coaches. We couldn't have done it without each other and all our hard work."

— Zoe Falcone

"When I was finished performing our routine, I was sure we won first place!"

—Kara Podlovitz

"I dreamed of going to Nationals ever since I knew it existed, and I couldn't have asked for anything more from my coaches or team. Going to Nationals was a dream come true!"

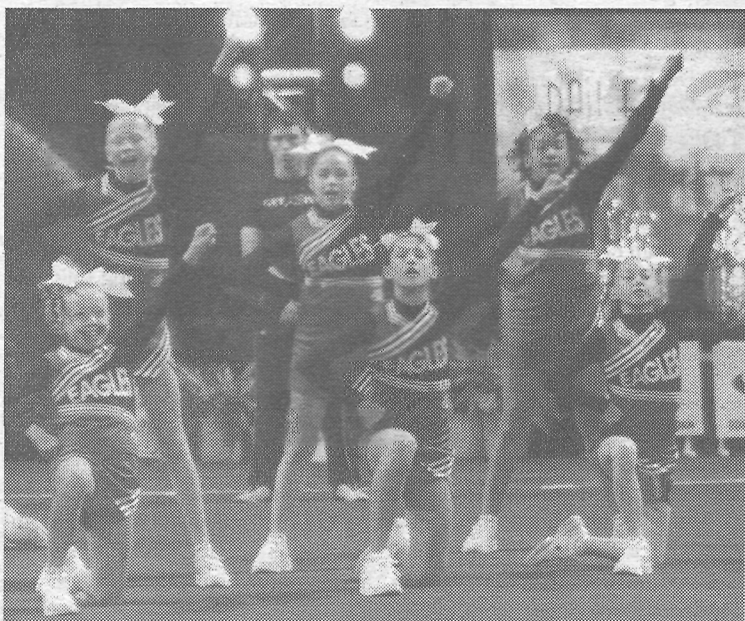
—Chelsea Housel

"I'm so glad we made it this far, and that all of us reached our goal for this year."

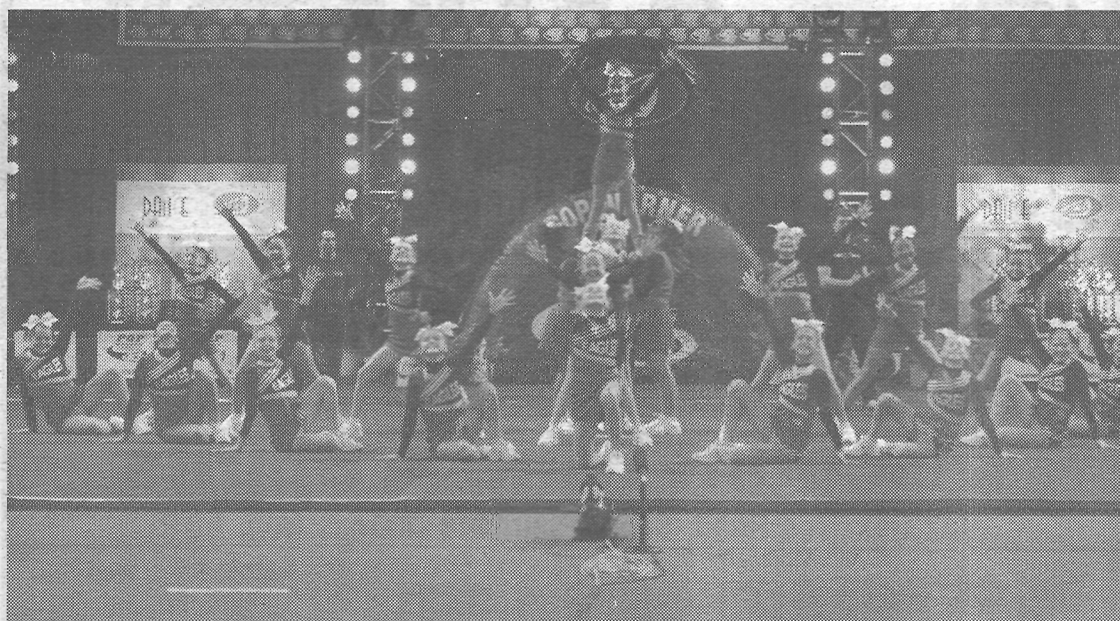
— Emily Smith

"I was proud to represent my town and excited our team took home the title."

— Shayna Hodge



The squad in perfect formation.



The entire squad in their closing formation.

Democrats Launch Web Site to Deliver News to the Public

The public can now sign up on the Assembly Majority Office Web site—www.assemblydems.com—to receive E-mail alerts detailing Assembly Democratic news.

The E-mail alerts will be sent at 6 a.m. daily, allowing the public to get Assembly Democratic news updates on whatever topics they select.

Those who click on the “sign up for E-mail alerts” link on the Web site will be able to choose to receive news updates from among 22 separate areas. Or, people can sign up to select all news released by the Assembly Democratic office.

They can directly visit <http://www.assemblydems.com/Subscription/SubscriptionSignIn.asp> to sign up.

The E-mail alerts come after the Assembly Majority Office began issuing multimedia news releases earlier this year.

The Assembly Democratic video releases can be viewed at the Web site or at www.youtube.com/user/njassemblydems.

Sports

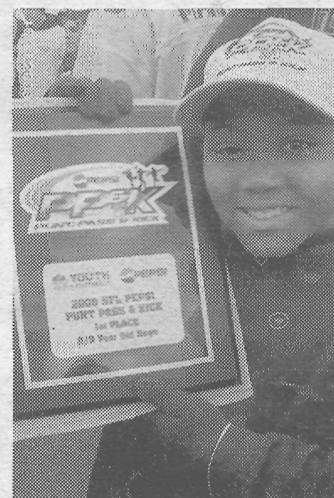
Jean F. Sapini, Jr. Wins Punt Pass & Kick Contest at Giants Stadium

Nine year-old Jean F. Sapini, Jr. entered the Pepsi Punt Pass & Kick (PP&K) contest earlier this fall in South Plainfield. He placed first for the 8/9 year-old boys with a score of 164.

Jean, Malik Cisson and others advanced to compete regionally at the Rutgers bubble. With many more boys to compete against, Jean won first place with a score of 217 feet total. This advanced him to compete at Giants Stadium on November 16. He also received three tickets to the Giants/Ravens game.

Jean “the machine’s” parents, Jean and Monica Sapini, as well as all of the South Plainfield Eagles staff, parents and players are proud to say that Jean also received the first place plaque for the Pepsi PP&K 8/9 year-old boys with a score of 218.9 ft. total.

Winning first place on the Giants Stadium field was awesome. Jean and his new friends at the competition were able to watch the Giants warm



Jean F. Sapini, Jr.

up. They got “high fives” from many of the players during their practice. Jean is ranked #9 out of 32 NFL teams. The results can be found on the Web site www.nflyouthfootball.com under “PPK competitions 2008.”

We are all so proud of Jean!

SHPS Bowling

By Ralph Fech

Tigers Fall to Sayreville and Perth Amboy, Squeeze by South River...Dandola 277 Game

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| SPHS Sayreville | 868-884-705-2457 977-908-893-2778 |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|

The boys bowling team rolled its high series of the season as they faced state champion and tournament of champions winner, Sayreville. The Tigers bowled well in the first two games, losing the second game by a scant margin of 24 pins. The Bombers, however, went on to victory.

Mike Dandola fired games of 237-198 enroute to a big set. Freshman Andrew Yon stroked a 214 game; Tim Moskal a 190 while Frank Dias and Nick Kukuch shot 166 and 162 respectively.

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| SPHS Perth Amboy | 751-797-785-2333 871-998-832-2701 |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|

Despite Tim Moskal's 191 game and Mike Dandola's 217-212-193 and 622 high set, the team dropped a 4-0 decision to a vastly improved Perth Amboy team. It was Perth Amboy's first win ever over the boys thus ending a 34-year losing streak. Congratulations Panthers.

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| SPHS South River | 830-804-732-2366 813-759-729-2301 |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|

The team surprised South River sweeping all three games in a 4-0 shutout. Mike Dandola fired 10 of 12 strikes in rolling a booming 277 game enroute to a 665 high set. Fellow senior Tim Moskal added 194 while the rest of the Tigers held their own down the stretch.

Lady Tigers Continue Streak, Tie Sayreville, Pound Perth Amboy, Nip South River

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| SPHS Sayreville | 757-771-727-2255 681-810-735-2226 |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|

The girls bowling team jumped out to a 76-pin lead after the first game, but had to withstand a powerful surge by the Sayreville Bombers. As the Tigers held on for a 2-2 tie match, Jackie Kukuch took scoring honors firing games of 178-181 for 515 high set. Lyndsey Murtagh rolled a high game of 191, while teammates Gina Curcio 165-162 and Katie Salvatore 163 chipped in for the Tigers.

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| SPHS Perth Amboy | 790-763-787-2340 600-693-547-1840 |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|

The team raised its record to 4-2-1 as they cruised to an easy victory over the panthers. Lyndsey Murtagh paced the Tigers with a 201 game and solid 534 set. Gina Curcio added 196-187 for a 521 while Jackie Kukuch fired the high game of 212 as the Tigers win streak stood at four.

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| SPHS South River | 623-768-613-2014 614-650-634-1898 |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|

A short-handed team had just enough fire power to extend its winning streak and dehorn the Rams of South River by the score of 3-1.

Lyndsey Murtagh led all scorers with a 214 high game and 492 set. Teammates Jackie Kukuch 467 and Nikki Disch 454 also posted solid sets. The win was not possible if it were not for the efforts of Stephanie Dicindio and Heather Thomas.

To Ryan and Kelly: Merry Christmas to you and your family. We miss you.

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HOLIDAY BEER SPECIALS...

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|---|--|
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| Coors Light 18 Pack 12 oz. Cans... 11 ⁹⁹ | Sam Adams Lager & Light 2/12 Packs 12 oz. N.R. Bottles... 24 ⁹⁹ |
| Natural Light & Ice 30 Pack 12 oz. Cans... 12 ⁹⁹ | Blue Moon 2/12 Packs 12 oz. N.R. Bottles... 24 ⁹⁹ |

HOLIDAY SPIRIT SPECIALS...

| | |
|---|--|
| Martini & Rossi Dry or Sweet Vermouth 750 ml... 5 ⁹⁹ | 1800 Reposado or Silver Tequila 750 ml... 21 ⁹⁹ |
| Dekuyper Pucker All Types 750 ml... 8 ⁹⁹ | Crown Royal 80 Canadian Whisky 750 ml... 22 ⁹⁹ |
| Smirnoff Vodka 80° 750 ml... 9 ⁹⁹ | Courvoisier Cognac VS 750 ml... 25 ⁹⁹ |
| Di Amore Amaretto & Sambuca 750 ml... 9 ⁹⁹ | Knob Creek 9 Year Old Single Batch Bourbon 750 ml... 27 ⁹⁹ |
| Wolfschmidt Vodka 80° 1.75 liter... 13 ⁹⁹ | Chivas Regal 12 Year Old Premium Scotch Whisky 750 ml... 27 ⁹⁹ |
| Kahlua Coffee Liqueur & Flavors 750 ml... 17 ⁹⁹ | The Singleton 12 Year Old Scotch Single Malt Whisky 750 ml... 34 ⁹⁹ |
| Johnnie Walker Red Scotch Whisky 750 ml... 17 ⁹⁹ | Remy Martin Cognac VSOP 750 ml... 35 ⁹⁹ |
| Admiral Nelson Spiced Rum 1.75 liter... 17 ⁹⁹ | Don Julio Silver Tequila 750 ml... 36 ⁹⁹ |
| Captain Morgan Spiced Rum 750 ml... 17 ⁹⁹ | Johnnie Walker Green Premium Scotch Whisky 750 ml... 44 ⁹⁹ |
| E & J Gallo Brandy VS 1.75 liter... 18 ⁹⁹ | |
| Bailey's Irish Cream Liqueur & Flavors 750 ml... 20 ⁹⁹ | |
| Plymouth Gin 750 ml... 21 ⁹⁹ | |

HOLIDAY WINE SPECIALS...

| | |
|---|---|
| Il Principe Chianti 750 ml... 6 ⁹⁹ | Almaden Mountain Burg, Chablis, Rhine Sangria 5 liter Box... 11 ⁹⁹ |
| Yellow Tail All Types 750 ml... 6 ⁹⁹ | Greg Norman Shiraz Lime Stone 89 ⁹⁹ WS 11 ⁹⁹ |
| Monte Oton Garnacha 2007 750 ml... 88 ⁹⁹ WS 6 ⁹⁹ | Ravenswood Chardonnay Sonoma 750 ml... 11 ⁹⁹ |
| Dr. Loosen Riesling "Dr. L." 2007 750 ml... 89 ⁹⁹ WS 7 ⁹⁹ | J. Lohr Los Osos Merlot 750 ml... 11 ⁹⁹ |
| Chat. Ste. Michelle Gewurztraminer, Sauv. Blanc 750 ml... 7 ⁹⁹ | J. Lohr Seven Oaks Cabernet 750 ml... 12 ⁹⁹ |
| Covey Run All Types 750 ml... 7 ⁹⁹ | Sterling Vintners Collection Cab., Merlot 750 ml... 12 ⁹⁹ |
| Sebek White Zinfandel 1.5 liter... 7 ⁹⁹ | Placido Rosso Di Montalcino 2005 750 ml... 13 ⁹⁹ |
| Robert Mondavi White Zinfandel 1.5 liter... 8 ⁹⁹ | Franzia Cabernet, Merlot, White Zinfandel, Chard. 5 liter Box... 13 ⁹⁹ |
| Solnia Rioja 2007 750 ml... 87 ⁹⁹ WS 8 ⁹⁹ | Bearboat Chardonnay Russian River 750 ml... 13 ⁹⁹ |
| Columbia Crest Grand Estates Cab. Sauv. 750 ml... 9 ⁹⁹ | Pulenta Malbec 750 ml... 90 ⁹⁹ WS 14 ⁹⁹ |
| Sterling Vintners Collection Chard., Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc, Shiraz, Zinfandel 750 ml... 9 ⁹⁹ | Solabal Rioja Crianza 2005 750 ml... 90 ⁹⁹ WS 16 ⁹⁹ |
| Il Principe Montepulciano D'Abruzzo 1.5 liter... 9 ⁹⁹ | Sterling Vintners Napa Cabernet 750 ml... 18 ⁹⁹ |
| Ruffino Lumina Pinot Grigio 750 ml... 9 ⁹⁹ | Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio 750 ml... 19 ⁹⁹ |
| Cockburn Ruby or Tawny Port 750 ml... 9 ⁹⁹ | San Felice Chianti Classico Riserva II Grigio 2005 750 ml... 19 ⁹⁹ |
| The Crossings Sauv. Blanc 750 ml... 10 ⁹⁹ | |
| Harvey's Bristol Cream Sherry 750 ml... 11 ⁹⁹ | |

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Obituaries

George "Taxi" Pornovetz, 81

George "Taxi" Pornovetz, beloved husband, dear father, grandfather and great-grandfather, died peacefully at home surrounded by his loving family on Wednesday, Dec. 17.

A lifelong resident of the borough of South Plainfield, Taxi worked for the former Cornell Dublier, United States Gypsum Co. and Kentile Floors, all located in South Plainfield.

He served in the U.S. Army during WWII and was a member of the South Plainfield VFW Post #6763.

Taxi, a well-known and well-liked man, had a gentle soul and was always wearing a smile. He enjoyed playing golf and walking around Spring Lake Park.

He was predeceased by a daughter, Melinda Pornovetz, who died in 2003, a sister and five brothers.

Surviving is his beloved wife of 59 years, Georgia (Clearwater); his adoring children, Debra Schroeder and husband Alfie of South Plainfield, Diane Pornovetz and Eugene Cooper of Pt. Pleasant, Donna Wilson and husband Bill also of Pt. Pleasant, Georgia Fenimore and husband Chris of Hillsborough and George Pornovetz and wife Chris of Port Orange, Fla.; a sister, Ann Deering of Jamesburg; two brothers, James and Charles, both of South Plainfield and eight adoring grandchildren, Stephanie Maher, Alyssa Marin, Brian and Kyle Wilson, Janelle, Chelsea and Nicholas Pornovetz and Jessica Fenimore. Also surviving are three loving great-granddaughters, Isabelle and Mya Marin and Ava Maher.

Funerals services were held at McCriskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals.



George "Taxi" Pornovetz

Sam Getz

Sam Getz, a very special husband, father, papa, uncle and friend, passed away on Sunday, Dec. 14. He will always be remembered for his gentle and caring personality, his intelligence and beautiful self-taught artistry.

He was predeceased by his cherished daughter, Laurie, who died in 2006.

He is survived by his wife, Florence; a daughter, Randy; two sons-in-law, David and Muhammad-Ihsan; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren.

A reflection of life memorial service was held at The South Plainfield James W. Conroy Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made in Sam's name to Princeton Hospice, 208 Bunn Dr., Princeton, N.J. 08540 or to The Alzheimer's Association, Greater New Jersey Chapter, 400 Morris Ave., Suite 251, Denville, N.J. 07834.

Harry W. Biles, 73

Harry W. Biles died on Friday, Dec. 19 at JFK Medical Center in Edison.

Born in Elizabeth, Harry lived in Milburn, but spent most of his life in South Plainfield.

Harry received an honorable discharge from the United States Marine Corp in 1961.

For over 40 years, Harry worked for Elizabethtown Water Company, spending about 25 years as a backhoe operator.

He was a member of the South Plainfield American Legion Chaumont Post #243, The Marine League and was a former vice president of Local #423 AFLCIO.

His daily routine was to take walks in Spring Lake Park, and he enjoyed attending his grandchildren's baseball and football games.

He was predeceased by his parents, William and Marie Biles.

Harry is survived by his wife, Lee (Bushman); two daughters, Tammy Welch of Dover Foxcroft, Maine and Colleen Kolvites and husband William of Barnegat; two grandchildren who referred to him as Pop, Kimberly and Adam Kolvites and by two brothers, William Biles of Manchester and John Biles of Charlotte, N.C.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals.

Charles T. Kiick, 90

Charles T. Kiick died on Tuesday, Dec. 16 at the Genesis Eldercare/The Woodlands Nursing Home in Plainfield.

Born in Jersey City, he resided in Lyndhurst before moving to South Plainfield in 1951.

Charles was employed as an assembler for American Can Co. of Hillside

for 20 years before his retirement.

He served with the 69th Regiment in the United States Army during WWII. Charles was a member and former commander of the 69th Regiment Veteran's Corps of Manhattan and the American Legion Chaumont Post #243 of South Plainfield. He was also a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernian's, the South Plainfield Polish Home and was a communicant of Sacred Heart Church.

Charles was an avid reader and history enthusiast. He cherished his Irish heritage and faithfully marched with the Fighting 69th every St. Patrick's Day in New York City.

Charles was predeceased by his wife, Irene, in 2002.

He is survived by a daughter and son-in-law, Linda and Ed Cumming of New Providence and by two grandsons, Jeffrey and Timothy Cumming. He also leaves behind the loving staff at The Woodlands, where he resided for the past seven years.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals.

Anna Florence Keller, 85

Anna Florence Keller died on Wednesday, Dec. 17 at home.

Born in Centralia, Pa. on August 30, 1923 she began her married life in Aristes, Pa. before moving to South Plainfield in 1954. She relocated to Edison in 2005.

Mrs. Keller and her husband are both Charter Members of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in South Plainfield. She was active in the church choir and Ruth Circle, taught Sunday School and directed the Junior Choir. She had worked as an aide at Pilgrim Covenant School.

She was predeceased by her parents, Alfred and Gussie (Benfield) Burge.

She is survived by her husband, Ted, and would have celebrated 62 years of marriage on December 26, 2008; three sons, Donald and wife Joyce of Oakhurst, Robert and wife Cathie of South Plainfield and James and wife Linda of Branchburg; a brother, Rev. Donald Burge of Ohio; seven grandchildren, Jonathan, Kristin Heyser, Timothy, Becky, Christopher, William and Marion and three great-grandchildren, Danielle and Abby Keller and Alexander Heyser.

Funeral services were under the direction of McCriskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to the Memorial Fund at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, 3145 Park Ave., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080.

From the South Plainfield Library

Bookmarks

By Sunnie Randolph

The library wishes everyone a continuing happy holiday season. This year the end of December will see the conjunction of holidays in a number of different faiths. Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights celebrating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, began on December 22 and lasts for eight nights. Christmas fell on Thursday and today, December 26, begins Kwanzaa, a holiday which stretches over seven days with celebrations encompassing the English definition of the word which means "first fruits." And finally Monday, Dec. 29 is the first day of the Muslim new year of 1430. So the last two weeks of December are a time of celebration.

Of course, you can find out more about these holidays and celebrations at the library. Besides a wide variety of books for the Christmas season, everything from cookbooks to craft books to fiction books with stories centered on the season, we have music CDs with holiday music and videos in both DVD and VHS formats. We also have books for celebrating Hanukkah and Kwanzaa, and others

on Islam. All of these celebrations will continue on at least through the beginning of this week. Actually, Christmas celebrations continue through January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, when the tradition states the Three Magi arrived to give presents to the Christ child. So come in and keep the holiday feeling going. And don't forget the library for your New Year's Eve party. We have music and videos to liven up any party.

Furthermore, there will be a special program at the library on Sunday, Dec. 28 at 2 p.m. on "What If You Are Losing Your Job?" A representative of H&R Block will be here to talk about tax and financial issues involved in losing a job. The program is free and no registration is required.

Also, there is no children's programming this week and the library will close at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, New Year's Eve, and will be closed Thursday, New Year's Day. However, we go back to regular hours on Friday, Jan. 2, 2009 and children's programming will begin again on Tuesday, Jan. 6.

LEGAL NOTICE

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

An appeal has been filed by Joseph Cambria requesting a variance from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the Borough of South Plainfield to permit the expansion of a front porch by 4'; 30' front yard setback required, 26' proposed; and other variances that may be required, said property being located at 3406 Park Avenue, Block 250, Lot 2, R 7.5 Zone 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, January 8, 2009 in the Council Chambers, Borough Hall, 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, New Jersey at 7:00 p.m.

The files and documents pertaining to this appeal are available for public inspection in the Planning/Zoning Office in Borough Hall between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

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December 26, 2008

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Nicholas S. Morris Jr., 84

Nicholas S. Morris Jr. died peacefully on Tuesday, Dec. 16 at home.

Born and raised in the Bronx, Nick resided in South Plainfield since 1951.

He worked as an iron worker for the former Savory & Glassier Fabrications in Middlesex for several years. Prior to Savory & Glassier, Mr. Morris worked for Mack Trucks in Plainfield.

Nick served a total of six years with the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force. A WWII veteran, Mr. Morris received the Purple Heart and other Air Force medals for his service.

He was predeceased by his wife, Nelly, who died in 1997; a sister, Olga Strauss, and by a brother, Serge Morris.

Surviving is a daughter, Kathryn Morris-Trainor and husband Terrence of Montreal, Canada; two sons, Nicholas S. III and wife Denise of Agoura, Calif. and Terrance and wife Barbara of South Plainfield; a sister, Sonia Dalton of Florida; six grandchildren, Terrance, Natasha, Nicholas and Jennifer Morris, Robert Trainor and Sarita Trainor-Browne and three great-grandchildren, Colin, Logan and Olivia.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals.

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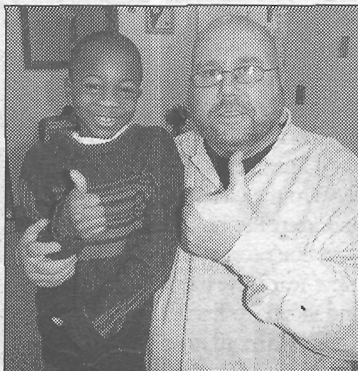
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2008-09
JUNIOR JOURNALIST

Alkeim Raines Named Junior Journalist



Junior Journalist Alkeim Raines with Roosevelt teacher Mike Bertram.

Alkeim Raines, Roosevelt School third grader, is this week's winner in the 2008-09 Junior Journalist program for his poem, "Santa." His efforts have earned him dinner for his family courtesy of Hometown Heros.

Students are encouraged to submit their original written works to their teachers, school principals, Hometown Heros on Hamilton Blvd. or the *Observer* at 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Winners receive a catered dinner for

their families from Hometown Heros and will be honored at a year-end banquet in May 2009, where they will be recognized for their efforts. Junior Journalist winners also have the opportunity to win the Ruth Kurland Memorial \$1,000 savings bond which will be awarded at the banquet.

For more information, call the *Observer* at (908) 668-0010 or Hometown Heros at (908) 755-4376.

Santa

By Alkeim Raines

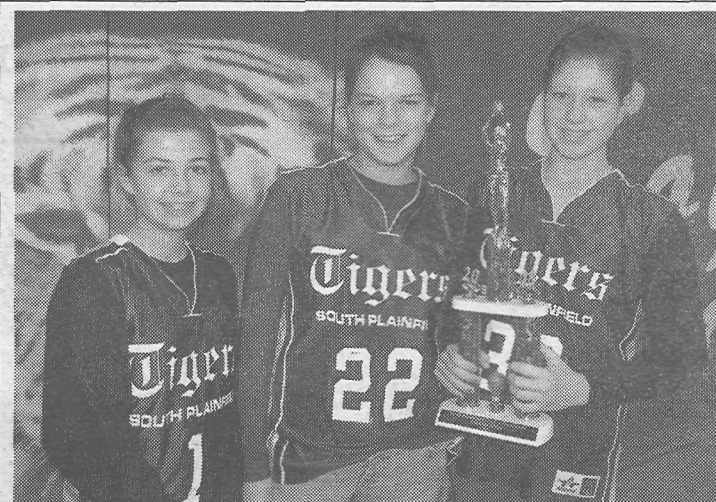
The chubby man
with a red suit that flies off houses,
with magical reindeer,
with no sound and no sight
he flies all night.
The gift giver in every town
lands on your roof and laughs
"Ho-Ho-Ho! Merry Christmas!"
Look closer in the sky.
See that shooting star.
Santa is coming tonight.

From a Not So 'Junior' Journalist...



Have a Holly Jolly Christmas
but don't ask me to play Santa
just because I'm built like a
snowman.
I wish I could melt away pounds
like Frosty in spring,
but cookies sing songs to my belly,
and cocoa dances down my throat,
making this fat man...
Jolly!!

~Mr. B



South Plainfield Alliance for Substance Awareness held the annual middle school boys and girls basketball tournament recently with the girls team taking the first place title beating Summit 27-26. Pictured with the trophy are Shannon McMahon, Jackie Dvorak and Rebecca Eustice.

SPHS Drug Testing

(Continued from page 1)

"There are 33 school districts that have begun this process. We are not trying to be punitive. The new drug policy was enacted to help deter students from experimenting with drugs," explained Greene.

"If I'm at a party on the weekend and I know that random testing will be held on Monday-then I might think twice about experimenting with a drug," Diehl added.

In dissatisfaction parents called the new policy coercive and criticized the program for testing not including every student and concentrating on a random, self-selected group of students who participate in extra-curricular activities, emphasizing more probable substance problems with students not engaged in any school activities. "We are in uncharted policy," said Diehl. "Any new program is not perfect. We are here to protect the children."

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policereport

• On Dec. 9 Segundo Sevilla, 53, of Plainfield was arrested for driving on a suspended license and an outstanding warrant.

• On Dec. 10 Bernadett O'Flaherty, 38, of South Plainfield was arrested for theft by deception.

• Fernando Agostimiano, 31, of New Brunswick was arrested at Home Depot for shoplifting \$37 worth of safety glasses.

• A New Market Avenue resident reported that the driver side window

of their vehicle had been smashed and three electric space heaters and assorted hand tools were taken.

• A Piscataway resident reported the theft of a 1993 Chevy Caprice from the parking lot at Target.

• On Dec. 11 Kenneth E. Daye, 44, of Perth Amboy was arrested for receiving stolen property.

• A Stratford Avenue resident reported that their Christmas lights on the front lawn had been cut.

• On Dec. 12 Donna L. Haines,

45, of Colonia was arrested for possession of a controlled substance.

• A Hancock Street resident reported that the driver side window of their vehicle had been smashed.

• On Dec. 15 Charma S. Henry, 21, and Stephanie Jean-Baptiste, 19, both of Monclair and Ebony Nichole Jackson, 21, of Toms River were arrested at Sears Essentials for shoplifting \$272 worth of underwear and jewelry.

LEGAL NOTICES

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

December 22, 2008

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action will take place by the South Plainfield Zoning Board of Adjustment for its meeting to be held on January 8, 2009.

1. Reorganization Meeting will start at 6:30 p.m.
2. Regular Meeting will start at 7 p.m.

Any and all interested parties may gather in the Council Chambers located at:

2480 Plainfield Avenue
South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080

Any questions may be directed to the Board Secretary at (908) 226-7641.

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

\$29.45

December 26, 2008

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

ORDINANCE NO. 1840

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

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE LICENSING AND REGULATION OF CHARITABLE CLOTHING BINS PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF NEW JERSEY STATUTE 40:48-2.60, ET SEQ. was presented for adoption after a public hearing was held by the Mayor and Council on Monday, December 22, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ 07080.

ATTEST:
Joann Graf/Acting Municipal Clerk

\$25.65

December 26, 2008

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

ORDINANCE NO. 1841

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

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 157 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD ENTITLED "SEWERS", was presented for adoption after a public hearing was held by the Mayor and Council on Monday, December 22, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ 07080.

ATTEST:
Joann Graf/Acting Municipal Clerk

\$25.65

December 26, 2008, 2008

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Middle School Delivers Holiday Spirit in Annual Concert

By Patricia Abbott

On December 11 the South Plainfield Middle School presented their annual holiday concert to an enthusiastic crowd of friends and family. The concert featured the school's orchestra, band, concert choir and the elite girl's choir, the Gems.

Principal Steven Novak began the evening by welcoming the crowd. "The Pledge of Allegiance" was led by student Kayla Smith and "The National Anthem" was sung by the Gems.

Each vocal and instrumental group offered the audience excellent selections of music. The orchestra, conducted by Sarah Bruce, performed "Dragon Dances," "Midnight Tango" and "Finale from Symphony No. 5," followed by the Gems conducted by Donna Markiewicz, singing "It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" and "All I Want for Christmas is You." The concert choir, also conducted by Markiewicz, sang "Adeste Fideles," "Changamano," "Dodi Li, Pie Jesu" and "Sing We Now of Christmas." The concert band, conducted by Andrew Veiss, performed "Conquistqa" and "The Swarm."

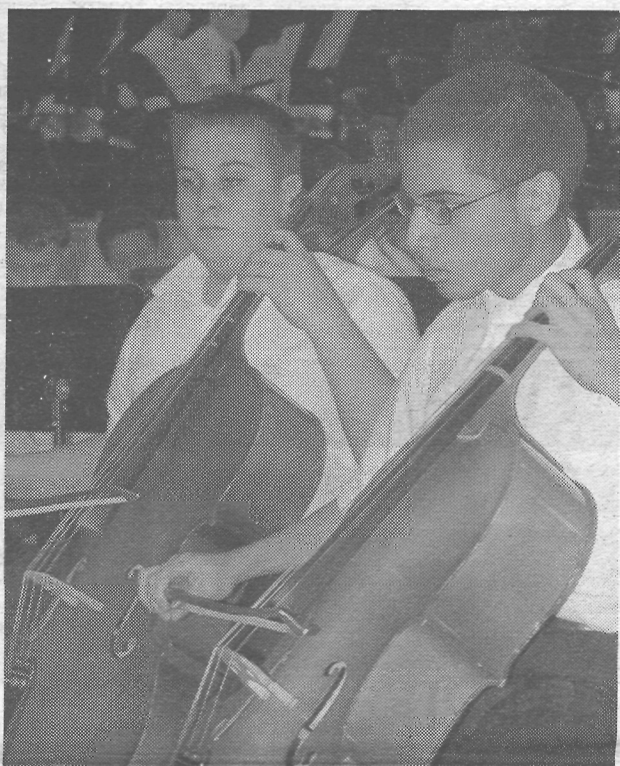
The evening concluded with a sing-along led by the combined groups.

Choral Director Donna Markiewicz said, "All of the music students worked very hard preparing for the concert. They were fabulous and we are very proud of their success! The South Plainfield Middle School music program is one of the best middle school programs in the state because of the support we receive from the community, administration, staff and the parents. The students worked diligently, attended rehearsals after school and all

are extremely dedicated to the music ensembles. It's a pleasure to have a job where you truly have fun every day and love what you do. I wish everybody the passion and enjoyment that I have had working with these young adults. We believe that the audience was the largest in years and we are looking forward to our next performance, the District Festival, on Thursday, March 26, 2009."

The performers experienced the amazing thrill of a full house; not only were all the seats filled, but an entire section of bleachers as well. It was the largest crowd to attend the middle school concert in many years. Novak was pleased with the outcome saying, "The concert was one of the best ever, the turnout was great with over 525 in attendance."

The students in the music area remain the pupils who excel in the four 'As'—academics, athletics, activities, arts. We at the middle school include attendance as well. I am so proud of our students and our music staff!"



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