

South Plainfield Observer

VOL. 14, NO. 24

Member New Jersey Press Association

60 CENTS

WITH PLAINFIELD FEBRUARY 18, 2011

PBA Contract Up for Approval Next Week

By Jane Dornick

The Borough Council introduced Ordinance No. 1914 on February 7 which includes salary increases negotiated in a new four-year contract with PBA Local 100. Their last five-year contract expired on December 31, 2010 which saw annual base pay raises of 3.9%. If the ordinance is approved by the council at their public meeting next Tuesday, police base salaries will rise only 1.75% this year and a constant 1.9% each of the following three years.

Councilman Rob Bengivenga read a statement thanking the members of the PBA negotiating team, Pete Magnani, Lloyd McNelly, Brian Iarapino and Robert Rogers, as well as CFO Glenn Cullen, Council President Ray Rusnak and Mayor Matt Anesh. "Given the economy, this was a very different bargaining climate than in years past," said Bengivenga. "The PBA understood this and the changes

in the contract reflect this."

Variations made to the new contract, according to Bengivenga, include a reduction in minimum overtime hours from four to three, a 1.5% contribution toward medical benefits for current officers and 3% for new hires and prescription co-pays increasing from \$5 to \$8 for generic and \$10 to \$15 for name brands. The starting salary of new officers was lowered and two new step pay increases were added.

"About a third of the give backs in this contract will benefit the borough in the long term," commented Bengivenga. "It was always easy to reap short-term gains at the expense of long-term sacrifices. In my opinion, we've made some nice steps forward in a different direction. This is an agreement that will serve the taxpayers well."

Rusnak stated that they had been trying to negotiate a three year contract.

(Continued on page 10)



The Sacred Heart Hawks Basketball teams held a fundraiser to benefit Children's Specialized Hospital last week. (See story and photo on page 12.)

Wrestlers Win in Semi-finals; Fall to High Point 30-28



Officials confer after the South Plainfield and Timber Creek match ends in a tie. South Plainfield was declared the winner by way of criteria.

By Kelly Stashko

On Sunday morning, the South Plainfield Tigers faced Timber Creek at the Poland Spring Arena at Toms River High School in the Group III semi-finals. Because the match ended in a 25-25 tie, the official scorebook was reviewed and the winner of the match was decided by using criteria. A crowd of over 5,000 had gathered to watch the top teams vie for the championship. The clock ticked away as both the fans and the athletes of the opposing teams anxiously awaited the decision.

Although Corey Stasenka was eventually pinned to end his bout, it was the early points he scored which gave South Plainfield the one-point decision on criteria H (first points scored). The resulting 26-25 score advanced the Tigers in the finals for

the second year in a row.

The Tigers had held the number one ranking in Group III Championship wrestling; however, that status changed after the championship match against High Point.

The Tigers defeat came when the High Point team won back-to-back decision victories. The first was when South Plainfield's Dylan Painton fell to Bill Hagany of High Point (125), followed by High Point's Nick Francaville defeating Tyler Hunt of South Plainfield (130), resulting in a final score of 30-28.

Last year these same two teams battled for the Star Ledger Top 20

(Continued on page 8)



Judge Denies Negron's Contract Renewal Request

By Jane Dornick

A judge for the State of New Jersey Department of Education ruled last Wednesday that the Board of Education is under no obligation to renew Superintendent Jose Negron's contract extension for the 2011/2012 school year.

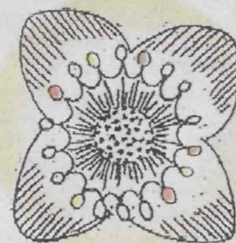
In September of 2007 Negron was hired for a three-year term expiring June 30, 2011. On June 29, 2010 the board voted 4-2 in favor of renewing his contract for an additional year through 2012 with abstentions by

President Jim Giannakis, Vice President Pio Penisi and Steve Bohn. The board subsequently rejected a three-year contract extension by a vote of 2-4. Board members Carol Byrne and Bill Seesselberg voted in favor of renewing both contracts.

Members of the board later decided to place Negron on a paid leave of absence by a vote of 5-0 during its September 30, 2010 meeting.

Maria Lepore, Negron's attorney, argued that "a simple majority of the quorum is required to carry resolution."

(Continued on page 10)



Spring means flowers, and sunshine, and warmth... and the Observer's borough wide issue!

To reserve space, call 908-668-0010 or email spobserver@comcast.net. Need more information? Give us a call.

Living Voices Brings History Into the Classroom



The South Plainfield Cultural Arts Commission sponsored the moving program, "Through the Eyes of a Friend (The World of Anne Frank)," starring actress Campbell Echols. The program brought history to life in Grant School on February 9.

Anne Frank was a young girl who wrote the most famous diary in the world while hiding from the Nazis during World War II. This stirring program brings the audience into the world of Anne Frank and is recognized as a breakthrough production model for consciousness-raising and educating individuals.

The Living Voices Program uniquely combines historical video of the era with a live perfor-

mance of an actor playing a friend of Anne Frank. Students quickly become connected to the performance as history comes alive.

Grant School fifth graders were glued to their seats as Echols played the role of Sara Weiss, fictional friend of Anne Frank. The students were an insightful audience and their questions were thought-provoking. They were clearly fascinated with the story of Anne Frank and the lessons of the Holocaust. Echols also spoke about tolerance for diverse ethnicities in school and in their lives.

The South Plainfield Cultural Arts Commission presents numerous programs, both in-school and to the public, aimed at promoting the arts to the residents of the borough.

For more information or to become involved, email Pam at pamelastc@aol.com.

-Submitted by Suzanne M. Lyte

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

February 22 (Tuesday) February 22 (Tuesday)

March 7 March 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

March 8, March 22, April 12, April 26, May 10, May 24, June 14, June 28, July 12, July 26, Aug. 9, Aug. 23, Sept. 13, Sept. 27, Oct. 11, 25, Nov. 1, * Dec. 13*

zoning board of adjustment

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

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

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

board of education

Meets Wednesdays at Roosevelt Administration Gymnasium on Jackson Ave.

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

March 2 and March 30.

Regular Public Meeting (begin at 7:30 p.m.): 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

cultural arts commission

Meets the third Tuesday of the month at the PAL at 7:30 p.m.

March 15, April 19, May 17, June 21, no meeting July and Aug., Sept. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 15, Dec. 20

library board of trustees

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

March 8, April 12, May 10, June 14, July 12, Aug. 9, Sept. 13, Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec. 13

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

March 8, April 12, May 10, June 14, July and August—no meetings, Sept. 13, Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec. 13

taxpayers advisory group

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

site plans sub-committee

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

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

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, February 28 at 7:30 p.m. in the Senior Center Questions? 908-226-7605

South Plainfield Observer

The South Plainfield Observer is published weekly on Fridays by G&G Graphics Inc.

How to Reach Us



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The South Plainfield Observer (U.S.P.S. 018253) is published weekly, except Thanksgiving week. Second class postage paid at South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080-9998. Postmaster: Forward change of address orders to G&G Graphics Inc. 1110 Hamilton Blvd., Suite 1B, South Plainfield, NJ 07080-2004. Subscription rates \$29.95/year in South Plainfield; \$34.95 year out of town.

SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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

The publisher is not responsible for typographical errors.



Members of Plainfields' Chapter of UNICO donate a check for \$100 and coffee valued at \$200 to the South Plainfield Senior Center. Pictured (L-R) are: Mike Colucci, vice president; Angela Baratta; Debbie Boyle; Renato Biribin, past national president; Kevin Hughes, South Plainfield's Office on Aging director; Anthony Bengivenga, president; Councilman Alex Barletta; and Robert Bengivenga, immediate past president.

In My Opinion

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

To the Editor:

We had one of our best food fest/bake sale/candy sales ever! When we asked people how they heard of it, most said the *Observer* or by the signs displayed by the church. We had a great sale and we all went home happy and joyous. So we once again want to thank the *Observer* for advertising for our sale.

Our next bake sale will be held in April right before Easter. We will inform you of the date soon. Pierogies can be ordered anytime by calling (908) 561-6366. Orders can be picked up every Friday at the church located at 400 Delmore Ave.

God bless you, and we will be in touch with you soon. Your newspaper is a great help!

**ANITA ANDERSON, TREASURER,
NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

To the Editor:

Absolute power corrupts absolutely. This is why now, at a time when

the Republican Party is looking to expand its power by taking over every aspect of South Plainfield government, it is more important than ever for all of us to exercise our constitutionally protected right to engage in substantive debate over pertinent issues and demand a system of checks and balances that ensures transparency and accountability in government. Every farmer knows you don't put the fox in charge of the hen house.

All of our citizens should be allowed to participate in community activities, but the Republican leadership is doing a great disservice to the community by appointing six of their family members to control boards and commissions and shutting out anyone who does not demonstrate blind loyalty. This type of power grab is a threat to the democratic process because it not only excludes residents, but it also takes the public business out of the public eye and gives unlimited authority to a few people selected by those in power.

The ad hoc library committee,

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.

which had bipartisan representation from the governing body under Mayor Butrico, is now under the complete control of the Republican administration. Clearly, this one-sided approach fails to provide fair representation for almost half of South Plainfield's citizens.

The trend demonstrated by the Republican Party flies in the face of bi-partisanship our residents want and deserve.

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To Promote & Protect Public Health & Welfare

MIDDLESEX COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

By Carol Barrett Bellante, Chair, Committee of Public Health & Education

Heart Health and Snow Removal

I am sure that everyone has already had their fair share of snow this winter—I know I have. It seems like we are faced with a new storm every other day. When those storms leave us with huge accumulations, it is important that we take the right precautions when removing snow.

Cleaning up from these storms can be very strenuous and should not be taken lightly. Aside from the obvious dangers of muscle strains or falls, cold weather and the exertion from shoveling can place extra strain on your heart.

You should always consider your overall state of health and the possible risk factors you may face when deciding to shovel snow. A smart choice for heart health is to talk to your doctor before you shovel, especially if you have an existing health condition or a family history of heart trouble. If your doctor advises you not to, or if you feel that you cannot shovel the snow yourself, you should consider hiring someone to do the job for you.

If you are going to shovel, there are some important recommendations that you should follow. First, you should dress in several layers of clothing to keep warm, try to avoid caffeine and nicotine before you start and drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.

When you do begin, shovel slowly and remember to bend at the knees and tighten your stomach muscles as you lift the snow. Keep in mind that plastic shovels are typically lighter than metal shovels and can be used to help lighten the burden when lifting snow.

If you do feel any discomfort while shoveling, you should stop immediately and seek medical attention. Ac-

cording to the American Heart Association, heart attack warning signs include: discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back, pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach and shortness of breath. Some other signs may include: breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

To help raise awareness about heart health February has been named American Heart Month. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States with someone having a heart attack every 34 seconds.

Everyone should be aware of heart disease and how to prevent it. You should talk to your doctor about a healthy lifestyle, and be aware of your own medical history and your family history of heart disease. The Middlesex County Public Health Department Health Education Division can provide free programs about heart health to schools, faith-based organizations, employers and staff, health professionals and other community groups. Call (732) 745-8860 to schedule an education session.

For additional information about winter weather protection, visit the following websites: www.state.nj.us/cgibin/dhss/njnewsline/view_article.pl?id=3655 or www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter.

For additional information about heart disease, visit the following websites: www.nhlbi.nih.gov, www.cdc.gov/heartdisease or www.americanheart.org.

Dollar Store Robbed at Gunpoint

The Dollar Store on Park Avenue was robbed in broad daylight on February 9. According to Sgt. Dan Noonan of the South Plainfield Police Department, they responded to the scene at approximately 12:45 p.m. on a report of an armed robbery.

The victim, a 56-year-old male from Somerset who owns the store, told police that a male entered the establishment brandishing a silver handgun demanding cash. The store

owner provided the proceeds which totaled \$250. The suspect then fled the store and ran eastbound on East Golf Avenue.

The suspect is described as an African-American male, approximately 20-25 years old, 6 feet tall wearing a black vinyl coat and a black hat.

Anyone with any information is urged to contact Sgt. Noonan or Detective Shaun Clifford at (908) 226-7660.

Donna Markiewicz Earns Doctorate

By Jane Dornick

Middle School music teacher Donna Markiewicz defended her dissertation at her symposium on February 3 at Rowan University and earned a doctorate in education in educational leadership. Her dissertation was on teacher professional development and professional learning communities and was entitled, "Co-gent Leadership: Transitioning to Professional Learning Communities." It will be published shortly after which she will receive her diploma.

Markiewicz began working on her doctorate in September 2008 and said, "I had wonderful professors, supportive classmates and a family that continuously supported my endeavors." While in the program she maintained a 3.98 GPA in the Ed.D program. She is proud to have had the opportunity to be a leader in the professional development programs in South Plainfield.



Donna Markiewicz

A graduate of The College of New Jersey, Markiewicz went on to receive a master's degree in music education and supervision certification from Rutgers University. She obtained a principal and superintendent certification through NJEXCEL and has been teaching at the middle school

since 2003. "I would like to thank the entire staff of the middle school for all of their support throughout the entire program."

Aside from teaching general music, Markiewicz also directs the chorus and Gems/Onyx groups. She continues to coordinate one of the most attended awards dinners in South Plainfield for music students with close to 300 people attending every year. The awards dinner has been extremely successful and focuses on recognizing the students and their achievements throughout the school year.

When Markiewicz is not teaching or furthering her education, she loves to watch the Yankees, eat good pizza and spend time with her family.

As for completing her doctorate, she says, "It is kind of surreal. I don't feel different. It's just an incredible accomplishment, and I am very happy to now have some time to relax and celebrate."

Board Approves Variance for Second Floor Office

By Libby Barsky

The South Plainfield Planning Board approved an application by Palak Amin, principal of Keval Holdings, LLC for a variance to convert the second floor area of a two story building located at 1600-1604 Park Ave. to office space.

The previous owner of the site, Scotchbrook Associates, had submitted plans to install office space on the second floor in January 2005 and January 2006, but the planning board turned it down, restricting the upstairs area for storage only.

At the time, the board believed there was only enough space to accommodate the four businesses on the first floor of the building. Initially, the board required 53 parking spaces on the site; however, plans were presented to increase the number of parking spaces through the removal of an on-site garage and to repair and repave the existing parking lot.

The board approved the variance for

May Distribution to occupy the second floor, which allowed for an additional 29 parking spaces and one office. Plans call for the proposed office to occupy 2,074 sq. ft. of the 5,000

sq. ft. space using the remaining amount for the storage of equipment and supplies for tenants. If there is a change in use on the premises, the owner must return to the board.

Comedy Night at Temple Shalom

Temple Shalom of Fanwood/Scotch Plains will host a hilarious comedy night on Saturday, Feb. 26 starring Robin Fox, "The Mother of All Stand-Ups." Also appearing with Fox will be Spin Cycle Comedy co-creator Danny Cohen and Doug Adler, a funny man known for his unique brand of Jewish humor. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.; show begins at 8:15 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and

includes refreshments. Seating is limited; reservations required.

For more information or to reserve tickets, email lytelaw@aol.com or call (908) 889-4900. Temple Shalom is located in the Fanwood Presbyterian Church at the corner of Martine and LaGrande avenues in Fanwood. Proceeds will benefit Temple Shalom and its numerous community, educational and religious programs.

<p>The Lacerda Team</p> <p>Email: homes@LacerdaTeam.com www.LacerdaTeam.com</p>	<p>The Strength of Teamwork, <i>the Reputation for Results.</i></p> <p>Andrea Lacerda, Jesse Lacerda Sue Espin, Michele Leavy</p> <p>South Plainfield's Premier Real Estate Team</p> <p>Century 21 Moretti Realty</p> <p>(908) 755-5300 Ext. 302 (908) 578-1166</p> <p>225 Maple Ave., South Plainfield, NJ 07080 <small>Each office independently owned & operated</small></p>
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JUNIOR JOURNALIST

Could it be you?

Food & fame await you if you are willing to put your thoughts down on paper.

There are still winners yet to be named in this year's Junior Journalist Program. If you are selected as a winner, your family will receive a catered dinner courtesy of Hometown Heros and you will be in the running for a \$1,000 savings bond. Your winning entry will appear in the Observer and you (and your family) will be honored at a year end banquet in May. What are you waiting for? Tell your teachers that you want your poems, short stories, essays, etc. entered in the contest, or bring your entries to the Observer at 1110 Hamilton Blvd. or to Hometown Heros at 340 Hamilton Blvd.

events

Around Town

Showboat Atlantic City Bus Trip

February 19

The American Legion Chaumont Post #243 is sponsoring a trip to the Showboat Casino in Atlantic City on Saturday, Feb. 19. Bus leaves at 10 a.m. sharp. Enjoy the car show, antique show, gambling and shopping. Tickets are \$30 per person, with \$30 returned in vouchers.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call (908) 668-9414.

SPBA Meeting

February 24

The South Plainfield Business Association will hold their monthly meeting on Thursday, Feb. 24 at 8:30 a.m. at Sherban's Diner on Front Street. A light breakfast will be served. Feel free to bring your business cards.

For information or to join the business association, log on to www.spba.biz or call (908) 668-0010.

Beef N Beer Night At the Elks Club

February 25

The South Plainfield Elks will be hosting a "Beef N Beer" night on Friday, Feb. 25 from 6 to 9 p.m. Hot roast beef sandwiches will be served with your choice of sauteed onions and/or mushrooms and homemade salads. Hot sandwich and beer is \$10; sandwich only is \$6.

All proceeds will benefit the Special

Children's Committee which assists our special needs children and defrays the cost of sending campers to Elks Camp Moore.

Free Safety Seminar For Women

February 27

Tiger Schulmann's Mixed Martial Arts, 4957 Stelton Road in Hadley Center will be conducting a free safety seminar for women on Sunday, Feb. 27. Open to women and girls age 13 and up. Under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Space is limited and reservations are required.

To make a reservation, call (908) 561-2401.

Boy Scout Troop 309 Clothing Drive

March 5

Boy Scout Troop 309 will be holding a clothing drive at Wesley Methodist Church, 1500 Plainfield Ave. from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Wearable clothing, shoes, accessories, linens, stuffed animals, hard toys such as trucks, action figures and small and medium bikes will be collected and donated.

Can't get out? Call Nancy for a pick up at (908) 917-4700.

Send Your Events to:
spobserver@comcast.net

For information on how to submit your event, visit our website at www.spobserver.com.

Project Graduation Auction/Raffle

March 5

The South Plainfield High School PTA will be hosting its annual auction/raffle on Saturday, March 5 from 6 to 11 p.m. in the SPHS gym. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$12 each. Profits benefit Project Graduation for the Class of 2011. Please call as soon as possible for information regarding tickets and to reserve your table.

To purchase tickets, call Tracey Hartmann at (908) 755-4349.

For more information or to make a donation, please call Sharon Miller at (908) 754-6461. This is a great event for a very worthwhile cause and your support is greatly appreciated. Together we can make a difference.

All-You-Can-Eat Spaghetti Dinner

March 6

St. Stephens Lutheran Church, 3145 Park Ave. will hold an all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner on Sunday, March 6 from 5 to 7 p.m. Free will offering. Suggested donation: Adults \$5; children \$2. Includes beverage and dessert. No reservations needed. For more information, call (908) 757-4474.

One Woman Play at Sacred Heart

March 7

The Sacred Heart Rosary Altar Society invites all to come join us for a one woman play featuring Gina Smith as Queen Esther on Monday, March 7 at 7:30 p.m. following the 7 p.m. Mass. Light refreshments will be served following the play. Free will offering.

Elks Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

March 12

The South Plainfield Elks Veterans Committee is sponsoring its annual

all-you-can-eat corned beef and cabbage dinner at the club on New Market Avenue on Saturday, March 12 from 4:30 to 9 p.m. Adults \$12; children \$5. Includes soda and dessert; cash bar.

Any questions, contact Lou Peralta at (908) 756-6406.

SPHS Class of 1995 15 Yr. Reunion

April 2

The South Plainfield High School Class of 1995 is planning a 15 year reunion for Saturday, April 2. It will be held at Maggiano's Bridgewater from 7 to 11 p.m. Ticket price is \$85 per person.

For more information, email sphsclassof1995@gmail.com or visit our Facebook page: SPHS class of 1995.

— Out of Town —

An Evening with Billie Holiday

Through February 27

The final performance of jazz vocalist Billie Holiday as envisioned by playwright Reenie Upchurch is captured in this powerful musical drama at the Crossroads Theatre, 7 Livingston Ave. in New Brunswick.

Evening performances at 8 p.m.; matinees at 3 p.m. on Feb. 20, 26 and 27. Tickets: \$40-50.

Purchase tickets online at www.CrossroadsTheatreCompany.org or by calling (732) 545-8100.

Willow Grove Arts & Crafts Exhibit

February 18-20

Willow Grove Presbyterian Church, 1961 Raritan Road in Scotch Plains will host an art exhibit featuring the creativity of the members of the Willow Grove congregation on Friday, Feb. 18 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 19 from 4 to 6 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 20 from 11:15 a.m. to 3 p.m. A light reception with beverages will be served.

SENIOR CENTER Calendar

Coming Up....

2011 membership fee due now. (Dues are collected Monday, Wednesday and Thursday)

MONDAYS

Presidents Day (Closed February 21)
Silver Sneakers 8:45 am
Crocheting 9:30 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
Shopping Trip 9 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
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

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

For more information, call (908) 232-5678 or visit www.willowgrovechurch.org.

Center for Hope Hospice Ball

February 19

Center For Hope Hospice & Palliative Care will host its 28th annual charity ball on Saturday, Feb. 19 at 6:30 p.m. at The Grand Summit Hotel, 570 Springfield Ave. in Summit. Tickets are \$100 per person.

Center For Hope Hospice provides terminally ill patients and loved ones with humane care known as hospice without concern for race, ethnicity, religious affiliation or ability to pay.

For more information, please call Barbara Witt at (908) 288-9112.

Blackrose to Perform

February 19

Blackrose, the band, playing classic rock and roll music and today's hits, will be performing at Tim Kerwin's Pub, 353 Bound Brook Rd. (Rt. 28), Middlesex on Saturday, Feb. 19 at 10 p.m. No cover charge.

CELEBRATE

Happy Birthday!

to Joan Abbott!
February 21

Love your daughter,
Patricia Kathleen Abbott

Specials for February 18-March 4	
APPETIZERS	DINNER (accompanied by potato and vegetable)
Crostini Prosciutto, melted mozzarella with garlic sauce on toast points \$8.95	Chicken Florentine \$18.95 Spinach & mozzarella cheese in a white wine sauce
Shrimp Oreganato \$11.95	Fettuccine Adelines \$17.95 Spinach and sausage with sundried tomatoes in a garlic white wine sauce
	Chilean Sea Bass \$23.95 With a citrus sauce



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Upscale Singles Dance Party

February 20

Steppin' Out Singles will hold an upscale singles dance on Sunday, Feb. 20 at 8 p.m. at the Woodbridge Hilton, 20 Wood Ave. South in Iselin. Ages 40 and up; no jeans/t-shirts/sneakers. Admission: \$17.

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

Beauty and the Beast at MCC

February 20

The Graham Lustig Dance Theatre's performance of *Beauty and the Beast* will take place at the Performing Arts Center on the Edison campus at Middlesex County College on Sunday, Feb. 20 at 3:30 p.m. Admission: \$25; \$10 for Middlesex County College students; and \$15 for children and students from other colleges.

To order tickets, visit www.brownpapertickets.com.

Woodbridge WOWs Open Dance

February 20

Woodbridge Widows Or Widowers will hold an open dance on Sunday, Feb. 20 from 7 to 11 p.m. at The Knights of Columbus Hall, Morrissey Ave. in Avenel. Light refreshments. Everyone is welcome. Admission: \$10 members, \$12 guests.

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

American Boychoir Alumni Chorus

February 20

The American Boychoir Alumni Chorus will perform a free concert at Lawrenceville School, 2500 Main Street in Lawrenceville on Sunday, Feb. 20 at 4:15 p.m. Open to the public; no tickets necessary.

For more information, visit www.lawrenceville.org.

Tricky Tray at Bishop George Ahr HS

February 25

Bishop George Ahr High School, One Tingley Lane in Edison will host its 32nd annual tricky tray, "A Day at the Beach" on Friday, Feb. 25. Admission: \$20 and includes door prize ticket and light refreshments; guests are invited to bring additional snacks. Doors open 5 p.m.; drawing begins 8 p.m.

Purchase tickets in advance by calling (732) 423-2206.

Project Graduation Auction/Raffle Donations Needed

The big event is only two weeks away! The SPSHS PTA Project Graduation Auction/Raffle will be held on Saturday, March 5 from 7 to 11 p.m. at the high school.

Tickets are currently being sold, so get yours before they are gone (see below for ticket information).

This year marks the SPSHS PTA's 23rd year of providing our graduating seniors with a Project Graduation celebration. Class of 2011 parents, we hope you can join us at the auction.

It is not too late to donate! However, since our auction is only two weeks away, we need to receive your donations no later than February 24. After that, we will only be able to accept monetary donations or gift cards/gift certificates that can be from any store or restaurant.

Monetary donations can be mailed to: South Plainfield High School, 200 Lake St., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080, Attn: SPSHS PTA. Please make checks payable to: SPSHS PTA.

We can make this event a success for our graduating seniors with the help and support of our wonderful community. Please support this worthwhile cause by making a donation.

Auction Ticket Sales—For ticket information, contact Tracey Hartmann (chairperson) at (908) 755-4349. Pro-

vide your name, phone number and the number of people you would like at your table.

Theme Baskets/Single Gift Items—We must receive these as quickly as possible. Remember, families may donate a joint theme basket or gift item.

Donations—Must be received ASAP in order to be recognized in our program. All families, businesses and community/educational organizations will be acknowledged in our program for your generous contributions. Our program will be finalized and printed in 10 days, so please try to get your donations in as quickly as possible.

Outside Business/Corporate Donations—Please ask the business or corporation where you work if they will make a contribution or if you know of someone who can obtain a donation from a business or corporation, please ask them for their help.

Telethon Donations—If you are a SPSHS senior family and have already pledged your support of a donation through our recent telethon, please send your donation by February 24.

Auction Volunteers—We need help in the following areas: set up from noon to 3 p.m.; ticket sales 6 to 7

p.m. and drivers to help move auction prizes from the homes where they are being stored to the high school by 11:30 a.m. If interested in helping, contact the high school's main office at (908) 754-4620, ext. 248 or Sharon Miller at (908) 754-6461. All volunteers will receive a phone call as a reminder.

Solicitation Volunteers—Thank you all for your help. Please submit all solicitation sheets as well as any donations you have received from local businesses to Mary Cargill (chairperson) at (908) 755-9717 by February 22.

PTA Meeting—February 22 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the SPSHS Tiger's Den. This is our last meeting before the auction. It is important for volunteers to attend.

Auction Information—Contact Sharon Miller (PTA president) at (908) 754-6461 for information on the auction or with any questions you may have.

The Class of 2011, the SPSHS PTA, and the SPSHS sincerely appreciate your support! Together we can make a difference!

Submitted by Sharon Miller

Auditions for Community Talent Showcase

The South Plainfield Cultural Arts Commission (SPCAC) will present its third annual talent showcase on Sunday, May 1 at 2 p.m. and they are inviting residents of all ages to audition for the show.

Open auditions will be held on Saturday, April 9 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and again on Sunday, April 10 from 3 to 6 p.m. at Fellowship Hall at Wesley Methodist Church, located at 1500 Plainfield Ave.

All ages and types of acts are welcome to try out, so come and share your unique talent with the community. Bring your own instruments or

items you need for the audition. The talent showcase is open to everyone.

For more information, contact Ken or Audrey Reisch at (908) 769-5938, or email spcac.nj@gmail.com. You can also follow the SPCAC on Facebook.

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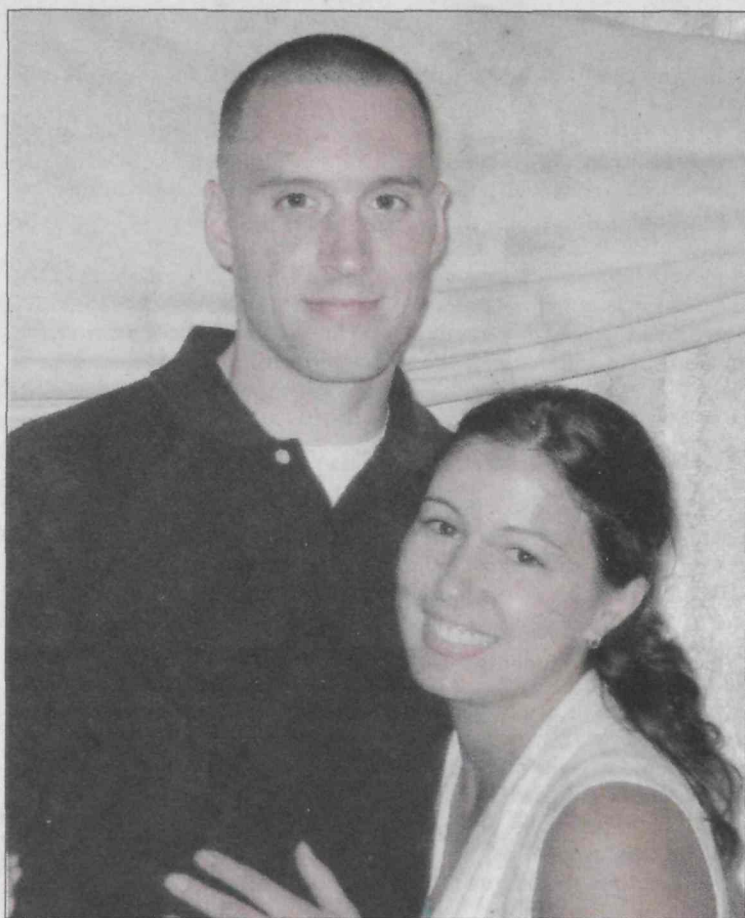
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Birthday
John Abbott

February 21

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Friend

southplainfieldpeople

Milestones



Todd Szalkowski and Lindsey Marie Bechtle

Lindsey Marie Bechtle to Wed Todd Szalkowski in May

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Bechtle of South Plainfield are proud to announce the engagement of their daughter, Lindsey Marie, to Todd Szalkowski, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Szalkowski of Plainfield.

Lindsey is a 2002 graduate of South Plainfield High School and Somerset County Technical Institute. She is a pharmacy technician at Twin City Phar-

macy in South Plainfield.

Todd is a 1998 graduate of St. Joseph's High School in Metuchen and a 2004 graduate of Caldwell College in Caldwell. He is an underwriter for Chartis Growth Enterprises in Berkeley Heights.

A ceremony on the beach is planned for May 2011.

Catherine Krawiec Named to Dean's List at Fairleigh Dickinson University

Catherine Krawiec of South Plainfield, a student at Fairleigh Dickinson University's College at Florham, lo-

cated in Madison has been named to the dean's list for the Fall 2010 semester.

Local Students Named to Rider Univ. Dean's List

Rider University's colleges of Business Administration; Continuing Studies; Liberal Arts, Education and Sciences; and Westminster College of the Arts have announced the names of undergraduate students who have been placed on the dean's list for the Fall 2010 semester.

Included on the dean's list from South Plainfield are Jared Christopher, a sophomore secondary education major; Natalie Colucci, a freshman global supply chain management major; Jaime Giannakis, a sophomore elementary education major; Andrew Gray, a junior communication major; Nicholas Jeglinski, a sophomore accounting major; Natia Katsantonis, a junior journalism major; Kairav Parikh, a freshman accounting major; Brian Pullen, a junior secondary education major; and Gregory Watts, a junior business administration major.

Local Students Named To University of Scranton Dean's List

The University of Scranton has announced its dean's list, which recognizes students for academic excellence during the 2010 Fall semester.

More than 1,325 students were named to the dean's list, including the following South Plainfield residents: Grey Coppi, a junior finance major; Ryan Curtis, a senior political science major; Danielle Dembia, a junior economics major; Christopher Stallone, a senior elementary education/special education major; and Michael Stallone, a senior accounting major.

Students must have a grade point average of 3.5 or better with a minimum number of credit hours to make the dean's list. The list includes students from the College of Arts and Sciences, the Kania School of Management, the Panuska College of Professional Studies and the College of Graduate and Continuing Education.

The University of Scranton is a Jesuit university located in northeast Pennsylvania.

Visit us on the web at
www.spobserver.com



Michele Kobilis

Kobilis Nominated For Society of Collegiate Scholars

Michele Kobilis, a 2009 South Plainfield High School graduate, has been nominated for membership in The National Honor Society of Collegiate Scholars, the honorary society for high achieving first and second year college students.

Michele is a sophomore at Towson University in Maryland where she achieved a 4.0 GPA last semester. She is a mass communications major with a minor in exercise science.

Smith Receives Academic Honors

South Plainfield resident Alison Smith, a Northeastern University student majoring in English, was recently named to the dean's list for the Fall 2010 semester.

To achieve the dean's list distinction, students must carry a full program of at least four courses, have a quality point average of 3.5 or greater out of a possible 4.0 and carry no single grade lower than a C- during the course of their college career. Each student receives a letter of commendation and congratulation from their college dean.

Northeastern University is a global, experiential research university. Grounded in its signature co-op program, Northeastern today provides unprecedented experiential learning opportunities around the world.

James T. Seyffart Named to Dean's List at TCNJ

James T. Seyffart of South Plainfield, a 2010 Edward J. Bloustein Distinguished Scholar, was named to the dean's list at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) for the Fall 2010 semester. A student must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher to receive dean's list recognition. James, who is in his freshman year, is also a member of the TCNJ Cross Country, Winter and Spring Track teams.

According to *U.S. News*, TCNJ has the highest percentage (90%) in the region of incoming freshman who ranked in the top 25% of their high school class. TCNJ is currently ranked as one of the 75 "most competitive" schools in the nation by Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, and is rated the number one public institution in the northern region of the country by *U.S. News and World Report* and is one of Kiplinger Personal Finance's top education values in the country. TCNJ is a highly selective institution that has earned national recognition.

Tim Ratti Named to Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. Honor's List

Timothy Ratti of South Plainfield, a student at Fairleigh Dickinson University's College at Florham in Madison, has been named to the honor's list for the Fall 2010 semester.

Send Your Milestones

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South Plainfield, NJ 07080
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email: spobserver@comcast.net

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Eighth grade "Activities" team members ready for battle.



Middle School students cheer on the teams.

Students Face Off in a Battle of the Teams

By Jane Dornick

School Spirit Week at the Middle School culminated on February 11 with the annual Battle of the Teams. For nearly two decades, seventh and eighth grade students participate in a fun-filled, friendly athletic competition against their classmates.

This year the first period teachers gave new names to the six teams that include three groups within each grade level. The seventh grade teams are now Athletics, Arts and Academics and the eighth grade consists of teams Attendance, Activities and Appearance, all in recognition of the "6 As" of achievement at the school.

Spirit Week began with Green & White Day with students wearing the school colors. Tuesday was Sports Apparel Day, and everyone wore something representing their favorite sports team. On the agenda for Wednesday was Crazy Hair Day. Thursday's theme



was Twin Day, and students chose a friend and each dressed alike.

In preparation for the battle on Friday, students wore t-shirts with their individual team's color. Some children even painstakingly embellished their shirts with the team name to show their spirit and anticipation for the game.

Prior to the actual "battle" in the gym, seventh grade student Vincent Cano read his award-winning essay, "Sportsmanship," to the crowd.

Principal Kevin Hajduk chose an essay from among the student body

based on the scoring rubric of the NJASK assessment testing. This was the first year of the contest and Vincent was awarded two tickets to a N.J. Nets game.

Then the music blared and the excited students performed activities they had been practicing during physical education class which included the "under over," "hula hoop," "foul shooting," "baton/hoop relay" and a "tug-o-war." Team Activities won the eighth grade competition, and Team Academics were the winners from the seventh grade.

The games were originally pioneered by retired teachers Jim Makowski, Bill Mosca and Jim Limansky, who participated as they always have by announcing and deejaying the competition.

"The kids demonstrated excellent sportsmanship and had a lot of fun this year," commented Principal Hajduk.



Middle School students pack the gym for the Battle of the Teams.

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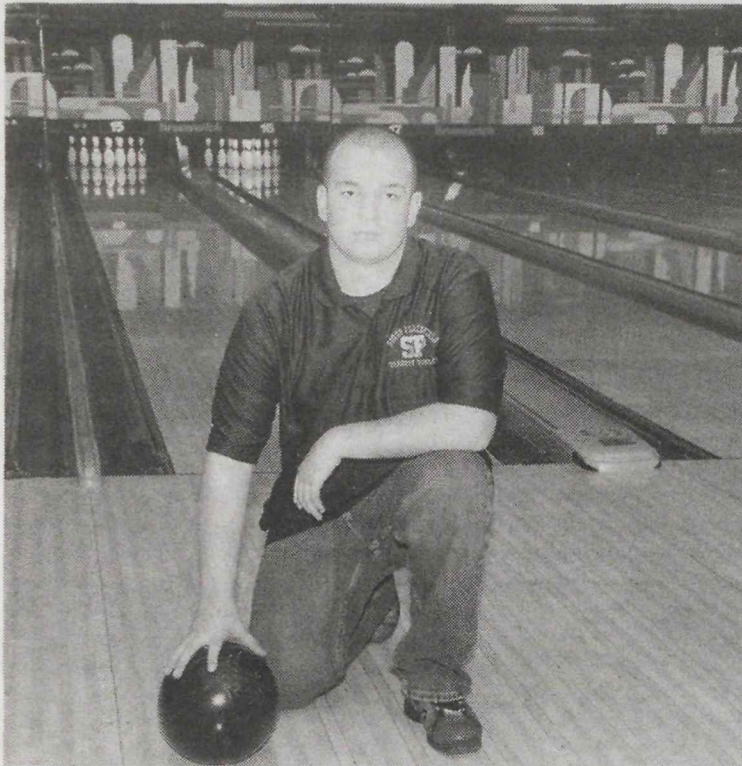
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Sports

SPHS Bowling



Junior Captain Andrew Yon

BOYS BOWLING

Tiger Bowlers Post 10th Place Finish In Central Jersey Group 2 Sectionals

South Plainfield 743-784-747-2,274

Junior Andrew Yon took scoring honors for the Tigers as he fired games of 191-193-178 for a solid 562 set. Sophomore Tom Riccardi added a 182-485 effort. Powerhouse East Brunswick captured the Group 4 crown with state champion Sayreville getting the gold in Group 3 and Woodbridge the runner-up slot.

The GMC will have three strong representatives in the NJSIAA State Finals.

REGULAR SEASON

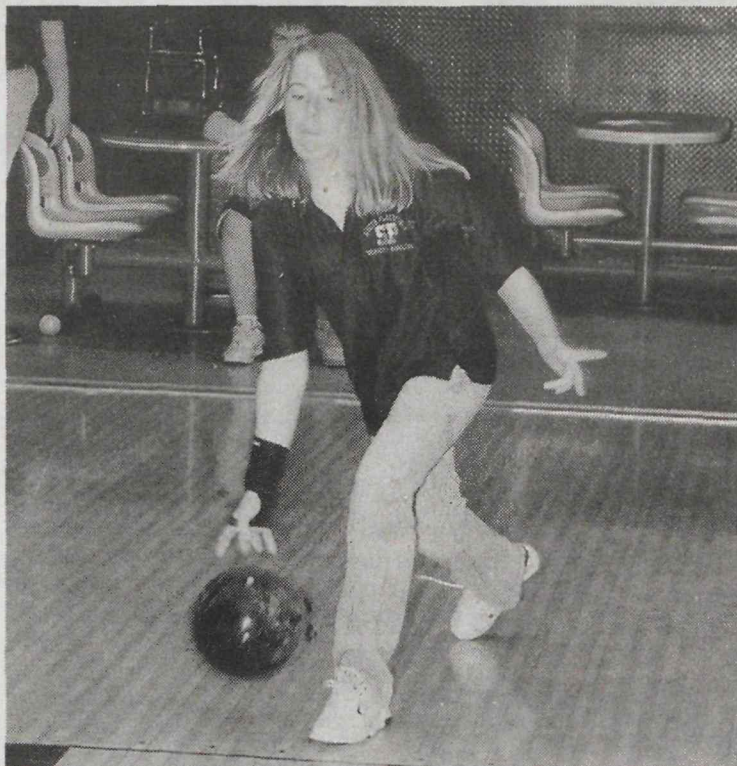
Tigers Edged by South Amboy

South Plainfield 804-807-760-2,371
South Amboy 843-737-815-2,395

The boys bowling team split the first two games but could not keep pace with South Amboy and dropped a close 24-pin decision.

Junior Andrew Yon earned scoring honors with a 192-194-518 effort. Chipping in were sophomores Tom Riccardi 188 and Jesse Masters 187-172.

By Ralph Fech



Sophomore Nicole Benwell

GIRLS BOWLING

Lady Tigers Place 4th in Central Jersey Group 2 Sectionals

South Plainfield 665-667-685-2,017

Senior Stephanie Sherwood led the girls bowling team to a respectable 4th place finish in the Group 2 Central Jersey sectionals. She rolled games of 183-189 and a 518 set.

Chipping in were Nikki Disch with a 173 game and 477 set and teammate Becca Moskal, 136 and 134.

The strong 10 team field included teams from Mercer, Monmouth, Hunterdon and Somerset counties. The rugged White Division claimed three champions: North Brunswick Group 4, Colonia Group 3 and Carteret Group 2. GMC foes Monroe, New Brunswick and Cardinal McCarrick were runners-up as the GMC sent six teams to the NJSIAA State Finals.

REGULAR SEASON

Tigers Steamroll South Amboy

South Plainfield 648-667-700-2,015
South Amboy 531-532-551-1,614

The girls bowling team clobbered South Amboy in their season finale. The Lady Tigers were paced by co-captains Nikki Disch 483 and Stephanie Sherwood 472. Rookie Angela Tharp contributed.

By Gary Lampasona

JUNIOR BASEBALL CLUB NOTES

Our first winter's thaw is upon us—I can see the blades of grass breakin' through the ice. Its time to get your glove ready!



Umpire classes continue this week. Studies continue this week on Tuesday and Thursday, Feb. 22 and 24, followed by Tuesday, March 1 at 6:30 p.m. The umpire test is on Saturday, March 5 at 9 a.m. All classes are held in the clubhouse. Please be on time. If you have any questions, call the clubhouse at (908) 754-2090.

Managers Meetings: If you have been selected to manage, the meeting dates are as follows: Small Fry C is Monday, Feb. 21; Small Fry B is Tuesday, Feb. 22 and Small Fry A is Wednesday, Feb. 23. All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. in the clubhouse. The draft dates are still to be determined.

Registration for the spring season: Rosters will soon close, so if your child would like to play this spring, please download the registration form from our website, www.leaguelineup.com/SPJBC, fill it out and mail it along with your check to the address on the form. Please remember that the \$20 late fee must be added to the registration costs. If your child is new to SPJBC, please include a copy of their birth certificate.

If you have any questions, please contact a board member or call the clubhouse at (908) 754-2090.

2011 Sign Sponsor: There is still time to get your business message in front of hundreds of your customers. Fill out a Sign Sponsor form and get your sign on a field. Go to the handouts section and download the form with the required payment.

This week's baseball definition: Baltimore Chop—A ground ball that hits in front of home plate (or off of it) and takes a large hop over the infielder's head.

"The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime."—Babe Ruth

SP Wrestlers Lose in Finals

(Continued from page 1)

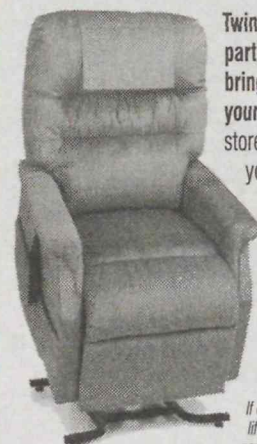
Trophy, which the Tigers walked away with when they defeated High Point 26-24 in the Group III Championship match. Although their victory was not to be repeated in 2011, South Plainfield was able to get decisions and obtain wins in other weight classes: Scott DeVecchio (135); Jeff Conroy (140); Corey Stasenko (152); Kyle Pompillo (160); Will Whitefleet (215); Anthony Ashnault (112); and Troy Heilmann (119).

Other competitors for South Plainfield included Joseph Pellegrino (145), Michael Molinaro (171), Ryan Billich (189) and Raymond Jazikoff (103).

"The team wrestled awesome the entire day. Unfortunately, we did not accomplish our long term goal of a Group III State Title. The team is upset, however, knowing that we only graduate four seniors, we feel we will be right back in the mix next season for a Group III State Title. This team has a lot to be proud of! Now it is time for everyone to get ready for their own individual goals, starting with the Districts," said Head Coach Kevin McCann. "The districts start this weekend. The top three move on to the Regions and the top three from regions move onto Atlantic City. We have won a state record of 26 consecutive District 12 titles. Hopefully this weekend will be 27."

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Obituaries

Henry J. Culver, 87

Henry J. Culver died on Monday, Feb. 7 in Haven Hospice at JFK Medical Center located in Edison.

Born in Queens, N.Y., Henry was raised throughout the Queens, Brooklyn, Bronx and Manhattan boroughs. He also resided in Jersey City prior to his enlistment in the U.S. Army Air Corps during WWII. Henry was a B24 gunner under squadron commander Jimmy Stewart, and he flew many combat missions over Germany and France.

He worked as a warehouseman for Anheuser-Busch in Newark, was a member of Teamsters Local #845 and served as their president. He was a member of Our Lady of Fatima RC Church in Piscataway, and for over 50 years he was an avid bowler.

Henry is survived by his wife, Joan (Mullen); a daughter, Debbie Thomson of Manville; three sons, Scott of South Plainfield, William and wife Janice of Toms River and Henry, Jr. of South Amboy; three grandchildren, Jason, Michelle and Cherise; and a sister, Gloria Muhlbauer of New York.

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

Sadie (DelVecchio) Pirozzoli, 91

Sadie (DelVecchio) Pirozzoli died on Tuesday, Feb. 8 in Care One at the Highlands in Edison.

Born in Plainfield, she resided there for 23 years before moving to South Plainfield in 1948.

She was previously employed as a winder for the former Kingston-Connelly Company of North Plainfield for five years.

Sadie was a member of Sacred Heart Church in South Plainfield.

She is predeceased by her husband, Charles Pirozzoli, who died in 1984.

Surviving are her daughters, Terese Pirozzoli and Susan English and husband Michael, all of South Plainfield; a sister, Sue Saccento of Middlesex and a brother, Nicholas DelVecchio of North Plainfield.

She is also survived by two grandsons, Shawn English and Brian English and wife Jenna; and by three great-grandchildren, Aidan, Bryce and Connor.

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

Philip Weiseman, 81

Philip Weiseman passed away on Friday, Feb. 11 in Sarasota, Fla. with his wife and children at his side.



Philip Weiseman

Philip was born and raised in Plainfield and was the longtime owner of Watchung Furniture House, established by his father in 1929; he expanded the business to Country Manor Furniture and A La Carton Furniture in Green Brook. In 2001 he retired and moved to Sarasota with his wife, Valerie.

He is predeceased by his father, Albert Weiseman by his mother, Gertrude Gartenberg Weiseman; and by a brother, Jac Weiseman.

Surviving are his wife, Valerie (Little); two sons, Kenneth and wife Susan and Wayne and wife Frances; and a daughter, Jody Weiseman Wood and husband Thomas.

Philip also leaves behind five grandchildren, Samantha, Matthew, Chris-

topher and Halima Weiseman, and Adam Wood, as well as many nieces and nephews.

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

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Philip Weiseman may be made to the National Kidney Foundation of Florida, 1040 Woodcock Rd., Suite 119, Orlando, Fla. 32803-3510.

Mary (Lences) Telychan, 88

Mary (Lences) Telychan passed away on Sunday, Feb. 6 at Kindred Hospital within RWJUH in Rahway.

Born in Plainfield, Mary resided in North Plainfield before settling in Edison in the early 1940s.

Mary was employed by Revlon in Edison and was a member of the Samoyed Club of America, the Delaware Valley Samoyed Club and the National Shelley China Club.

She is predeceased by her husband, Michael, who died in 2001; and by a brother, Joseph Lences.

She is survived by a beloved daughter, Barbara Telychan; and by two brothers, Charles and wife Feryne and John Lences.

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

In lieu of flowers, donations to the family are requested.

Marie "Yolanda" Fuca, 91

Marie "Yolanda" Fuca died on Tuesday, Feb. 8 at Care One at the Highlands Nursing Home in Edison.

Born and raised in Fairview, she was

Third Anniversary

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John "Jack" L. Mocharski

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Wife, Toni
Children and Grandchildren

a resident of Manchester for 25 years, and most recently, Yolanda moved to the nursing home in August of 2010.

Yolanda spent her time as a homemaker caring for her family. She was a member of the Leisure Knoll Italian-American Club and Travel Club and a former member of St. John's Church in Lakehurst. Yolanda enjoyed her time traveling with her family, especially to Europe and Hawaii, and had visited 49 of the 50 states.

Yolanda loved cooking Italian food, playing cards and could always be found ballroom dancing.

She is predeceased by her husband, Carmelo "Charlie", who died in 1997; and by three siblings, Nick, Oreste and Regina.

Yolanda leaves behind two children, Joan Gargiulo and husband Jerry of Piscataway and Ronald and wife Caroline of Saylorsburg, Pa.

She is also survived by four grandchildren, Jim and Karen Gargiulo, and Bob and Stephanie Gargiulo; a great-grandson, Ryan; and by a brother, George Malavolta and wife Ann of Albuquerque, N.M.

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

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations sent to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, Tenn. 38105 or to Deborah Heart and Lung Center, 200 Trenton Road, Browns Mill, N.J. 08015 would be appreciated.

Marjorie Fleming, 69

Marjorie Fleming died on Sunday, Feb. 13 at her home.

Born and raised in Newark, Marjorie lived in Orange before moving to South Plainfield in 2003.

She owned Wee Watchers Day Care out of her home and was a member of Word of Faith Ministries located in Colonia.

She is survived by two daughters, Crystal Caddell of Maple Shade and Stacey and husband James Porter of

Somerset; a son, Al Fleming of South Plainfield and a grandchild, Sheradon Moon.

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

Richard J. "Bear" Silhanek, 56

Richard J. "Bear" Silhanek died on Sunday, Feb. 13 at home.

Born in Hackensack, he resided in Piscataway.

He was a truck driver for 25 years working for several trucking companies throughout his driving career. His last employer was New Penn Trucking in Trenton.

Rich was a member of the Merchandise Drivers Local #641 based in Union and a member of the Piscataway Elks Lodge #2414.

Bear was an enthusiastic NY Jets fan and was a season ticket holder for many years. He also followed the N.Y. Yankees and Rutgers Scarlet Knights. In addition, Bear enjoyed playing golf, softball and sharing laughs with his friends.

He is predeceased by his parents, Adelaide and Arthur Silhanek.

Surviving is a brother, Edward Silhanek and wife Diane of South Plainfield; and a sister, Patricia Cernack and husband Joseph of Florida. Also surviving are a niece, Jennifer Silhanek and many friends.

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

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Lorraine Cochran
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Your time on earth was much too short
Your pain and suffering too long
But we must believe God's promise
That to him you now belong
It doesn't seem three years have passed
Since he called you home
But in our hearts you will always be
Until we meet again.

Your Loving Family, Bill, Brian, Laurian, Skylar, Bill Jr., Barbara, Quinn, Ben, Jack, Charlee, Wren, Chris, Michelle, Dale & Emma

Congratulations Giavanna! #1 JUNIOR JOURNALIST

Debbie and Charlie Kurland of Hometown Heros deliver dinner to Junior Journalist winner Giavanna DiFrancisco, pictured with her parents, Susan and Joe; grandparents, John and Sandy Szumowski, and grandfather Ron Kabara.

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PBA Contract Up for Approval

(Continued from page 1)

fact, but in order to get "some give backs" they agreed to a four. "Kudos to the PBA who went above and beyond," said Rusnak.

CFO Cullen remarked that the borough doled out \$250,000 alone in longevity pay during last year.

Former Mayor Charlie Butrico questioned the validity of the savings, saying that the contract included three additional days off, extra longevity pay and a 5% increase in salary in the first step year. "Two new steps benefit the low end, but it's a 50% increase over two years," said Butrico, who believes that the PBA had "negotiated in good faith." "Look at the math," stated Butrico. "What are taxpayers getting in return?"

PBA Vice President McNelly reiterated that the contract had been signed by police and questioned how someone outside the negotiating team had knowledge of its contents. He also said that the three additional days off "do not cost taxpayers a penny," and that with the new benefit contribution they are in actuality only receiving a .4% salary increase the first year.

There was much controversy between the council and public as to whether the ordinance should be approved prior to the contract signing without public input. Audience members also questioned how Butrico obtained a copy prior to it being fully ratified. Mayor Anesh stated that if need be they could not go back into the bargaining process "with a document that has already been leaked out."

Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas, one of two Democrats on the council, remarked, "I am disappointed that the borough's negotiating team, all from the Republican Party, did not give the public the opportunity to view the terms of the police contract before they voted on the ordinance to support the wage increase." She cited that previous borough employee contracts were voted on prior to a salary ordinance, allowing the public the opportunity to see and understand the impact of the negotiations on their property tax bill. "It is very unfortunate that the Republicans did not give the public that same consideration," said Buteas.

Judge Denies Negrón's Request

(Continued from page 1)

tions dealing with extensions of superintendents' contract." Board attorney Marc Zitomer of Schenck, Price, Smith & King, LLP, contended that the initial resolution did not pass because "it was not supported by a vote of the majority of the full membership." Administrative Law Judge Jeffery Gerson found that there is no case law or statute to support Negrón's claim.

Another decision made in the matter was that in order to extend Negrón's contract the issue had to be voted on by the 2011/2012 BOE between the date of the school board elections in April and the expiration

of his contract. Even though the original vote was in favor of the contract extension, it would still be considered "null and void because the 2010 board was not statutorily authorized to bind the 2011 board by extending the contract."

Negrón has 13 days from the date of the court's decision to file a written exception. Dr. Gary Bowen was appointed interim superintendent last October at \$750 a day. The board cannot begin to search for a permanent replacement until Negrón's contract expires on June 30. He will continue to receive his \$177,598 annual salary until that time.

JUNIOR JOURNALIST

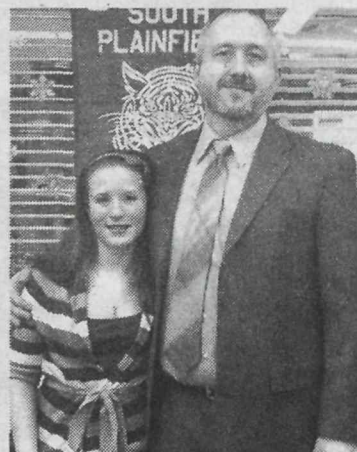
Graziano Named Junior Journalist

Kaitlyn Graziano, SPHS senior, is this week's winner in the Junior Journalist program. Her poem, "The Cruelty of Sports," has earned Kaitlyn dinner for her family, courtesy of Hometown Heros.

There is still time to submit entries for the annual program which runs through May. Students should submit their original written works to teachers, Hometown Heros or 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.

For more information, call the *Observer* at (908) 668-0010.



Junior Journalist Kaitlyn Graziano with Principal James Pedersen.

The Cruelty of Sports

By Kaitlyn Graziano

There I sat and warmed the bench,
with all my goals in my heart I clench,
waiting for the day,
when it would be my time to shine,
the day when I could win,
and the ball would be mine.
So as I watched everyone else have a turn,
I began to watch from the bench and learn,
the mechanics of the game & the skills I would need,
so if I was ever played then I could succeed.
But the problem was the coach wasn't fair,
I asked him if I could play and he just didn't care,
he said if I wanted to leave I should just turn in my uniform,
even though I was polite,
I guess I just wanted to play the game I loved,
but I would never be right.
Even though I never complained when I was hurt,
I guess he thought he was powerful,
and could treat me like dirt.
So I was always respectful and cheered on the team,
but I began to see there's no team without me,
so I kept trying my hardest and doing everything right,
but he would always have this evil smirk,
thinking that he would win the fight.
But the coach helped me see the evils in life,
how some peoples words will just cut you like a knife,
how they will put you down and make you frown,
how one person can just stop you from accomplishing your desires,
how people can be such great liars,
how favoritism can give the undeserving what they want,
while the good hearted will be abused and taunt.
He might have taught me how he can win the battle,
but I will smile when I win the war,
because fairness is every day,
what I'm fighting for,
and I have more pride in me,
than he'll ever comprehend,
and although volleyball is over,
my dreams and determination will never end.

Enter Essay Contest Celebrating Women's History Month

Women's History Month, celebrated annually in the United States, is a month long celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society. Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas is asking students to help celebrate women's history and advancement in the United States of America.

As a woman passionate about public service and engaging women in civic life, Buteas is again sponsoring a project which celebrates the life of one of our country's greatest advocates of civil rights. Contest participants are invited to take advantage of this opportunity to examine the life of Rosa Parks, learn about the ideals that fueled her passion and explore avenues for continuing her legacy.

On December 1, 1955, when Parks was riding a bus home from her job, the bus filled up, and she was expected to relinquish her seat for a white man. She refused, and was arrested for violating Alabama's segregation laws. The black community mobilized a boycott of the bus system which lasted for 381 days and resulted in the ending of segregation on Montgomery's buses. The boycott also brought national attention to the civil rights cause and to a young minister, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Parks continued her commitment to civil rights until her death, willingly serving as a symbol of the civil rights struggle.

Entrants should discuss a specific event or accomplishment of Parks' life that is significant to them. If you had the opportunity to create a project to continue Parks' legacy here in South Plainfield, tell what the project would be and how it would be implemented. The length of the essay should be 500-750 words.

Residents in grades 9-12 are eligible to enter. Deadline to submit the essay is March 11.

Grand prize is a \$250 American Express gift card, a copy of *Past and Promise, Lives of New Jersey Women* and recognition in the *South Plainfield Observer*. Winner will be chosen on or before March 19 by a committee consisting of Debbie Boyle, Nina Rohrer, Nancy Stillman Pender, Pamela Stefanek and Chrissy Buteas.

Submit essays to: Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas, Borough of South Plainfield, 2480 Plainfield Ave., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080 or chrissybuteas@comcast.net. Include your name, address, grade, phone number and email address.

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From the South Plainfield Library

Bookmarks

By Eve Pasternak

We'll be celebrating President's Day on Monday, remembering that George Washington and Abraham Lincoln were born this month. Other February presidents include Ronald Reagan (February 6) and William Henry Harrison (February 9). Two presidents also passed away during this month, John Quincy Adams on the 23rd, and Woodrow Wilson on the third. February is the first month the United States had a president—George Washington was elected on February 4, 1789. And, as the first on a very short list of presidents, Jefferson Davis was inaugurated as the president of the Confederate States of America on February 18, 1861.

In honor of all this presidential activity, the library will be closed Monday, Feb. 21. If you have books you want to renew, visit our website at www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us

Log in to your account using the barcode on your library card and your PIN, which is the last four digits of the phone number you gave when you signed up for your card. You can also call ELVIS at (908) 757-3280. Have your library card and the books in front of you.

The library is inaugurating something new this month—audiobooks in MP3 format. Each CD in the new format can hold the same as 10 CDs in standard format, meaning that most books fit on one disc. They can be played in the CD drive of your computer, and newer home and automobile CD/DVD players have the correct hardware as well. Most cars since 2006 have MP3 compatible CD players. There will be no need to switch discs while driving. Plenty of current

titles are available. You can find them shelved near the DVDs. Browse the selection frequently; we'll be putting out more titles all month.

If you'd like to listen to audiobooks about presidents from George Washington to Barack Obama, use the library website to link to ListenNJ. Using your computer and a portable music player (iPod, Zune, Nook, etc.), you can download thousands of titles, both fiction and non-fiction. It's easy to discover if the book you are interested in will work on your device. There are e-books, too!

Monday's closing will not affect the storytime schedule. Tuesday at 10:30 a.m., there will be stories and a craft for children ages four and older. Wednesday brings "Time for 2s and 3s" at 10:30 a.m. and "Storytime" for ages four and older at 6:30 p.m. On Thursdays, the two- and three-year-olds will be welcome at 10:30 a.m., and the four-year-olds at 1:15 p.m. Children two and under are invited to "Babytime" with Miss Linda on Friday at 10:30 a.m. All programs are free and no registration is needed for storytime.

We know that the snow will melt eventually. Looking ahead to that, February's Kidcraft (Monday, Feb. 28, 6:30 p.m.) will feature a spring surprise. Children ages six to 10 will have the chance to make something fun to welcome the return of warm weather. There is a \$1 materials fee. Please register in advance, because space is limited.

There are hundreds of ways to learn about our presidents at the library—books, movies, CDs and more. Come and check some out, and have a Happy President's Day!



Sacred Heart alumni, students, teachers and coaches compete to raise money for Children's Specialized Hospital.

Sacred Heart Hawks Go to the Hoop for Charity

The Sacred Heart Hawks Basketball Teams played a charity basketball game to raise money for Children's Specialized Hospital on February 10. The Sacred Heart Hawks Cheerleaders were also on hand to cheer for the players on both sides.

The Hawks Basketball teams consist of boys and girls of all ages who attend Sacred Heart School. The Hawks faced the enormous task of trying to defeat their coaches, teachers and alumni. Size and experience was a definite disadvantage during the competition, but the Hawks fast paced game

and sharp shooting kept them competitive for most of the game. The score was close until the alumni took over and showed the students the many talented basketball players who graduated from Sacred Heart School.

The game was a big hit with those who attended. All the players, young and old, had a great time competing with each other.

The event, organized by Sacred Heart Athletic Director Carl Adlassnig, raised over \$1,000, which will be donated to Children's Specialized Hospital.

Hall of Fame Applications Available Online

South Plainfield High School's Hall of Fame applications are now available online. To enter your application, please visit www.spnet.k12.nj.us and click on the high school page.

The Hall of Fame was established at SPHS to recognize outstanding graduates. Honoring these successful graduates as leaders in their fields and community provides current students with positive role models.

Candidates must have graduated from SPHS at least 15 years prior to nomination and have made significant contributions in academics, business, community participation and service to humanity.

Application deadline is Friday, April 8. For more information or if you have any questions, please call the high school at (908) 754-4620, ext. 248.

South Plainfield Democrats Seek Candidates

The South Plainfield Democratic Organization is seeking prospective candidates to fill three council seats for this year's election.

Democratic Chairman Charles Butrico stated, "I, along with the Democratic Committee, am very excited about this year's election. We are looking for positive, energetic candidates who have an interest in improving the quality of life for all of our residents."

Prospective candidates should forward their resume and a short letter expressing their interest to Charles Butrico by February 28 by contacting him via email at cbutrico@yahoo.com.

The candidates will be interviewed by the Democratic Municipal Committee in March.

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Why Advertise in Newspapers?

A study commissioned by the New Jersey Press Association (NJPA) and conducted by Belden Associates revealed that newspapers are the number one choice for news among New Jersey residents and that 93% of adults with a media preference choose a newspaper for local community and neighborhood news.

The study also revealed that 73% of New Jersey shoppers use newspapers as their primary source for local shopping information and 2 out of 3 consumers rely on newspapers for information related to purchases. You may also be interested to know that the average number of days a weekly paper is kept is 4.2 and the

average number of readers per copy in a household is 2.0. And that ads are second only to local events in reader interest. Statistics also reveal that more South Plainfielders rely on the Observer for local news than any of the dailies, surpassing the local circulation of The Home News-Tribune, the Courier News, and The Newark Star-Ledger.

To reserve space or for more information, call 908-668-0010.