

**TO OUR READERS:**  
Due to the Christmas holiday,  
the December 25 Observer will  
not be available in stores until  
Saturday, December 26.

# South Observer

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60 CENTS

DECEMBER 18, 2009



**Celebrating 126 Years of Service**—The family, friends and fellow employees of four retiring members of the Department of Public Works gathered to celebrate at a party at the Italian-American Club last Saturday night. Public Works Superintendent Joe Glowacki (35) and employees Victor Kurilew (38), Paul Brand (27) and Donald Fiore (31) were employed for a combined total of 126 years. Pictured standing (L to R) are Bill Staats, Paul Brand, Ray Monticchio, Don Fiore, Rich Ritchey, Joe Glowacki, Phil Russo, Rick Zekas, Vic Kurilew and Dave Donatelli. Kneeling (L to R) are Ken Calderoni, Bob Graf and Leo Appolloni. Not pictured are Donna Zereconski, Leon Mielnikiewicz and Bob Capparelli.

## Republicans Object to Dismal Swamp Commission Appointments

by Jane Dornick

The Borough Council voted to appoint William Thomas and Jeffrey Williams to the newly formed Dismal Swamp Preservation Commission.

Prior to the council vote on the appointment at the December 7 meeting, Republican Councilmen Ray Rusnak and Tim McConville argued over the urgency of appointing two individuals to the newly formed commission. A bill sponsored by Assemblymen Peter J. Barnes III and Patrick Diegnan (D-Middlesex) and passed into law on

October 14 established the commission which will create a regional master plan to prevent further encroachment upon the Dismal Swamp and have regulatory authority over the swamp. The commission will consist of seven members, two each appointed by Edison, Metuchen and South Plainfield, respectively, and one by Edison Wetlands Association.

Rusnak quoted the borough's bylaws, Article 5, Section 8, stating, "It will be the policy of the mayor and council not to fill vacancies which occur between Election Day and the annual reorganization meeting unless it is absolutely necessary."

Mayor Charles Butrico felt the bylaw was "open ended" and said that other towns "were appointing people as we speak." Republican Councilman-elect Rob Bengivenga said the council would be in violation of the bylaws and that he personally contacted the other towns involved and they have not made any appointments as of yet.

Borough Attorney Patrick Bradshaw was questioned on the legality of a vote and he said it was "up to the council and a decision by the majority" as to its necessity.

The appointees are William Thomas, a lawyer and Zoning Board of Adjustment chair, and Jeffrey Williams who, according to Butrico, is a "young and upcoming individual." "Both men are highly qualified," said Butrico. Resident Robert Bengivenga, Sr. brought up the fact that his 10-year experience on the Green Brook Flood Commission would make him a suitable candidate and he was disappointed that the position was not advertised.

Democrats Ray Petronko and Chrissy Butcas were not present at the meeting, and the vote resulted in a tie. Both Republicans Ray Rusnak and Tim McConville voted "no" and Democrats Joe Scudato and Frank Salerno voted "yes" to the resolution. Mayor Butrico exercised his privilege to vote in the event of a tie and the resolution was passed. Butrico offered up the fact that when the Republican Majority takes office on January 2 they will be able to make their own appointments.

The Dismal Swamp stretches across 1,200 acres of hardwood forests, EPA-designated Priority Wetlands and wild meadows in South Plainfield, Metuchen and Edison and is home to countless wildlife species.

## 3 Schools Evacuated Kennedy, Franklin and SPSHS Students Forced to Exit Buildings

Police responded to emergency calls in local schools on December 10 after Kennedy School received a bomb threat and Franklin School reported a burning odor, and on December 11 after the smell of natural gas was reported at the high school. All three schools were evacuated.

On December 10 at approximately 10:45 a.m. South Plainfield Police received word of a bomb in Kennedy School that forced students and staff to leave the building. They were escorted by police to the PAL building and parents were notified through the Board of Education's reverse 911 system to retrieve their children at that location. According to Police Chief John Ferraro, bomb sniffing dogs were brought in by the Middlesex and Monmouth County Sheriff's Departments and N.J. Transit and nothing unusual was found in the building. Classes resumed as usual the following day. An Edison

man was charged with calling South Plainfield police and falsely claiming there was a bomb in the same school back on May 7.

While the Kennedy evacuation was underway, the odor from an overhead light ballast in a Franklin School classroom forced students outside for a brief period.

The following day, December 11, high school students were sent to Grant School and the middle school after the smell of natural gas was reported. The fire department identified a gas pipe on the roof as the source of the odor.

According to Business Administrator Rich Guarini, repairs were made to the pipe over the weekend and also to the light fixture at Franklin School. He commended the fire department for their immediate action and their ability to identify the problems quickly.



(L to R) Student Council Vice President Charlie Butrico, President Jessica Uhl and Representative Cody Decker with the gifts they collected.

## Middle School Students Make Holiday Special for Others

The Middle School Student Council collected 260 gifts in the school's annual toy that began on November 23. In addition, several hundred dollars were collected and used to purchase Kohl's gift cards.

All of the items donated by students and their families were given to the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve/N.J. Retired Chapter Gifts for Kids program, South Plainfield families in

need and needy families in Middlesex County.

"I am once again very grateful to all of the students and South Plainfield families that donated to this holiday toy and gift drive. I also know that many also donated to the high school toy drive. South Plainfield continues to be a proud community that cares about others," said Principal Steve Novak.



(L to R) Michael Elkow, president of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, N.J. Metro Chapter; Mayor Charles Butrico, Jackie Jackson and Dan Messina, chairman of the local New Jersey chapter.

## MS Society Honors Jackson

South Plainfield resident Jackie Jackson was named MS Activist of the Year by the New Jersey Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society at an award ceremony on December 6. She was recognized for her activism in promoting accessibility for handicapped individuals in towns throughout New Jersey.

In addition, the Borough of South Plainfield received the Partner of the Year Award for both being active in understanding the needs of the handicapped by conducting an accessibility tour, and for making changes to the borough infrastructure to improve accessibility.

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spobserver@comcast.net.







Mayor Charlie Butrico attends a press conference at Cornell-Dubilier to welcome Judith Enck, the new EPA regional administrator, who was there to discuss the beginning stages of the \$30 million Recovery Act-funded effort to clean up the soil.



### Want to stay informed but can't make it to borough council or BOE meetings?

Council meetings air on Comcast Channel 96 Mondays at 7 p.m. (Check Comcast community bulletin board for last minute time changes.) To purchase a complete copy of a council or BOE meeting, contact the Observer. BOE Meetings air on Thursdays at 7 p.m. Please note: Meetings are now broadcast on Channel 96.

#### council meetings

Meets twice a month on Mondays, except where noted.\*

Borough Hall Council Chambers • Questions? 908-226-7605

Agenda Meeting Public Meeting

Monday, December 21 ..... Monday, December 21

All Agenda Meetings begin at 7 p.m. followed immediately by the Public Meeting, unless otherwise noted. Meetings of the Governing Body are held in accordance with the N.J. Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.) in the Council Chambers at 2480 Plainfield Ave.

#### planning board

Meets second and fourth Tuesday of the month, \*except where noted.

Borough Hall Council Chambers, 7 p.m. Questions? 908-226-7641

#### zoning board of adjustment

Meets second and fourth Thursday of the month \*except where noted.

Borough Hall Council Chambers, 7 p.m. Questions? 908-226-7641

#### board of education

Meets Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at Roosevelt Administration Gymnasium on Jackson Ave. \*except where noted.

Committee of the Whole: Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 10 and March 31

Regular Public Meeting: Jan. 20, Feb. 16, March 17 and April 14

#### BOE curriculum/technology/student activities

Meets once a month on Wednesdays at 4 p.m. in 2nd floor conference room, Roosevelt Administration Building on Jackson Ave. Jan. 6, Feb. 3, March 3 (April to be announced)

#### BOE buildings & grounds

Meets second Monday of the month at 7 p.m., 2nd floor conference room, Roosevelt Administration Building—Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 8

#### recreation commission

Meets once a month on the second Tuesday of the month, except July and August PAL Building, Maple Ave. 7 p.m. Questions? 908-226-7716

## South Plainfield Observer

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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.

## In My Opinion

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

The following letter was received from the State of New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing and addressed to Mayor Charles Butrico after press time last week. The letter clarifies an inaccurate statement attributed to Spokeswoman Lisa Ryan in an article that appeared in the Courier News.

#### Dear Mayor Butrico,

On December 30, 2008, the Borough of South Plainfield petitioned COAH with a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan that included the Harris Steel (Tyler Properties) site to address 230 credits of its fair share obligation, consisting of 156 family rental units and 74 rental bonuses. On October 14, 2009 the Borough of South Plainfield received Substantive Certification for its 1999-2018 Fair Share Plan, which included the Harris Steel site.

In the resolution that was adopted by the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing on October 14, 2009, which granted South Plainfield Borough substantive certification, it was specified that all implementing ordinances must be adopted within 45 days of the grant of substantive certification. This 45-day requirement is statutory (N.J.S.A. 52:27D et seq) and cannot be waived by the Council. In addition, the COAH Compliance Report noted that a developer's agreement was submitted, dated August 21, 2009. This developer's agreement between the Borough and Harris Steel must also be executed within 45 days of substantive certification as part of the grant of substantive certification that was issued by the Council and represents the firm commitment that is needed pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:97-3.6.

If the implementing ordinances permitting the zoning on the site were not adopted and the developer's agreement not executed, the resolution granting substantive certification would be null and void, thus leaving the Borough vulnerable to builder's remedy litigation.

In addition, under the Fair Housing Act, only municipalities participating in COAH's process may collect and retain development fees. Therefore, if the ordinances and developer's agreement are not adopted, the Borough's trust fund account would also be frozen. As of December 2008, the Borough had a balance of \$204,911 in its trust fund account.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call.

SINCERELY,  
LUCY VANDENBERG, EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR, COUNCIL OF  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

#### Dear Editor,

On behalf of the Roosevelt Elementary School's Student Council, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to our Roosevelt families, teachers and staff for their generous contributions during our pajama drive. Because of their generosity, we were able to provide many families with the gift of warm pajamas, ranging from infant sizes to teen sizes. This was a great opportunity for our students to witness and participate in a project promoting community involvement and assisting those in need. It also highlights and incorporates our December character trait of caring.

We would also like to thank Mrs. DeAndrea for delivering our pajamas to Marge Ackerman of South Plainfield's Social Services and for spending the day putting together the bundles for the needy families in our community. Again, thank you and best wishes for a joyous, peaceful holiday and New Year.

SINCERELY YOURS,  
MARGARET MOSLEY, M.ED, MSW,  
LCSW, STUDENT COUNCIL  
ADVISORY

#### Dear Editor,

Last week I saw our mayor on NJN news in a piece on plans for the Cornell-Dubilier site. He said that they were looking to put retail (read: strip mall) along the road front and 'multi-use' in the rear of the site.

Instead, how about several different, carefully selected outlet stores, a kind of small-scale Turntable Junction or Peddler's Village? Look at what Flemington and Lambertville have done with the idea.

There are no outlet centers between Elizabeth and Flemington, so the location would be attractive to customers in the surrounding towns. The centers at Oak Tree and Park would see more exposure as customers were drawn from that direction. The plans for a 'back door' connection to Route 287 would be easily accessible to many people and limit the traffic impact on the rest of town.

Perhaps funding could be found for a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks that would connect the businesses in the South Plainfield Avenue/Front Street area. It would be great to preserve its 1920-30s feel, perhaps as a one block-long bricked pedestrian mall.

For years having a Superfund site in the geographic center of town has been a negative. I hope that it can now be viewed as an opportunity to improve things, rather than do more of the same. The last thing this town needs is yet another strip mall.

SINCERELY,  
JANET MOYERS BOWMER

#### Dear Editor,

Last week, Councilman-elect Rob Bengivenga wrote the paper to explain why he opposes a plan to build 708 rental apartments on New Brunswick Avenue. I think we can all agree that this project would irreparably damage our town as we know it, and needless to say, I also oppose it.

Since Rob wrote that letter things have changed dramatically.

#### 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 Email: [spobservers@comcast.net](mailto:spobservers@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.

A few years ago the council worked a deal with developer Jack Morris that allowed him to build a large age-restricted housing complex on the old Tingley Rubber site. Morris has now applied to convert the project to regular housing (without an age restriction). In other words, we are looking at another huge development project, which, when added to the New Brunswick Avenue project, would bring the number of units over 1,000.

Republicans opposed the Tingley project. When we predicted that Morris would come back looking to convert the project into regular housing, the Democrats (like they usually do) insisted we were wrong. This is one time I wish we were.

Imagine the impact. Can Roosevelt School handle a few hundred more kids? Or will we have to start bussing kids around the district? What about the stress on our volunteer fire department and rescue squad? And what about the effect on traffic and taxes?

South Plainfield is at a crossroads. We either join the towns that have said "no" to these types of massive projects and fight them, or we surrender and let the state force them down our throats. With the election of a new governor who promised to "gut" the regulations that require these huge developments, it only makes sense to fight to preserve our town. Now's not the time to surrender.

COUNCILMAN TIM MCCONVILLE

(Continued on page 10)

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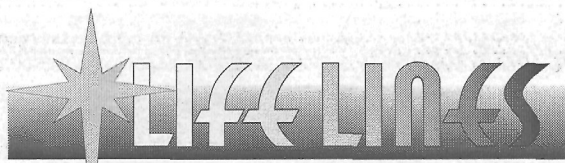
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(This column was originally submitted by Rescue House of Prayer in April 2008. A reprint was requested. In the hustle and bustle of holiday preparations, the message may be helpful to many of us!)

In these days of unbelievably demanding schedules, countless projects, "due dates," classes, activities, social events, and yes, sometimes even an unhealthy preoccupation with our own individual desires, we can easily lose focus of our most valuable asset: *our families*. Certainly, we love them but, do we really *know* them.

Initially and quite naturally, our first response is, "of course." That notwithstanding, do we take time and make time to really know them, not just talk, but communicate? Sadly, for many families, the answer is, "seldom." I've found, through my own experiences, that there is no better time to actually connect to one another than around the dinner table: no television, no Internet, no video games, just us.

In today's hectic world, both young and old are experiencing so much stress in their lives that sometimes we may feel we will explode if we are not given the opportunity to "let it out." Setting time aside to come together with our loved ones lets us realize what's really important and serves as an outlet to relieve stress. Gathering as a family provides security and comfort.

The Bible often talks about the importance of "reasoning together," *together* being the key word. It also goes on to say that "with all our *getting*," it is most important to "get an understanding."

Our children, our spouses, our parents, our families deserve us to have some knowledge of their true characters, their ideas, their fears, their goals.

How can we even start to get this most essential type of information? By encouraging open, honest and frank conversation between us. But when anxiety-producing problems or concerns come up, there are so many chances for us to become angry, alarmed, sensitive, or indignant! True communication will never work if we are overly sensitive or easily offended.

In the Bible's Old Testament, the prophet Samuel reminds us that "man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." As difficult as it may be, we should never judge one another based on surface behavior. The best approach is to work hard on separating our own emotions from whatever problems might arise in our discussions.

This all brings me to the point of my message, the importance of coming together for family dinner. A time to laugh, reminisce, and when necessary to feel free to talk about things that are bothering us, our problems and concerns.

Today's world is vastly different from that of a generation ago. If you can come together nightly, that's fine, but you must do it as regularly as time permits. Even if it's just one night per week. Pick a night of the week when everyone is free. Make it "family night" and stick to it as often as possible.

Yes, doing things together is essential, but coming together and communicating and freely expressing ourselves in an atmosphere of love and acceptance provides lifelong rewards, the opportunity to bond, to connect, to understand and to love. That's why family dinner time is the most meaningful, most significant event of our day.

*Life Lines is an Observer column provided by area churches.*

## Former South Plainfield High School Graduates Gather for Unofficial Reunion

By Patricia Abbott

The South Plainfield High School classes of 1972, 1973 and 1974 gathered at the Woodbridge Hilton in Iselin for an informal, but fun 'un-reunion' on December 4. The evening was the result of a mutual idea between unofficial Class of 1973 spokesperson Raymond Weeks, Jr. and Kriste Beckler who had been in touch with each other on Classmates.com in late summer. Once the decision was made, planning began.

It was originally thought to have the un-reunion include only the class of 1973 and then they realized that the classes of 1972 and 1974 had also shared the long ago split-session class experience. For those unfamiliar with that, SPHS freshman/sophomore students attended school from noon until 5:20 p.m. and the junior/senior began classes starting at 7:30 a.m.

The evening came together with help from a few friends from the classes of 1972 and 1974. Raymond said, "We didn't want anyone, including ourselves, to get shackled with contracting a hotel or restaurant, making guarantees or collecting money, so we decided to keep it simple and find a venue in Central Jersey that could accommodate 50 or so. The Hilton was our choice. I used Web sites Classmates.com and my Facebook.com page to promote it. The



Liz Kaplan and Lisa Brandi

latter has grown since the un-reunion. By the way, a 1973 classmate coined the term un-reunion and I used it. I think it resonated with the masses because it communicated the non-formal nature of the event."

Ray continued, "There was a real ground swell of interest—no dinner or fee, just a simple mixer at the Hotel lounge. We all found something to talk to each other about; either a shared memory from 35 years ago or a common interest in our lives today, and found the get together to be great medicine."

Lisa Brandi, a 1972 graduate who recently moved back to her home town of South Plainfield, commented, "Either we have all aged remarkably well—or the eyes are the first thing to go. So a big shout out to all my 'homeys' from South Plainfield High school, I'm so glad to be back home!"

Over 40 alumni from the three classes also attended the event. It was a



Lynn Van Haren

magical evening of recognizing and renewing old friendships, listening to an onslaught of comments and laughter while pouring over yearbooks. Guests enjoyed dancing, conversations and the sharing of dozens of photos.

## Gather Your Antiques For Appraisal

Antiques appraiser Allan Snyder will return to the South Plainfield library on Sunday, Jan. 10 at 2 p.m.

A frequent guest at the library, Snyder will offer free antiques appraisals to attendees. Participants are limited to two items each; appraisals are made on a "first come, first served" basis. This program is being presented free; no pre-registration is required.

For information, please call (908) 754-7885 or visit the library's Web site at [www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us](http://www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us).

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# Events

## Girl Scouts Babysitting/Movie Night

December 18

Drop the kids and go shopping, or have a date night! Babysitting/movie night will be held at Wesley Church, 1500 Plainfield Ave., on Friday, Dec. 18 from 6:30-10 p.m. Ages: K-4 (must be able to use bathroom without help). Cost: \$15/child; \$8 for each additional sibling. Includes: craft, games, snacks and a G-rated movie. Advance registration is highly recommended. This is being run by seven Ambassador Girl Scouts (all 16+), and their leaders to earn money for a trip.

For more information, or to register, call (908) 757-4244 or (732) 548-7646 for any questions.

## Friends of the Woods Open House

December 19

The Friends of the Woods will hold an open house at the Nature Center at Highland Woods Environmental Education Reserve on Saturday, Dec. 19 from 1 to 4 p.m. Outdoor guided tours start at 1:30 p.m. Inside exhibits will be on display as well as an outdoor exhibit on backyard composting. Everyone is welcome. Free of charge.

## McCriskin Tree Lighting, Caroling

December 19

McCriskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals will be hosting its annual tree lighting and caroling program on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 4:30 p.m.

The annual tree lighting is dedicated to the memory of the members of Task Force 3-502 101st Airborne Division who tragically died when their plane crashed in Gander, New Foundland on December 12, 1985. They were on their way home from a tour of duty. It is also the second year for caroling.

Following the tree lighting, light refreshments will be served at the senior center. Everyone is invited.

## Blackrose to Perform

December 19

Blackrose, the band, playing classic rock and roll music and today's hits, will be performing at Rugs & Riffs, 493 Rahway Ave. in Woodbridge on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 10 p.m. No cover.

## Musical Service at Wesley Methodist

December 20

Wesley Methodist Church, located at 1500 Plainfield Ave., will present a musical service on Sunday, Dec. 20 at the 10:30 a.m. service. Christmas Eve service will be at 7:30 p.m. with children's pageant, and at 11 p.m. with carols, lessons and communion.

Call the church at (908) 757-2838 if you would like to participate in a charity during this blessed season.

## Sacred Heart New Year's Eve Gala

December 31

Come join us for a New Year's Eve celebration on Thursday, Dec. 31 from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. in the Sacred Heart School cafeteria. Cost of \$50 per person includes a hot buffet, setups, dessert, coffee and champagne. Party hats, noise makers and streamers will be provided. Bring your own choice of party beverage (BYOB) and snacks for your table. DJ music for dancing provided by "Heat Wave." Champagne toast at midnight. RSVP by Sunday, Dec. 20. Seating of 10 at tables-reserve early!

For tickets, call Fran Schulte at (732) 287-4768 or Lisa at (908) 756-0633, ext. 10.

## Math Genie Program at Library

January 3

There will be a special program on the "Math Genie" system at South Plainfield library on Sunday, Jan. 3 at 2 p.m.

The program will introduce parents to "Math Genie," a method of

teaching children, from toddler to pre-teenage, mathematics using a both a logical and creative focus. This program is being presented free of charge; no pre-registration is required.

For more information, please call (908) 754-7885.

## Library Board of Trustees Meeting

January 12

The next meeting of the South Plainfield Library Board of Trustees will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 12 at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at the library.

The meeting will include discussion of the library's current and future plans, including matters of library policy and needed improvements of library services and facilities. It will also serve as the annual Reorganization Meeting, involving the appointment of board members and assignment of duties. Members of the public are invited to attend this important meeting; no pre-registration is required. There will be a public comment period early in the meeting.

## — Out of Town — Holiday Festival of the Arts in Edison

December 18

Edison Arts Society will showcase artwork and performances by members representing the society's various disciplines of fine, literary and performing arts on Friday, Dec. 18 from 7-10 p.m. at the Franklin School on Route 27 in Metuchen. Admission is free with a suggested donation of \$5.

## Steppin' Out Singles Pre-Holiday Bash

December 19

Steppin' Out Singles will hold a pre-holiday bash on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 8:30 p.m. at the Woodbridge Hilton Grand Ballroom in Iselin. New DJ with great music will keep you danc-

## SENIOR CENTER Calendar

### Coming Up.....

Dec 20 - **Holiday Luncheon**  
12:30pm

### MONDAYS

Silver Sneakers ..... 8:30 am  
Crocheting ..... 9:30-11:30 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, computer classes, exercise, art, Tai Chi, yoga and crafts. Lunch Served Monday-Friday.

### WEDNESDAYS

Aerobics ..... 8:45 am  
Line Dancing ..... 10 am  
Computer 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm  
Crocheting ..... 1 pm  
Tai Chi ..... 2 pm

### THURSDAYS

Active Seniors ..... 8:30 am  
Shopping Trip ..... 9 am  
Crafts Class ..... 10 am  
Computer 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm  
Exercise Class ..... 1:15 pm

### FRIDAYS (Closed Christmas Day)

Bingo ..... 10 am-2 pm

Call (908) 754-1047 for more info or visit [www.southplainfieldnj.com/SeniorCenter](http://www.southplainfieldnj.com/SeniorCenter)  
2009 dues are due-\$10 membership

Senior Center is open daily 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Closed Saturdays and Sundays

ing all night. Be sure to dress to impress. Ages 40 and up; \$15 admission.

For information call the 24-hour hotline at (732) 656-1801.

## Jewish Textile Lecture And Demonstration

December 20

A Jewish textile lecture and demonstration will be held on Sunday, Dec. 20 at 3 p.m. The lecture will be presented by textile artist Mo Fleming at the Plainsboro Municipal Building, 641 Plainsboro Rd. in Plainsboro. The workshop is offered free of charge but advanced registration is required.

To register, call (732) 745-4489.

## Christmas Concert At Willow Grove

December 20

The Imperial Brass in Christmas concert will be held on Sunday, Dec. 20 at 3 p.m. at Willow Grove Presbyterian Church, 1961 Raritan Rd. in Scotch Plains. The 30-piece brass ensemble will perform classics by J.S. Bach, Irving Berlin, Canadian composer Morley Calvert and Chicago arranger William Himes. Purchase tickets in advance or at the door. Prices are \$15, seniors/students \$10, children under 12 are free. Following the concert will be a reception.

For tickets, call (908) 232-5678.

## Holiday Jamboree At Forum Theatre

December 29-30

Winnie the Pooh and Friends Holiday Jamboree will be presented at the Forum Theatre, 314 Main St. in

Does your organization need publicity for an event? Submit it for publication in Events Around Town.

Email: [spobserver@comcast.net](mailto:spobserver@comcast.net)

Metuchen on Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 29 and 30 at 10 a.m. Tickets are \$14.

For more information or tickets, call (732) 548-5600 or visit [www.forumtheatrearts.org](http://www.forumtheatrearts.org).

## Steppin' Out Singles New Year's Eve Bash

December 31

Steppin' Out Singles will celebrate the New Year with other singles on Thursday, Dec. 31 at 9 p.m. at the Days Hotel, 195 Route 18 South in East Brunswick. Dance, mix and mingle all night. Hats and noisemakers, cake and coffee. Dress to impress. Call the hotel for reasonable room rates. Ages 40 and up. Proper attire required, admissions is \$15.

The 24-hour hotline is (732) 656-1801.

## St. Helen's Caregiver Support Group

January 4

The Caregiver's Support Group, held in St. Helen's Parish Center, located at Lamberts Mill Road in Westfield, will meet on Monday, Jan. 4 at 8 p.m.

The support group for those caring for elderly or chronically ill loved ones meets on the first non-holiday Monday of each month.

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

## Hunterdon Chamber Networking Breakfast

January 6

Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce presents Leads Exchange, a networking breakfast (first Wednesday of every month) on Wednesday, Jan. 6. Registration at 7:45 a.m. at the Hampton Inn, 6 Frontage Dr. in Clinton. Continental breakfast compliments of the Clinton Hampton Inn. Free admission; bring a friend.

To register, call (908) 782-7115 or visit [www.hunterdonchamber.org](http://www.hunterdonchamber.org).



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Rev. John Paul Alvarado, Pastor  
**Mass Schedule:**

Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 p.m.

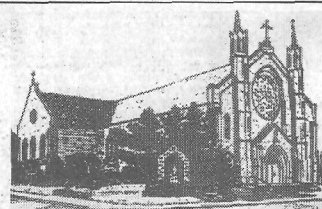
Sunday 9:30, 11:30 a.m.

Weekdays Mon. 7 p.m., Tues. 9 a.m., Wed. 9 a.m., Thurs. 7 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m.

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

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

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** - Saturday 10-11 a.m., 4-4:45 p.m. and after 5 p.m. Vigil Mass







Standing (L-R): South Plainfield Councilman-elect Rob Bengivenga, Jr., Alex Barletta-vice President Plainfields' UNICO, Anthony Bengivenga-president Plainfields' UNICO, Robert Bengivenga, Sr.-deputy District X UNICO governor, Frank Licato III and Erik White-UNICO District X "True Grit" award winner. Seated (L-R): John Gibriano and Linda Gibriano on accordion and Santa Claus.

## UNICO Hosts Keystone Christmas Party

The Plainfields' Chapter of UNICO sponsored their annual Christmas party for the Keystone Community residents on December 12. After a noon Mass at Sacred Heart Church, everyone went to the school cafeteria for a luncheon and Christmas party complete with the singing of Christmas carols accompanied by two accordions. The arrival of Santa Claus, who distributed gifts to everyone, highlighted the day.



In the kitchen: Alex Barletta, Ann Petrucelli, Victoria DeAugustine, Robert Bengivenga, Sr., Mike Colucci, Bill Tuthill and Anthony Bengivenga.

## Senate Approves Bill Allowing Nonpartisan Municipal Elections to Move to November

Legislation Assemblymen Patrick Diegnan, Jr. and Peter J. Barnes III sponsored to allow New Jersey towns to hold nonpartisan municipal elections during the November general election has been approved by the senate.

Currently, nonpartisan municipal elections are held on the second Tuesday in May.

"Allowing towns that hold May nonpartisan elections to move those elections to November without jeopardizing their nonpartisan status is a win for everyone," said Diegnan (D-Middlesex). "Municipalities win because they save money while being able to keep their unique form of government; voters and candidates win because the electorate is more engaged and more active in November elections."

The Diegnan/Barnes bill (A-351) would allow any municipality with a population of 10,000 or less and certain other municipalities that meet

special size, placement and population criteria that hold nonpartisan municipal elections to move, through passage of an ordinance, the election to the same date as the general election, the Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

"Giving communities the option to save money by moving their municipal nonpartisan elections to No-

vember just makes sense," said Barnes (D-Middlesex). "It allows towns the freedom to decide what electoral approach is right for them, and helps them to save money in the process."

The senate cleared the measure 38-0. The assembly initially passed the measure in February 2008, but will have to reconsider it after the senate amended the bill.

## Library Board of Trustees Meeting

The next meeting of the South Plainfield Library Board of Trustees will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 12 at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at the library.

The meeting will include discussion of the library's current and future plans, including matters of library policy and needed improvements of library services and facilities. It will also serve as the annual reorganization meeting, involving the appointment

of board members and assignment of duties. Members of the public are invited to attend this important meeting; no pre-registration is required. There will be a public comment period early in the meeting.

The library is located in the South Plainfield Municipal Complex at 2484 Plainfield Ave.

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



## All About Pets....

### The Twelve Tips of Holiday Pet Care

Dr. Anthony Loomis DVM,  
Plainfield Animal Hospital



With all the excitement of the holidays and our more hectic schedules pets can find trouble more easily. Here are 12 tips to help keep your pet safe during all of the holiday festivities.

1. We have all heard the horror stories of a Christmas tree being knocked over by a rambunctious dog or curious cat, so make sure your tree is well secured. Also, cover the water supply as it may contain fertilizers that can be toxic or bacterial growth in stagnant tree water.

2. Avoid tinsel. Cats love to play with shiny tinsel or ribbons which can lead to vomiting or even an obstruction.

3. Fasten all of your tree ornaments securely. Place delicate or breakable ornaments up high out of paws' reach.

4. Keep lights, wires and batteries securely out of the way. A wire can deliver a potentially lethal shock and a punctured battery can cause burns to the mouth and esophagus.

5. Don't leave lighted candles unattended. Pets can cause a fire or burn themselves if they knock a candle over, especially with their furry tail.

6. Place holiday plants out of reach. Poinsettia can cause drooling, mouth pain and vomiting. Mistletoe causes vomiting, labored breathing, shock and death from heart disease.

7. Be careful with gifts of chocolate goodies. Chocolate is the most common toxicity during the holidays and can lead to severe health problems including death.

8. Make sure your kids and guests avoid sharing their holiday meals with the pets. Table food can lead to upset stomachs for our pets and unwanted messes to clean up in the house.

9. Consider seriously the choice of giving a pet as a gift. First, make sure the recipient wants a new pet. If they truly want a pet, the best option is to select the pet together to find the right one for them.

10. Continue your pets' daily routine to avoid stress. Many guests coming in and out of your house can stress your pets, allow them to stay in a quiet room in the house if they get overly anxious. Also, do your best to feed and exercise them on their normal schedule.

11. Keep your pets warm during the cold winter months. It is best to keep them inside. If they must stay outside provide a warm shelter for them. A good rule of thumb: If you can't tolerate the weather, it's probably too cold for your pet.

12. Lastly, remember there is no legal drinking age for animals. Make sure to keep your holiday cocktails away from your pets' reach. Because alcohol is absorbed in the bloodstream, it can affect animals very quickly leading to breathing and cardiac issues, seizures, and even death.

By following these tips, hopefully you can minimize your pets' holiday mischief. Have a happy and safe holiday.

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## Visit Ireland With Rec Dept.

South Plainfield Recreation Department is sponsoring a four day trip to Ireland next March.

Sunday, March 28-Depart New York for Dublin, Ireland. After arriving, you will have a free day to explore.

Monday, March 29-Guided tour of Dublin.

Tuesday, March 30-Dublin Bay and Castle Tour.

Wednesday, March 31-Full day tour of Wicklow Mountains, Valleys.

Thursday, April 1-Return flight to New York.

Total price is \$1,100 and includes airfare, hotel, transfers, tours, transportation to and from the airport, breakfast and taxes (based on double occupancy). There are 30 spaces available. Tickets are available at the PAL.

## Hot Christmas Dinner

for any elderly or disabled person residing in South Plainfield.

We will deliver to your home on Christmas Day at no charge.

If you would like dinner or know of someone who is in need of dinner,

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Shirley Thompson

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(908) 756-7686

Please call between 10-12, Monday through Friday by December 21

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# Students and Alumni Perform in 36th Annual TubaChristmas Concert in NYC



South Plainfield students and alumni participated in the 36th annual TubaChristmas concert.

On December 13 many South Plainfield School students and alumni performed at the 36th Annual TubaChristmas Concert. This concert was conceived by tuba virtuoso Harvey Phillips to honor his teacher, the late great William J. Bell.

The first TubaChristmas was presented in Rockefeller Center in 1974, and was conducted by Paul LaValle of Band of America fame. This unusual

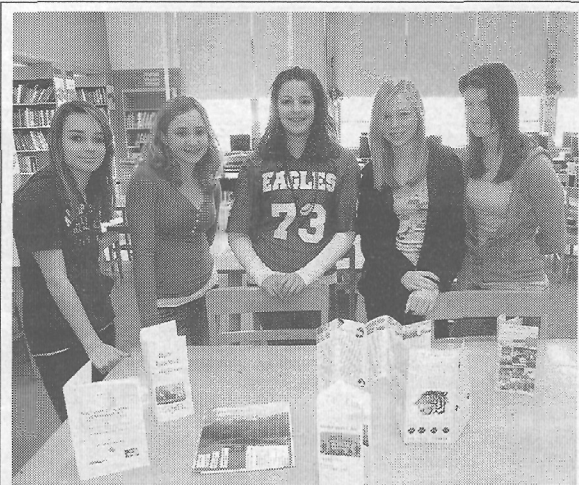
Christmas tradition is firmly established in over 200 cities around the world. Enthusiastic audiences become an important part of the concert by singing along with Christmas carols especially arranged for the tuba choir by American composer Alec Wilder.

The weather was windy and rainy, but approximately 450 tubas, baritone and euphoniums performed 30 minutes of Christmas carols on the ice

rink under the gigantic Rockefeller Center Christmas tree. The conductor of the celebration was C. Christian Willhelm, who is the former conductor of New York's famous Goldman Memorial Band and is the current conductor of the Ridgewood Concert Band.

This event has become a tradition at the middle school and throughout the district, which has had students participating in the concert for the past seven years. Middle school students involved were Liz McCormick and Rachael Pedersen. Isaac Blanco, Matt Brazza, Jake Rotella, Richard Rotella, Brendan Berry, Emily Roseo, and Marvin DeLaCruz represented the high school.

Grant School was represented by Tim Nuber. Franklin School student Lailah Goldberg was recognized as the youngest student participating in the event. All of the students were accompanied by Mr. Veiss and Mr. Baldwin. In addition, several South Plainfield High School alumni participated including Francisco DeLaCruz, Ken Abbott and Mike Puterbaugh.



Pictured with their outstanding travel brochures are (L to R) Kimberly Dornick, Samantha Soto, Alyssa Capone, Holly Delair and Kelley O'Brien.

## Middle School Students Design Travel Brochures

Renee Abbruzzese's project for her seventh grade geography class at the middle school was to create a travel brochure to entice visitors to experience the variety of sites and sounds that South Plainfield has to offer.

Included in the project were pictures that best represented the borough. Political, economic, recreational, cultural, commercial and physical aspects were also to be incorporated. Most important to the assignment was the inclusion of what makes South Plainfield unique for potential visitors.

Some of the students' brochures

depicted historical sites such as the Drake House; others incorporated photos of more recent additions to the town, such as Monument Park. Some included the school's Tiger mascot and expounded on the wonderful sports programs in the borough.

Abbruzzese commented on the project. "The students really enjoyed this assignment since they were actively learning about their community. They enjoyed coming to class every day to discuss new information that they had uncovered about South Plainfield and really began to feel a part of the community."



Thanks to EMT Tim Kelly, the Webelos I and II from Pack 224 earned their Readyman Badge at the South Plainfield Rescue Squad.

## Student-Athlete College Recruiting Seminar Jan. 12

On Tuesday, Jan. 12 a seminar entitled, "How to get recruited and possibly receive a college athletic scholarship" will be held at South Plainfield High School from 8 to 10 p.m.

The seminar is open to boys, girls, and their parents in grades 7-12.

The keynote speaker will be Kendrick Gholston from the Rutgers University Athletic Department. A representative from each of the Rutgers' athletic teams has been invited to attend (attendance not guaranteed).

Middle and high school student-athletes can attend free with student ID. Non-resident donation is \$15 per person in advance, \$12 per person for groups of 10 or more in advance, or \$20 per person at the door.

Please bring a copy of highlight reel for Rutgers to keep.

To reserve a seat, please call Willie at (201) 745-4491, or E-mail willie@wjcsports.com. For more information, visit [www.wjcsports.com/kids](http://www.wjcsports.com/kids).

## 55 and Over Housing Available

Beringer House, a shared living senior citizen residence owned and operated by the Metuchen Branch YMCA, has vacancies available.

If you are 55 and over, and are in

need of low to moderate income housing, please contact Jean A. Vick, director senior citizen services, Metuchen Branch YMCA at (732) 548-2044, ext. 217 for more information.

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## SPHS Music Boosters

### MUSIC NOTES



On behalf of the South Plainfield Music Boosters, Merry Christmas, happy holidays and happy New Year to all. Our Holiday concert was held on December 17 in the high school auditorium.

Congratulations to Justin Lesky for making fourth chair wind ensemble in region band.

The next music booster meeting is Wednesday, Jan. 6 in the high school chorus room at 7 p.m. See you all there.

Submitted by Tracy Hartmann

## AFP Coffeehouse to Feature Local Talent

Almost Famous Players (AFP) will hold a coffeehouse featuring amazing local talent on January 9 at the PAL from 6 to 9 p.m. Advance tickets are \$5; \$6 at the door.

Watch the Observer for more information.

Roads • School Board • Council  
 Police • Elections • Trucks  
 Sports • Recreation • Police Report



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## Petra Solar Named Clean/Green Company of the Year

New Jersey Technology Council has selected Petra Solar, a South Plainfield based cleantech company, as the winner of the Clean/Green Company of the Year Award. The selection was based upon key considerations, including Petra Solar's unique SunWave™ technology that combines distributed solar generation with smart grid capability and grid quality enhancement functions. Other considerations included the company's impact on the industry, contribution to industry standards, success in the marketplace and growth rate.

Petra Solar was honored in November at The Palace at Somerset Park in Somerset. The NJTC ceremony celebrates innovation in the region and salutes the efforts of leaders in technology-based innovation and entrepreneurship.

"Our goal at Petra Solar is to create and grow green jobs as we export products across the nation and around the world," said Shihab Kuran, CEO and president of Petra Solar.

In July, Petra Solar became the first business awarded funding under New Jersey's Clean Energy Manufacturing Fund. The U.S. Department of Energy awarded Petra Solar a prestigious multi-million dollar grant to perform research on the evolution of the grid with high penetration of solar generation. The company also signed a \$200 million contract with PSE&G to produce its SunWave™ intelligent PV solar systems for installation on 200,000 utility and street light poles throughout PSE&G's service area in New Jersey.

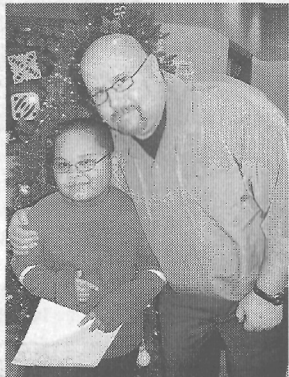
"Petra Solar brings together advanced renewable energy technology and a robust communications architecture that enable utilities to maximize the value of their solar power generation," said Joe DeLuca, vice president of Product Management "We are pleased that NJTC recognizes the value of our innovative approaches."

Petra Solar is presently in discussion with more than thirty other utilities throughout the country about providing the SunWave system for solar generation, smart grid connectivity and enhanced grid performance through its "intelligent solar solution."

Petra Solar was founded in 2006 by CEO and President Dr. Shihab Kuran, pioneer of SunWave, a grid tied, pole mounted, distributed solar generation systems. The SunWave system combines solar energy with smart grid.

## JUNIOR JOURNALIST

### Kyle Gallardo's "Live" Submission Earns a Junior Journalist Recognition



Junior Journalist winner Kyle Gallardo with teacher Michael Bertram.

Writing is not the only talent of this week's Junior Journalist winner

Kyle Gallardo, The Roosevelt School third grader paid a visit to the *Observer* office to submit his entry. Kyle's "live" submission included a musical performance of his poem, "Come With Me." Kyle will receive dinner for his family courtesy of Hometown Heros.

Students should submit their original written works to their teachers, school principal or the *Observer* office at 1110 Hamilton Blvd.

Winners will receive a catered dinner for their families from Hometown Heros and will be honored at a year-end banquet in May of 2010. Junior Journalists 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.

### Come With Me

*Written and Sung by Kyle Gallardo*

Singing has the power to make your heart move (heart move)  
down the hill into your life (your life)  
making sure that you're doing alright (alright)  
join me and you'll have a great time (great time)

**Chorus:** So! Come with me counting down the melody  
down the bum-py hills of life  
Watching over you, making sure you're alright  
You and I must live our life with trust  
And we'll smooth out the bum-py hills of life.

This road is a rollercoaster  
with twists and turns, ups and downs,  
but I'll be there  
I'll cheer you up,  
I'll wipe your tears when you're down.  
I'll hold your hand,  
make you smile the whole way through,  
I'll never say goodbye to you  
Together we can smooth out the bumpy hills of life.  
That's why you should...

**Chorus:** Come with me counting down the melody  
down the bumpy hills of life  
Watching over you, making sure you're alright  
You and I must live our life with trust  
And we'll smooth out the bumpy hills of life.

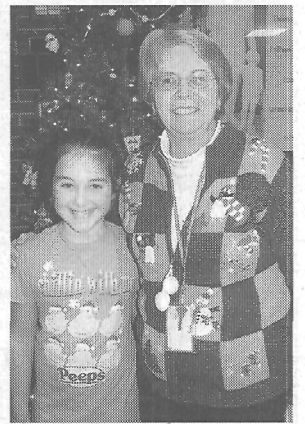
### Jackie Battista Named Junior Journalist

Kennedy School fourth grader Jackie Battista has been named a winner in the Junior Journalist contest. Her submission of the poem, "Santa's Coming," has earned her a dinner for her family courtesy of Hometown Heros.

Students should submit their original written works to their teachers, school principal or the *Observer* office at 1110 Hamilton Blvd.

Winners will receive a catered dinner for their families from Hometown Heros and will be honored at a year-end banquet in May of 2010. Junior Journalists 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.



Junior Journalist winner Jackie Battista with teacher Cynthia Severino.

### Santa's Coming

*By Jackie Battista*

It's December 24, on Christmas Eve,  
Everyone around you will believe.  
That Santa's coming on his sleigh.  
But he will be gone on Christmas Day.  
When we're asleep the cookies will wait.  
In the morning you can see what he ate.  
When you wake up and the plate is clear.  
You will know that Santa was here.

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# Construction Begins on Composting Demo Site

Volunteers from the Flint & Steel Association, a fraternal service organization associated with the Boy Scouts of America, descended upon the Highland Woods Environmental Education Reserve in late November to begin construction of stage one of the backyard compost demonstration site.

The 10 men—Mike Corveleyn, Chris Corveleyn, Al Tuttle, Don Andrews, John Yaborski, Mike Semone, Bob Vincent, Jack Sager, Chris LePore and Jim Donelson—representing South Plainfield, Piscataway and Dunellen, spent the day building a large three-bin compost unit of wire, lumber and fiberglass and a 3 ft. x 10

ft. raised garden bed, repairing and painting the main gate, relocating an existing sign and cleaning up around the nature center building. The Friends of the Woods, caretakers of the reserve and nature center, provided the material through a Lower Raritan Watershed Supplemental Environmental Project Grant administered by Edison Wetlands Association.

The compost demonstration site will ultimately include nearly a dozen types of composting units from which residents can choose the ones the best suits their needs. Three of the units on display are available at deeply discounted prices from the Middlesex

County Improvement Authority and the Middlesex County Division of Solid Waste Management. Others can be constructed, the plans of which are available at the nature center and the Environmental Specialist's Office in the borough's municipal building on Plainfield Avenue.

Composting is easy to do and benefits soil and plants; it saves money on fertilizer and other soil amendments and helps the environment by reducing the amount of garbage going to landfills.

For more information, E-mail [spnatrailer@verizon.net](mailto:spnatrailer@verizon.net).



Volunteers begin work on the compost demonstration site at Highland Woods Environmental Center.

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## From the South Plainfield Library Bookmarks

By Kenneth Morgan

Okay, we're pretty much in the home stretch. We have mere days to make sure that the gifts are all wrapped (and the receipts saved), the relatives' arrival times have been plotted, the holiday videos are ready for playback (yes, even *Santa Claus Conquers the Martians*), and some time has been saved to reflect on the true meaning of the season. So, let's chisel out a few seconds for news from the South Plainfield Library.

The library will be open from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. next Thursday in observance of Christmas Eve and will be closed next Friday in observance of Christmas Day. We'll re-open on Saturday, Dec. 26, in observance of Boxing Day or Kwanzaa, depending on your cultural outlook.

We'll have an abbreviated schedule of children's programming next week. The Monday Morning Movie, presenting an age-appropriate movie for pre-schoolers, will be shown on Monday morning at 10:30. Storytime for children ages four and over will be held on Tuesday morning at 10:30 and Wednesday evening at 6:30. Time for 2s & 3s, for children ages two and three, will be held on Wednesday morning at 10:30. The story programs last about an hour and feature stories, music and a craft activity. For more details, please call us and ask for Miss Linda or Miss Mija.

Wednesday will be the last day of availability for the current group of Circuit DVDs. DVDs may be bor-

rowed, four at a time for two days, with free renewals. Get 'em while they're gettable.

If you're in the market for a late Christmas gift, we at the library are able to help. We still have library tote bags available for purchase. The blue recyclable bags are available for \$2 each, while the small canvas bags are \$7.50 each. (Sorry, we're currently out of the large canvas bags.) If you're interested, please stop by the circulation desk.

Another word for "Books to Keep," technically, the deadline for the drive passed on the 15th. However, there is just a bit of leeway in this situation. So, if you still wish to donate books or money to this effort, please do so right away, so we can pass it all along before the holidays. (And, while you're at it, please remember to give to the other worthy charities represented here at the library.)

And here are a couple of teasers for upcoming 2010 programs: on Sunday, Jan. 3 at 2 p.m. we'll be hosting a program about Math Genie, a method for teaching your kids mathematics. On Sunday, Jan. 10 antiques appraiser Allan Snyder will make a return appearance. More on these stories as they develop.

That's about all for now. As always, we're very interested in your comments and questions. Please call us at (908) 754-7885 for more information, or check our Web site at [www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us](http://www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us). And we at the library wish you a happy and safe holiday season.

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# Sports

## RECREATION WRESTLING

By Joe Sacco

### Rec Wrestlers Open Season with Wins

#### Tigers Outscore Westfield 59-12 in Central Jersey League

This past weekend the South Plainfield Recreation Wrestling Team opened its dual meet season with impressive wins over Westfield and Basking Ridge. The team competes in two separate leagues, the Central Jersey Wrestling League and the Raritan Valley Wrestling League. In Central Jersey action the host Tigers outscored Westfield 59-12.

Recording pins for South Plainfield were David Loniewski, Joey Heilmann, Ryan Duhamel, Jeff Plungis, Jake Hoffman, Desmond Santos and Danny Hedden. Winning by technical fall was Christian Gonzalez and winning by decision was Jake Giordano, Brenden Hedden, Joey Penyak and Christopher Maszczak.

The team also traveled to the eighth annual Robbinsville Duals where they rolled to a third place finish, avenging an earlier loss to Washington Township. See next week's *Observer* for full

details and a photo of the team with their trophy.

The Raritan Valley team had an exciting win outscoring host Basking Ridge 41-35. Recording pins for the Tigers were Tommy Fierro, Joseph Sacco, Michael Marrero, Ben Lundy and Zack DelVecchio. Scoring decisions were Jake DelVecchio, Alex Amato and Jacob Panton.

Both teams are home at the PAL this Saturday at 9 a.m. with the Raritan Valley team wrestling Manville and the Central Jersey team wrestling Watchung Hills, Roselle Park and Plainfield/North Plainfield.

The South Plainfield Wrestling Club also hosted the fourth annual Pec Wee Bantam Tournament this past weekend at the PAL. Over 130 wrestlers from around the state participated.

Finishing in the top four for South Plainfield were:

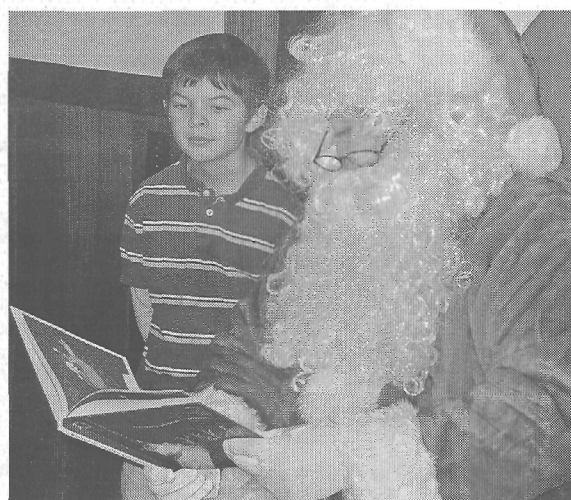
In first place, J.J. Giordano, Jake

DelVecchio, Matthew Cassio, Tommy Fierro, Joseph Sacco, Sebastian Santos, Joseph Anesh, Alex Amato and Marc Giordano.

In second place were Harrison Anesh, Domenic Faustini, Luke Niemeyer and Michael Clevenger.

In third place were Tyler Russo, Christopher Poggio, Ahn Griffin, Michael Niemeyer, Mark Molinaro, Jack Campagna, Marcus Czarrunchick, Gabriel Panton, Xavier Santos, Steven Twist, Nick Loniewski, Thomas Sikanowicz, Kenny Clevenger, Louis Quintanilla and E.J. Nieves.

In fourth place were Jason Rodas, Sean Passarelli, Justin Rodas, Patrick Corsello, Christian Schultz, Aidan Mackenzie, Anthony Nigro, Mikey Kurilew, Noah Connolly, Alfred Pace, Francis Niemeyer, Anthony Penyak, Justin Bell, Jack O'Shaughnessy and Gregory Algarin.



### Knights of Columbus Sponsor Breakfast With Santa

The Knights of Columbus Council #6203 sponsored "Breakfast with Santa" on December 12. It was attended by 19 families from the community, and was a great success.

Santa entertained the children with Christmas stories and games. The children were able to have their photos taken with Santa and he promised to take all the wish lists back to the

North Pole with him for consideration.

Breakfast event chair Tom Berry and the Knights Council would like to thank Joe McGeehan and Max Waldrop and all the Knights who helped make this a great success.

Additional photos of the event can be seen on the council Web site: [www.kofcsouthplainfieldnj.com](http://www.kofcsouthplainfieldnj.com).

## Obituaries

### Baby Girl Katie Koznowicz

Baby Girl Katie Koznowicz, born Sunday morning, Dec. 13 to parents, Susan (Valeri) Duarte and Edward Koznowicz, Jr., has passed away.

Katie was the little sister of Paulie and Samantha, and the granddaughter of Marion and Adam Valeri and Edward and Elizabeth Koznowicz. Also surviving are numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and family members.

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

### Katherine F. (Pendolino) Romanowicz, 91

Katherine F. (Pendolino) Romanowicz died on Sunday, Dec. 13 at home. Born and raised in Plainfield, Mrs. Romanowicz resided between South Plainfield and Manasquan and had lived in So. Bound Brook before settling in Piscataway in 1988.

A former member of Sacred Heart RC Church in South Plainfield, Katherine worked as a supervisor for Cornell Dubilier in South Plainfield for 12 years and later for Revlon in Edison for 12 years before retiring many years ago.

Mrs. Romanowicz was an avid traveler and enjoyed visiting places such as Hawaii, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal.

She also enjoyed raising her family. Mrs. Romanowicz is predeceased

by her husband, Henry, who died in 1985, and by a sister, Ann Wilson.

Surviving is a daughter, Joan Lipowski and husband Peter of Piscataway; four sisters, Rose Pendolino of Somerset, Marion Celentano of Edison, Frances Rossi of Green Brook, and Jean Beck of Piscataway and two brothers, Al Pendolino and wife Irene and Eugene Pendolino of Pennsylvania. Also surviving is a granddaughter, Stephanie Lipowski, as well as several nieces and nephews.

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

### Lorine M. Arre

Lorine M. (Mangina) Arre entered into eternal rest on Thursday, Dec. 3 at St. Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston.

Born in Birmingham, Ala. to her late parents Ben and Frances (Caterinichia) Mangina, Lorine resided in Elizabeth, Newark and N. Arlington before settling in South Plainfield over 10 years ago.

Lorine retired as an executive secretary from the U.S. Postal Service in 2002 after 38 years of service.

She was a member of Sacred Heart RC Church and belonged to their Rosary Altar Society.

She enjoyed spending her time with her family, and was an avid opera fan. Lorine recently attended her 60th class reunion for Batin High School, formerly of Elizabeth.

She is predeceased by her husband, Peter, who passed away March 21, 1995, and by 10 siblings, Annie Nelson, Virginia Monticello, Margaret Sartino, Frances Lospinoso, Sarah Gombos, John, Joseph, Anthony, Frank and Philip Mangina.

Lorine leaves behind three children, Patrick and wife Marcella Arre of Basking Ridge, Mary Alice Arre of Colorado and Benjamin and wife Sandra Arre of South Plainfield; three grandchildren, Caroline, Susan and Peter Arre; four siblings, Cary Schaffran, Mary DeStafano, Lucille MacInode and Ben Mangina, and by many nieces, nephews and cousins.

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

### Linda E. (Lawrence) Namotka, 42

Linda E. (Lawrence) Namotka, 42, died suddenly on Sunday, Dec. 13 at her home.

Born in Elizabeth, she had resided in South Plainfield for most of her life

before recently settling in Dunellen.

She had attended South Plainfield schools and Piscataway Vo-Tech.

Surviving are three children, Paul, Jesse and Samantha; her parents, Steven and Clara (Borrello) Lawrence; two sisters, Sherri Mayersky and Tina Stutz and husband, Bob; a brother, Steven Lawrence and a former husband, Paul, as well as a host of family and friends.

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

### Patricia E. Natalizio, 74

Patricia E. Natalizio died on Sunday, Dec. 13 at Somerset Medical Center in Somerville surrounded by her entire loving family.

Born and raised in the Honesdale Pa. area, Patricia resided in the Bound Brook area for 50 years before settling in South Plainfield six years ago.

She is predeceased by her husband,

Donato A. Natalizio, Sr.

Surviving are four sons, Costa, Salvatore and wife Dawn (Leeds), Donato III and Michael Phillips; six daughters and their spouses, Donna Hanna and Scott, Sally Truong and Ty, Patricia Ibarra and Victor, Carmella Shawiak and Danny, Doria Natalizio and Lucretia Ibarra and Raul; 16 grandchildren, David and Ashley Hanna, Tyana and Jadelyn Truong, Brandon and Ryan Vu, Ciara Ibarra, David and Christine Shawiak, Corey, Blake and Seth Leeds, Christian Natalizio, Marissa Natalizio and Jocelyn and Alex Ibarra. Also surviving are two brothers, Raymond and Dennis Neenan; a sister, Mary Ryan and her beloved pet, Muffin.

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

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital, 501 St. Jude Way, Memphis, Tenn. 38105.

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# In My Opinion

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

(Continued from page 2)

Dear Editor,

Something odd is going on with the South Plainfield High School English Department. Did you know it's not even an English department? Some English classes are, you know, English classes, but my sophomore English class was not. The other day, I was going through an old folder and I found a test from my sophomore English class, where all the questions were based on our daily power point presentations. Examples of test questions included: "The author who wrote about life on the frontier and the Old West is \_\_\_\_\_" and this question could easily translate to, "The author whose book you didn't read, because you were busy watching power points was \_\_\_\_\_." Another question was: "The author who died at age 29 of tuberculosis was \_\_\_\_\_." I applaud this person. I couldn't get tuberculosis even if I tried. However, English is not supposed to involve knowing which disease killed off which authors. One of my absolute favorite questions on the test was: "Spoon River Anthology is a collection of how many poems?" So, basically, you could get this question correct without reading the book. Pretty analytical stuff. I now know to count the number of chapters in each book just in case a teacher asks how many chapters "Grapes of Wrath" has? If you don't know how many chapters are in this book, you basically don't know how to read.

Another good question on the test: "Mark Twain's masterpiece of literature is \_\_\_\_\_." So, obviously Mark Twain can only have one masterpiece, and it can only be the one the teacher put on her power point. If it's not on the power point, it's not a masterpiece. In fact, instead of hoping to win a Pulitzer Prize, most authors just

hope they make it to the power point. Fingers crossed.

The majority of our tests were like this, and, bored with the power point testing arrangement, I did poorly in the class and was put into an Academic English class the next year. Academic English classes are not English classes, by the way. You do not actually read whole books in academic classes. To be honest, I can't really remember what happened in the academic class. Maybe it didn't happen!

As a result of not being in Honors English class, I was banned from AP English class. Surely I would have caused much chaos, probably by the freshness of my teeth as I smiled each day. In AP English class they read books AND write essays—lots and lots of essays. Reading and writing is a job for the 'English success stories', not the 'almost advanced proficient' honors kids, and most certainly not the 'possibly proficient or maybe not it doesn't really matter English isn't their future' academic kids. English classes are only actually provided for the best of the best—power point watchers.

SINCERELY,  
HOLLY J. MC DEDE,  
SPHS SENIOR

# Circle of Life Adult Day Center Opens

Circle of Life Adult Day Center celebrated their grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by Mayor Charles Butrico on December 3. Located at 3000 Hadley Road, New Jersey's newest adult day center is designed to meet the needs of older adults who require supervision, while also maintaining the independence of individuals who reside in their own homes.

The program offers a structured day that benefits older adults in need of assistance with their daily lives in a supervised, protective environment. Circle of Life Adult Day Center offers respite to the family member/caregiver who is unable to give 24-hour per day care to their loved ones, and provides full nursing, social services, nutritional and recreational activities.

A day at Circle of Life begins with a light breakfast. Clients can then choose from a variety of crafts, games, word puzzles and arts to enjoy activity sessions that are tailor-made for their needs. An exercise session follows which is different each day of the week.

A day at Circle of Life also includes tending to the health needs of clients. A variety of medical monitoring takes place, including blood pressure and blood sugar levels (for diabetics).



Mayor Charlie Butrico joins center owners Rupen Patel and Dr. Ray LeDon, and project manager Eric Shaw in cutting the ribbon to officially open the Circle of Life Adult Day Center.

Joan-Marie Granato, president of Future Focus, Inc., Creative Health Care Consultants served as project manager in opening the center. "I am pleased to be involved with such an all-inclusive day center. Our goal is to not only provide exciting and helpful daytime programming, but also to assist our clients with all aspects of their lives, even after they leave the center." She continued, "We assist all of our clients in accessing any services that are available to them within the com-

munity which will supplement their daily lives." Granato is also a national board member for the National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA).

Transportation is available to and from the center, with full wheelchair accessibility. Circle of Life Adult Day Center services are covered by Medicaid, private pay and other programs.

For more information on the center, or to schedule a visit for a complimentary lunch and tour of the facility, please call (732) 839-3333.

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## VSA arts Seeking Applications for Awards Programs

VSA arts of New Jersey (VSA/NJ), a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the creative power of people with disabilities, is accepting applications for the 2010 Arts Achievement Awards and fifth annual Dare to Imagine Awards. VSA/NJ is an affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Deadline for applications is January 11. Selections will be announced in March and award recipients will be honored at a ceremony in April.

The annual VSA/NJ Arts Achievement Awards include the Student Arts Excellence Awards, presented to students with disabilities who are classified (mainstream, inclusion, self-contained classes or activities), 14-21 years old, not to exceed 12th grade level, who show an outstanding achievement in and commitment to an art form; and the Education in the Arts Awards are presented to outstanding educators and administrators for establishing high quality arts programs for classified students. The awards also recognize individuals who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to arts education for classified students. Award recipients become candidates for the distinguished New Jersey Governor's Awards in Arts Education.

Through the Dare to Imagine Awards, VSA/NJ recognizes adults who have made a positive difference in the life of a person with disabilities.

For application and registration information, contact VSA Arts of New Jersey, 703 Jersey Ave., New Brunswick, N.J. 08901 or [info@vsan.org](mailto:info@vsan.org).

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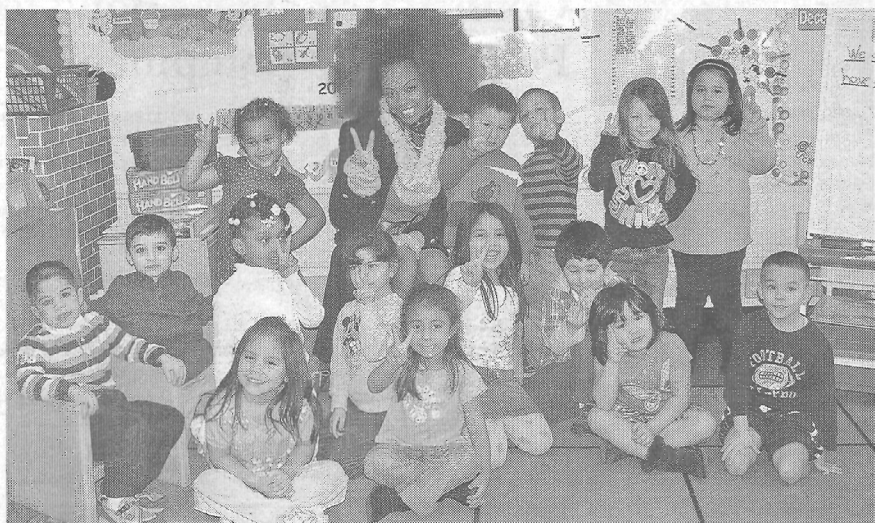
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The four year olds in the Red Room at Future Stars Preschool could not have been more excited to receive a visit from Kimberly "Kimmie" Gipson, a backup dancer for Beyonce. Kimmie is from Plainfield and most recently can be seen in Beyonce's music video "Ego."

## BOROUGH NOTES

The following action took place at the December 7 council meeting:

- Authorized a 2009 tax credit in the amount of \$27,838.50 to Restaurant Depot. They also authorized refund checks, of \$13,429.01 and \$23,153.78, for 2008 tax appeals.

- Approved the purchase of a 2010 Crown Victoria from Wanock Fleet for the police department at a cost not to exceed \$27,838.70.

- Appointed Beverly Krausse as recording secretary for the South Plainfield Cultural Arts Council.

- Authorize the renewal of a junk yard license for Gene's Auto Wreckers

for the year 2010.

- Recognized new junior fire department member Anthony Muccigrossi and six junior fire department members who completed training for the ride-a-long program, Christopher Cupo, Peter Hlavka, Jurrien Kratz, Shane McCoid, Miguel Mejia and Michael Mocharski.

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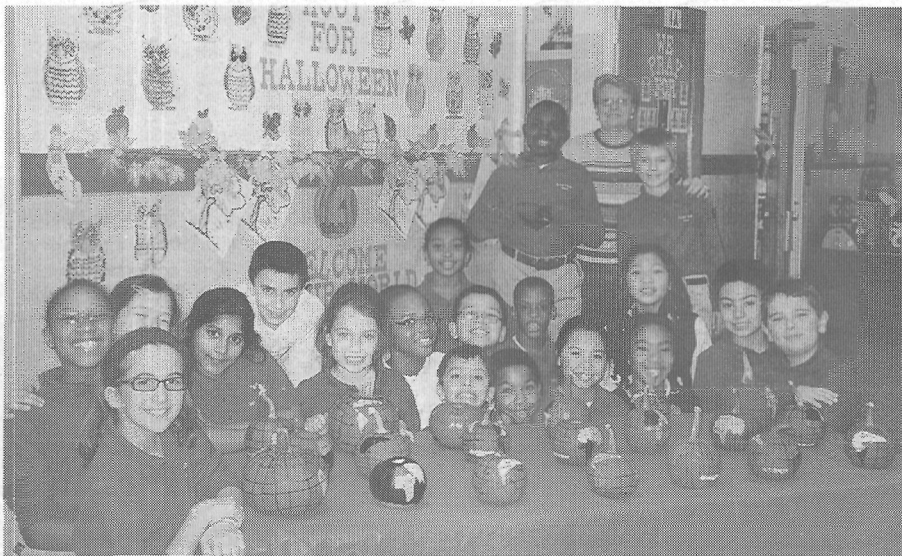
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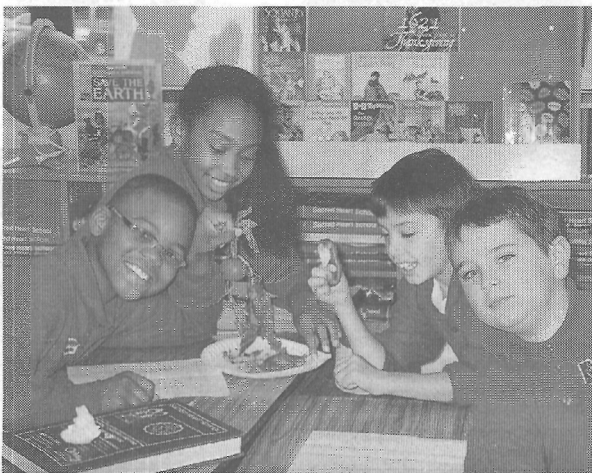
## Fourth Grade Happenings

The children in Linda Goetz's fourth grade classroom at Sacred Heart School were very busy this autumn. First, they underwent a metamorphosis when they changed into other

"beings" on Halloween. Then, their pumpkins also underwent a change, becoming globes of the world.

As Thanksgiving drew near, studies focused on the variety of foods they would be consuming on this special day. Their study of "Life Sciences" literally came alive as they examined the many fruits and vegetables available, and learned about roots, stems, seeds, flowers and leaves. Do you know what makes a fruit a fruit? They do; just ask them!

As preparations are made for Christmas during this Advent season, the children are working on the virtue of "Peace" for the "Student of the Month" award. They would like to wish each of you a very joyous and healthy holiday season with "Peace, Goodwill Toward Man!"



## SCHOOL BOARD Briefs

The following took place at the November 18 Board of Education meeting:

- The resignation of adult high school mathematics teacher Paul Rafalowski; appointments for adult high school: Donna Tierney-mathematics teacher; Brandon Crosby-history teacher and Rance Abbruzzese-substitute teacher

- 2009-10 extra curricular appointments-Mary Ecklund and Lauren Hartong-Winter Guard choreographers; Donna Helgesen-Grant latchkey team leader.

- 2009/10 substitute teacher appointments/reappointments, contingent upon successful criminal history review, fingerprints and a physical examination, Dorothea Bohn-Roosevelt part time secretary/clerk typist; high school AM breakfast program duty

aide appointments-Cindy DeSimone and Antoinette Day; Elizabeth Smith and Terry Cianfrocca-Roosevelt latchkey aides.

- Sherry Butrico and Debra Savoca appointed 2009/10 substitute secretary/clerk typist/instructional support/duty aide.

- Michael Byleckie, Zoraida Cruz, David Ledford, Esther Pak, Karen Robbins, Erin Gavigan and Jaime Gaughan approved as student teachers.

- 2009/10 winter coach appointment of Thomas McGuire as high school assistant girls' basketball coach; Grant duty aide appointment of Michelle Romano; 2009 curriculum writing approval of Brian Panek to write the physics curriculum; CPR training workshop presenter Leslie Rippon; increase in hours and salary adjustment of support aide Rudolph

Coleman.

- The 2009/10 new fall transportation jointures-Hanover Park Regional High School and Plainfield; Piscataway host district; accepted a check from Target for \$111.44 to be used for Kindergarten instruction books at Roosevelt; board member conference/travel; student services and placement-2009/10 and awarded Bid #04-10-lockers for the middle school girls locker room.

- Travel expenditures; extension of agreement with Sodexo Management, Inc. for maintenance, custodial, grounds operations and management services; appropriation of extraordinary aid for various programs and improvements; Comprehensive Maintenance Plan and perform various building and grounds projects and repairs in district.

## Council Introduces Bond for Police Radio Equipment

The Borough Council introduced an ordinance at the December 7 meeting to approve a \$450,000 bond to purchase portable police radios and additional equipment for emergency services personnel.

Councilmen Joe Scrudato and Franky Salerno voted in favor of the ordinance. Tim McConville and Ray Rusnak abstained saying they needed more information on the acquisition and to pursue the possibility of grants in lieu of bonding. The total cost to the borough is estimated at \$475,000, with \$25,000 utilized from leftover grant money.

According to Police Chief John Ferraro, the borough will be purchasing 65 portable police radios, 70 lapel microphones, and refurbishing the console that stores the 911 dispatch center in the police department. The Bureau of Fire Prevention will receive six portable radios along with the Office of Emergency Management (OEM). In addition, a bi-directional antenna will be placed at the high school and OEM will have a new remote dispatch console. The fire department recently received a Firefighters Grant to upgrade their portable radios which will be compatible.

Butrico explained that Scrudato, the chair of Public Safety has been discussing the matter with the heads of emergency services and Det. Sgt. Jim Foran for the past six plus months and that the borough has two options: either upgrade old radios that are being serviced by Motorola or switch over to the county system as a shared service. "The new system would allow anyone, anywhere in the county to communicate with South Plainfield," said Butrico. The first year of service would fall under warranty and the borough would save approximately \$10,000 a year thereafter by participating in a maintenance agreement with the county. Instead of broadcasting out of the borough, the signal would be headquartered out of New Brunswick and would allow emergency personnel to communicate at further distances as opposed to only within the city limits. Police officers

would no longer have to double up to transport prisoners which would save on manpower. It will also be the final upgrade to complete prior purchases made to the 911 communications system over the past couple of years.

Councilman-elect Rob Bengivena was hoping that the council could hold off on financing the radios and work to obtain a federal grant such as Councilman-elect Matt Anesh had been successful in doing in the past for previously purchased equipment. The mayor said "it was something they could still discuss" as there still needs to be a second reading of the ordinance at the Monday, Dec. 21 meeting.

Over the past couple of weeks McConville and Rusnak have been meeting with Foran, who is in charge of the 911 communications, and who has also been researching and piecing together the entire system. "This system is dirt cheap compared to what other towns have paid for their own systems," said Foran. "I'm pretty proud we have gotten this far." He acknowledges having meetings with CFO Glenn Cullen in 2008 regarding the 911 system, however the purchase of the radios was in its infancy a year ago. It was Scrudato who held meetings with heads of emergency service as soon as he became chair of public safety. He acknowledges that Rusnak had also been at a few of the meetings.

"The benefits of the new system are the increased mutual aid capacity. It will provide specific talk groups with a larger footprint of coverage when conducting tactical operations within the department," said Ferraro. The system will also be encrypted which provides a higher level of security.

Scrudato stressed, "This needs to be complete. This is for the safety of the towns people." The mayor also explained that the entire new communications system will have the potential to be upgraded with even more capabilities down the road.

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### LEGAL NOTICES

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December 18, 2009

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
LEGAL NOTICE

November 9, 2009

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action was taken by the South Plainfield Planning Board at its meeting held on November 8, 2009.

- A. Case # 724/Site-Zaremba Group, LLC, Block 523; Lots 2.01, 3, 4 & 5; McKinley & West Street. The applicant's request for amended preliminary and final site plan approval was hereby GRANTED specifically for the floor area discrepancy which was clarified subject to additional prior voluntary conditions.
- B. Case # 09-03-Ray Betyerman & Elise Giordano, Block 61; Lot 8; 244 Fairmount Avenue. The applicant's request for minor subdivision approval was hereby GRANTED in order to merge parcels 7 and 8 subject to additional voluntary conditions.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Beth Khidre  
Recording Secretary-Planning Board

\$26.25

December 18, 2009

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
LEGAL NOTICE

December 11, 2009

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action was taken by the South Plainfield Board of Adjustment at its meeting held on December 10, 2009.

- A. Case # 33-09-George & Joan Jaghab, Block 86; Lot 9; 2621 Park Avenue. The applicant's request for a lot coverage and rear yard setback variances in order to erect a deck was hereby GRANTED subject to additional voluntary conditions.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mary Beth Khidre  
Secretary-Board of Adjustment  
\$23.60

December 18, 2009

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