

# South Plainfield Observer

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JANUARY 7, 2011

## Matt Anesh Sworn in As 18th Mayor

**Council Reorganizes... Borough Gets First Republican Mayor in 16 Years... McConville, Rusnak Sworn In... Barletta Fills Vacated Seat... Mayor Butrico Bids Farewell**



Tim McConville (left) and Ray Rusnak are sworn in to second terms on the Borough Council. See additional photos on page 8.

Republican Matt Anesh was sworn in as mayor of South Plainfield at the January 2 reorganization meeting. Anesh will be the borough's first Republican mayor in 16 years. Also sworn in for a second, three-year term were Councilmen Tim McConville and Ray Rusnak. The 2011 council will be made up of a Republican mayor, four Republican councilmen and two Democratic councilmen.

The meeting began with the *National Anthem* performed by Taylor Kurilew. Rev. Charles Mingle offered the invocation. Outgoing Mayor

Charles Butrico gave a short farewell speech before stepping down.

Congressman Leonard Lance administered the oath of office to Anesh, McConville and Rusnak.

The council voted unanimously to appoint Alex Barletta to fill the council seat vacated by Anesh. He was sworn in by former New Jersey Governor Donald DiFrancesco, a partner in the borough's legal firm.

Ray Rusnak was unanimously elected to serve as council president and DiFrancesco gave him the oath of office.

Mayor Matt Anesh presented

Charles Butrico with a plaque of appreciation on behalf of the council. Butrico served four years as mayor.

The members of the council then voted on the contracts awarded, as well as all the mayoral and council appointments to committees and commissions. Democrats Chrissy Buteas and Franky Salerno voted against the appointments of April Bengivenga and Robert Bengivenga, Sr., citing relatives of council members shouldn't be appointed to boards or commissions. They also voted no to the appointment of a new insurance broker/consultant as well as the appointment of Glenn Cullen as PARSA Commissioner.

Mayor Matt Anesh gave the annual message, and Councilwoman Buteas gave the minority report.

Contracts were awarded to the firm of DiFrancesco, Bateman, Coley, Yospin, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer, P.C.-borough attorney, T&M Associates-borough engineers and planners, Suplee Clooney & Co.-borough auditors, Thomas Lanza and



Matt Anesh is joined by his wife, Kimberly, and sons, Harrison and Joseph, as he is sworn in as Mayor of South Plainfield.

Paul Garelick-borough prosecutors, Edward J. Santoro-public defender, Insurance Buyers' Council, Inc.-insurance broker/consultant, McManimon & Scotland, LLC-bond counsel and redevelopment attorney; Sterling, DiSanto and Associates-borough appraiser; Maser Consulting PA-

environmental engineers, DiFrancesco, Bateman, Coley, Yospin, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer, P.C.-redevelopment attorney and condemnation counsel, and Spencer Robbins, Esq.-municipal court judge and Paul Rizzo of DiFrancesco Law Firm-public agency compliance officer.

## Barletta to Fill Anesh's Unexpired Term



Alex Barletta is sworn in to a council seat by Former Governor Donald DiFrancesco as his wife, Susan, and sons, Adam and Alex Jr., look on.

By Libby Barsky

The council unanimously selected Alex Barletta to fill the unexpired council seat that was vacated when Matthew Anesh took the oath of mayor at Sunday's reorganization meeting. Last month, the Republicans announced the three candidates they would be choosing from—Alex Barletta, Bob Jones and Derryck White—and

they held off the announcement until the reorganization meeting. Barletta will serve for one year. A special election will be held in November to fill the seat for the remaining year on the three-year term.

Former Governor Donald DiFrancesco administered the oath of office to Barletta while his wife, Susan, and sons, Alex Jr. and Adam, held the bible. In 2006, Barletta and Dave Sesok

were the Republican candidates for council, along with Robert Bengivenga, Jr., who was the Republican candidate for mayor. All three lost to the Democratic ticket headed by Charlie Butrico for mayor and Ray Petronko and Joe Scudato for council.

"When I ran in 2006, it was a great experience meeting so many people while going door to door. We worked hard and it was a tough loss," said Barletta.

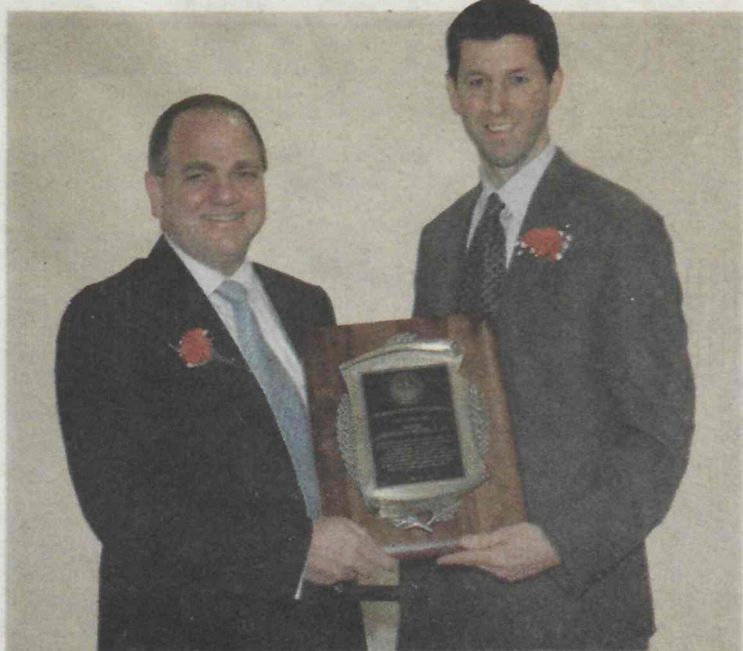
During the campaign for council, Barletta recalls talking about utilizing shared services to cut borough expenses. "There wasn't a recession then, but we were talking about the concept," he added.

As the newest council member, Barletta will be a member of the Shared Services Committee, along with Council President Ray Rusnak.

"I will examine Governor Christie's 'tool kit' for shared services, and explore expanding some of the shared services with the Board of Education and possibly other municipalities," he said.

Barletta was appointed to a four-year term on the Zoning Board of Adjustment in 2008. Members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment elected him vice chairman for two years—2008 and 2009—and chairman in 2010. He resigned as chairman prior to being

(Continued on page 14)



Matt Anesh presents a plaque to Charlie Butrico.

## GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE...

By Jane Dornick

Charlie Butrico said goodbye to politics after one term as mayor and nine years of service to the Borough of South Plainfield.

Butrico was elected to the Borough Council for two terms on the Democratic ticket prior to a successful bid for mayor in 2006. Two of the four years Butrico held the position was under Republican control of the council.

According to Butrico, some of his proudest accomplishments as mayor include improvements to Veterans Park, the installation of the turf field at the PAL building, acquiring and preserving over 100 acres of open space, performing weddings and being able to donate over \$20,000 to local charities, and keeping taxes affordable.

Among his other endeavors was the permanent banning of truck traffic in 2006 on the newly reconstructed Hamilton Boulevard. Much of his mayoral campaign was based on extending New

(Continued on page 14)

LOOKING BACK

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THE YEAR IN REVIEW  
10

## The Year in Review

The Observer takes a look back at the stories that made news in 2010.

To see more of the Observer's special "Year in Review," turn to pages 8 through 12.



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Want to stay informed about the business of your Council and BOE?

# FYI

**Borough Council**

Council meetings air on Comcast Channel 96 Mondays at 7 p.m. BOE meetings air on Thursdays at 7 p.m.

To purchase a complete copy of a council or BOE meeting, contact the Observer.

(Check Comcast community bulletin board for last minute time changes.)

## council meetings

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

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

Agenda Meeting ..... Public Meeting

January 10 ..... January 10

January 24 ..... January 24

February 7 ..... February 7

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

Reorganization Meeting Tuesday, Jan. 25 at 6:30 p.m. Regular Meeting 7 p.m.

## 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 Roosevelt Administration Gymnasium on Jackson Ave.

Committee of the whole meetings (begin at 6:00 p.m.)

2011: Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 2 and March 30.

Regular Public Meeting (begin at 7:30 p.m.): Jan. 19, Feb. 16, March 16, April 6.

## 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.

## BOE buildings & grounds

Meets second Monday of the month at 7 p.m., 2nd floor conference room, Roosevelt Administration Building

## library board of trustees

Meets once a month on the second Tuesday, at the library at 7 p.m.

## 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

Jan. 18, Feb. 15, March 15, April 9, May 17, June 21, (July & Aug. no meeting) Sept. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 18, Dec. 20

## taxpayers advisory group

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

## site plan sub-committee

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

## 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.

## ad hoc alternative truck route committee

Monday, Jan. 24 at 7 p.m. in the Senior Center Questions? 908-226-7605

## South Plainfield Observer

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How to Reach Us



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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.

### 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: 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.

when I reach the Plainfield border and find clear blacktop while the South Plainfield side is covered with ice and snow. It is frightening to be traveling five miles an hour and not be able to stop at an intersection.

I am a municipal employee in another jurisdiction and when I returned to work on Thursday, every single road was clear, including cul-de-sacs. As I left for work this morning, the first day of the new year, Orchard Drive, Geary Drive and Grant Avenue were still snow covered.

I am frustrated beyond words and I am angry. As a municipal employee, I understand and appreciate the dedication of public workers but I implore Mr. Capparelli to look at these 13 plowing districts and during the next snowfall, please drop some salt in Geary Park.

**JUSTINE KENNEDY**

Dear Editor,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our newly elected mayor, reelected and appointed councilmen and all those who were appointed to various committees and boards within the borough.

Furthermore, I would like to publicly thank former Mayor Charlie Butrico for his service to the Borough of South Plainfield. Though we did not always agree, I appreciate the countless hours Mayor Butrico dedicated and how we were able to respectfully engage one another. I sincerely wish former Mayor Butrico the best in all his future endeavors.

Dear Editor,

Words cannot express how thankful I am for all the support given to the South Plainfield Social Services Holiday Project.

We were able to provide food for Thanksgiving and gifts for Christmas for well over 110 families. It is a daunting task; however, knowing the support of the community is always there, I get great strength to be able to get through the season.

We had great support from the schools, teachers (SPEA), individuals, churches and organizations throughout the community.

Our mayor, Charles Butrico, personally shopped for 55 children. He donated the funds from the weddings he did throughout the year. This was truly a time consuming job and I applaud him for this.

A special thanks to all the volunteers who came in to help sort the food before Thanksgiving and the gifts for Christmas. Without all this support, this could not be accomplished.

We look forward to a better 2011. Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.

**MARGARET ACKERMAN**  
**DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dear Editor,

I once again want to thank everyone involved with making South Plainfield Borough's Breakfast with Santa event a huge success. I especially want to thank A-Tech Landscaping, Joe McGeehan, Max Waldrop and Ken Cavanagh Photography for their generous donations. I also want to thank all of Santa's elves who helped out throughout the day, including Mayor Charlie Butrico, Billy Butrico, Nina Rohrer, Kathy, George and Mike Buteas, Joe Scrudato and Debbie Boyle.

With a team effort, we were able to raise \$750 to assist South Plainfield families in need. We are already looking forward to next year's event.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR,**  
**COUNCILWOMAN CHRISSY BUTEAS**

Dear Editor,

I felt compelled to write this letter after reading the article about the wonderful job that the South Plainfield DPW did in removing the snow after last weekend's storm. Where I agree with Mr. Cullen's statement that it was not a typical storm, I must assume that he has not seen the Geary Park section of the borough. The article states that 250 tons of salt was used in town, but it appears none of it made it to Geary Park.

I have lived in South Plainfield for 11 years and after previous storms, have called both the DPW and the police department to ask for assistance with the roads in my neighborhood. Recently, I have resorted to emailing council members out of desperation. I have taken photos of the terrible shape of the roads. Still, the next snowfall occurs and very little is done to clear our section. When traveling down Grant Avenue, I become angry

As we look toward a new year and the challenges that face our community, I am reminded of a quote by President Ronald Reagan: "There is no limit to what a person can accomplish if they do not care who gets the credit." My hope is that each and every member who serves at any level in this administration will embrace this cooperative mentality. We have an abundance of experience and talent available to us in this great town, and even with the inevitable difficulties we will face there is tremendous hope for a successful and prosperous future. Our community can reap the benefits of all that we, as individuals, have to put forward when we adhere to the sentiments that Henry Ford expressed best: "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, and working together is success."

**RESPECTFULLY,**  
**DERRYCK C. WHITE**

Dear Editor,

I read Councilman McConville's response to my letter two weeks ago and as has been the tactic of the Republican Party all along, the party's "letter writer" has once again tried to change the topic from the issues at hand and once again tried to place the blame on someone else. The issues I pointed out in my letter included the fact that Mr. McConville and his Republican colleagues supported bonding \$600,000 on a tax appeal because they failed to budget enough money. They took the easy way out and just decided to settle the case, at the taxpayer's expense.

They also increased the sewer rate and then waited until after the election to take any action, thereby deceiving the public that our financial house was in good order. Clearly, if this information had come out before the election, it could have impacted their re-election bid.

At this point it is water under the bridge, but as I stated in my previous letter, I will continue to watch closely.

**SINCERELY,**  
**JOE SCRUDATO**

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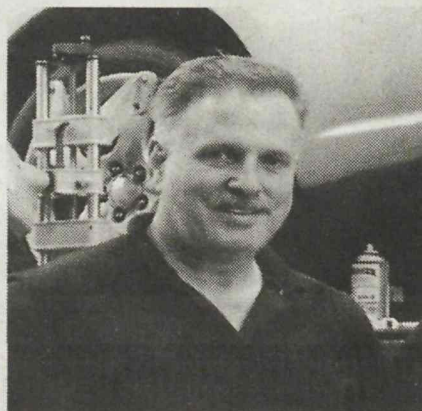
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DPW secretary Janice Muccilli at retirement party.

## DPW Secretary Retires After 28 Years of Service

By Jane Dornick

South Plainfield Department of Public Works (DPW) secretary Janice Muccilli formally retired after 28 years of service to the borough on December 31. Prior to working at the DPW for 17 years, she was the secretary for the planning and zoning departments.

During her first year at the DPW, Muccilli recalls a very large snow storm in which she, and then Superintendent Joe Glowacki, spent nearly 46

hours straight manning the office. "It is a great place to work," said Muccilli. "I've had great bosses and my coworkers are a nice bunch of people."

Muccilli, who has resided in South Plainfield with her husband, Don, for 32 years, recently moved to Piscataway. They have three children and nine grandchildren. Both are looking forward to moving to Florida where Muccilli says she intends to volunteer her time and possibly return to college.

Replacing Muccilli is clerk typist Carmela Sutor.

## County Ice Skating Rink Opens

Middlesex County's popular Roosevelt Park Family Ice Skating Rink has opened for its eighth season. The rink is located at the Level Playing Fields Complex inside the county's Roosevelt Park, which is adjacent to Menlo Park Mall in Edison.

Accredited group and private lessons are available. The rink is available for birthday parties and private events. Call (732) 494-3785 for information and reservations.

Hours of operation are: Wednesdays to Fridays, 5 to 9 p.m.; Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (session 1), 2 to 5 p.m. (session 2) and 6 to 9 p.m. (session 3); Sundays, 12 to 3 p.m. (session 1) and 4 to 7 p.m. (session 2).

The following dates will operate as follows: Monday, Jan. 17—Sunday schedule; and Monday, Feb. 14—Sunday schedule. The rink is closed on Mondays except as listed above.

Per session admission is \$6 for adults and \$5 for senior citizens and children 17 and under. Discounts are available for multi-session passes and groups.

For more information or to book an event, call (732) 494-3785 or visit [www.co.middlesex.nj.us](http://www.co.middlesex.nj.us).



Sal Esposito (far right) presents a check for \$1,000 on behalf of the Watchung Hills Youth Benevolent Association to Marge Ackerman, director of Social Services. Also pictured are Councilman Rob Bengivenga (left) and Sal Esposito Jr. The donation benefited local families in need during the holiday season.

## Interfaith Prayer Service for Peace and Non-Violence

The Division of Church and Society of Wesley Methodist Church will sponsor an interfaith prayer service for peace and non-violence on Sunday, Jan. 16 at 4 p.m. on the eve of Martin Luther King Day.

Representatives from various faith communities will be present and greet attendees. The choir of Rescue House of Prayer will help pay tribute to Dr. King and there will be a few beautiful cultural dances. Borough leaders have been invited to speak. The community is cordially invited to attend. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

For more information, or if you would like to perform a song or dance,

please call the church or Pastor Nehemiah Thompson at (908) 251-3992.

## County Unveils College Scholarship Program

Taking a page from recent announcements of public-private partnerships formed to improve education and job opportunities and building on a federal program that supports returning college students, Middlesex County Freeholder Deputy Director Ronald G. Rios unveiled plans for the Middlesex County Education Stimulus Plan.

Rios said the Middlesex County Education Stimulus Program would establish a public-private partnership to provide scholarships to 100 residents to attend Middlesex County College. Scholarships will include full tuition, a voucher for books at the college bookstore, application fees and counseling services.

The Middlesex County Education Stimulus Program will focus on adults returning to or beginning college to complete a degree for increased employability. Eligible students are high

school graduates who are at least 21 years old, who have been laid off for more than six months from a full time position or whose job has become obsolete.

Rios unveiled the county program on the heels of an announcement of a new partnership between Middlesex County College and the federal government. The federal government granted the school \$75,000 to provide free counseling for adults with at least 31 college credits who wish to return to school to complete a degree. The counseling services at the college's new "Center for Adults Returning to Education" will include

support with the enrollment process, special workshops and tutoring and bookstore vouchers.

Rios said the County's Education Stimulus Program will expand the federal program by offering counseling to all 100 scholarship winners, regardless of how many college credits they have earned.

"We are very pleased to collaborate with the county to expand our CARE program to those with fewer than 31 credits," said Dr. Joann La Perla-Morales, president of Middlesex County College. "If they otherwise meet the qualifications, they'll be able to come to the college and receive services."

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# events

## Around Town

### Boy Scout Troop 125 75th Anniversary

January 9

Boy Scout Troop 125 will be celebrating its 75th anniversary on Sunday, Jan. 9 at 2 p.m. downstairs at the VFW hall on Front Street.

Any alumni who wish to partake, please email the scoutmaster at BSA TROOP125@hotmail.com. This is a pot luck dinner so please bring your favorite dish. Also, if you have any pictures or memorabilia you want everyone to see, please bring it with you to display on the troops history table.

### Historical Society Monthly Meeting

January 11

The South Plainfield Historical Society will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. in The History Center located in the Roosevelt Administration Building, 125 Jackson Ave. Entrance is on the lower level. The new slate of officers will be installed at this meeting. Annual dues can be paid then, or mailed to The SP Historical Society, P.O. Box 11, South Plainfield, N.J. 07080.

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### Library Board Reorganization

January 11

The next meeting of the South Plainfield Public Library Board of Trustees will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. This will serve as the board's annual reorganization meeting. In addition to the installation of board members and assignments for the coming year, they will also discuss the library's current and future plans, including the proposed project for the construction of a new library building.

The public is invited to attend; public comment time is early in the meeting; no pre-registration required.

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

### Grant Fundraiser

January 13

Grant School will be holding a fundraiser on Thursday, Jan. 13 from 4 to 10 p.m. at Red Robin on Hadley Road. Red Robin will donate 10% of its food sales to support Grant School's 2011 Stokes trip.

You must bring the flyer! Print it through our calendar at <http://stokes2011.webs.com>.

### Ponytail Softball Fundraiser

January 21

Come out for a night of music and laughter, sponsored by the South Plainfield Ponytail Association, at the Senior Center, 90 Maple Ave. on Friday, Jan. 21 from 6:30 to 11:30 p.m. to help support girls softball. Tickets are \$40 per person and include a buffet dinner, beer, wine, soda and dessert. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; dinner at 7:30 p.m. and show at 8:30 p.m.

To purchase tickets, call Roone at (908) 202-1653, Nancy at (908) 217-2103 or Dave at (908) 906-1670.

### Sacred Heart "A Night on Broadway"

January 30

The Sacred Heart Music Ministry presents "A Night on Broadway" on Sunday, Jan. 30 at 3 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 149 South Plainfield Ave., featuring music from many beloved musicals, including *The Sound of Music*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Carousel*, *My Fair Lady*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *The Fantastiks*. A free will offering will be accepted at the door.

For more information, call (908) 756-0633, ext 139.

### — Out of Town —

### Woodbridge WOWs Business Meeting

January 12

Woodbridge Widows Or Widowers will conduct a business meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 12 at 7 p.m. in the Children's Room of the Main Library, located at George Fredrick Plaza, Rt. 35 in Woodbridge. All widows and widowers are welcome to attend.

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

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**Jay A. Mevorah**  
Certified Public Accountant  
Tel: (908) 753-1717  
Cell: (732) 397-3187  
Fax: (908) 753-0095

### "Caring for an Older Adult" Program

January 13

Congregation Beth Israel, 18 Shalom Way in Scotch Plains, will present "Caring for an Older Adult," on Thursday, Jan. 13 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The program is open to the public and free of charge, and made possible by a grant from the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey.

For more information or to attend, call (908) 889-1830.

### Singles Dance Party

January 15

Steppin' Out Singles is holding a grand reopening upscale singles dance on Saturday, Jan. 15 at 8 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Edison, 2055 Rt. 27 in Edison. Newly renovated with a brand new dance floor.

Ages 40 and up; no jeans/sneakers/t-shirts. Admission: \$17.

For more information, call (732) 656-1801.

### Forum: Coping with Education Cuts

January 20

"Coping with the Governor's Education Cuts," an education forum hosted by Senate Majority Leader Barbara Buono, will be held on Thursday, Jan. 20 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at Edison High School in the auditorium, 50 Boulevard of the Eagles in Edison.

How have the governor's education cuts affected you? Come voice your opinion and concerns at this public forum. All are welcome.

For more information, call (732) 205-1372.

### Temple Sholom White Elephant Auction

January 22

Temple Sholom of Fanwood/Scotch Plains, 74 Martine Ave. will host its second White Elephant Auction.

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### SENIOR CENTER Calendar

#### Coming Up.....

#### MONDAYS

Silver Sneakers ..... 8:45 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

#### 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 ..... 8:45 am  
Shopping Trip ..... 9 am  
Crafts Class ..... 10 am  
Computer .. 10 am, 11:30 am, 1:30 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.

Call (908) 754-1047 for more info or visit [www.southplainfieldnj.com](http://www.southplainfieldnj.com)

Senior Center is open daily 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed Saturdays & Sundays.

tion at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 22. Open to the public. Tickets: \$10 in advance; \$15 at the door include light refreshments, soft drinks and wine.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call (908) 889-4900 or email [sholom@sholomnj.org](mailto:sholom@sholomnj.org).

### Willow Grove Winter Festival Concert

January 23

Hear Imperial Brass perform its Winter Festival Concert on Sunday, Jan. 23 at 3 p.m. at Willow Grove Presbyterian Church in Scotch Plains.

Tickets are on sale in advance and at the door. Ticket prices are \$15; seniors and students-\$12; and free for children 12 and under. Following the concert, a reception with light refreshments will be held in Alexander Hall.

For tickets or information, call (908) 232-5678.

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James Graham, executive chef at KC's Korner, with the staff of Jagrah's Experience, JoAnn Bruckman, Mathew DelValle and Erika Lytell.

## KC's Korner Dining Room Reopens After 20 Years

By Jean Fultz

For more than 20 years, the dining room at KC's Korner held little more than a pool table and some tables with chairs. Now, after a more than a two-year renovation project undertaken by owner Walter Kurilew, the bar and restaurant is open for business with a new chef, a new style and a new menu.

The Jagrah's Experience, featuring executive chef James Graham, has found a new home at KC's Korner, bringing world fusion dining to South Plainfield. A combination of Asian, Cajun, French and southern cuisine, Graham has perfected his niche by creating unique appetizers, soups, salads and entrees that include seafood, fish, chicken, lamb, steaks, chops and ribs.

Educated in Manhattan at the New York Food and Hotel Management School, Graham began his career as a sous chef at Top of the Sixes in Manhattan. He was also the executive chef at the Chart House in Weehawken and managed the dining room at the American Express corporate offices in New York City. The owner of a catering business of the same name, The Jagrah's Experience is based in Edison where Graham resides with his wife Stephanie, and three children, Christiana, 17, Jayson, 14 and Ethan, 6.

It was after a particularly difficult catering job that Graham and his staff stopped by KC's Korner to relax and have a drink. A conversation about the empty dining room ensued, which led to a meeting with Kurilew who ultimately brought Graham and his associates, Erika Lytell, Mathew DelValle and JoAnn Bruckman, to the bar/restaurant to manage the kitchen and the dining room.

Graham, who was raised in Bolton, N.C. by his grandparents, always knew he wanted to be a chef. "When I was growing up, I was the only boy in the kitchen. My grandfather wouldn't let anyone else in," he said. "I got my passion for food and cooking from my grandparents, Ishmel and Fronnie Mitchell."

Among Graham's favorite dishes is his Lobster Martini appetizer: large

portions of poached fresh lobster on top of fresh Pico de Gallo and diced avocado served in a martini glass. Another favorite on the menu is the southern fried catfish. Blackened or fried, but not battered, the catfish filet is prepared with a dry rub and served on a bed of red beans and dirty rice with Cajun aioli. Not on the menu yet, but prepared as a special when available, is pan seared duck breast served with duck confit, lotus root, enoki mushrooms, taro and chives.

New to KC's Korner in February will be Sunday brunch served from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. The menu will include many breakfast favorites such as scrambled eggs, bacon and sausage as well as omelets and waffles made to order, sunrise potatoes, grits, chicken marsala and other entrees sure to entice even the most discerning palate.

The new dining room and renovated bar dining area at KC's Korner is open seven days a week for lunch and dinner. The Jagrah's menu will be served in both the restaurant and the bar, keeping the classics of KC's bar menu and adding new items soon.

Lunch will be served Monday through Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with dinner served Monday through Thursday from 4:30 to 10 p.m. and Fridays and Saturdays until 11 p.m.

For more information or to view the new menu, stop by KC's Korner at 100 Oak Tree Ave. or call (908) 757-5306.



## Kennedy School Choral Holiday Concert

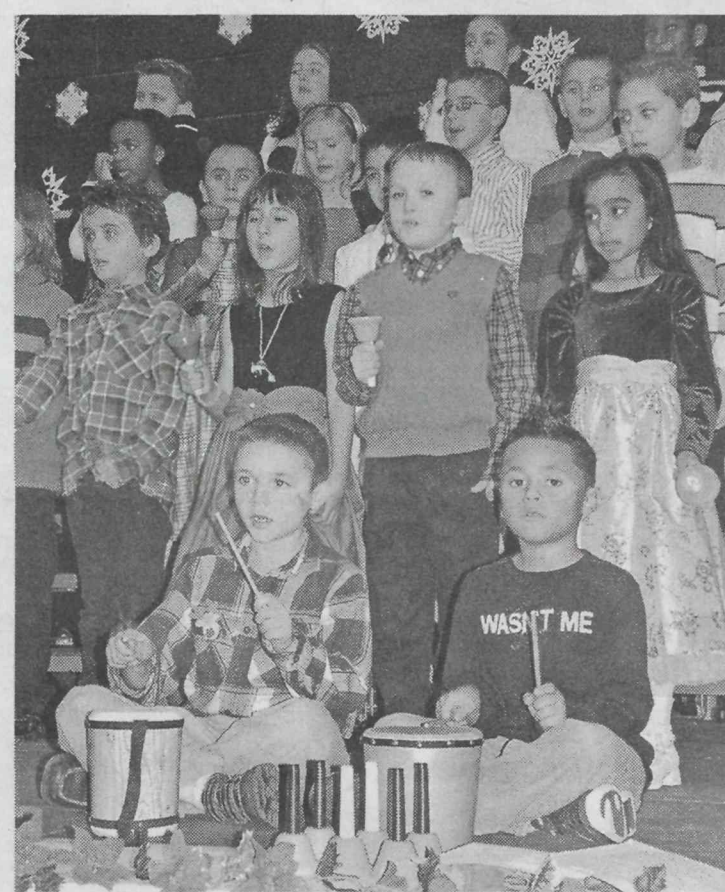
Kennedy Elementary School held their annual choral holiday concert on December 17. Each grade level

learns many different cultural selections that are taught and accompanied by music teacher, Barbara Habeeb,

on the piano in the fall.

The Kindergartners sang *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*, *Light the Candles* and *Jingle Bells*. The first grade class performed *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, *Hanukkah Hayom* and *All I Want for Christmas is my Two Front Teeth*. Second graders sang *Thirty Two Feet and Eight Little Tails*, *Feliz Navidad* and *Donde Esta Santa Claus*. Little Drummer Boy, *Candles of Hanukkah* and *Jingle Bell Rock* were performed by the third grade classes and the fourth graders sang *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*, *Silver Bells* and *Sleigh Ride*.

Accompanying the selections were Peter Danks and Isaias Ramos on tom toms, Saru Castillo, Colin Farrell, Robert Ginda, John Tran, Lita Goolsarran and Jessica Flores on handbells, Faith Abraham on tambourine, Samantha Morris, Abe Calderon, Gianella Torres, Chance Jones, Mackenzie Hall, Krystal Manobanda, Patrick Both and Mitchell McKee on jingle bells and Skylar Davisson, Katherine DeLair, Joe Sacco, Sarah Gwiazda, Justin Cavaliere and Domonique Bowe on hand bells and Skylar Davisson and Katherine DeLair on finger cymbals.



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# Borough Council Reorganizes 2011

— From —

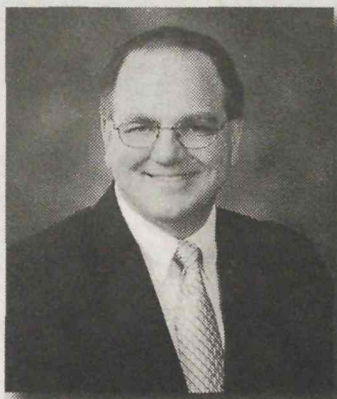
## Mayor Charles Butrico

In the words of the poet William Shakespeare: "Parting is such sweet sorrow." Today is a day of mixed emotions for me. I will miss serving the residents of South Plainfield; I will miss working with the dedicated employees of the borough who I have had the privilege of working with for the last nine years. I will miss performing weddings and I will miss working on projects to benefit our community. But let me be honest, I will not miss the political theatre which has become synonymous with our governing body.

I love South Plainfield and I am proud of what has been accomplished over my nine years of service, first on the borough council and then as mayor, which has been the greatest honor of my life.

Being mayor is a tremendous commitment of time, but I was happy to give all my spare hours in a day to work for the people of this town. Working for the hard working families of this great borough is the most fulfilling thing I could have ever imagined. I have spent countless hours over the past nine years working on projects to improve our community. Some of these include:

- Getting the New Market Avenue extension project funded and built;
- The reconstruction of Hamilton Boulevard with the installation of decorative lights;
- The installation of the beautiful



Mayor Charles Butrico

turf field behind the PAL;

- The improvements at Veterans Park;
- Acquiring and preserving over 100 acres of open space;
- Working closely with the EPA to get the Cornell site cleaned up;
- Keeping taxes affordable;
- And my proudest accomplishment, keeping trucks off of Hamilton Boulevard.

I say with the greatest sincerity that I have truly enjoyed working for the residents of South Plainfield and trying to improve their quality of life.

To Matt Anesh, I wish you all the luck as you take on this great responsibility. In the history of South Plainfield only 18 people have had the opportunity to serve as mayor. I know you won't take this honor lightly. Forget politics and do what is right.

The rest will come easy. Remember to be available and attend as many functions and events as possible as the residents of the community truly appreciate you being there.

Congratulations to Tim McConville and Ray Rusnak on beginning their second term as council members. I encourage all members to work together to continue to make South Plainfield one of the best places to live and work in New Jersey.

You all have your work cut out for you. These are difficult times to serve in public office. But with the greatest challenges comes the greatest rewards. We are all counting on you.

To be your mayor has been the greatest honor of my life. Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I now return to the highest position in a democracy, that of a citizen. Even though my term as mayor comes to an end today, I will stay an active member of the community. If I can ever be of assistance to any of you don't hesitate to call.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends from the bottom of my heart for their moral support over these past years. Your support has been invaluable.

God's blessings on our new mayor, on the members of the borough council, on our employees and on all of the residents of South Plainfield. May 2011 bring us joy and good health and may it bring peace to our world.



Tim McConville, pictured with wife, Gina, and children, Sean, Caitlin and Julian, is sworn in to a second term council seat by Congressman Leonard Lance.

## Council Committee Assignments

### ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE & PUBLIC INFORMATION

Raymond Rusnak, Chairman

Council Members: Alex Barletta & Robert Bengivenga, Jr.

### PUBLIC WORKS

Franky Salerno, Chairman

Council Members: Chrissy Buteas & Timothy McConville

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Alex Barletta, Chairman

Council Members: Chrissy Buteas & Raymond Rusnak

### HEALTH, WELFARE & ENVIRONMENT

Chrissy Buteas, Chairwoman

Council Members: Franky Salerno & Timothy McConville

### PUBLIC SAFETY

Robert Bengivenga, Jr., Chairman

Council Members: Raymond Rusnak & Alex Barletta

### RECREATION

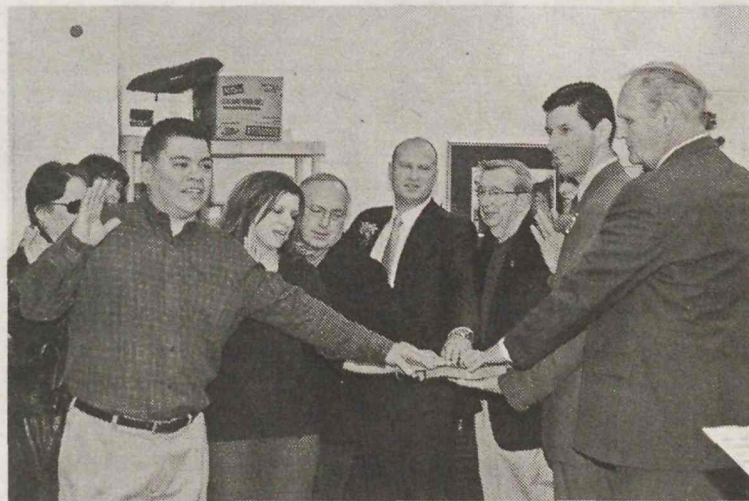
Timothy McConville, Chairman

Council Members: Franky Salerno & Robert Bengivenga, Jr

## 2011 Mayoral Appointments

By virtue of the power vested in me as mayor of the Borough of South Plainfield, I, Matthew P Anesh, do hereby make the following appointments to borough boards and commissions:

APPOINTEE	BOARD	TERM
Christopher Cioffi	Environmental Commission	12/31/2013
Daniel Morley	Environmental Commission	12/31/2013
Dorothy Miele	Environmental Commission	12/31/2013
Jonathan Walezak	Environmental Commission	12/31/2011
Robyn Rusnak	Environmental Commission Alternate	12/31/2011
Jennifer Bechtoldt	Mayor's HCD Com. Representative	12/31/2011
Christine Faustini	Mayor's Library Board Rep	12/31/2011
Matthew Anesh	Planning Board Class I	12/31/2014
John Pabst	Planning Board Class II	12/31/2011
Robert Ackerman	Planning Board Class IV	12/31/2014
Richard Frank	Planning Board Class IV	12/31/2014
Frank Mikorski	Planning Board Alternate I	12/31/2012
Christine Marks	Recreation Commission Alternate II	12/31/2015
James Olano	Recreation Commission Alternate III	12/31/2015
Councilman		
Rob Bengivenga	Mayor's Representative-MCTCC	12/31/2011

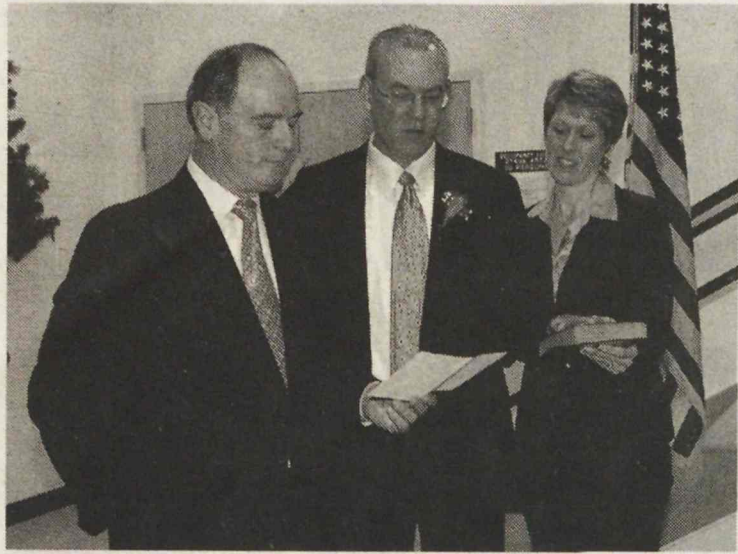


## 2011 Council Appointments

Be it resolved by the governing body of the Borough of South Plainfield and pursuant to ordinance #728 and N.J.S.A. 40:55D that:

NAME	BOARD	EXPIRES
Anthony Cataldo	Ad Hoc Truck Bypass Committee	n/a
Councilman Rusnak	Affordable Housing Committee Liaison	12/31/2011
Carolyn Allen	Business Advisory Group	12/31/2013
Darlene Pinto	Business Advisory Group	12/31/2013
Kevin Murtagh	Business Advisory Group	12/31/2011
Mary Beth Khidre	Business Advisory Group (Zoning)	12/31/2011
T & M Associates	Business Advisory Group (Engineer)	12/31/2011
Councilwoman Buteas	Environmental Commission Liaison	12/31/2011
Alex Barletta	Environmental Comm/Planning Bd Liaison	12/31/2011
Dr. Alice Tempel	Greenbrook Flood Control	12/31/2011
T & M Associates	Greenbrook Flood Control- Alt II	12/31/2011
Councilwoman Buteas	Greenbrook Flood Control - Alt II	12/31/2011
Robert Bengivenga, Sr.	Greenbrook Flood Control - Alt I	12/31/2011
Councilman Bengivenga	Council's HCD Representative	12/31/2011
Alex Barletta	Planning Board - Class III	12/31/2011
Councilman McConville	Office on Aging Advisory Board Liaison	12/31/2011
April Bengivenga	Office on Aging Advisory Board	12/31/2013
Natalie Bergen	Office on Aging Advisory Board	12/31/2013
Lillian Smith	Office on Aging Advisory Board	12/31/2013
Elaine Biribin	Office on Aging Advisory Board	12/31/2013
Owen Kelly	Office on Aging Advisory Board	12/31/2013
Frank Mikorski	Taxpayers Advisory Group	12/31/2013
Virginia O'Brien	Taxpayers Advisory Group	12/31/2013
Richard Petrone	Taxpayers Advisory Group	12/31/2013
Frank Lemos	Taxpayers Advisory Group	12/31/2013
Dennis Little	Taxpayers Advisory Group	12/31/2013
Ken Bonnano	Taxpayers Advisory Group	12/31/2013
Councilman Bengivenga	Traffic Safety Advisory Comm Liaison	12/31/2011
Councilman Bengivenga	Truck By Pass Committee Liaison	12/31/2011
Councilman Rusnak	Shared Services Committee	12/31/2011
Alex Barletta	Shared Services Committee	12/31/2011





Donald DiFrancesco swears in Ray Rusnak as council president. Rusnak's wife, Robin, holds the Bible.

## — Minority Address From — Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas

I would first like to congratulate Matt, Tim and Ray on their victories in November. You have been granted the greatest honor of any person, that of serving as an elected official.

As we move into a new year, it goes without saying that we have many challenges ahead of us in 2011.

Revenue is down, tax appeals are skyrocketing, our roads need resurfacing, our parks need to be rejuvenated, not to mention the need for a new library, additional recreation space and additional public safety equipment.

As you act to tackle these challenges, I encourage you to look at ways to budget for these expenses. I am concerned that the governing body is taking the easy way out and bonding for what I consider everyday expenses or non capital projects. Of course there are exceptions throughout any year, but what worries me is the overall trend. During 2010, the Republican Majority bonded for playground equipment, tax appeals, employee payouts, the paving of Cherry



Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas

Street, DPW apparatus, speed humps, essentially every project put forth. We need to tighten our belts and look for innovative ways to pay for these projects. No doubt, these projects benefited some, but at the expense of many.

I am never a fan of pointing out things I

question without offering solutions. I have offered these suggestions in the past, but will gladly offer a couple of the suggestions for cutting the budget to prevent the out of control bonding: reduce the fees paid to our professionals by 10%, fundraise for any new park equipment purchased, consider closing Borough Hall for one day a week during the summer months and I am sure there are many others we can discuss throughout the year.

Councilman Salerno and I look forward to working with this mayor and council for the coming year. We truly enjoy serving the residents of South Plainfield and will add constructive thought to the matters that lay ahead.

## Reorganization Message — Mayor Matt Anesh

Welcome and thank you for joining us today. I cannot adequately convey the gratitude I have for my fellow residents for providing me the opportunity to serve this great borough as its mayor. I was born here, raised here, went to school here and decided to raise a family in town. You have my word that I will do everything in my power to make sure South Plainfield remains a community we can all be proud to call home.

I would like to thank Mayor Butrico for his service both as a councilman and as mayor for the last four years. Mayor Butrico has dedicated his time and effort to the borough and championed many causes. His motivation has always been to do what's best for South Plainfield. Mayor, on behalf of the residents of South Plainfield, I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

We welcome back Councilman Rusnak, now Council President Rusnak, and Councilman McConville. Your re-election victory is evidence of the voters' trust and approval of your performance as public servants. Continue to place the best interests of our town above all and you are sure to succeed over the course of your new term.

We also welcome Councilman Alex Barletta. Alex, the council looks forward to benefiting from your experience as Zoning Board chairman and as a business executive. Follow your instincts and you will serve the residents of the borough well.

2010 by all counts was a challenging year for the nation, the state, municipal governments and families everywhere. Economic challenges continued to present themselves in the form of high unemployment, layoffs, furloughs, a depressed real estate market and rising costs to Americans everywhere. The excesses of past administrations and the current economic climate forced Governor Christie to reduce aid to municipalities across the state in 2010. The fate of municipal aid for 2011 is unclear.

However, in spite of these tough challenges the 2010 governing body was able to introduce a budget with some bipartisan help that included a \$178 municipal tax decrease for the



Mayor Matt Anesh

average South Plainfield resident. In fact, the adopted budget was smaller than each of the budgets from the previous two years. Municipal spending was reduced without cutting essential services that our residents rely on, or borough wide events such as the Labor Day parade and fireworks.

We trimmed the size of the borough workforce by more than a dozen spots through attrition and reorganization. We sought and found innovative ways to reduce costs for basic services, such as utilizing competitive bidding for recycling services that in the past were simply contracted through the county. We saved over \$200,000 by refinancing borough debt and taking advantage of an improved bond rating for the municipality. This was at a time when, according to one statewide newspaper, most towns in the state saw their bond ratings downgraded. South Plainfield was one of a select group of municipalities to see their bond rating improved during a period of historic economic strain.

In a bipartisan effort led by Finance Chair Ray Rusnak, the borough council was able to eliminate a \$100 increase in school taxes without affecting vital programs. In fact, the revised school budget passed the council with a unanimous vote. We invested in our town infrastructure with the completion of Stage 1 of the New Market Avenue reconstruction project. Cherry Street was fully repaved after decades of neglect. We provided the Department of Public Works with the necessary equipment to complete their vital jobs. The Safe Streets, Safe Kids program was expanded through the approval of resident petitions for speed tables on Cherry and Walnut streets. But we know our work is never complete.

In 2011, this governing body will once again need to navigate through a challenging economic climate to deliver vital services to our residents while controlling taxes and spending. I'm eager to work with our Finance Committee and Chief Financial Officer Glenn Cullen to introduce a budget that holds the line on taxes and spending. To do so, we'll be working with our municipal workforce to finalize labor contracts that balance their needs with the realities of today's economic climate and a newly introduced 2% budget cap. We'll continue to look to streamline borough government where possible and seek savings from all borough departments.

Aside from fiscal challenges, I encourage this governing body to continue to oppose over development and high density projects that will strain our schools, borough services and infrastructure. I know it took courage, but the right decision was made in December 2009 to oppose the pending developers agreement that would have paved the way for an additional 700 units in South Plainfield. We can't correct the mistakes of the past but we must remain dedicated to preventing them in the future and protecting the small community atmosphere that is South Plainfield.

Much has been accomplished with the Hollywood Avenue Extension. We are on the verge of filing an application with the New Jersey Department

of Environmental Protection. As this project enters a new stage the need for increased council oversight and management is warranted. Today, we welcome Jake Cataldo to the Ad hoc Truck Committee formed by Council President Bengivenga in 2008. Mr. Cataldo long ago saw the potential of Hollywood Avenue as a viable alternative for truck traffic in South Plainfield. Councilman Bengivenga will also take the lead as council liaison to the Ad hoc Truck Committee. I look forward to working with Councilman Bengivenga, the committee, our state government, the Christie Administration and the entire council to see this project progress. Make no mistake about it, we expect opposition and know that great challenges still lie ahead. However, if we as a community continue to unite behind the effort, we can overcome the obstacles.

In late 2010, the governing body was presented with the findings and recommendation of the library committee. I ask the council president to formally authorize the committee as a council committee. I look forward to working with the council, library board and committee to advance the planning for the future of South Plainfield's public library.

In addition, I encourage the governing body to continue to expand the Safe Streets, Safe Kids program. By leveraging enhanced road markings, improved signage, speed tables, raised crosswalks and enhanced radar tools, we can continue to improve the safety of our residential streets. I've identified the area of Cady Lane, which encompasses our community pool and Police Athletic League as a priority zone for safety improvements. I've directed the council and our engineer to look into improvements that will increase pedestrian safety in the area. Additionally, we must continue to invest in our public safety departments to ensure they have the tools necessary to protect our borough. To that end, just last week I submitted a request to Bill Baroni, the deputy executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for First Responder Funds offered by the agency.

Today, I ask the council to work with me to formalize a multi-year blueprint for infrastructure repair and capital replacement. While the economic environment promises to be challenging for some time, we simply cannot afford to pass off needed investment years into the future. We must also not forget to continue to invest in our parks and recreation programs. Investments made over the last several years continue to pay dividends, allowing us to maintain our parks for thousands less than contracting for basic borough services. Please work with our department heads, grant coordinator and administrator to identify grants, state and federal funding that will assist us in reaching our goals while maintaining our fiscal focus.

Last but certainly not least, I encourage this council to work together on a bipartisan basis. You have my word that I will work with each member of this council to advance initiatives that put the interests of our residents first. My door is always open and I encourage your thoughts and ideas. It's clear to see that 2011 will be a challenging year, however I'm convinced that if we work together we can accomplish great things.

Again, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to serve as your mayor. I want to thank my wife Kimberly, sons Harrison and Joseph, my parents, brothers, sisters, in-laws, nieces, nephews and friends for your support. Without you, nothing would be possible.

Thank you all for coming today, best wishes for a happy and healthy 2011. May God continue to bless you and your loved ones, our town and these United States.

## Mayoral Appointments With Advise and Consent of Council

Be it resolved by the governing body of the Borough of South Plainfield, New Jersey, that:

NAME.....	BOARD .....	EXPIRES .....
Jim Franchetti, Alternate.....	Construction Board of Appeals-Plumbing.....	12/31/2013
Joseph Abbruzzese.....	Construction Board of Appeals.....	12/31/2013
Larry Del Negro, Alternate.....	Construction Board of Appeals - Fire .....	12/31/2013
Steve Druga, Alternate .....	Construction Board of Appeals Architect .....	12/31/2013
Frank Furino.....	Cultural Arts Committee .....	12/31/2013
David Joshi.....	Cultural Arts Committee .....	12/31/2013
Beverly Krausse .....	Cultural Arts Committee .....	12/31/2013
Suzanne Lyte.....	Cultural Arts Committee .....	12/31/2013
Scott Carey.....	Health Advisory Board.....	12/31/2013
Sue Goulet.....	Community Dev. Citizens' Advisory .....	12/31/2013
Ken Bonnano.....	Community Dev. Citizens' Advisory .....	12/31/2013
Richard Frank.....	Community Dev. Citizens' Advisory .....	12/31/2013
Anthony Cataldo .....	Ad hoc Truck Bypass Committee .....	12/31/2015
Robert Bengivenga, Sr.....	Library Board of Trustees .....	12/31/2011
Patricia Massey.....	Library Board of Trustees - Bd. of Ed Rep. ....	12/31/2011
Glenn Cullen.....	PARSA Commissioner 5 yrs: .....	2/1/2011 to 01/31/2015
Debbie Leporino.....	Public Celebrations.....	12/31/2013
Yvonne Viscosi.....	Public Celebrations.....	12/31/2013
Kristen Semon.....	Public Celebrations.....	12/31/2013
Kimberly Anesh.....	Public Celebrations.....	12/31/2013
Alissa Bengivenga.....	Public Celebrations.....	12/31/2013
Dennis Scalera.....	Traffic Safety Advisory.....	12/31/2013
Lt. Kevin Murtagh.....	Traffic Safety Advisory - Police Rep.....	12/31/2011
Bobby Capparelli.....	Traffic Safety Advisory - DPW Rep.....	12/31/2011
Councilman Bengivenga, Jr.....	Youth Guidance Council - Council Liaison.....	12/31/2011
Police Representative.....	Youth Guidance Council - Police Rep.....	12/31/2011
James Gustafson.....	Zoning Board of Adjustment.....	12/31/2014
Maria Campagna .....	Zoning Board of Adjustment.....	12/31/2014
Derryck White.....	Zoning Board of Adjustment (unexpired).....	12/31/2013
Roy Kaplan.....	Zoning Board of Adjustment (unexpired).....	12/31/2011
Cindy Eichler.....	Zoning Board of Adj -ALTI (unexpired) .....	12/31/2011



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# The Year in Review

*The Observer continues a look back at the stories that made news in 2010.*



## Principal Dedicated to Student Achievement Retires

After a 42-year career in the South Plainfield School District, Middle School Principal Steven Novak retired from his position on July 1.

Novak began student teaching in the borough in 1968; the following year he was hired as a U.S. and world history teacher at the high school. In the 1970s he pioneered the government and law curriculum, which is still in place today.

After becoming an assistant principal at the high school, Novak instituted the "four A's": academics, athletics, arts and activities, something he believes every student should benefit from and strive for. In 2005 he was named principal of the middle school.

## Passerby Discovers Decomposing Body in Van on Metuchen Road

A decomposing body was found in a white 1992 Ford Econoline van on Metuchen Road on the border of South Plainfield and Edison on July 15. It is being investigated as a fatal one car crash police believe happened six days prior.

A witness told police that they had noticed a vehicle in the woods off to the side of Metuchen Road on July 10, but thought nothing of it while driving past. According to Sgt. Dominick Masi, commander of the Edison Township Serious Crash Investigation Team, the witness noticed the same vehicle in the same position while driving on Metuchen Road on July 15. After pulling over and walking towards the van, the witness smelled a strong, foul odor, and as they got closer, saw a body slumped over the steering wheel.

The unidentified body was severely decomposed and no cause of death was determined.

## OSHA Fines Sodexo For Safety Violations In Schools

The South Plainfield school district's maintenance provider, Sodexo, was fined \$8,100 by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for nine serious safety hazards that endangered workers and could have potentially harmed students.

OSHA cited Sodexo for failing to assure that workers received adequate training, protective equipment and labeling information when using dangerous chemicals. They also cited Sodexo for unsafe storage of

flammable and combustible liquids, failure to guard live parts of electronic equipment, and requiring workers to operate industrial trucks without testing their ability to do so safely.

The nine violations OSHA found at the schools were classified as "serious," meaning there was substantial probability that death or serious injury could occur from a hazard about which the employer knew or should have known.

## Board of Education Pays Out \$164,000 to Retirees

The BOE approved sick and vacation day payouts to 18 retiring employees at its July 14 meeting.

Receiving payouts were high school Principal Dr. Ken May, middle school Principal Steve Novak, Buildings and Ground Director Robert Walker, high school psychologist Nancy Lech, high school English teacher Gale Pastula, high school business education teacher Ann Zajkowski, middle school expressive arts teacher William Mosca, high school science teacher Thomas Seiz, high school guidance counselor Nadine Knight, high school cooperative education teacher Deirdre Falato, middle school physical education teacher Jeffery Middleton, middle school math teacher John Limyansky, middle school expressive arts teacher Jeffery Spezio, Kennedy School special education teacher Barbara Friedman, Riley Elementary School teacher Maria Campagna, Riley School music teacher Joanne Gurske, Middle school secretary Thia Kirchofer and Special Services secretary Jill Reid.



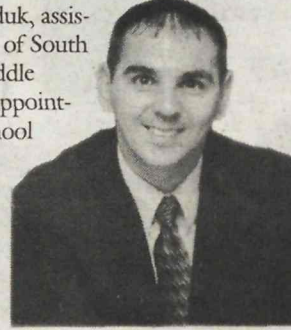
## Mayor Butrico Named Labor Day Honorary Grand Marshal

The South Plainfield Public Celebrations Committee chose Mayor Charles Butrico as the honorary grand marshal for the 53rd annual Labor Day Parade to be held on September 6. Not only has Butrico been mayor of the borough since 2006, but he has served the community in various areas of civic service in tandem with his political aspirations.

Butrico is a lifelong resident who began volunteering his time coaching t-ball and softball for his three daughters, Dana, Kristie and Michelle, who are now grown. In 2001 he ran for public office and was elected to the borough council, and he was reelected in 2004. He has remained a member of the Planning Board, Business Advisory Group and Economic Development Committee since 2002. A devoted Catholic, Butrico spends a good part of his spare time as a member of the Knights of Columbus doing charity work.

## Kevin Hajduk Appointed Middle School Principal

Kevin Hajduk, assistant principal of South Plainfield Middle School, was appointed middle school principal, replacing Steve Novak, by the Board of Education at a special meeting



held on July 28. He had been the assistant principal at the school since 2008. Hajduk holds an Educational Leadership and Educational Specialist certification from Seton Hall University. He is 12 credits away from receiving a Ph.D. in educational leadership.

Hajduk, a 1995 graduate of South Plainfield High School, was Novak's Social Studies student. "Novak was a great teacher. He was the kind of teacher in high school that you couldn't wait to get to class because he always had some sort of hook to catch your attention, to get you engaged," recalled Hajduk.

He began his career in 2000 teaching special education at Roosevelt School after graduating from East Stroudsburg University in Pennsylvania. In his junior year in college he, along with Addison Williams, coached students for Special Olympics events held every June in Trenton. Hajduk is still associated with the Special Olympics.

## Council Approves Amended Budget

The 2010 calendar year budget, which received final approval by the Borough Council, boasts a \$178 tax decrease and 1.226 tax rate for the average home in South Plainfield assessed at \$122,400. Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas was the lone dissenting vote. Councilman Franky Salerno was not present.

Even though state aid was down \$682,703, the municipal budget totaled \$25,966,432 compared to the 2009 calendar year budget of \$26,228,607.70. The 2008 calendar year budget of \$26,284,414.63 was the first year Republicans had control of the council in a decade.

## Acting Chief To Retire

After four months as Acting Chief of Police Paul Brembt officially retired from the force effective April 1, 2011. His last active



day was September 10. Brembt took over former Police Chief John Ferraro's position on April 16, who retired after 28 years. Brembt is a 25-year veteran of the South Plainfield Police Department, having been promoted to the rank of captain in 2005 and commanding the Patrol Division, Detective Bureau and Staff Services. He is also the department's grant writer and a community policing

advocate who headed up the local women's domestic violence volunteer group.

Captain James Parker, who was promoted on April 19 following Brembt's appointment to acting chief, will take the title of "provisional chief" as of September 10 at a pay rate of \$73.03 per hour.

## School Board Appoints New Law Firm

The Board of Education voted 7-1 to replace its legal counsel, Schwartz Simon Edelstein Celso & Zitomer of Morristown, and appoint the law firm of Schenck Price Smith & King, also of Morristown, during a special meeting held August 3. The board has worked with attorney Nicholas Celso and his firm for many years. "It was a tough decision," said Pio Pennisi, vice president of the board.

According to Pennisi, the board took this action in order to retain three attorneys—Mark Zitomer, Joe Roselle and Robin Ballard, a special education attorney. The three had worked closely with the board for the past three years and recently joined the newly appointed law firm.



## Richard Costello Named State Trooper of the Year

Det. Richard Costello, a resident of South Plainfield, was honored by Congressman Leonard Lance and the Borough Council at the August 16 meeting for his recognition as 2009 Trooper of the Year, one of the most prestigious awards given by the New Jersey State Police.

Congressman Lance presented Costello with a flag that was flown over the U.S. Capitol. Mayor Charles Butrico presented him with a proclamation on behalf of the mayor and council. Butrico said he was doubly honored since he was the one who performed Costello's marriage ceremony a few years prior. He and wife, Rianna, reside in South Plainfield with their two children.

## Negron Appointed Interim High School Principal

In a surprise motion made by Board of Education member Debbie Boyle at the August 18 Board of Education regular public meeting, Superintendent Jose Negron was appointed high school interim principal until the position can be permanently filled.

Because the committee of the whole and public meetings are combined during the summer, the board and attendees did not receive the evening's agenda until minutes before the proceedings. High School Assis-



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Tiger Sharks Swim Team at the NJ Swimming and Diving Championship on July 31. Members Samantha Soto, Allison Huber, Chelsea Cullen and Maggie Valentino took first place in the 13-18 200 freestyle relay races.

tant Principal Ralph Errico's name was listed on the agenda for the position of principal beginning the following day. Boyle instead asked that the appointment be tabled and the board voted 6-2 in favor. Board members Steve Bohn and Bill Seesselberg voted against it; Gary Stevenson was absent. Boyle then asked that Negrón's name be added to the agenda as interim, citing the fact that it is in his job description and it is board policy that he can take over the job if it is in the "best interest of the district." The motion passed 5-1 with Seesselberg voting no and Board President Jim Giannakis and Bohn abstaining.

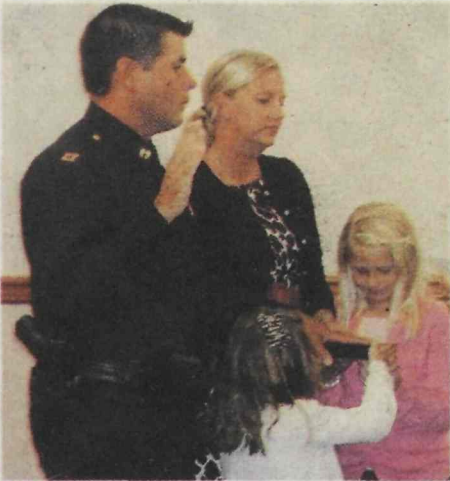
Baseball Club  
Makes History

The South Plainfield Junior Baseball Club has its first ever, four-time District 9 Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth Champions. The now 13U team, managed by Commissioner Mike Pellegrino, won three consecutive district titles from ages 9U through 11U and has taken revenge against one of the top rival teams in the district, South Brunswick. The team's roster is John Chillemi, Kyle Dickerson, Tommy Dunn, Bryan Gilen, Chris Graves, Chris Marrero, Cody O'Connor, Mike Olano, Vincent Pellegrino, LJ Scarpitto and Xavier Wilson. The boys won their third tournament of the summer in South Brunswick by beating the Old Bridge Patriots in back-to-back games and then beat the CJ Steel in the finals.

Hundreds Rally in  
Support of Local  
Transplant Recipient

"Expect Miracles," the second Tiger Nation for Nancy fundraiser, was held for Nancy McMahon on August 26. It was attended by more than 500 residents who jammed field four at the Junior Baseball Club to watch South Plainfield play Team 95.5 WPLJ. Most of the crowd was forced to watch the game standing because all the bleachers filled up early. The first Tiger Nation fundraiser was held in June of 2009, and the turnout was overwhelming. Mary Cargill is credited for getting Team 95.5 WPLJ to come to South Plainfield and play the coaches and scorekeepers from the

Ponytail Softball All Stars. Nancy McMahon is a 16-year resident of South Plainfield. In 2009, she was suddenly stricken with a serious heart malfunction and the first fundraiser was organized. On June 26, Nancy received a new heart. She is recovering from the transplant very well. McMahon and husband Rick have been very active in coaching the children of South Plainfield, as well as in Ponytail Softball. South Plainfield defeated Team 95.5 WPLJ. All who attended agreed the evening was an overwhelming success. More than \$7,000 was raised.



Capt. Parker Named  
Provisional Chief

Lifelong resident James Parker will assume command of the South Plainfield Police Department as "provisional chief" effective September 10. He replaces Acting Police Chief Paul Brembt, who announced his retirement after five months on the job. Parker joined the police department in August 1993 and spent time working with the New Jersey Drug Enforcement Agency Task Force. He was promoted to the rank of captain on July 1 when former Chief John Ferraro retired from the force after 28 years and Brembt was named acting chief. As provisional chief, Parker intends to maintain the status quo within the department.

Cochrane and Plate  
Named 2010 Cappy  
Award Winners



William Cochrane, Sr. Richard Plate

The South Plainfield Recreation Department and the South Plainfield Police Athletic League named William Cochrane, Sr. and Richard Plate 2010 Cappy Award recipients. The award, named for the late Tulio Capparelli, is given to residents who have dedicated their lives to helping the children of South Plainfield. William Cochrane Sr. lives in South Plainfield with his wife, Georgeann. He has four children, Brian, Bill Jr., Michelle and Chris, and seven grandchildren. Richard Plate lives in town with his wife Joann. He has two children, Nicole and Janine, and five grandchildren.

BOE Appoints Interim  
Principal and Middle  
School Assistant Principal

At a special meeting held September 3, the Board of Education hired Dr. Gary Bowen and Tamekia Grier to fill the top two vacant spots at the high and middle schools. Bowen, a retired superintendent from the Montville Township School District, will start as interim principal at the high school on September 15 at \$500 per day until the position can be filled permanently. Superintendent Jose Negrón was appointed to fill the position at the board's August 18 meeting, and his office will remain at the high school indefinitely to assist Bowen with the transition. Tamekia Grier was hired as the new assistant principal at the middle school. She is currently a vice principal at John F. Kennedy High School in Paterson and has a math and science background.

Borough Officials to Meet  
With DEP to Discuss  
Hollywood Ave. Truck Route

Several members of the Ad hoc Alternate Truck Route Committee will hold a preliminary meeting with N.J. Department of Environment Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bob Martin in Trenton on September 13 to discuss their intentions regarding the Hollywood Avenue truck bypass route prior to submitting design plans and permits in October. According to Remington & Vernick engineer Terry Vogt, the survey and traffic study are 95% complete. The borough, however, still must obtain written consent from several property owners who will be affected by the project.



In Honor of the  
Service & Sacrifice

The heroes and victims of September 11, 2001—a day etched in the minds of all Americans—were honored by the South Plainfield Elks Lodge #2298 at a Patriot Day ceremony. The Borough Council returned more than \$42,000 to 20 property owners who won favorable judgments on tax assessment appeals at the September 7 meeting. An additional \$4,500 was refunded during Monday evening's meeting.

(Continued on next page)



Officials cut the ribbon to mark the official opening of the long-awaited New Market Avenue Extension.



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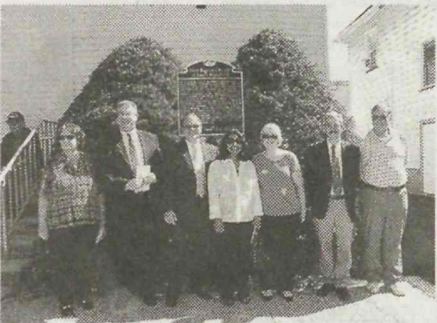
(Continued from page 9)

Tax Assessor Marge Ackerman said that her office has seen over 200 applications this year alone. Most of the petitioners receiving reductions on Monday were commercial real estate owners; the remainder were residents who had purchased newly constructed homes during the real estate boom, explained Ackerman. Some of the appeals had been initiated several years prior and were fought in court by attorneys.

The borough chose to place all of the appeals on the agenda at this particular time to coordinate with the mailing of fourth quarter tax bills. Credits were issued to property owners as opposed to the town collecting the money and then having to refund a portion.



Four high school students, Jordan Davis, Jennifer Villacres, Richard Rotella and Bjorn Delacruz, had the opportunity to intern at Borough Hall this summer in a shared services collaboration between the Board of Education and the borough. Students gained practical experience and performed community service. Pictured along with the interns are borough officials.



(L-R): Historical Society President Dorothy Miele, First Baptist Church of South Plainfield Pastor Gordon Braun, Mayor Charles Butrico; from the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission, History Services/Grant Coordinator Isha Vyas and Curator of Exhibitions, Katie Zavoski; Dr. Richard Veit and Larry Randolph at the church marker dedication.

First Baptist Designated Oldest Church

The First Baptist Church of South Plainfield held a dedication ceremony on September 19 after it received an historic marker as a gift from the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Located at 206 Hamilton Boulevard at the intersection of Church Street, the church has the distinction of being the oldest religious institution and church building in the borough.

According to local historian Larry Randolph, local Baptists founded the church in 1792 and named it the Samptown Baptist Church. The first church building was constructed the same year outside the colonial hamlet of Samptown on what is now Hillside Cemetery on New Market Avenue. A larger structure was built there in 1832 which was destroyed by a fire in 1879.



Boy Scouts follow protocol in preparation for a flag burning at the Activity Day that included recruitment activities and a 9/11 memorial.

School Board Ousts Superintendent

The Board of Education (BOE) voted 5-0 to place Superintendent of Schools Jose Negrón on paid administrative leave until further notice at a special meeting held September 30. Negrón had come under fire as interim high school principal recently by SPEA Vice President Diana Joffe for instituting new practices at the high school and shutting out teachers from the process. He had also been at odds with the BOE in respect to his recommendations for interim principal and his overall lack of communication with members, employees and the public during his tenure.

Elementary Music Lessons Eliminated

Acting Superintendent Dr. Lorraine Cella announced that third grade students will no longer receive string instrument music lessons, and the district will no longer provide band lessons for fourth graders; however, each K-4 school will have its own full time music teacher for weekly class instruction.

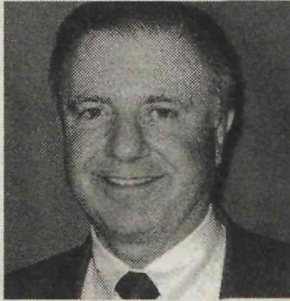
Cella explained that the decision included input from the music staff and principals. They worked "many hours examining schedules and discussing optimum learning opportunities for your child's music lessons without pulling them out of language arts and math."

Instrumental and band lessons will still be offered, commencing in fifth grade, where Cella says, it is "a time when students are ripe for band instruction." All instrumental lessons in the remainder of borough schools will go on uninterrupted.



Senator Barbara Buono, Congressman Leonard Lance and Lucy Hudson, president, South Plainfield Suburban Woman's Club, at Columbus Day 41st annual ceremony at Borough Hall on October 11.

BOE Names Gary Bowen Acting Superintendent



Dr. Gary R. Bowen, who spent just three days as interim principal at South Plainfield High School, was appointed acting superintendent by the Board of Education (BOE) at the Committee of the Whole meeting held on October 13.

The BOE also appointed Dr. Bowen to the Representative Assembly of the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission from October 15, 2010 through May 31, 2011. His salary will be \$750 per day until a new superintendent is found.



Annual Buddy Walk Raises Awareness for Down Syndrome

More than 500 people participated in this year's South Plainfield Buddy Walk 2010. The walk, held to raise awareness and funds for Down Syndrome, was started by South Plainfield resident, Michele Both, seven years ago. This year the walk raised \$21,000.

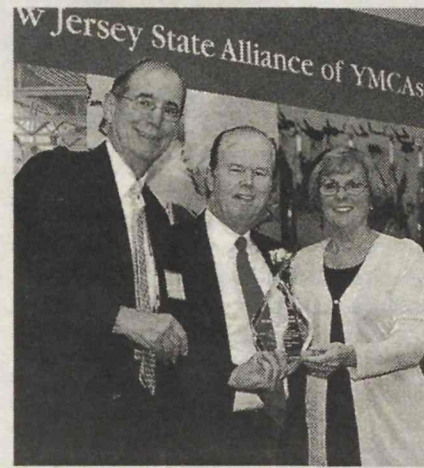
Twenty-six teams participated in this year's walk. Michele made each team a banner and buttons with their child's picture on it. Some teams personalized their shirts to reflect their individual personalities. Family pets, too, got into the act with their own t-shirts. The group made two circuits around the park.

Man Pleads Self Defense in Hotel Murder

Harold A. Tucker, 29, of Plainfield pled not guilty on October 16 in the shooting death of Quadir Ali-Muslim, 32, of Plainfield at the Best Western Hotel on Stelton Road on August 22. He was apprehended by the U.S. Marshal Service after he was spotted riding in a vehicle in Plainfield.

Diegnan Earns Friend of YMCA Award

Assemblyman Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. (D-18) was presented with the "Friend of the YMCA" award by the New Jersey State Alliance of YMCAs on October 7. Other honorees included Senator Diane Allen (R-7), Christopher J. Daggett, president/CEO, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and exceptional youth volunteers from YMCAs throughout the state. The event was held at the Forsgate Country Club in Monroe.



Residents Pack Senior Center for Debate

Borough Council incumbents, Republicans Tim McConville and Ray Rusnak, faced off against Democratic challengers, John Sorrentino and Jeff Williams, in a candidates' debate last Thursday evening at the Senior Center. Mayoral candidates, Council President Matt Anesh and former borough mayor and councilman, Michael English, also took questions from the audience posed by League of Women Voters moderator, Linda Mather.

The South Plainfield Business Association, in conjunction with the *South Plainfield Observer*, sponsored the debate that drew more than 200 residents.



Belief in Friend's Recovery Inspires Worldwide Response

Erica Bowden, a Rutgers University junior, was devastated when her friend of four years, Rutgers defensive tackle Eric LeGrand, was paralyzed from the neck down during the Rutgers/Amy football game on October 16. Bowden wanted to do something to help Eric and his family cope with the tragedy, and she came up with the idea to sell wristbands to raise money to present to



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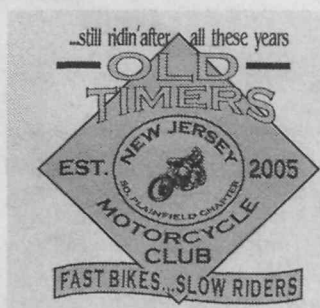
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Eric's mother.

The red and black wristbands, with "Eric LeGrand" on the front and "#52 Believe" on the back, are available for \$5 each. "Erica's original idea was to sell 200 wristbands at the college's student center," said Bill Bowden, Erica's father. "She wanted to present the money to Eric's mother because of their friendship."

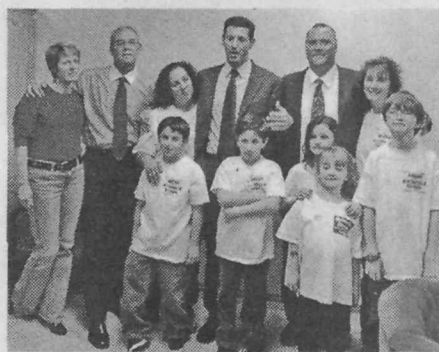
Once word got out about the wristbands, Erica began to receive requests from all over the country, which led to an initial order of 5,000. Requests came from as far away as New Zealand and the UK.



## Motorcycle Club Takes 60-Mile Ride to Fight Childhood Cancer

The Old Timers Motorcycle Club teamed up with the Open Your Heart Foundation to raise nearly \$26,000 to help children battling cancer. In its fifth year, the club has raised close to \$140,000.

Over 300 bikers came out on October 3, and met at the Kenneth Avenue Pop Warner field. After a 60-mile run through Somerset County, the bikers returned to the field for a barbecue, live music and a car and bike show.



## Republicans Retain Control Of Borough Council

Election Day results were very satisfying for the South Plainfield Republicans. The GOP retains a 4-2 majority over the Democrats and will swear in the first Republican mayor in 16 years.

Republicans Matt Anesh, Ray Rusnak and Tim McConville easily defeated Democratic opponents Mike English, John Sorrentino and Jeff Williams.

The final vote tally for mayor was Anesh, 3,476 and English, 2,653. Council totals were Rusnak, 3,352; McConville, 3,324; Williams, 2,660 and Sorrentino, 2,629.

Matt Anesh will vacate his council seat in January when he is sworn in as mayor, and the Republicans will name someone to fill his seat until the next election.

A total of 6,218 of the 14,087 registered voters (44%) cast their votes on Tuesday, down from last year's turnout of 46%.

## Lorraine Cella, Assistant Superintendent, Resigns

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Dr. Lorraine Cella will resign her position as of January 1 after working in the district for less than a year.

On October 18, Dr. Cella informed the board that she had accepted a superintendent position in the Edgewater School District in Bergen County. While in the district, Dr. Cella initiated an overview of all curriculums in the district and created the "Being a Writer" program to strengthen the K-6 language classes.



## Report Shows Significant Drop In School Violence and Vandalism

For the past five years vandalism at district schools, as well as the cost of repairing the damage, has declined from a high of 46 incidents of vandalism in the 2005/2006 school year to six as reported in the state-mandated Violence and Vandalism Report for 2009/2010. Ten vandalism incidents had been recorded in the previous school year, 2008/2009. The report was released at the October 27 Board of Education meeting.

Costs to the district have decreased from a high of \$23,651 five years ago to repair 13 vandalism incidents in 2005/2006 to \$450 for two vandalism incidents in 2009/2010 compared to last year's cost of \$2,479.

## Two Arrested In Burglary

Two Staten Island men were arrested and charged with burglary and possession of burglary tools on November 8. Louis Scala and Jason Reiff are being held at the Middlesex County Adult Correctional Facility in lieu of \$50,000 bail with no 10% option.

The arrests are the result of the South Plainfield Police responding to the 100 block of Pomponio Avenue on a possible burglary in progress report. As police units arrived, Officer Fusaro observed a silver vehicle leaving the area and proceeded to make a motor vehicle stop. The suspects were detained and arrested a short time later.

## Business Association Elects New Officers

The South Plainfield Business Association (SPBA) elected a new slate of officers at its November meeting. The new officers were sworn in at the SPBA's annual holiday breakfast on December 16.

The new officers are President Nancy Grennier, Vice President Marge Reedy, Secretary Tom Stillman, Treasurer Carolyn Allen and Financial Secretary Shannon Jefferys.

"It's my hope that the SPBA will increase its membership so it can continue to create a better business environment throughout the borough. I invite any and all businesses in South Plainfield to join in making our town a place for a business to prosper," said Grennier.

## New Library Proposed By Feasibility Committee

Mayor Charles Butrico, chairman of the Library Feasibility Committee, made a presentation to the Borough Council on its recommendations for building a new library facility.

The cost of the new library would be \$4.98M. The cost to taxpayers would be \$13.26 per year.

## SPHS Hosts Annual Band Festival

South Plainfield High School hosted the 29th annual band festival at Jost Field on October 16. The competition featured a dozen bands. The South Plainfield Tiger Marching Band was not eligible to compete since they hosted the event; however, they did perform at the end of the evening.



## Local Ceremonies Honor Veterans

In keeping with the original commemoration, VFW Post #6763 held ceremonies on November 11 at 11 a.m. at the VFW hall on Front Street.

Franklin Elementary School held the school's annual program in front of a standing room only crowd. Also holding ceremonies were the Middle School, Sacred Heart School and the VFW.

Franklin students wore an array of red, white and blue. The younger students made hats decorated in the American Flag colors. Students filled the center area of the gym while the guests of honor—veterans of all ages and areas of our country's armed forces—were seated on the stage.



## Middle School Cross Country Teams Take First and Second at GMCs

The Girls Middle School Cross Country Team was declared best in the county for the first time in school history. The Lady Tigers outpaced all of their competitors in order to finish first at the Greater Middlesex Conference Championships on October 30.

In a tight race, the girls narrowly defeated Crossroads Middle School of South Brunswick, 67-66, avenging their dual meet loss the week leading up to the championships.

In the boys race, the tenacious Tigers were powered to second place by their talented team. The boys also took home a trophy for third place in the novice race.

The girls end their fantastic season with a record of 13-2. The boys finished up their season with 14 victories and only one loss.

## BOE Names Pedersen SPHS Principal

The Board of Education appointed James Pedersen principal of South Plainfield High School. Pedersen replaces Dr. Kenneth May, who retired in June after holding the position since January 2004. Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Gary Bowen stated, "With his experience both as a high school teacher and administrator, enthusiastic personality and curriculum development background, including special education services and his nearly completed doctoral studies, I am optimistic that Mr. Pedersen will provide the leadership excellence expected by the South Plainfield community."

## Puleio Named Interim Business Administrator

The Board of Education appointed Nicholas C. Puleio interim business administrator to replace Richard Guarini.

Puleio started on November 29 at a salary of \$600 a day. The board also appointed him Affirmative Action Officer for Equity in Employment Practices and Public Agency Compliance Officer, the liaison official with authority to make corrections to the district's Affirmative Action contracting procedures for matters concerning P.L. 1975 C127. He was also appointed custodian of school records, purchasing agent, food service representative and special education-Medicaid initiative co-coordinator.

## Taxpayers to Borrow \$590K to Fund Tax Appeal

The Borough Council introduced a \$590,000 bond ordinance to pay for a large tax appeal settlement with BIT Holdings Fifty Three, Inc., owners of property located at Park and Oak Tree avenues, which includes the years 2008, 2009 and 2010. The three-year bond will cost the average taxpayer approximately \$16.50 a year.

## GOP Nominates Three to Fill Vacant Council Seat

The South Plainfield Republican Organization announced that they will choose from three of their members to fill the council seat vacated by Council President Matt Anesh when he is sworn in as mayor at the annual reorganization meeting on January 2.

The nominees are Bob Jones, a former BOE member and party chair and current Zoning Board of Adjustment member; Alex Barletta, Zoning Board chairman; and Derrick White, Republican Committee member.

(Continued on next page)



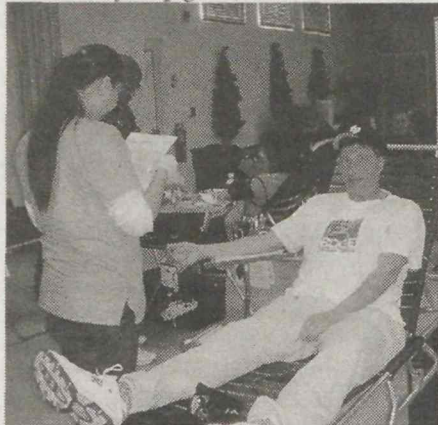
## LOOKING BACK

20  
THE YEAR IN REVIEW  
10

## The Year in Review

*The Observer continues a look back  
at the stories that made news in 2010.*

(Continued from page 11)



### Gerald Bartolotti Blood Drive Draws Overwhelming Response

The South Plainfield Business Association-sponsored blood drive held in honor of Gerald Bartolotti drew close to 100 donors. Bartolotti, who lives in South Plainfield with his wife and Franklin School fourth grade son, was seriously injured in a recent truck accident.

The N.Y. Blood Center collected a total 72 units of blood at the drive. All donors received a pair of NJ Nets basketball tickets and a Chick-Fil-A coupon.

In addition to blood donations, many residents offered monetary contributions to the Gerald Bartolotti Trust Fund, which is administered through a bank account set up on behalf of his family at Columbia Bank on Oak Tree Avenue.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Residential Sewer Rates To Rise 8.6%

The Borough Council introduced an ordinance at its December 6 meeting increasing the fee structure for the Middlesex County Utilities Authority (MCUA) residential, commercial and industrial users. Homeowners will see their bill go up 8.6%, from \$290 to \$315. The minimum commercial rate will be \$580, a 10% increase.

Voting in favor of the increase were Republicans Matthew Anesh, Rob Bengivenga, Tim McConville and Ray Rusnak. Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas voted against the measure. Frank Salerno was not present.

According to Borough CFO/Administrator Glenn Cullen, the increases are due in part to the reduction of industrial customers who went out of business.

\*\*\*\*\*

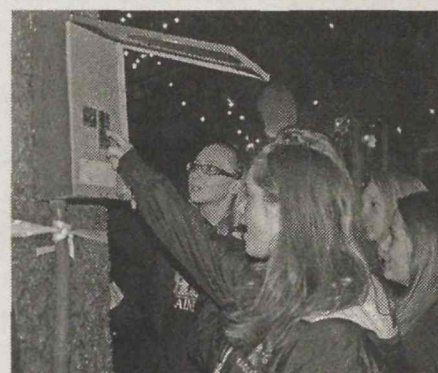
### BOE Appoints Interim Asst. Superintendent

The Board of Education appointed Dr. Frank Cocchiola, Jr. as interim assistant superintendent of instruction and operations at the December 15 meeting.

Cocchiola began work on December 16 at a rate of \$575 per day. He replaces Dr. Lorraine Cella, who will leave the district on December 30 to take the position of Edgewater superintendent of schools.

Cocchiola is currently an adjunct professor at both Felician and Caldwell colleges.

\*\*\*\*\*



South Plainfield Eagles Midget Cheerleaders have the honor of flipping the switch to light the McCriskin Christmas tree.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Weekend Blizzard Blankets Borough With Two Feet of Snow

The borough received a little over two feet of snow, which began early December 26 and continued overnight and into the next day during a weekend blizzard. The Department of Public Works (DPW) crew arrived at 5 p.m. on Sunday and worked 23 straight hours. "This was obviously not a typical storm," said CFO Glenn Cullen.

Over the course of the storm, the DPW dropped nearly 250 tons of salt on roadways. The town is separated into 13 plowing districts and two plows are utilized in each one.

Sunday evening the wind was blowing so intensely that the snow on the Riley soccer fields drifted onto Walter Street. Over three feet of snow had to be removed using a front end loader.



Congratulations to the Eagles Midget Cheer squad and coaches who took first place in their division at the National Cheer Championships on December 10 at the Milkhouse in Walt Disney World, Florida.

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# Sports

## RECREATION WRESTLING

By Joe Sacco

### Rec Wrestlers Win in New Year

The young Tigers rang in the New Year this past weekend at the Kenilworth Golden Bears wrestling tournament.

Striking gold with first place finishes were Brandon Lienhard, Andrew Loniewski, Bobby White, Christopher Poggio, Tyler Balent, Steven Twist, Colby Huber, Alex Amato and Brenden Hedden.

Second place finishes went to Daniel Borsos, Mikey Kurilew, Justin Bell, Tommy Fierro and Luke Niemeyer.

Third went to Noah Santos, Derek Glenn, Al Fuschetti, Justyn Kranzke,

Anthony White and Joe Sacco.

Finishing in fourth were Jeff Jacome, Robert Barrios, Nicholas Lienhard, Gabe Panton and Marcus Czsar-runchick.

In league action, the young Tigers are off to a strong start. The Central Jersey team is 2-0 with big wins over Flemington and Ridge. The Mid Jersey team is 2-1 with wins over Monroe and Fords and a one point loss to Sayreville.

Please follow the action at [www.spwrestling.com](http://www.spwrestling.com) and come out and support the team at their next home match.

### SPHS Wrestling Alumni Night

South Plainfield High School Wrestling is pleased to announce the first annual Alumni Night on Saturday, Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. at South Plainfield High School.

We invite all former SPHS wrestlers to join us for a night of fun and reminiscing as we watch the Tigers take on Old Bridge.

Following the match, all alumni,

friends and fans (adults only please) are invited to join us at Flanagan's for a post match reception sponsored by the South Plainfield Wrestling Club. Light buffet and cash bar will be available. Alumni, for more information and to register for this event, please visit [www.spwrestling.com](http://www.spwrestling.com). Information may be found under the Alumni section.

### Knights Sponsoring Youth Free Throw Championship

South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 is sponsoring the annual youth free throw championship on Sunday, Jan. 9. Boys and girls ages 10 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition.

Registration for this event will be held at 8:30 a.m. in the Sacred Heart School gymnasium. The competition will start at 9 a.m. for boys and girls ages 10 and 11. Girls ages 12, 13 and

14 will be from 10 to 11 a.m. Boys ages 12, 13 and 14 will be from 11 a.m. to noon.

All contestants on the local level are recognized for their participation in the event. Participants are required to furnish proof of age (birth certificate) and written parental consent.

For more information, call Robbi Matusz at (973) 534-6447.

—Submitted by Joe Scrudato

### PTO, PBA to Face Off in Charity Basketball Game

A charity basketball game, sponsored by the Middle School PTO and South Plainfield PBA between the police officers and teachers, will take place on Saturday, Feb. 12 at 2 p.m. in the high school gym. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to resident Jerry Bartolotti who was injured in a truck accident.

Tickets (\$4) are available Feb. 1 by calling the contacts below, or they can be purchased at the door. There will be games and prizes during halftime. Refreshments will be available;

For more information, call Officer Lloyd McNelly at (908) 755-0700 or PTO President Debbie Boyle at (908) 803-1573.

## Santa Joins in the Fun at Riley's PJ Party

By Patricia Abbott

Riley School students got a jump start on the holidays at the school's annual "Pajama Party with Santa" on December 17. Students, parents and siblings joined the PTSO sponsored-party by donning their favorite holiday pajamas.

The school lobby was decorated with a variety of blow up characters, including Snoopy, Tigger and Santa.

The party featured make-your-own ice cream sundaes, a moon bounce, temporary tattoos, coloring, make-a-wish balloons and a raffle basket auction. A large screen television ran continuous Christmas movies.

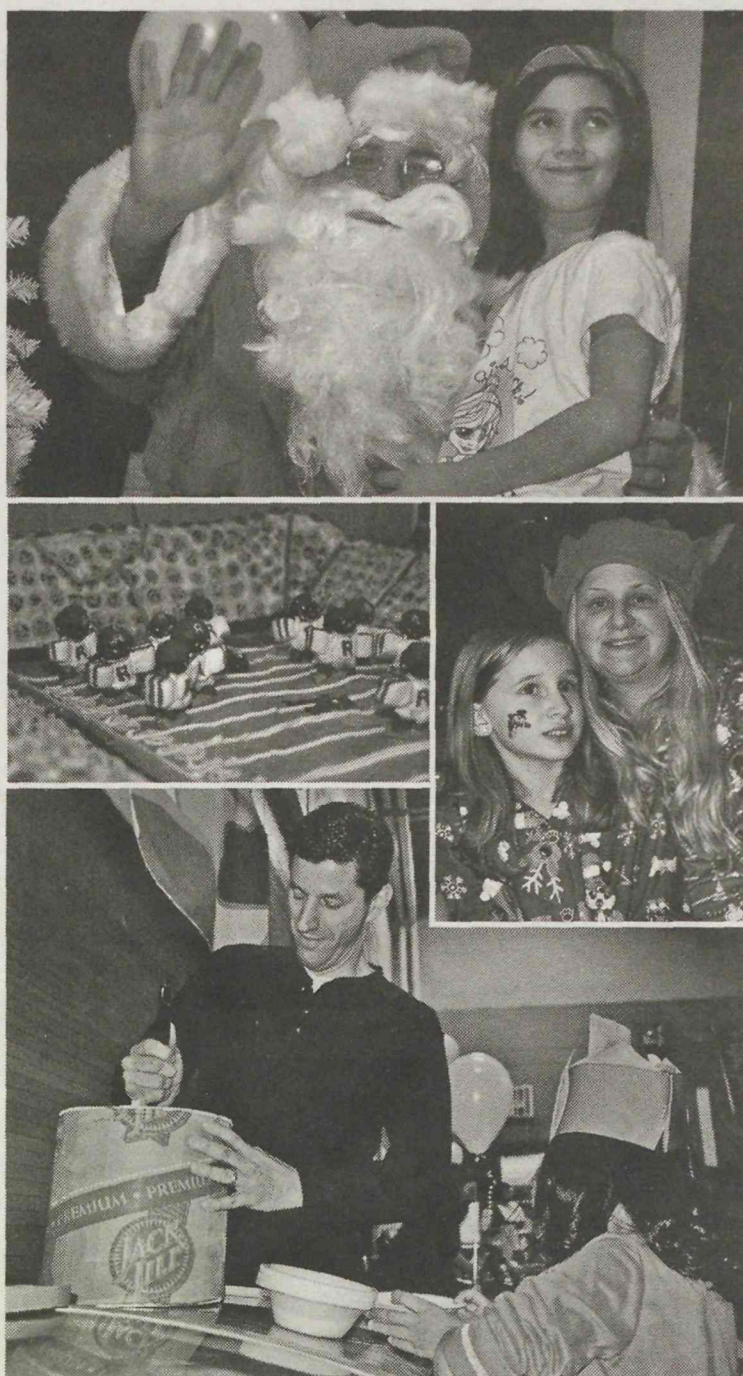
Giant elves (parent volunteers) manned the booths and the food table. Pajama-clad Mayor-elect Matt Anesh took a turn at serving ice cream.

The highlight of the evening was the arrival of Santa Claus. Children lined up to tell Santa their Christmas wishes and have their photos taken.

The party also included a gingerbread house contest. There were dozens of creative creations, including a Rutgers University stadium gingerbread "house" complete with players and vehicles in the parking lot. The "house" was inspired by injured Rutgers football player Eric LeGrand.

The turnout was one of the annual pajama party's largest—more than 300 students, parents, siblings and friends were in attendance.

Clockwise from the top, Santa greets students. Second grader Haily Palmer, pictured with her mom, Dayna Palmer, shows off her "tattoo." Mayor-Elect Matt Anesh scoops ice cream. Close up of a gingerbread replica of Rutgers Stadium.



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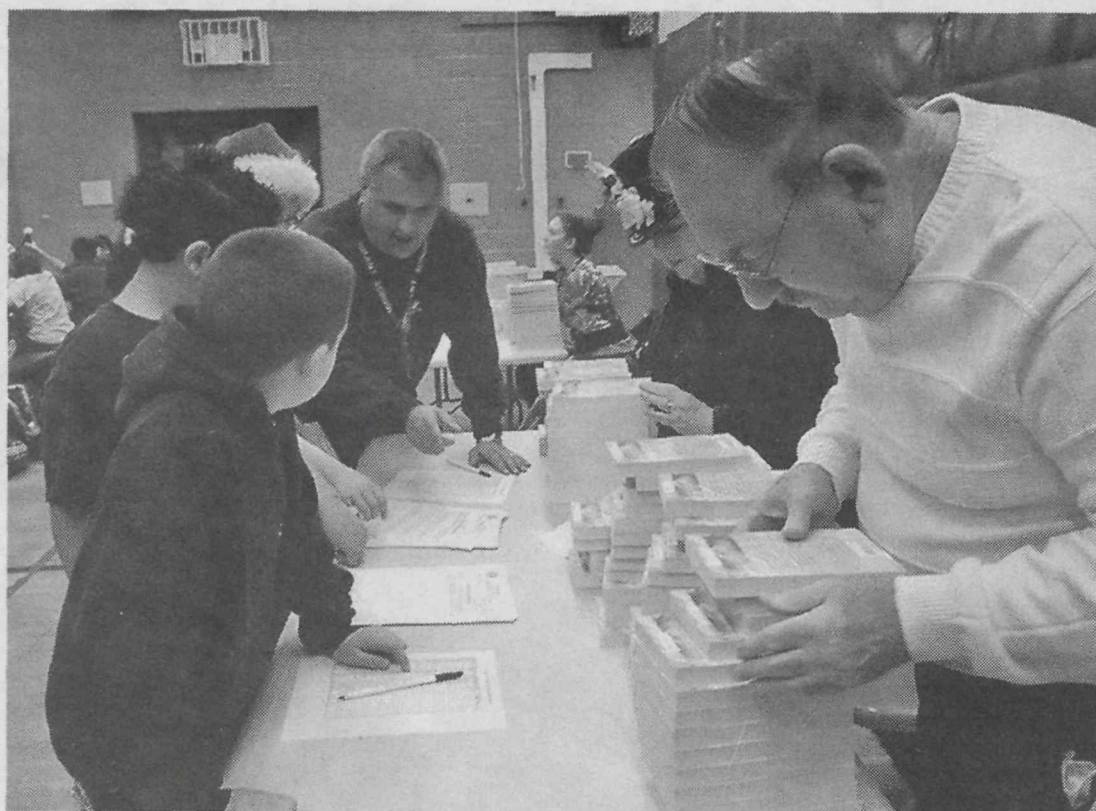
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Grant School Principal Leo Whalen and volunteers Audrey and Ken Reisch distribute copies of *Karma Bites* to students who promised to read the book over the holiday break. South Plainfield Cultural Arts Commission sponsored the "Meet the Author" program that provided the book free to students. Author Valerie Thomas visited Grant School on December 13 to discuss her career as a writer and read excerpts from her book. The Cultural Arts Commission is involved in many activities throughout the year, and this program is part of their ongoing quest to promote literacy in the community.

## Barletta to Fill Unexpired Term

(Cont. from page 1)  
chosen for the council seat.

Some of the more complicated zoning cases included the cell tower off Cedarbrook Avenue (NJ American Water Property), the billboard at the intersection of South Clinton Avenue and Hamilton Boulevard (yet to be installed) and the D'Annunzio & Sons property on Park Avenue.

"Being on the Zoning Board was a great experience for me and I enjoyed every meeting. I can't say enough about the dedication and commitment of my fellow board members. When you drive by something that you have approved and you see it come to completion, you have the feeling of being part of something that has a positive impact for the town," said Barletta.

He received two council appointments during the reorganization meeting—Planning Board Class III Council liaison to the Planning Board and also Planning Board liaison to the



Alex Barletta

Environmental Commission.

Barletta has lived in South Plainfield since he was four years old. He attended the old Grant School, graduated from South Plainfield High School and joined his family's business, Barletta and Sons Disposal. The business was sold to Republic Services, and

Barletta joined the company as commercial and industrial account manager and sales manager for Midco Waste Systems. Barletta also owned a bagel shop in Bound Brook which he sold. He recently resigned from Midco, and in November 2010, started a home improvement business, Barletta Construction LLC.

Barletta lives in the home he built in 1982 on Delmore Avenue with wife Susan, a pediatric nurse at Matenhy Medical Center in Peapack, and his sons, Alex, Jr., a graduate of Sacred Heart School and South Plainfield High School, and Adam, a senior at Monmouth College.

## Charles Butrico: Grateful for the Opportunity to Serve...

(Continued from page 1)

Market Avenue through the then yet-to-be demolished Cornell-Dubilier Superfund site so that trucks may safely pass through what he termed a "less residential" area of town. The Republican council members opposed the idea, and when they took control in 2008 spent much of the year attempting to pass ordinances to repeal the ban. They claimed that Hamilton Boulevard was rebuilt specifically to accommodate trucks, therefore they should return to that route. Butrico's vetoing of the ordinances stalled the GOP attempt until the next election year when the Democrats once again regained control of the council.

Throughout that time, Butrico worked closely with the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); the Cornell-Dubilier site has since been torn down and remediated.

The New Market Avenue extension opened for trucks this summer and plans for building along the new road are in the early stages.

The Helen Street extension project was a pet project of Butrico's during his council days; he spent many hours trying to improve truck traffic in the borough. However, after 10+ years, Butrico's hopes of having a truck route on the outskirts of town was put to rest when the project was stalled at the N.J. DEP. Seeing the need to continue to search for an alternate solution, Butrico appointed then Senior Center Director Joann Graf to head up the Ad hoc committee to investigate other solutions. After nearly three years the committee has redirected its efforts toward extending Hollywood Avenue. The engineering phase is almost complete, and permits for the proposed roadway are expected to be submitted to the N.J. DEP shortly.

Also on his list of accomplishments is getting the Rt. 287 exit corridor cleaned up (the proposed future site of Progressive Insurance).

More recently, Butrico chaired the Library Committee to seek a new, larger facility. His party's plan to

build a new library during his tenure was stalled after the GOP members initiated a Democracy Week in 2008 which was not received well by voters. The new committee findings were announced at the November 22 council meeting when Butrico enthusiastically laid out plans for expanding the current library. Funding for the project, as well as approval of the Library Board, will have to be secured.

When not embroiled in heated battles on the dais, Butrico enjoyed his role as mayor reading to school children for Dr. Seuss's birthday, attending Boy and Girl Scouting events, throwing out the first pitch at the opening days of the Junior Baseball Club and Ponytail Softball games and attending the annual Memorial Day services held throughout the borough each year.

Butrico has fond memories of being inducted into the South Plainfield High School Hall of Fame in 2009 and was honored to be named grand marshal of the 2010 Labor Day Parade. Another unforgettable experience he

says was being invited to spend an afternoon with the National Guard in Florida before they were deployed to Iraq.

Aside from politics, Butrico spends his time doing charity work with the Knights of Columbus. He can always be seen cooking and serving meals at the Lenten fish dinners at Sacred Heart, the Don't Cook Friday spaghetti dinners, helping out at Trivia Night, the Special Citizens Drive and the annual Christmas party. Butrico also volunteers at the annual Feast of St. Anthony at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, town wide cleanup day each spring, Sacred Heart Church Special Liturgy lunch and the Keystone Community.

Butrico was a producing board member for Summer Drama Workshop from 1998 through 2001. He has been a member of the planning board, Business Advisory Group and Economic Development Committee since 2002. He coached t-ball and softball for his three daughters, Dana, Kristie and Michelle, who are now grown up.

A graduate of Rutgers University, Butrico is currently employed as an account executive for Computer Sciences Corp., a Fortune 200 company, and one of the world's largest and most respected providers of information technology services.

As for the future, he plans to stay involved with the library committee as much as possible.

"I am somewhat saddened to be stepping down as mayor as I have truly enjoyed working for the people of South Plainfield and trying to improve our community," said Butrico, as the end of his term grew near. "I say thank you to all the residents of this wonderful town for allowing me the opportunity to serve you during these past four years. I have enjoyed working on your behalf."

At his Inaugural Address in January 2007 Butrico said, "Only in America can a young boy or girl tell his or her playmates, 'I am going to grow up to be mayor' and actually have that dream come true."

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Boy Scout Troop 207 held a Court of Honor for the boys who earned the historical Signaling Merit Badge on December 9. In honor of the 100th Anniversary of Scouting, the badge was one of four that was brought out of retirement. Scouts had until December 31 to earn it. The boys also worked hard earning six Scout ranks and an Eagle Scout Bronze and Gold Palm. Pictured are Scott O'Brien, Charles LaDelle, Zach Prehn, Alex Kelly, Ronald Soden, Owen Milane, Michael Mocharski, Joseph Ifrach, AJ Yon and Ryan Drumbore. Not pictured is Jonathan Gleeson.

From the South Plainfield Library

## Bookmarks

By Chris Grippio

Welcome to a New Year! The South Plainfield Public Library is on track for another exciting year.

First of all our new circulation system is going great. It allows you to log in to check your account, place holds, renew materials, etc. There is an additional feature in this system which allows you to place a hold on materials which are listed as 'available.' Theoretically, these materials are on the shelf and we will put them on the request shelf for you. However, as with holds for materials which are checked out, a .50 fee will be charged to your account for each item held.

Speaking of renewing materials, that is just one way. You can also call the library while we are open or call our automated renewal system (ELVIS) at (908) 757-3280. If you choose either Elvis or online renewal you will need your library card (and with Elvis you will need the materials you are renewing so that you can read the barcode). Also, please remember our fines for overdue video materials are \$2/day. This means if you have four items out and return them one day late you will have an \$8 fine on your card. The library would rather not have to charge anyone late fees so please renew any items.

Furthermore, please check out all the databases to which the library subscribes. These can be accessed through

our website at [www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us](http://www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us) and include everything from testing sites (ASVAB, GED, GRE, etc.) to downloadable audiobooks and ebooks (ListenNJ). If you had to access these websites on your own they would cost you money, but the library subscribes to them so you get them for free.

Don't forget all the children's programs with Miss Mija and Miss Linda. Programs for three and four year olds and up are held Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m., Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m., and Thursdays at 1:15 p.m. "Time for Twos and Threes" is held Wednesdays and Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. and "Books and Babies" is held Fridays at 10:30 a.m. All programs are free and no registration is required; however, it is important that you arrive at least a few minutes before the program begins in order for Miss Mija and Miss Linda to create name tags and for your child to get the most out of the program. It is best if parents/guardians remain in the room for the two and three year old programs, but for older children, Miss Mija and Miss Linda just request that they remain in the building. We will be announcing in this column all the guest entertainers they will have over the next year.

We are located next to Borough Hall at 2484 Plainfield Ave. and our phone number is (908) 754-7885.

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## PUBLIC NOTICES

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# 2010-2011 JUNIOR JOURNALIST

## Liesl Co Named Junior Journalist



Junior Journalist winner Liesl Co with Principal Robert Diehl.

Liesl Co, Roosevelt School third grader, is this week's winner in the Junior Journalist program. Her poem, "Who Said It's Christmas," has earned Liesl dinner for her family, courtesy of Hometown Heros.

Students should submit their original written works to their teachers, Hometown Heros or to the

Observer at 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Winners and their families will receive a catered dinner from Hometown Heros and will be honored at a year-end banquet in May of 2011. For more information, call the Observer at (908) 668-0010.

### Who Said It's Christmas? By Liesl Co

The trees did  
I see them sprinkled with sugary,  
white snow.  
The Christmas tree forests did  
With sweet smells of pine or cedar.  
The hot chocolate did  
With a delicious, chocolaty flavor  
With fluffy, white marshmallows.  
The presents did  
As paper is torn off them, going  
Rriiiipp!  
Followed with a "Wow! What a  
present!"  
Now you know  
How I know  
It's Christmas,  
A special time of year.



## SPHS Students Host Holiday Party for Seniors

By Patricia Abbott

More than 60 South Plainfield senior citizens were treated to a holiday concert and lunch on December 15 courtesy of the South Plainfield High School Student Council and several members of Peer Leadership.

The afternoon began with 45 minutes of excerpts from the school's band and orchestra concert. While the seniors enjoyed the music, the students had just 10 minutes to clean up after the last lunch period and set up for the luncheon. The guests were greeted and escorted into the cafeteria where the students immediately began to serve the food. The holiday menu consisted of salad, turkey, mixed vegetables, mashed potatoes and gravy, sweet potatoes, bread pudding and hot and cold beverages. Helping to keep things moving along was Student Council Advisor Anthony Encino.

The meal was cooked by the cafeteria staff. About 20 students were kept busy rushing back and forth serving the hot meal. As the afternoon began to wind down the students took the time to stop at the tables and chat with their guests. Rachel Alexa said, "I think

that the luncheon is a good way to bring people together for the holidays."

The event has become a long standing tradition at the high school. Student Council Vice President Karly Sanko said, "As vice president of the student council I have been doing this for the past four years, and I'm happy to volunteer my time to serve and interact with the senior citizens. It allows us to get enjoyable hands-on community service experience."



## LEGAL NOTICES

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

### LEGAL NOTICE

#### CONTRACTS AWARDED FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Local Public Contracts Law of New Jersey, (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq) the awarding of the contracts for "Professional Services" without competitive bidding must be publicly advertised within 10 days of the date approved. The following Professional Services contracts were approved at the January 2, 2011 Re-organization meeting of the South Plainfield Mayor and Council.

**Borough Legal services**  
including Borough Attorney,  
Redevelopment, and  
Condemnation:

DiFrancesco, Bateman, Coley, Yospin, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer, P.C.,  
15 Mountain Boulevard, Warren, New Jersey 07059

**Borough Auditors:**

Suplee, Clooney and Co., 308 E. Broad Street, Westfield, NJ 07090

**Borough Appraisers:**

Sterling DiSanto & Asso, 145 West End Ave, Somerville, NJ 08876

**Borough Engineer/  
Planner / Truck Bypass:**

T & M Associates, 11 Tindall Road, Middletown, NJ 07748

**Borough Bond Counsel:**

McManimon & Scotland, LLC, One Riverfront Plaza,  
4th Floor, Newark, New Jersey 07102-5408

**Environmental Engineer:**

Maser Consulting, PA, 331 Newman Springs Road, Red Bank, NJ

**Municipal Court Judge:**

Spencer Robbins

**Borough Prosecutor:**

Tom Lanza Esq., 2416 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ 07080

**Borough Prosecutor:**

Paul Garelick, Esq., 1862 Oak Tree Road, Edison, NJ 08820

**Public Defender:**

Edward Santoro Jr., Esq, 304 Maple Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ 07080

**Insurance Broker:**

Insurance Buyers' Council, Inc., 97220 Greenside Drive, Suite 1E,  
Cockeysville, MD 21030

**Public Agency**

**Compliance Officer:**

Paul Rizzo of the DiFrancesco Law Firm

ATTEST:

Joann Graf/Municipal Clerk

\$52.13

January 7, 2011

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

### LEGAL NOTICE

January 4, 2011

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action was taken by the South Plainfield Board of Adjustment at its meeting held on December 30, 2010.

A. Case # 35-10-Adler Tank Rentals, LLC. Block 389; Lot 10; 250-260 Mack Place. The applicant's request for a use variance, front yard setback variance, side yard setback variance and preliminary and final site plan approval was hereby GRANTED subject to additional voluntary conditions.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mary Beth Khidre  
Secretary-Board of Adjustment

\$28.98

January 7, 2011

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

### LEGAL NOTICE

January 3, 2011

Public Notice is hereby given that the following action will take place by the South Plainfield Planning Board for its meeting to be held on Tuesday, January 25, 2011.

1. REORGANIZATION MEETING WILL START @ 6:30 PM.

2. REGULAR MEETING WILL START @ 7:00 PM.

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

2480 Plainfield Avenue  
South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080

Any questions may be directed to the Board Secretary @ 908-226-7641.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mary Beth Khidre  
Secretary/Planning Board

\$30.40

January 7, 2011

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

### LEGAL NOTICE

#### 2011 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS OF THE SOUTH PLAINFIELD MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that the following dates are have been approved as the official meeting dates for the South Plainfield Mayor and Council for 2011:

#### Agenda Meeting

(Reorganization)

January 2, 2011

January 10, 2011

January 24, 2011

February 7, 2011

February 22, 2011 Tuesday

March 7, 2011

March 21, 2011

April 4, 2011

April 18, 2011

May 2, 2011

May 16, 2011

June 6, 2011

June 20, 2011

July 11, 2011

August 15, 2011

September 6, 2011 Tuesday

September 19, 2011

October 3, 2011

October 17, 2011

November 7, 2011

November 21, 2011

December 5, 2011

December 19, 2011

#### Public Meeting

January 10, 2011

January 24, 2011

February 7, 2011

February 22, 2011

March 7, 2011

March 21, 2011

April 4, 2011

April 18, 2011

May 2, 2011

May 16, 2011

June 6, 2011

June 20, 2011

July 11, 2011

August 15, 2011

September 6, 2011

September 19, 2011

October 3, 2011

October 17, 2011

November 8, 2011

November 21, 2011

December 5, 2011

December 19, 2011

All Agenda Meetings begin at 7:00pm followed immediately by the Public Meeting, unless otherwise noted.

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

\$39.85

January 7, 2011

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