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Observer

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JANUARY 29, 2010



D.A.R.E. Building to Go?

Future Uncertain for Community Policing Satellite

Is the D.A.R.E. building slated for sale? The issue of a potential sale of the D.A.R.E. building located at the corner of Hamilton Boulevard and New Market Avenue was brought up at the January 19 Borough Council meeting. Retired Police Officer Allen LaMonda, who attended the meeting, remarked that an appraisal of the

Chief Financial Officer Glenn Cullen acknowledged that the building has been appraised, but added that it is the council's decision whether or not the building should be sold. The issue of a potential sale has not yet been decided.

Councilman Ray Rusnak, liaison to the Board of Education, attended the January 20 BOE meeting and stated

that he was concerned for the safety of students who visit the D.A.R.E. building, which is located on the truck route. Rusnak reiterated that the council hadn't determined any action, but was still considering selling the building.

As the borough anticipates state aid cutbacks and less revenue for services, department heads have been directed

(Continued on page 6)

The South Plainfield Coalition of Cultural Diversity celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day with their third annual Festival of Cultures. The event was held at Riley Elementary School in the Anthony P. Sincavage Gym on January 18.

Guests were greeted with a musical interlude featuring William Morrison on alto saxophone, Paolo Cantarello on drums and Pravin Thompson on guitar. The evening officially began

with the introduction of mistress of ceremonies, Kirsten Nuber. The American Flag was presented by Boy Scout Troop 309 and *The National Anthem* was performed by Riley School teacher Mary Sikanowicz.

President of the coalition, Reverend Dr. Nehemiah Thompson of Wesley Methodist Church, began by introducing members who organized the festival. Guest speakers included Mayor Charles Buttrick and Superintendent of Schools Jose Negron.

In the weeks leading up to the

event, the coalition held an essay contest, which was open to all South Plainfield children ages 12-14. The essay theme was "Tell us what you would do to create a more harmonious, friendly and welcoming community. Would you make changes? What would they be? What kind of projects would you create?"

Prior to the entertainment, Chris Sienkielewski, coalition vice president, introduced essay winners Becky Birath and Alexandra Lacasale, who read excerpts from their essays.

The evening's songs and dances encompassed a diverse range of cultures. The entertainers included Arab-American dancers from Rutgers performing a Middle Eastern dance, several vocal numbers by the Edison Chinese Chorus, Hungarian folk dancers performing a dance from Csallokoz of Southwest Slovakia and an Indian folk dance which highlighted seven young ladies. Irish dancers Kelly and Bridget Simpson, South Plainfield residents, performed a slip jig and a reel. The girls have been taking Irish dance lessons since they were four. Peruvian dancers Camila Martinez and Richard Quispe danced the Marinera, the national dance of Peru and the Vietnamese Fan Dance.

The South Plainfield Board of Education appointed Lorraine Cella, Ed.D, as the new assistant superintendent of instruction and operations at their agenda meeting held on January 7.

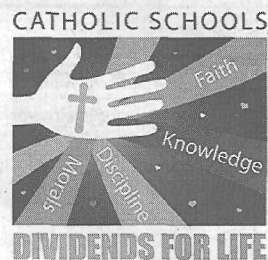
Dr. Cella is currently principal of Hoboken High School and will begin her new position on March 15 at a salary of \$140,000 a year. She will be replacing Dr. Fredrik Oberkher who left the district on December 13 to take the position of superintendent of schools in Rochelle Park. No one from within the school district applied for the position.

Cella is a resident of Tenafly. She received a masters in education from Long Island University and an Ed.D. in English education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Prior to signing on as principal at Hoboken High in 2007, she was an elementary school principal in the Westwood Regional Schools system in Washington Township. She has also been an adjunct professor at Teachers College, Columbia University since 2006.



Dr. Lorraine Cella, Ed.D.

The August 2008 issue of *New Jersey Monthly* magazine lauded Hoboken High as the second most improved high school in their biennial ranking of the state's public high schools. According to *New Jersey Monthly*, "Lorraine Cella has only been principal at Hoboken High for a year, but she has already implemented innovations that seem to be making a difference. A literacy expert, Dr. Cella emphasizes reading and writing for her 550 students."



All Are Welcome

Sacred Heart School Celebrates Catholic Schools Week

Beginning this Sunday, January 31, please join Sacred Heart in a celebration of Catholic Schools Week. This year's theme, "Catholic Schools: Dividends for Life," focuses on the school's commitment to infuse students with the faith, knowledge, morals and discipline that will help them lead fulfilling lives. Come enjoy a variety of events that focus on various aspects of Catholic Education. See how Sacred Heart School provides dividends for life!

- *Sunday, January 31*
10 a.m.-2 p.m. Open House
- *Monday, February 1*
9 a.m.-Dividends for Life
-Home School Association
Program
- *Tuesday, February 2*
9 a.m.-School Mass
Noon~Grade 8 Teacher
for a Day
- *Wednesday, February 3*
8 a.m. Saint Blaise Blessing of
the Throats, school gym
9:30-11 a.m. Classroom Visits
- *Thursday, February 4*
Benefit for Charity Day-
All day benefit for the NJ
Chapter of the Leukemia &
Lymphoma Society
- *Friday, February 5*
Student/teacher breakfast
with special surprise

Find out more at
www.sacredheartsp.net



Want home delivery of the Observer? Call 908-668-0010 or Email spobserver@comcast.net.



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.

council meetings

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

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

Agenda Meeting Public Meeting

February 1 February 1

February 16 (Tuesday) February 16

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

Feb. 9, Feb. 23, Mar. 9, Mar. 23, Apr. 13, Apr. 27, May 11, May 25, June 8, June 22, July 13, July 27, Aug. 10, Aug. 24, Sept. 14, Sept. 28, Oct. 12, Oct. 26, Nov. 9 Dec. 7.

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

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

board of education

Meets Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at Roosevelt Administration Gymnasium on Jackson Ave.

*except where noted.

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

Regular Public Meeting: 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.

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—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

taxpayers advisory group

The Taxpayers Advisory Group (TAG) meets the fourth Tuesday of every month at Borough Hall, 2480 Plainfield Ave. at 7 p.m. Questions? 908-769-0786.

site plans sub-committee

Meets once a month on the third Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m.

Feb. 16, Mar. 16, Apr. 20, May 18, July 20, Aug. 17, Sept. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Dec. 21

environmental commission

Meets once a month (second Wednesday) Borough Hall Conference Room, 8 p.m.

Questions? 908-226-7621

business advisory group

Meets once a month (first Wednesday) Borough Hall Council Chambers, 5 p.m.

Questions? 908-757-8100

ad hoc alternative truck route committee

Senior Center, 7 p.m. Questions? 908-226-7605

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.

To the Editor:

The other night I was watching the council meeting on TV. I heard Mr. Cullen tell the mayor that the D.A.R.E. building was no longer needed. It was suggested that the building be put up for sale.

I have been a D.A.R.E. officer in South Plainfield for the past 17 years. Now recently retired, I take that statement and suggestion as an insult to myself and the community that I served for the past 25 years. I understand that times are bad, but to sell the D.A.R.E. building for maybe \$116,000 (as was appraised) would be a shame.

In 1999, I went to the town in an attempt to acquire that property. At that time I was told by the building department that a number of people had been interested in the property, but all were denied because the lot was too small and was located at a dangerous intersection. The property is 10 feet smaller now and has only one driveway. If they couldn't sell it then, how could they sell it now?

If the town decides to sell the building, they should also reimburse all of our local businesses and contractors who donated their time, hard work and thousands of dollars. Their generous contributions were made to create a place where the youth of South Plainfield could go and talk to a police officer in a relaxed atmosphere at no cost to the town. Inside the building for everyone to see is a plaque that includes all of the names of the businesses and contractors that contributed in making the D.A.R.E. building a success for the children and parents of our community.

Since it opened in 1999, many children and adults have come into the building to discuss their concerns and problems. The D.A.R.E. building provides an environment where people feel comfortable and are not intimidated by fellow students or the seriousness of the police station.

It was also suggested that the D.A.R.E. office be moved to the PAL or Grant School. The PAL is always full of people and I would like to see what an adult would have to go through to get into Grant School to see a D.A.R.E. officer.

Working with children for the past 17 years, I know that a child would be hesitant to speak to a police officer about problems around their peers.

The D.A.R.E. program should not be put in a closet somewhere. It needs to be out in the public eye, just as it is.

I feel our Community Policing Program takes a hit every year due to budget cuts. Last year, the length of the Junior Police Academy was cut to one week. This year, they may not have it at all (again, a budget cut). The Junior Police Academy was one of the most successful programs I was ever a part of.

When the D.A.R.E. building was first opened, it was to be manned all day long. Now due to budget cuts, officers are only there in the morning before school and in the afternoon. D.A.R.E. and community policing are a major part of the police department, but I feel it is looked at as a necessary evil.

As a retired police officer and D.A.R.E. instructor, the children and adults of South Plainfield will always be one of my main concerns.

ALLEN LAMONDA

Dear Editor:

In December I was honored to be appointed to serve for a five-year term, along with Jeffrey Williams, as South Plainfield's first members of the Dismal Swamp Commission. This commission, which was established as a result of a law authored by Assemblymen Peter Barnes and Patrick Diegnan, creates a regional approach to control development within the Dismal Swamp, which is located in Edison, Metuchen and South Plainfield. Each of those towns has two members on the commission, along with county representatives and a representative of the Edison Wetlands Association.

Both Mr. Williams and I were ap-

pointed by a resolution of the Borough Council and have taken our oath of office. As a former chair of the South Plainfield Zoning Board of Adjustment, a current member of the borough's planning board and the borough's commissioner on the Plainfield Area Regional Sewerage Authority, I believe that I bring a skill set that can be very advantageous to the newly created Dismal Swamp Commission.

Jeffrey Williams is a graduate of South Plainfield High School where he excelled both academically and in track. He went on to graduate from High Point University where he received numerous academic and athletic honors. Jeff also has served as the mayor's representative for housing and community development for Middlesex County. He is a man of outstanding ethics and honesty. In fact, Jeff is a licensed minister. Jeff and I are looking forward to serving our home town on this commission.

I was stunned to learn that the new Republican Majority on the South Plainfield Borough Council are attempting to nullify our appointments. Even though their attorney has been unable to cite any legal precedent for such an outrageous action, they adopted a resolution at the January 4 council meeting to remove Jeff and me from the commission.

The Republicans on the borough council must learn that no person is above the law. This will serve to put them on notice that Jeff and I intend to serve on the commission to which we were properly appointed.

I urge them to withdraw their efforts to remove us. Such an action can only lead to the waste of thousands of taxpayer's dollars for payment of attorney fees in litigation that they cannot win.

VERY TRULY YOURS,
BILL THOMAS

To the Editor:

I voted for building a new library, and was very disappointed when it was voted down. Now there is word of a promising alternative; a suitable building on Montrose Avenue. It sounds wonderful, but it violates the real estate three prime requirements: location, location, location.

A library should be where the people live. Very few children live on Route 287 or in the Middlesex Mall.

JAY SCOVORNEK

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 thought you might like to let South Plainfield residents know that Sister Mansueta Dolalas, RVM, Betania Retreat House, Malasag, 9000 Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines is at present in Manila preparing for her "Golden Jubilee of Religious Life" on Tuesday, Feb. 2. Perhaps some would pray for her as she prepares for the big day and keep her in their mind on that day. It would make her day mean so much more.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU,
MRS. DOROTHY MERCIER

Dear Editor,

We wanted to thank the staff of Kennedy School, most especially Barbara Habeeb and Donna Helgesen, for their quick, professional response during a crisis situation.

On Thursday afternoon, our son Colin, a second grader, began choking in the cafeteria. He was turning red and his airways were blocked so he was unable to speak. Luckily, these two angels were watching over him that day. Mrs. Helgesen attempted to dislodge the food by using back blows. When that did not work, Miss Habeeb gave Colin the Heimlich maneuver.

Our family cannot express how grateful we are to these women. We cannot imagine what could have happened if they were not the caring, knowledgeable and attentive people they are.

We would also like to thank Mary Bannon, the school nurse, for her immediate phone call. She presented the news so calmly that it was not until much later that the full gravity of the situation sank in, which is a sign of what an effective nurse she is. Because Colin is shy, she invited me to come see him and speak to him and ascertain that he was frightened, but very well considering the circumstances.

(Continued on page 12)

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Front Street Farmers Market offers a large selection of fruits and vegetables.

Front Street Farmers Market Opens

The new Front Street Farmers Market, which opened Saturday, has literally everything from soup to nuts and is conveniently located in the downtown area at 214 Front St. next to Sherban's Diner.

Open seven days a week, the market offers fresh fruits and vegetables, right off the truck, to cakes and breads baked fresh daily. The deli features Boars Head meat, along with fresh

mozzarella, ravioli and pierogi and homemade heat and serve dishes.

The shelves are stocked with Italian gourmet pastas, tomato products, olives, cookies and imported cheeses. Essentials such as milk and eggs can also be found as well as fresh cut flowers and fruit baskets.

Stop by Friday and Saturday, Jan. 29 and 30 for free samples. For more information, call (908) 941-5598.

Police Ask for Public's Help In Identifying Man's Body

The South Plainfield Police Department is asking for the public's help in identifying a body that was found on January 17 at approximately 1 p.m.

The body of a white male was discovered in the wooded area off the property of Harris Steel, located approximately 200-250 yards east of New Brunswick Ave., across from Royal Garden Apartments in Piscataway. Two South Plainfield residents discovered the body while walking through the wooded area.

The deceased is described as a Cauca-

sian male, 65-75 years of age, bald, with a white beard, 5'4", weighing 110 lbs., wearing a royal blue sweatshirt and a short sleeve "Mighty Ducks" shirt, dark grey pants and black boots.

The cause of death is under investigation and there is no indication of foul play.

Anyone with information as to the identification of this individual is asked to contact Sgt. Daniel Noonan or Detective Anthony Pacillo of the South Plainfield Police Department at (908) 226-7660.

Boys Scouts of America Plan 100th Anniversary Celebration

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Boy Scouting, scouts from around the world will be holding a Spirit of Light candle ceremony between 7:30 and 8 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 8.

In South Plainfield, the scouting community will be gathering in Spring Lake Park at the gazebo at 7:15 p.m. to join the 100th anniversary

celebration.

All current scouts are asked to contact their leaders directly if they are planning to attend.

All former Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and leaders are asked to contact Jeff Pauls at (908) 279-4684 or E-mail Jeff.Pauls@hofmanequip.com if they plan to attend.

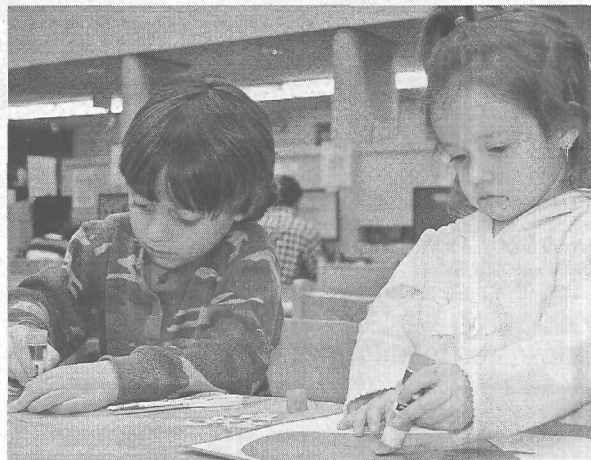
Kids Create Valentines for Veterans

By Patricia Abbott

The South Plainfield Library held a Valentines for Veterans craft evening on January 25. The event was a drop-in program for all ages which required no pre-registration. From 6-8 p.m. visitors created unique valentines using a wide array of items supplied by the library, including paper cutouts of hearts, stars, butterflies, teddy bears, flowers, cars and more. They also used lace, doilies, ribbon, markers, glue sticks and crayons.

Children paused to look over the wide array of choices available to create their personal valentines. Some took the card making process very seriously, carefully picking out their designs, selecting the perfect color markers and embellishments and pondering over the exact placement. Some children giggled and scribbled, enjoying the glue sticks and the scented markers. Others had mom or dad help them create their masterpieces. Most of the kids made more than one card to deposit in the card box and a few took an extra valentine home with them. One little girl made a special valentine for library employees, who receive between 125 to 150 cards per year.

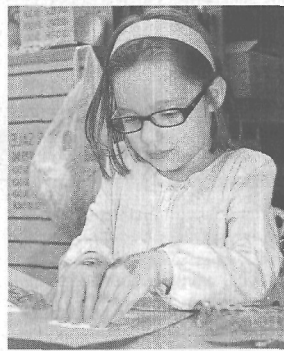
The valentines will be delivered to the New Jersey Veterans' Memorial Home in Menlo Park, Edison. Children's Librarian Linda Hansen said, "I



Salvatore and Mia DeTata (above) and Allison Schwartz (right) create Valentines for veterans at the library.

think we've been doing this [Valentines for Vets] for the past 10 years. We also have a box set up to collect valentines from people who can't make it tonight."

The Valentines for Veterans program is a wonderful way to brighten up the day for lonely veterans. Residents still have a chance to help by creating their own cards and dropping them off at the library no later than Sunday, Feb. 8.



Volunteers Sought for Special Advocates

Be the voice for an abused or neglected child. Give that child hope for the future. Become a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).

There are currently more than 9,000 children in the foster care system in New Jersey who are the victims of abuse and neglect. Over 500

of those children are from Middlesex County alone. Many become trapped in the court and child welfare systems spending their childhood moving from one temporary foster home to another. You can make a difference by becoming a CASA. You can be the voice for a child.

The goal of the CASA volunteer is to facilitate placement of a child into a

safe, permanent home. We are looking for individuals with a desire to help children—no special background is needed. CASA volunteers receive 30 hours of training prior to being appointed in addition to ongoing supervision from the CASA of Middlesex County staff.

Call CASA of Middlesex County at (732) 246-4449 for information.

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Events

VFW Spaghetti Dinner January 30

The South Plainfield VFW will hold a spaghetti dinner on Saturday, Jan. 30 from 5 to 8 p.m. The public is welcome. Cost is \$6.

For information, call (908) 668-9751.

Blackrose to Perform January 30

Blackrose, a band performing classic rock and roll music and today's hits, will perform at The Stagehouse Inn, located at 366 Park Ave. in Scotch Plains on Saturday, Jan. 30 at 10 p.m. No cover charge.

Soccer Club Pancake Breakfast at Elks January 31

The South Plainfield Soccer Club will be holding their annual pancake breakfast at the South Plainfield Elks, 1254 New Market Ave. on Sunday, Jan. 31 from 8 a.m. until noon. Menu includes eggs made to order, pancakes, French toast, bacon, sausage, home fries, toast, juice, coffee and hot chocolate. Price: adults/\$7, seniors/\$5, children 3-12/\$4, children two and under are free.

For information, call Sharon Reuter at (908) 791-1214.

Knights "Don't Cook Friday" Dinner February 5

The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 is conducting their annual "Don't Cook Friday" spaghetti dinner on Friday, Feb. 5 at the council hall located at 334 Hamilton Blvd. from 4-7:30 p.m. Price: \$8/adults, \$7/seniors and \$4/children.

All proceeds will be donated to the Alzheimer's Caregivers Fund.

Sacred Heart Charity Basketball Game February 11

Sacred Heart School, located at 149 South Plainfield Ave., will hold their annual charity basketball game on Thursday, Feb. 11 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the school gym. 100% of ticket sale proceeds to benefit Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside.

Admission: \$5 per person, children three and under are free. (Children must be accompanied by an adult). Come join in on the fun as the Sacred Heart School basketball teams compete against the adults, all for a worthy cause.

For more information, call Lisa at (908) 756-0633, ext. 10.

Pet Dental Fair February 14

Plainfield Animal Hospital, 2215 Park Ave., is holding a pet dental fair on Sunday, Feb. 14 from 2-4 p.m. Bring your pet for a free dental examination and learn about the importance of pet dental health. Giveaways, contests, tours, tooth brushing demos, door prizes, refreshments.

RSVP by February 10 to (908) 755-2428.

Lenten Fish Dinners at Sacred Heart February 19, 26, March 5, 12, 19 and 26

The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 and Sacred Heart Church will again be sponsoring Lenten fish dinners on Friday, Feb. 19, 26, March 5, 12, 19 and 26. Dinners will be served in the Sacred Heart School cafeteria, 149 South Plainfield Ave., from 5 to 7 p.m.

Menu: fillet of fish (fried, broiled, parmesan), pasta (cheese ravioli, manicotti or linguini) or pizza; fresh garden salad, rice pilaf, French fries or macaroni and cheese, cole slaw, coffee, tea or cold drink, plus dessert. Take out orders are also available. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$7 for seniors and \$4 for children. Pay at the door. Stations of the Cross will be held in the church at 7 p.m.

Comedy Show at Grant School February 27

Grant School is holding a comedy night fundraiser on Friday, Feb. 27 at the senior center featuring national touring comedian Dave Reilly. Seats are limited—reserve now. Tickets are \$25 each. Show starts at 7:30 p.m. Bring your own food and drinks. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. All profits to be used for Stokes trip.

For tickets and information, call Debbie at (908) 227-7834, E-mail dpete1851@comcast.net or call Christine at (908) 705-4201.

— Out of Town —

Prodigal Foundation Charity Bowling January 30

Prodigal Foundation, Inc. is hosting the fourth annual H.S. Masters Bowling Tournament on Saturday, Jan. 30 at the Woodbridge Bowling Center at 12:30 p.m.

If interested, call the Woodbridge Bowling Center at (732) 634-4520, Prodigal Foundation at (732) 636-9200 or visit woodbridgebowling.com for entry form and sponsor sheet.

PDA Statewide Conference January 30

A statewide conference and winter warm up dinner will be held on Saturday, Jan. 30 from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the Days Hotel & Conference Center, 195 Rt. 185 in East Brunswick, sponsored by Progressive Democrats of America-New Jersey.

To register, call Joanne O'Neill at (856) 858-499.

Willow Grove Family Game Night January 30

Willow Grove Church, 1961 Raritan Road in Scotch Plains, is hosting a family game night on Saturday, Jan. 30 from 6-9 p.m. Bring your games. Refreshments of Boboli pizzas and des-

SENIOR CENTER Calendar

Coming Up....

April 25-27-Wheeling, WV
May 13-15-Washington, DC
June 7-10 Niagara Falls
(Call the senior center for more info)

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

Call (908) 754-1047 for more info or visit
www.southplainfieldnj.com
Senior Center 2010 dues are due—
\$10 membership

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

Bingo 10 am-2 pm

Daily Activities: Morning coffee, pool, cards, board games, computer classes, exercise, art, Tai Chi, yoga and crafts.
Lunch Served Monday-Friday.

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

serts will be served. This event is free.
To make reservations, call (908) 232-5678 or E-mail info@willowgrovechurch.org.

Singles Dance Party January 30

Steppin' Out Singles is hosting an upscale dance party on Saturday, Jan. 30 at 8 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Monroe Grand Ballroom, 390 Forsgate Drive in Monroe. Ages 40 and up; no jeans/sneakers; \$15 admission. For information, call the 24 Hour Hotline (732) 656-1801.

Open House at Our Lady of Mt. Virgin January 31

Our Lady of Mt. Virgin School, 450 Drake Ave. in Middlesex, is holding an open house and education fair on Sunday, Jan. 31, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the church.

For more information, please call (732) 356-6560 or visit olmvt.net.

Congregation Beth Israel Fashion Show January 31

Congregation Beth Israel (CBI) and The Emmanuel Cancer Foundation (ECF) will host the second annual day of "Fashion, Food and Fun" on Sunday, Jan. 31 from 2-5 p.m. at the synagogue, 18 Shalom Way in Scotch Plains. First 100 pre-registered guests receive gift bags. Tickets: \$10/adults; \$5/children under 10.

To register, call the synagogue office at (908) 889-1830.

Woodbridge WOWs Open Dance January 31

Woodbridge Widows Or Widowers will hold an open dance on Sunday, Jan. 31 from 7 to 11 p.m. at The

Sacred Heart Church

149 South Plainfield Ave.
South Plainfield, NJ

Rev. John Paul Alvarado, Pastor

Mass Schedule:

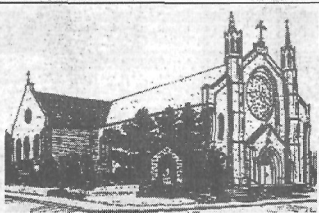
Saturday Mass 9:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m.

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

Daily 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday
7:00 p.m. Monday (Church), Thursday (Parish Center Chapel)

Holy Days 6:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 7:00 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation—Saturday 10-11:30 a.m. and at other times by appointment



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Mayor & Council • Borough Officials & Agencies • Meeting Dates • Police-Fire-Rescue Squad • Recreation • Senior Center • South Plainfield Business Association Listing • Community Bulletin Board • Yard, Garage Sales, Classifieds

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Knights of Columbus Hall, Morrisey Ave. in Avencel. Light refreshments. Admission: \$10 members; \$12 guests.

For more information call (732) 381-3255 or (908) 757-0515.

Our Lady of Fatima School Open House

January 31

Our Lady of Fatima School, 499 New Market Road in Piscataway, is holding an open house on Sunday, Jan. 31 to kick off Catholic Schools Week, beginning with the 11:30 a.m. Mass.

For more information, call (732) 968-5555.

NAMI Meeting

February 1

NAMI-Middlesex, an affiliate of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, is holding their informal supportive discussion and speaker series on Monday, Feb. 1 from 7-9 p.m. at University Behavioral HealthCare, 671 Hoes Lane, Rm. D201 in Piscataway. Everyone is welcome to attend.

For more information, call (732) 745-7409 for further information.

Middlesex East WOWs Meeting

February 1

Middlesex East Widows Or Widowers will hold a business meeting on Monday, Feb. 1 at 7 p.m. at the Carteret Community Center in Carteret. Light refreshments to follow. All widows and widowers are welcome to attend.

For more information, call Dorothy at (732) 541-2174 or Lois at (908) 757-0515.

Metuchen-Edison Women's Club Meeting

February 3

The Metuchen-Edison Women's Club will hold its monthly meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 3 at 7:30 p.m., at The Heritage at Clara Barton, 1015 Amboy Ave. in Edison. A "Happy, Healthy New Year" will be our program. Guests are welcome.

For additional information, please contact Rose at (732) 494-8685.

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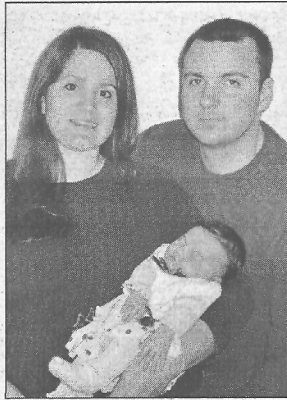
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Randy and Theresa with daughter, Isabella May.

Kuhns Welcome New Daughter, Isabella May

Randy and Theresa Kuhn happily announce the birth of their daughter, Isabella May Kuhn. Isabella was born at 6:46 a.m. on January 6 at Somerset Medical Center, weighing in at 7 pounds 10 ounces and measuring 21 inches long.

Her paternal grandparents are Harry and Dominique Kuhn and her maternal grandparents are Bill and Kathy Lamastro, all from South Plainfield.

southplainfieldpeople

Milestones

Chris Stallone Selected for Team USA Baseball in International Competition

Chris Stallone, 2007 graduate of South Plainfield High School, was recently selected to compete for Team USA Baseball in international competition this summer.

A junior at the University of Scranton, Chris achieved a number of accomplishments in his first two years, both on and off the field. This past year on the baseball field, he received All-Conference/Region honors while also setting school records for hits, runs and stolen bases. He was also selected as an ESPN Academic All American with a 3.95 grade point average.

As a result of his accomplishments, Chris was selected to participate on the USA Athletes International Baseball Team to compete at the Robur '58 Baseball Series in Holland, Netherlands starting July 3. This event fosters international goodwill and friendship among nations, as well as promotes the game of baseball.

With the exception of the U.S. Olympic program, there are few opportunities for American athletes to

experience the competition, history and culture of other countries, as well as showcase their talents on an international level.

In order for Chris to participate in this tournament, he must raise approximately \$4,000 in donations to cover the cost of the trip. All donations are tax-deductible.

If anyone is interested in making a donation, they can contact Chris directly at stallonec2@scranton.edu or call him at (908) 705-6434.

To view Chris's accomplishments at the University of Scranton, visit <http://matrix.scranton.edu/athletics/mens/baseball/news/basemay282009.shtml>.

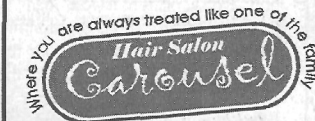


Ashley Bishop

Ashley Bishop Graduates from Rowan University

Ashley Bishop graduated from Rowan University on May 14 earning a bachelor of arts degree in law and justice. A 2005 graduate of South Plainfield High School, Ashley is employed by an Edison law firm.

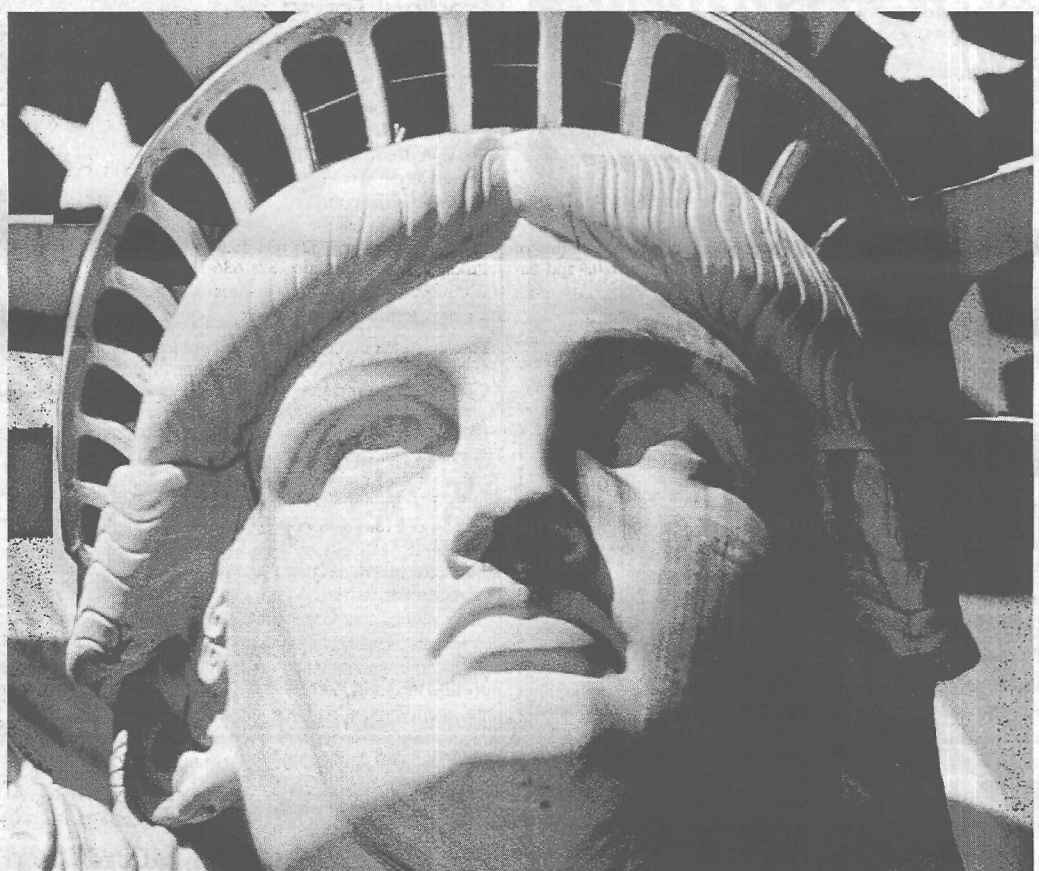
She is the daughter of Scott and Debra Bishop.



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T. Robak Associates Adopts Spot On Belmont Avenue

Terry Robak, owner of T. Robak Associates, LLC, has signed an agreement with the South Plainfield Clean Business Association to adopt one of the Borough's Open Space parcels on Belmont Avenue. He will be removing litter from the wooded lot that lies between Tremont and Arlington av-

enues. The borough preserved this land permanently several years ago as part of the open space project.

Although this part of Belmont Avenue no longer is carrying the heavy truck traffic that used to generate so much debris, the brushy vegetation along the roadside tends to attract and hold litter. Also, marking an undeveloped lot as open space does not protect it from illegal dumping. The Clean Communities Advisory Board is happy to have a caretaker for this spot.

Robak is a member of the South Plainfield Business Association (SPBA). He has been participating in the SPBA's adopted spot on the Lakeview Avenue overpass. He wanted to do even more to improve the borough's environmental quality, so he contacted the CCAB to ask if there were other spots available for adoption. Robak plans to have as many as four people work at the site monthly.

For more information about the Adopt-A-Spot program, contact the clean communities coordinator at (908) 226-7621 or E-mail attempel@southplainfieldnj.com.



The D.A.R.E. building prior to renovation in 1999.

D.A.R.E. Building to Go?

(Continued from page 1)

to cut their budgets by 10%. Cullen is reviewing the borough's assets, including the D.A.R.E. building, which could possibly be sold to offset the decrease in revenues. The building has been appraised at \$116,000.

The D.A.R.E. building, originally the former Empire gas station, was suggested by officers LaMonda and Joe Papa, who were the D.A.R.E. officers at the time. They approached former Police Chief Steve Merkler about incorporating the concept of

community policing in the borough in order to make the police more visible and available to the public. Merkler agreed and the project to convert the station to the D.A.R.E. building was soon underway.

"The whole idea of the building was to have a more relaxed atmosphere where adults and kids could talk and be with officers away from the police department in borough hall. It was especially important for the police to be in a separate, private place, especially for kids to be away from school so there is a private place for them to talk to police," said LaMonda. The D.A.R.E. program was already in the schools with former Police Officer John Alles heading the program, who later partnered with Papa. The officers went to local schools and talked to fifth and eighth grade students in the district about health and public safety.

LaMonda, who has been a police officer for 25 years (the last seven with the D.A.R.E. program), recalls being paired with Papa in 1992.

LaMonda and Papa personally took charge of finding donations to spruce up the building so it could be made into office space for D.A.R.E. and community policing.

Business owners gave more than money for the restoration project, according to LaMonda. "They didn't give money, they gave time and material," said LaMonda. "Bobby Stilo paved the entire place for nothing, J&L Plumbing installed all of the plumbing, Power Solutions did all of the electrical and Penyak donated the entire roof. The Borough of South Plainfield didn't pay a dime. The police department paid for the outside finish and Michael Aripino of Edison Heating put in the heating units," added LaMonda.

Initially the two officers spent time in the building during the day, but as budgets tightened, they were assigned to other duties.

"But we were always there after school. We told the kids we'd be there after school and the kids came. We were there at 3 p.m.," said LaMonda.

In his remarks to the council, LaMonda spoke of the challenges that the small building occupies. "It now has only a one way entrance and the driveway is narrower than when it was first converted to become the D.A.R.E. building."

Board of Education member Debbie Boyle told the council that the board had discussed giving the D.A.R.E. officers space in school buildings. "We could accommodate those officers. It's up to council to make that decision for more of a police presence. This would fill the void," said Boyle.

"That's what the kids don't need—association [of the police] with the school. Our work is more effective away from the school environment," said LaMonda.



Local business owner Greg Heim (center) presents a \$185 check to the South Plainfield Girl Scouts on January 14. Pictured are Jeanne Gruver (left), Brownie and Junior Girl Scout consultant, and Christa Reineke (right), service unit manager. The monies represent a portion of Heim's purchases from his business for the last quarter of 2009.

Mr. Subs Sponsoring Disaster Relief Fundraiser for Haiti

Mr. Subs will be donating all proceeds from sales, and donations to support disaster relief in Haiti on Saturday, Jan. 30. They have also obtained a corporate sponsor who will be matching the entire contribution.

In one instant, their hopes for a

better future were destroyed. Let's do our part to help the people of Haiti rebuild their lives. Please tell your family and friends.

For more information, please call (908) 444-8634.

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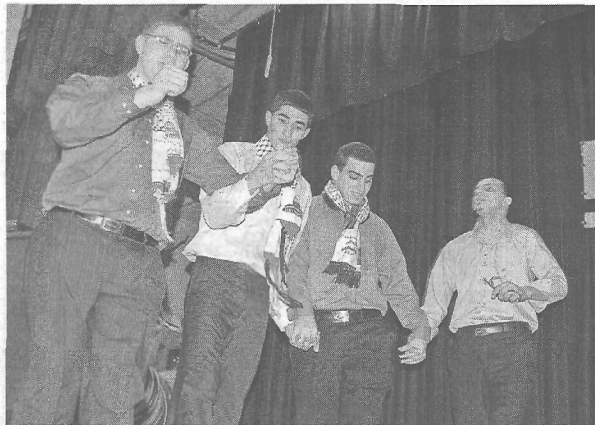
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Arab-American dancers perform.



Rescue House of Prayer performs a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Peruvian dancers Camila Martinez and Richard Quispe danced the Marinera..

Festival Celebrates Cultural Diversity

(Continued from page 1)
The evening concluded with a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. performed and conducted by the Rescue House of Prayer.
The entertainment was rivaled only by the wide variety of ethnic foods served. Food choices included mous-saka (Greek lasagna), baked ziti, chicken and broccoli, pork fried rice, Jamaican meat pies, samosas, Greek salad, an Ethiopian cabbage dish, Filipino BBQ sticks, chick pea and chorizo soup, pasta fagioli, pizza, pancer and white rice (Indian dish), bagel sandwiches, cavatelli and broccoli, Greek cookies and more.

Food and drinks were donated by more than a dozen area businesses. The left over food was donated to the Keystone Community Residence.
In addition to Boy Scout Troop 309, South Plainfield Girl Scout and Brownie troops also assisted. More than 150 people of all ages attended. Among those enjoying the evening were high school Principal Dr. Ken May, Rev. Charles Mingle, members of the borough council as well as members of the board of education.
The purpose of the Coalition of Cultural Diversity is to encourage the various ethnic peoples to support each other and become involved in the community of South Plainfield; to create awareness and appreciation for each other's ethnicity, difference, commonality and richness; to encourage inclusiveness and to act as a forum for residents of all ethnic backgrounds to gather, meet and support one another.
South Plainfield Coalition of Cultural Diversity Committee members are President Nehemiah Thompson, Vice President Chris Sienkiewski, Treasurer Althea Hollis, Secretary Pamela Stefanek, Shehnaz Abdeljabar, Phoebe Andes, Sharon Gianneschi, Lisa Hahn-Gould, Keri Gould, Barry Gould, David Joshi, Clark Olson-Smith, Nikki Woo and Rick McCriscin.



South Plainfield residents and Irish dancers, Kelly and Bridget Simpson

BOE Tables Approval of Public Records Policy

By Libby Barsky

Members of the Board of Education are divided on whether to continue with the board's policy of charging \$.55 for each copy of a page a resident requests from board records. The issue of whether to reduce the price or stay with the existing rate first came up at the December meeting when the board voted 5-4 on the first reading of Policy #8310-the Public Records policy. After a discussion at the January 20 meeting comparing what borough offices charge for copies, board member Debbie Boyle called for a vote to table the issue and return to it at a later time.
At the December meeting, board member Bob Jones defended the right of the public to be able to have access to public records without paying the current charge of \$.55 per page and suggested bringing the cost down to \$.15 or \$.10.
"The current charge is gouging the

public," said Jones, who estimated the true cost of the paper and ink to be \$.04 and \$.04, respectively.
Board President Jim Giannakis defended the current rate of \$.55 per page noting the cost of the copying includes the time office personnel would be interrupted from their work to spend locating and printing documents.
Upon first reading of the policy, board members Debbie Boyle, Carol

Byrne, Bob Jones and Tim Morgan voted for an amendment offered by Jones to reduce the copying cost, but the amendment was defeated when board members Steve Bohn, Jim Giannakis, Sharon Miller, Pio Pennisi and Bill Seesselberg voted no.
The existing charge for copying remains at \$.55 per page for 1-10 pages, \$.30 per page for 11-20 pages, and \$.15 for more than 20 pages.

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Sports

SOCCER CLUB NEWS By Dawn Hutchison

Enjoy a Pancake Breakfast Sunday

The club held its first fundraiser last Friday with its pasta night. We would like to thank all who came out in support of the event and especially to all those who helped out. A big thank you to Joe McGeehan for all the cooking and preparation of the fine Italian feast.

Our next fundraiser, a pancake breakfast, is this Sunday, Jan. 31 at the Elks Lodge on New Market Avenue, from 8 a.m. to noon. Breakfast includes eggs made to order, French toast, pancakes, bacon, sausage, home fries, toast, orange juice, coffee, tea and hot chocolate. Cost is \$7/adults, \$5/seniors, \$4/ages 3-12, two and under free.

The Elks have held this event for us over the years and they do a wonderful job. We really hope to see all our families come out, enjoy a great breakfast with friends and family, and help make this event even better than before!

Don't forget about our big event:

- Friday, Feb. 12-Mardi Gras Night at the senior center on Maple Avenue at 7 p.m. An evening of authentic Cajun cooking, music and fun. Enjoy live Dixieland music by Marshall's Dixieland Band. King and queen of the court will be crowned, beads and masks available for purchase. Come out and play like the Cajuns do. Adults only. Seats limited to 100 guests.

Tickets are \$25 per person, includes dinner. Call (908) 755-3550 for advanced ticket sales. Leave your name and number and our ticket committee will get back to you.

Menu appetizers include barbecued shrimp with fresh French bread and stuffed mushrooms. A choice of one of three entrees—chicken gumbo, jambalaya, or shrimp etouffee. Sorbet or pecan pie with ice cream.

We are still in need of help. If you can help in any way with any of our events, contact Bill Garner regarding the Mardi Gras at Bill.Garner@iqor.com and Laura Readie at lreadie@verizon.net, for all other events.

Thanks as always for your support of the SPSC.

RECREATION WRESTLING

By Joe Sacco

Rec Wrestlers Remain Undefeated

South Plainfield's Central Jersey and Raritan Valley League teams both remain undefeated in league action.

The Central Jersey League team improved to 7-0 this weekend with a 65-11 win over Clark, 56-13 win over Franklin and a big 36-27 win over rival 2009 league champ Bridgewater. Tommy Fierro, Jake Giordano, Jake Hoffman, Danny Hedden and Dion Pender led the way with three wins each. Joseph Heilmann, Ryan Duhamel, Brenden Hedden, Joe Penyak, Kyle Bythell, Christopher Maszczak and Christian Gonzalez had two wins each. Jordan Hamberg, Michael Marro, Jeff Plugis and Desmond Santos added a win each.

The Raritan Valley League team improved to 4-0 with a 55-10 win over visiting North Hunterdon. Picking up pins for the young Tigers were David Loniewski, Joseph Sacco, Kyle Davisson, George Pittenger and Zack DelVecchio. Winning by technical fall was Alex Amato with decisions going to Nicholas Loniewski, Jacob Panton, Jeff Plungis, Connor Adams, Ryan Stankin, Nick Diffrancesco and Nick Scalera.

In weekend tournament action, the Tigers had some big wins. Finishing in first place and bringing home the gold from the Lacey Mat Cat Classic was Jake DelVecchio, Tommy Fierro, Michael Castagno, Connor Adams, Joseph Heilmann and Jake Giordano. Second place went to Jordan Hamberg, David Loniewski and Zack DelVecchio. Third place finishes went to Justin Bell, Anthony White, Joseph Sacco, Jake Hoffman and Josh Stasenka.

At the Caldwell Junior Chiefs tournament, David Loniewski was the sole champion; Luke Niemeyer finished in second and Joseph Sacco third.

At the Madison tournament, Michael Castagno had a first place finish, his second championship in as many weeks. At the Monroe mid-season tournament, first place went to Jacob DelVecchio, Jordan Hamberg, Joseph Heilmann, Tommy Fierro, Brenden Hedden, Zack DelVecchio, Danny Hedden, Ryan Duhamel, CJ Maszczak and Dion Pender; second place to Ja-

son Giordano, Joseph Anesh, Dominic Faustini, David Loniewski, Joe Sacco, Alex Amato and Jake Hoffman. Third place went to Tyler Russo, Harrison Anesh, Desmond Santos, Jake Giordano, Joseph Penyak and Ben Lundy. Fourth place went to George Pittenger and Jacob Panton. At the Middlesex novice tournament, striking gold for the young Tigers was Aidan Taber and Ryan Marston. Second place finishers were Colby Huber, Nick Loniewski and Connor Adams. Justin Bell and Anthony Penyak finished in third, with Marcus Czarrun-chick taking fourth.

Lastly, in state qualifier action, Luke Niemeyer pinned his way to a first place finish at the Randolph State Qualifier for his ticket to the state championships in early March.



Ponytail Softball Batters Box

By Nancy McMahon

Mark your calendar for the following events:

South Plainfield Ponytail All Star Tryouts will be held Sunday, March 7 at Inman Sports Club during the following times: girls 12 years old and under (as of December 31, 2009), 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. (check in at 8:15), and girls 14 years old and under (as of December 31, 2009), 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (check in at 10:15 a.m.).

Visit our new Web site at www.leagueup.com/spponytail.com.

By Gary Lampasona

JUNIOR BASEBALL CLUB NOTES

Our monthly meeting will be held on Monday, Feb. 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the clubhouse. We are excitedly preparing for this season and your participation will make it a more successful one for our children. It all starts with your attendance at our monthly meetings. Key issues are discussed and if you aspire to be a manager or coach, you won't want to miss them. You can also check out what's going on by downloading the 2010 calendar of events from the "Handouts" section of our Web site at www.leagueup.com/spjbc.

"Baseball, it is said, is only a game. True. And the Grand Canyon is only a hole in Arizona."—George F. Will

SPHS Bowling

By Ralph Fech

GIRLS

Lady Tigers Edged by Sayreville, Bounced by North Brunswick

SPHS 599-661-614-1874
No. Brunswick 844-941-804-2589

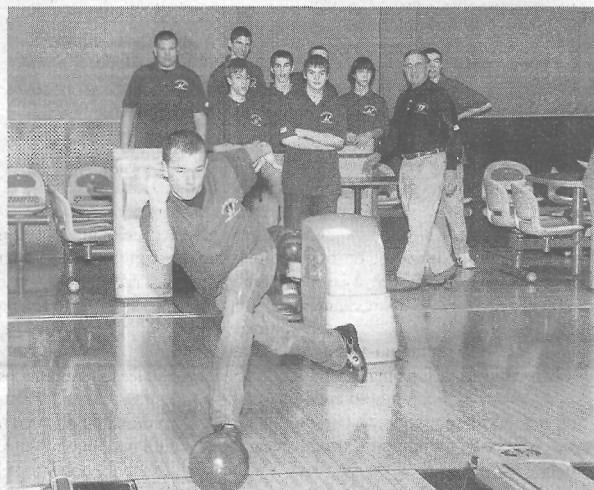
The undefeated Raiders jumped out of the starting gate and never looked back as they easily swept all three games from the young Tigers. Michelle Hernandez led SPHS with games of 150 and 133 for a high 397 set. Chipping in were Stephanie Sherwood, 150-144, and freshman Allison Yuschick with a pair of 135s.

SPHS 662-698-689-2059
Sayreville 714-763-657-2134

The girls' bowling team was edged by a good Sayreville squad, although they upended the Bombers in the third game. Stephanie Sherwood's 166 high game paced the Tigers, who also received help from Nikki Disch's 151 and freshman Nicole Benwell's 156 game.



Last year's rookie of the year, Michelle Hernandez, posted games of 166-163-141 and 470 set as the Tigers fell to undefeated Colonia.



Sophomore Andrew Yon bowled a big 246 game and 581 set as the Tigers dropped a 4-0 decision to the Ramblers of Carteret.

BOYS

Tiger Bowlers Clipped by State Champion Sayreville, Tripped by North Brunswick

SPHS 719-747-818-2284
Sayreville 843-992-814-2709

Two-time defending state champion Sayreville was too much for the boys' bowling team as they swept all three games. Sophomore Andrew Yon's 192 high game and 499 led the vastly improved Tigers. Chipping in were freshman Joe Parillo, 171 and Tom Riccardi, 170. Sophomore Kyle O'Keefe dished out a 186 game and Ryan Riccardi posted a 171.

SPHS 705-689-660-2054
North Brunswick 815-900-935-2550

Freshman Joe Parillo took scoring honors for the Tigers, rolling games of 165-177-157. For 499 high set, teammate Andrew Yon added games of 163 and 164 and 485, but after a close first game, the Raiders woke up and coasted to the victory.

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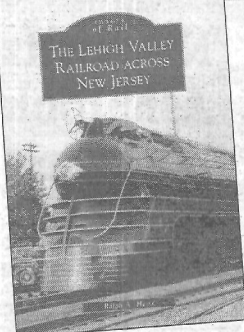
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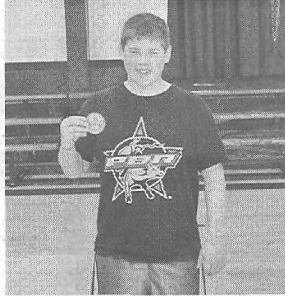
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Robert Matusz (left) congratulates 14 year-old winner Emily Pittenger.



Ryan Harris, 14 year-old winner

Knights of Columbus Announce Free Throw Contest Winners

The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 held its annual local level free throw contest at Sacred Heart School on January 17. Boys and girls ages 10 to 14 shoot 15 free throws, and whoever makes the most are winners and move to compete at the district level competition.

The winners were: 10 year-old boy-Billy Keane; 10 year-old girls-Grace Ochoa; 11 year-old girls-Sara Cargill; 12 year-old boys-Italo Cardoso; 13 year-old boys-Matthew Ciandella; 14 year-old boys-Ryan Harris; 14 year-

old girls-Emily Pittenger.

The Knights would like to thank all the boys and girls who participated: Jack Scrudato, Brandon Wizda, Brian Marski, Andres Fernando, Matt Resende, Arthur Wright and JT Colapetro. All contestants on the local level were recognized for their participation in the event.

The Knights would also like to thank Robbi Matusz, who chaired this event, as well as his helpers, Steve Belanger, Mark Resende, Dan Ratti and Gerry Buttrico.

Submitted by Joe Scrudato

CONTACT We Care to Hold Volunteer Training Class

CONTACT We Care, Inc., the 24-hour caring and crisis hotline voted best statewide volunteer organization by the New Jersey Governor's Office of Volunteerism, will begin its comprehensive 36-hour volunteer training class on Wednesday, Feb. 17 from 7-10 p.m. at the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm St. in Westfield. The class will meet weekly until mid-May.

Experts in active listening, grief recovery, mental health issues, spirituality, and suicide prevention will join with CONTACT's professional staff to conduct the training.

"Our recent award from the governor recognizes CONTACT's commitment to providing an enriched, rewarding volunteer opportunity," said David Owens, executive director. "We also offer volunteers the opportunity to work directly with individuals in need. To be able to have this one-on-one direct connection is a unique and rewarding volunteer opportunity."

CONTACT's training is designed to prepare prospective volunteers for

the wide variety of needs and situations they will encounter on the phone line," said Sue Fasano, CONTACT's director of training.

"We have been told time and again how valuable CONTACT's volunteer training is," said Owens. "The active listening skills people learn help them in all areas of their lives—not just on the hotline."

There is a \$50 fee to cover the cost of training materials.

For more information on becoming a CONTACT We Care volunteer and making a difference in people's lives by listening actively, call (908) 301-1899 or visit the organization's Web site at www.contactwecare.org.

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2010 Recreation Meeting Schedule

South Plainfield Recreation Commission meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the P.A.L. Building, located at 1250 Maple Ave. in the conference room. The meeting is open to the public.

The 2010 recreation meeting dates are as follows: February 9, March 9, April 13, May 11, June 8, July-no meeting, August-no meeting, September 14, October 12, November 9 and December 14.

Richard H. Little, 74

Richard H. Little of South Plainfield passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 19 at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick with his family at his side.

Richard retired from MN&S Railroad where he worked as a sales representative in N.Y.C.

He served in the U.S. Army and was stationed in Germany from 1956-58.

He enjoyed spending time with his family and traveling around town spreading his cheer and humor to all.

He leaves behind his beloved wife of 50 years, Eileen; a son, Richard and wife Lori Little of South Plainfield; two daughters, Kim and husband Kevin Krajniak of Howell and Valerie and husband Phil Weisman of Sarasota, Fla. and four beloved grandchildren, Ashley, Jennifer and Matthew Little and Connor Krajniak.

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

Donations in his memory may be made to the American Diabetes Association, Center Point II, Suite 103, Bridgewater, N.J. 08807.



Richard H. Little

Obituaries

Surviving are three daughters, Michele Bataille of South Plainfield, Eileen Boettger and husband Alan of South Plainfield, Gail Anderson of Waynesboro, Pa.; two sisters, Kitty Halasz and husband Bill of Highland Park and Helen Popadiuk of Raritan; a brother, John Buyachek of Nev., a brother-in-law, Ted Rupp of Conn.; five beloved grandchildren, Jason and Jimmy Bataille, Chris and Matt Anderson and Stephanie Boettger and many nieces and nephews.

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

Frank M. Barone, 51

Frank M. Barone of Weirton, W.V. died on Tuesday, Jan. 20 at home.

Born January 19, 1959 in Scranton, Pa. he was the son of the late Frank, Jr. and Jacquelyn Barone of South Plainfield. Frank lived in South Plainfield for 41 years before moving to Weirton.

Frank is survived by a son, Anthony J. Barone and wife Harmony of Naples, Fla.; a brother, Robert Barone and wife Wendy of South Plainfield; two nephews, Robert and Nicholas and a niece, Jennifer.

Services were held at Greco-Hertnick Funeral Home in Weirton.

Richard R. O'Brien

Richard "Dick" R. O'Brien died on Sunday, Jan. 24 at his home with his family by his side.

Dick was born in Minneapolis, Minn. to the late Raymond and Hazel (Clemmer) O'Brien.

He graduated from Rahway High

School where he met his beloved wife, the late Mildred (Nadler) O'Brien. They settled in South Plainfield in 1956 where they raised their family.

Dick faithfully served his country during the Korean War as a proud United States Marine.

He was the owner of Allstate Carpet Service, installing carpet for Huffman Koos of Rahway.

Dick was a longtime member of the American Legion Chaumont Post #243 where he made many lifelong friends over the years. He was also a parishioner of Sacred Heart Church in South Plainfield.

Besides his parents and wife, Dick is predeceased by a brother, Jerome; and by a brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Kenneth and Dorothy.

Dick is survived by three loving children, Diane Herriott (Billy) of South Plainfield, Nancy Krauszer (Jeffrey) of Mantoloking and Michael O'Brien (Annette) of South Plainfield; 13 grandchildren, Brielle (Anderson) Fredericks and husband Jonathan, Caitlin, Paige and Tyler Herriott, Kate, Kelley and Mackenzie O'Brien, Alyssa, Cara and Michael Capone and Kurt, Tara and George Krauszer; two great-grandchildren, Collin and Shane Fredericks; a sister-in-law, Joan O'Brien; two brothers-in-law, Lawrence Nadler (Dolores) and Robert Nadler (Sarah), along with many extended family and friends from the American Legion.

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

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations sent to the American Legion Chaumont Post #243, Oak Tree Ave., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080 would be appreciated.

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Lines formed at the rabies clinic held at the borough garage early last Saturday morning and continued to grow throughout the morning. In addition to rabies shots, dog and cat licenses were available. More than 400 rabies shots were given and approximately 395 licenses were issued.

The Tabernacle Church Solicits Donations to Provide Relief to Haiti

[T]he Tabernacle, a ministry located in South Plainfield, is spearheading a relief drive for victims of the recent earthquakes in Haiti. All donations will be sent directly to Haiti via missionary ship on January 31.

In times like these, many people become weary of opening their wallets and hearts in fear that their contributions will not be distributed to those in need. For this reason, The Tabernacle has launched an emergency relief drive that will provide a wide range of supplies only for those directly affected by the earthquakes.

"In light of the devastating earthquakes in Haiti that have undoubtedly shaken the entire world, we feel it is important that we make a positive impact on the world for Christ," says DeAndre Salter, senior pastor.

The church is soliciting everything from bottled water and beans to flashlights and dust masks. The Tabernacle will transport the items to Louisiana where they will be placed on missionary ships for direct transport into Haiti. This act of kindness and concern lines up with the ministry's purpose to reach the world with impactful projects.

In 2009, the ministry was recognized by the governor of New Jersey for its innovative nonprofit social enterprise model which has created more than 45 small businesses in New Jersey during the recession.

A comprehensive list of requested items include bottled water, rice, beans, cornmeal, oatmeal, cooking oil, pasta, extension cords, flashlights, gloves, dust masks, garbage bags, soap, paper/plastic cups, plastic cutlery, paper towels and napkins.

Monetary donations to pay for

transportation costs or to purchase items can be mailed or dropped off at the church located at 1253 New Market Ave., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080.

Information regarding The Tabernacle Church and its community projects can be found at www.thetabernacle.com.

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Observer writer/photographer Patricia Abbott will be cleaning out her computer files in the next month. Among files to be deleted are:

- Kennedy-2009 father/daughter dance, dance-a-thon and 2008 variety show.
 - Franklin-2009 auction, Christmas concert, back to school picnic, Veterans Day and Halloween.
 - High School-2009 career day, 2008 and 2009 homecoming and pep rally, bonfire, indoor competition, 2009 football college fair, senior luncheon, scholarship awards, cultural heritage day, graduation, Dafur concert, prom, *Beauty and the Beast* and Tracy Murray Benefit.
 - Riley-2009 father/daughter dance and pajama party with Santa.
 - 2009 Board of Ed wine tasting.
 - Middle School-2009 dinner dance and graduation, and battle of the teams.
 - Grant School-Productions of *Cinderella* and *Oklahoma*.
 - 2009 Labor Day Parade and park events.
 - SDW-Production of *Fame*.
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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)

Lastly, we would like to thank the teachers at Kennedy, who turned Colin's harrowing experience into a "teachable moment," educating all of the children as to the universal sign for choking, so they know what to do if they or one of their classmates begins to choke. We feel blessed and secure with our kids at Kennedy School.

**SINCERELY,
ERIN & CHRIS FARRELL**

To the Editor:

Enough is enough!
In the month of December the South Plainfield governing body voted to appoint two residents of South Plainfield to the new Dismal Swamp Regional Agency. The state-approved agency was designed to prevent unwanted development in the last large natural preserve in central New Jersey. The two residents were appointed to five-year terms.

Well, four weeks later, a new majority on the council decided to rescind the appointments and two weeks later appointed two other people to the agency. I am sure that all the volunteers are good people and will do a great job for our town. It's about time that we appoint our volunteers based on their qualifications and willingness to serve, not by their party affiliation.

And I am really concerned that this sets a very bad precedent? Does every volunteer who has been appointed to a board or agency have to be reviewed by a new council every year? This political move brings out the worst in people and demeans the process and the volunteers who want to serve our community.

Let's all take a new approach in the future. Prioritize the people's interest—our taxes, our services, our quality of life. Put the politics where it belongs—October and November. For the other 10 months, we are all one community with shared interests and concerns. It's time to put people first and politics last.

MICHAEL ENGLISH

To the Residents of South Plainfield:

The South Plainfield Education Foundation held its annual telethon the week of November 30. The students from several groups in the high school made phone calls to the parents of every student in the South Plainfield school district. If you are a parent that pledged a donation to the foundation, a follow up letter has been sent. There are several areas throughout the district that the parents can direct financial help.

To date, we have received over half of the amounts that have been pledged. If you have not sent your pledge money in yet, we would ask that you send it to the S.P. Education Foundation as soon as possible.

This is our most important fundraiser of the year. Through this fundraiser we are able to continue providing scholarships to deserving seniors from South Plainfield High School. We would also like to continue to support the Gold Card Program at the high school. We have been in existence since 1994. We are a separate non-profit 501c-3 organization. Please be advised that the education foundation is not affiliated with the school board. If you would like further information on the foundation, you can log on to the South Plainfield school district Web site and click on the link to the foundation, or you can go to our Web site at www.spvision2001.org. We provide monies for scholarships and incentive programs for the entire district as an independent, non-profit organization.

We would like to thank the community of South Plainfield for their continued support of the South Plainfield Education Foundation.

**MARJORIE REEDY,
PRESIDENT, SOUTH PLAINFIELD
EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

To the Editor:

The Superintendent took exception to the use of the word "surplus" in a recent *Observer* article. He may

not like the word surplus, but the fact is that the fund balance is a pool of money that is available after the audit.

In previous years, any fund balance in excess of two to three percent of the total budget was to be returned to the taxpayers in the form of property tax relief. This year the state limited this to two percent and revised regulations to give districts the opportunity to allocate this fund balance differently. The district still had the opportunity to allocate this fund balance for property tax relief. Instead,

what did the superintendent and school districts do? No property tax relief. Instead, they allocated the fund balance in excess of two percent as follows: \$740,284 for encumbrances, \$1,199,783 excess surplus (the two percent referred to previously), \$654,445 for subsequent budget ease—these accounts were previously used.

The superintendent and board then established a number of new reserve accounts: emergency reserve \$495,000, maintenance reserve \$499,992 and capital reserve of \$3,475,000; so they used \$4,469,992 of the fund balance for these reserves and removed the option to provide you with property tax relief. Bear in mind that in the past most of the projects included in the capital

reserve account would have been included in the capital outlay and maintenance sections of the regular school budget and you the taxpayers would have had the opportunity to vote on the merits of these projects. Therefore, \$4,469,992 of the fund balances were allocated to be used (your money) and you the taxpayer had no say on these expenditures, but you paid the taxes.

This fund balance of \$7.2M is there because the amount raised by taxes exceeded the dollars required for district budget operational purposes.

Look at Exhibit J-4 Sheet 1 of the audit. It shows that the school taxes we paid in 2005 were \$32,829,404. In 2009 the tax levy increased to

\$40,318,578, which was an increase of \$7,489,114 or 22%. The school tax went from 2.491 to 2.824 in 2009.

The *Observer* was not factually incorrect. There is in fact a fund balance of \$7.2 M. This balance was available to the district and they chose to allocate these excess funds (surplus) as indicated earlier.

More of this fund balance could have been allocated for property tax relief. They, the superintendent and board, chose not to do so. Actually, the fund balance was \$7.2M. Also remember this audit covers the period as of June 30, 2009 and the report was released December 2009.

FRANK MIKORSKI

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