

# South Plainfield Observer

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60 CENTS

MARCH 4, 2011

## Police Officer Delivers Breech Baby in Auto

By Jane Dornick

South Plainfield Police Officer Pete Magnani delivered a breech birth baby to a grateful mother who was in a vehicle parked on Plainfield Avenue in front of Borough Hall on February 21.

Dawn Simpson was being driven to the hospital by her 20-year-old daughter who called 911 dispatchers at 10:12 a.m. and reported that her mother was about to give birth. The operator instructed them to pull the vehicle over as Magnani was exiting the parking lot to respond to the call.

According to Magnani, Simpson, a Plainfield resident, was in the passenger seat when he arrived and said she was "going to have the baby right now." The woman was only six months pregnant at the time.

Joe Abbruzzese, who was working with the Fire Prevention Bureau at the time, arrived on the scene. Simpson's water broke immediately thereafter. "We saw the baby's feet and realized we had a breech birth," said Magnani. Police Dispatcher Darleen Marin also responded from the communications desk and assisted in the birth. Magnani wrapped the newborn baby girl in a blanket and performed CPR for

several minutes. The time of the birth was approximately 10:30 a.m.

The premature infant was transported to JFK Medical Center in Edison by Somerset EMS and medics from Mercy 9. A second rescue squad was not available because they were responding to other calls, so Magnani retrieved a borough ambulance from the rescue squad, brought it to the scene and Simpson was transported to JFK Medical Center by Firefighters Joe Abbruzzese, Daryl Foster and Bill Conti, who kept her calm throughout the process.

"It was definitely not a textbook birth," said Magnani, who credits Abbruzzese and Marin for their help. "This type of delivery is rarely even performed in hospitals due to the delicate nature," Magnani commented. "Doctors normally opt for an emergency c-section."

This is the second delivery for Magnani and Abbruzzese during their careers and a first for Marin. "Both mother and daughter are doing exceptionally well thanks to the fast response and quick thinking of members from all of our emergency services," said Magnani, who had been a rescue squad member for many years prior to becoming a police officer.



Five Kennedy School students who recently won the Junior Journalist contest read their poems that had been published in the Observer at the February 16 Board of Education meeting. Sarah Gwiazda read her poem, "Teachers" which ended with the words, "They make us smart. They give us their heart. I love teachers. They are the best. There is no contest." It was enthusiastically applauded by the many teachers present. Pictured (L-R) are Sarah Gwiazda, Michael Marrero, Kennedy School Principal Lisa Parker, Skylar Davisson, Anthony Barge and Sarahann Singh.

## Council Approves PBA Contract

The Borough Council approved a new four year contract for the South Plainfield PBA Local 100 at its public meeting on February 22. Democratic Councilmembers Chrissy Buteas and Franky Salerno both abstained from the vote and Councilman Tim McConville recused himself since his brother is a police officer. All other members

voted in favor of the contract. Borough Clerk Joann Graf explained that a recusal does not count as a vote, therefore the ordinance passed.

"It's a contract that includes quite a few givebacks," said Council President Ray Rusnak, who was part of the bargaining team. "Longevity is being eliminated for new hires, salaries for

new hires are dropping 15% over the first two years of service, and overtime is being cut."

According to CFO Glenn Cullen, the merit increases for the nine different "steps," or classifications, for officers based on their service time amounts to an average of 1.75% overall.

(Continued on page 7)

**BIG**  
Borough-wide issue March 25  
**BIG**

Four times a year we offer folks the opportunity to reach the entire borough of South Plainfield.

Our next borough wide issue hits newsstands on March 25. To reserve space, please let us know by March 9.

The borough wide issue reaches 11,000 addresses

## BOE Holds Budget Workshop

By Libby Barsky

The Board of Education is in the process of completing its budget for the 2011/2012 school year for approval by the County Superintendent of Schools by March 28.

During a budget workshop held at Roosevelt School on February 23, Interim Business Administrator Nichola Puleio reported the district had received \$473,231 in state aid, or one percent of the school budget. This amount is more than the district received last year when Governor Christie reduced the district's state aid by five percent. Despite the increased school aid, \$1.7M in cuts still need to be made in the 2011/2012 school budget to keep it within the two percent municipal tax cap.

Dr. Gary Bowen explained his "Three Tier Plan" in evaluating where the \$1.7M in budget cuts would be made. The first tier addresses teachers, second, the classroom size and third will be programs.

In other business, the board ap-

proved a resolution petitioning the New Jersey School Boards Association to endorse Senate Bill S1312 and Assembly Bill A2143, which would allow district school budgets within the mandated two percent tax increase not need to have voter approval and instead be submitted directly to the Commissioner of Education.

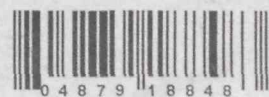
Last year the South Plainfield Board of Education proposed a budget of \$52,299,265 which was at the approved four percent increase and it was defeated by the voters. The borough council was allowed to cut \$1.25M from the budget.

The board also petitioned New Jersey School Boards to seek legislation to amend the current law to allow boards of education to suspend tenured employees without pay for the entire length of the proceedings.

(Continued on page 6)



Franklin School principal Ellen Decker-Lorys (second from right) holds a proclamation from Mayor Matt Anesh in honor of Read Across America Day on March 2. Also pictured are Leo Whalen, Grant School principal; Lisa Parker, Kennedy School principal; and Robert Diehl, Roosevelt School principal.





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

March 7 ..... March 7

March 21 ..... March 21

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

### planning board

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

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

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

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 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 plan 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.

## In My Opinion

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

Dear Editor,

We do not live under a monarchy or a dictatorship. Our government consists of elected officials who are responsible for serving and answering to the public. The founding fathers thought the protection of political speech so critical to democracy that they put it at the top of the list when composing the Bill of Rights. That's why I find it so disturbing that our Republican mayor and members of the council go to such great lengths to deny borough residents their First Amendment rights.

Former Mayor Charlie Butrico, who has served this community with dignity and honor for years and is no less dedicated to the borough and its residents now than he has always been, has tried to get information about important borough business that involves the expenditure of significant taxpayer dollars, yet he has been denied the information and the opportunity to speak about this and other borough issues at public meetings. Such behavior flies in the face of the democracy and denies citizens the right to open and honest government.

Even an occasion that should unite us has been co-opted by this Republican administration for political gain. Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas began working with the borough clerk, Joann Graf, last year on a community event to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the tragedy that befell our nation on 9/11. They have spent months securing commitments from special guest speakers and have even inquired about getting a piece of steel from the World Trade Center. After they spent several months preparing for this celebration, the new mayor decided to take credit for the project by appointing a Republican to chair the committee. Councilwoman Buteas initiated.

What is most troubling is the appointment of Bob Jones as zoning board attorney. Jones, the former Republican Party chair who still serves as treasurer of the PAC that funnels thousands of dollars to the South Plainfield Republican Party, has a clear conflict of interest here. This patronage appointment surely violates the public trust and the standards of ethical governance.

South Plainfield citizens deserve better. Patronage, nepotism and suppres-

## Friends Reach Out to Help a Child

To the Editor:

I am writing to you about my best friend and her husband, Tara Huslage and Stephen Maszczak. They are both graduates of South Plainfield High School and have known each other since they were both 15. They have been married for the past nine years and have four beautiful children, Stephen Austin, Thea, Faith and Sofie.



Stephen Austin Maszczak

Two weeks ago, they found out that Stephen Austin may have a brain tumor. This is a painful and all too familiar situation with the Huslage Family. Tara's brother, Austin, passed away 15 years ago from a metastasized brain tumor.

On February 17, the family was told that Stephen Austin does indeed have a very aggressive form of brain cancer. He was released from Morristown Memorial Hospital on February 21 as there was nothing more they could do for him. His father travelled to different hospitals last week, and the official diagnosis is diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma, high grade glioblastoma. There is no cure for this horrible, evil and cruel form of cancer.

Friends of Tara and Stephen (new and old) have all come together to do whatever they can to help the family in any way possible. A website has been created for Stephen Austin, [www.StephenAustinmiracle.org](http://www.StephenAustinmiracle.org).

The Maszczak and Huslage families have been a part of the South Plainfield community for over 30 years and could really use all of our help right now. We are asking for your financial support in any way possible in their time of need to help with some of the huge medical expenses associated with Stephen's hospitalization and treatment.

SINCERELY, KRISTI MONIZ

sion of speech, secret government—these are not the characteristics of a democracy and they are not good enough for the residents of this borough.

PAT DE SANTIS

Dear Editor,

I would like to respond to the letters written in last week's paper by Ms. Teri Pileggi and Mr. Norm Loenser regarding a poem written by my daughter that won the Junior Journalist contest. I was all set to write up a lengthy response, but while at church on Sunday, I realized how insignificant this would be. I will say that I thank the South Plainfield school system for teaching my daughter to express herself through words rather than other means. I would like to thank the principal for standing by one of his students for winning an award, and I would like to thank Ms. Pileggi and Mr. Loenser for also exercising their rights of free speech as my daughter has done.

The priest asked us to pray for a little boy named Stephen Austin Maszczak who has an inoperable brain tumor and probably will not survive. He is only seven years old. His parents will probably never have the opportunity to watch him play a sport, or for that matter write about it.

I would like to ask everyone that reads this letter to take a minute and say a prayer for Stephen and his family. If you want to find out more, go to their website at [www.stephenAustinmiracle.org](http://www.stephenAustinmiracle.org).

SINCERELY,  
ALAN J. GRAZIANO

To the Observer:

I am writing on behalf of my friend, Kaitlyn Graziano, one of the recent winners of the Junior Journalist contest.

I was very upset to hear about the backlash that her poem received. I know Kaitlyn probably better than anyone. She is one of the sweetest and most caring people I know and for adults to be bashing her like this is unheard of. She puts her all into everything she does and maybe she is not the best player on the team, but how is she supposed to get better if she was never given the chance?

In the beginning of the year when she made the team, she was told that she was going to be put in to play and for this to happen she had to go to all of the practices and games, which were practically every day. She was so committed to this team, that she had quit her job.

This only led to empty promises. Yes, I know high school is a different level

(Continued on page 10)

### 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: [spobsobserver@comcast.net](mailto:spobsobserver@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.

**South Plainfield Observer**

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### SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES

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

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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

The publisher is not responsible for typographical errors.

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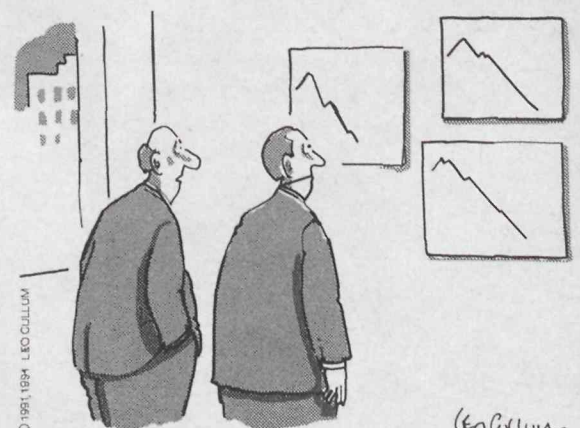
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## Nice Price Robbed at Gunpoint

On February 17 at 10:35 p.m. an employee of Nice Price convenience store at 409 Hamilton Blvd. was robbed at gunpoint.

According to the clerk, he was behind the counter when a black male walked toward him, pointed a small silver handgun and asked that he open the cash register. The victim placed \$150 in a white cloth bag held by the suspect, who then left on foot heading south on Hamilton Boulevard.

The robber is described as approximately 20-years-old, 6' tall, wearing a black ski mask, gloves, a hooded sweatshirt and cloth coat.

Police are reviewing the security camera video from the store.

## Applications for Hall of Fame Online

South Plainfield High School's Hall of Fame applications are now available online. To enter, visit [spnet.k12.nj.us](http://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.

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



Team "Charlee's Angels" plunged into the frigid Atlantic at the 18th annual Polar Bear Plunge on Saturday, Feb. 26. Over \$1.3M was raised to benefit Special Olympics N.J. The Cochranes of South Plainfield were among the 5,100 plungers this year. Pictured are members of the team named in honor of the Cochrane's daughter, Charlee, who has Down Syndrome. Team Captain Tom Yanchek, Bill, Barbara, Quinn, Ben and Jack Cochrane, Stacey Diana and Sean O'Keefe.

## policereport

On February 18 Jackson D. Munoz, 27, of Plainfield was arrested for driving while intoxicated.

On February 19 Sylvester Greenwood, 28, of Plainfield was arrested for driving while intoxicated and careless driving.

An Edison resident reported the theft of a \$20 bill left in the console of their vehicle while going through Squeaky Clean Car Wash on Hamilton Boulevard.

Keith A. Campbell, 50, of South Plainfield was arrested for driving while intoxicated, reckless driving and failure to keep right.

On February 20 Taj G. Wright, 21, of Piscataway was arrested for driv-

ing while suspended, an unregistered vehicle and an outstanding warrant.

On February 21 Aisha Nayo McFarlane, 34, of New Brunswick was arrested for driving while suspended and an outstanding warrant.

A Joan Street resident reported that the rear windshield of their vehicle had been broken.

An East Golf Avenue resident reported that their driver's side window had been smashed and a Garmin GPS was taken.

A Schindler Drive resident reported the theft of a Garmin GPS and laptop from their vehicle.

A Desepio Avenue resident reported the theft of loose change from their unlocked vehicle.

On February 23 Nagalaksh Pesara, 33, of Edison was arrested at Kohl's for shoplifting various items worth \$570.

Crisdel Group, Inc. reported the theft of six LED lights, a plate compactor, power saw, submersible pump and generator from their company vehicles that were parked at American Concrete on Hollywood Avenue.

## Project Graduation Auction, Raffle to be Held Saturday

It's finally auction time! The event you have all been waiting for is tomorrow, so come join us. Project Graduation auction (tricky tray)/raffle tickets will be sold at the door.

**Great Prizes**—55" Toshiba LCD TV, Dell laptop (custom ordered to include the best features), Apple iPad, a night out for two in NYC (theatre tickets to any Broadway show and dinner), 32GB iPod Touch, Kindle ereader, an authentic Gucci watch, a Wii bundle and Devils tickets with an authentic autographed puck and much more! Where can you find these great prizes? Only at the SPHS PTA Project Graduation auction/raffle on Saturday, March 5 from 7 to 11 p.m. (doors open at 6 p.m.) at South Plainfield High School.

This year marks the PTA's 23rd year of providing our graduating seniors with a Project Graduation celebration.

Senior parents, this one is for your children so get some of your friends together and come join us for a fun night at the auction. For those of you who have never attended our auction before, it is run similar to a tricky tray.

**Ticket Info**—Call Tracey Hartmann (chairperson) at (908) 755-4349 for door tickets and to reserve a table. Tickets will also be available at the door. We will have extra tables set up to accommodate anyone who buys tickets tomorrow night and did not previously reserve a table.

**Auction Information**—The auction begins at 7 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tables will be reserved for all ticket holders. The reservation will be in the name of one person from your group. There will be paper products on the tables (plates, cups, napkins). You may want to bring extras. As far as food goes, the sky is the limit. You can bring anything from snacks and desserts to complete dinners. Non-alcoholic beverages only will be permitted.

### Correction

In the photo caption on page 12 of the February 25 issue of the Observer, Ms. Patty is an instructional aide, not a teacher, in the Future Stars program.

There will be a small amount of water, soda and cookies for sale as well as coffee and tea, at no charge. Plastic bags to hold your tickets will be provided at the door. Please remember that no one under the age of 18 will be admitted. Contact Sharon Miller (president) at (908)-754-6461 for any additional auction information you may need or with any questions you may have.

**Volunteers**—If you have volunteered to help set up for the auction, we are meeting at the high school gym at noon. If you would like to help set up, but didn't sign up, we will be setting up until around 3:30 p.m. and can always use extra help.

If you volunteered to help sell tickets or work at the front desk, please arrive between 5-5:15 p.m.

**To Everyone Attending The Auction**—Every ticket you buy could be a winner, so the more tickets you buy, the better your chances of winning. But remember at the end of the night, even if you don't win a physical prize (and many of us don't!), you will still be a winner in the eyes of SPHS's class of 2011, because you helped to give them a fun and safe graduation night. We hope everyone has a great time and we wish you all luck.

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

Submitted by Sharon Miller

## ALERT

### BOE Meeting Date Change

Please be advised that the Committee of the Whole Meeting originally scheduled for Wednesday, March 2 was changed to Wednesday, March 9 at 6 p.m. The meeting will be held in the gymnasium of the Roosevelt Administration Building, 125 Jackson Ave.

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# events

## Around Town

### Boy Scout Troop 309 Clothing Drive

March 5

Boy Scout Troop 309 will be holding a clothing drive on Saturday, March 5 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Wesley Methodist Church, 1500 Plainfield Ave. 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.

### Project Graduation Auction/Raffle

March 5

The high school PTA will be hosting its annual auction/raffle on Saturday, March 5 from 6 p.m. (doors open) to 11 p.m. in the high school gym. For tickets, call Tracey Hartmann at (908) 755-4349. Tickets will also be sold at the door.

For more information or to make a monetary donation, call Sharon Miller at (908) 754-6461. This is a great event for a very worthwhile cause.

### VFW Country Breakfast

March 6

The South Plainfield VFW Post #6763, located on Front Street, will hold a country breakfast on Sunday, March 6 from 8 to 11 a.m. Come and enjoy a tasty breakfast and you may be the winner to another breakfast. The public is welcome.

For more information, call (908) 668-9751.

### 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.

### Historical Society Monthly Meeting

March 8

The South Plainfield Historical Society will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 8 at 7 p.m. in the history center on Jackson Avenue. Parking and entrance are on Jackson Avenue. The history center is open every Tuesday from 2 to 4 p.m.

New members are welcome. Come and learn something about the "old days" in South Plainfield, when we used to be part of Piscataway. Do you know why some of the street signs have a gold star on them? Come in and we will tell you why.

### Lenten Studies at Pilgrim Covenant

Beginning March 9

Pilgrim Covenant Church, 3121 Park Ave. invites you to join us in worship and reflection this Lenten season beginning on Wednesday, March 9 at 7:30 p.m. with an Ash Wednesday service. Women's book study begins on Monday, March 14 at 7 p.m. Wednesday night Bible study begins

on March 16, preceded by a light dinner at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome.

For information, call (908) 756-2474 and leave a message for Gina.

### Free Nutrition and Healthcare Class

March 9

Dr. Lori M. Serra and The Divine Health Team will be offering a free healthcare class on Wednesday, March 9 at 7 p.m. at the office of Dr. William A. Carone, 1110 Hamilton Blvd. Space is limited; reserve your space now before it's too late!

For more information or to reserve your space, call Dr. Carone's office at (908) 757-2330.

### St. Stephen Friday Night Fish Fry

March 11

St. Stephen Orthodox Church, 609 Lane Ave. (next to high school), will hold a fish fry on Friday, March 11 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Meal includes fish filet, fried potatoes, salad, bread, soft drinks, tea, coffee and dessert. Adults \$7.50; seniors/children \$6; three and under are free.

### Elks Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

March 12

The South Plainfield Elks Veterans Committee is sponsoring an 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.

### Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

March 12

The Sons of the American Legion will be holding a corned beef and cabbage dinner on Saturday, March 12 from 6 to 11 p.m. at the American Legion Chaumont Post 243, 243 Oak Tree Ave. Tickets: \$18 adults; \$13 children age five to 12; under five are free. Includes beer, wine, soda and dessert. Music provided by DJ Al. Proceeds benefit the scholarship fund.

### Girl Scouts Pancake Breakfast at the Elks

March 13

The South Plainfield Elks, 1254

New Market Ave., in conjunction with the South Plainfield Girl Scout community, will host its annual pancake breakfast on Sunday, March 13 from 8 a.m. to noon. Pancakes, eggs cooked to order, French toast, bacon, sausage, home fries, toast, juice and coffee. Adults \$6; seniors \$5; children three to 12/\$4; children under two are free.

For more information, call (908) 668-9750 after 4 p.m.

### Franklin School Auction/Raffle

March 19

The Franklin School PTO presents the annual auction/raffle, "Spring is in the Air" on Saturday, March 19. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door. No reservations/no refunds. Checks can be made out to Franklin PTO.

For tickets, call Karen at (908) 723-4546 or Kristin at (908) 755-9114.

### Columbiettes Fashion Show and Tea

March 19

The South Plainfield Columbiettes will hold the annual charity spring fashion show and tea on Saturday, March 19 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Hamilton Boulevard. Corned beef sandwiches, a variety of tea sandwiches, special pastries, as well as other desserts. Cost is \$10.

Fashions will be provided by Dress Barn of South Plainfield and modeled by club members and their families.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call Kathy at (908) 756-3772 or Emma at (732) 287-2346.

### — Out of Town — Robotics Competition

March 4-5

The 2011 NJ FIRST Robotics Competition will be held at the Sun National Bank Center in Trenton on Friday and Saturday, March 4-5 at 8 a.m. Sixty-two high school teams and their robots are facing off in a game called "LOGO Motion."

For more information, visit [www.nycnjfirst.org](http://www.nycnjfirst.org).

### Dinner Dance

March 5

Plainfield Gesang-und Turn-Verein, Inc. will hold a dinner dance on Saturday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m. at Singer Hall, 220 Somerset St. in North

## SENIOR CENTER Calendar

### Coming Up....

March 17-Bally's

**Membership fee due.** (Collected Monday, Wednesday and Thursday)

#### MONDAYS

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  
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.

Plainfield. Pork roast dinner with different sausages with all the trimmings. Coffee and dessert. Music provided by Mountaintops Band. Tickets are \$20 for members; \$22 for non members.

For tickets, call Victor at (908) 276-8572 or Joan at (908) 647-0819.

### Jersey Shore Gospel Music Series

March 5

Jersey Shore Gospel Music Fellowship will present a southern gospel concert with Carl and Laura Gentry on Saturday, March 5 at 7 p.m. at the Francis Asbury Chapel, 70 Stockton Ave. in Ocean Grove. Free will offering.

For more information, call (732) 897-0800.

### Blackrose to Perform

March 5

Blackrose, the band playing classic rock and roll music and today's hits, will be performing at the Stagehouse Restaurant, 366 Park Ave. in Scotch Plains on Saturday, March 5 at 10 p.m. No cover charge.

### Stories from the Jewish Tradition

March 6

Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission and the Folklife Program for New Jersey present storyteller Gerald Fierst in The Wineglass:

### LEGAL NOTICES

Notice of Alcoholic Beverage License Amendment Change in Corporate Structure

#### NOTICE

Take notice that application has been made to the Borough of South Plainfield, Municipal Clerk's office, 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, N.J. 07080 for a **Change in the Corporate Structure** of Retail Plenary Consumption license #1222-36-030-002 by Friendwell Management, LLC, trading as Best Western for premises located at 101 New World Way, South Plainfield, NJ 07080. The new stockholder, Lee Man W of 365 Restaurant & Bar Inc. residing at 93 Hoffman Rd., Monroe, NJ 08831 will be-joining the corporation.

Objections, if any should be made immediately in writing to: Joann Graf, Municipal Clerk of the Borough of South Plainfield, 2480 Plainfield Ave., South Plainfield, NJ 07080.

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South Plainfield, NJ 07080

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February 25 and March 4, 2011

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# events

## Around Town

Blessing Families with Stories from the Jewish Tradition at the East Jersey Olde Towne Village, 1050 River Road in Piscataway on Sunday, March 6 at 2 p.m. Free; registration required.

For more information or to register, call (732) 745-4489.

### Tricky Tray

March 6

Resurrection of Christ Church, 649 Bound Brook Rd. (Rt. 28) in Dunellen will hold a tricky tray auction on Sunday, March 6 (snow date March 13). Doors open 12 p.m.; drawings begin at 1:30 p.m. Admission: \$5. Gift certificates, grand prize, specialty prize, and much more!

To purchase tickets, call (732) 968-1369, (732) 752-5741 or (732) 873-1731.

### Mardi Gras at Willow Grove Church

March 6

The community is invited to the fifth annual Willow Grove Presbyterian Church Mardi Gras Jazz Worship Service on Sunday, March 6 at 10 a.m. at the church, 1961 Raritan Rd. in Scotch Plains. A light brunch will follow the service. Reservations requested.

For more information or for reservations, call (908) 232-5678 or email office@willowgrovechurch.org.

### Middlesex East WOWs Business Mtg.

March 7

Middlesex East Widows Or Widowers will conduct a business meeting on Monday, March 7 at 7 p.m. at the Carteret Community Center, Pershing and Cooke avenues. All widows or widowers are invited to attend.

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For more information, call (732) 969-2228 or (908) 757-0515.

### Mick Moloney and Friends to Perform

March 9

Musician and vocalist Mick Moloney returns Wednesday, March 9 at 7 p.m. to South Amboy High School, 200 Governor Harold G. Hoffman Plaza. The program is funded in part by Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission, Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State.

### "Women, Jews and Art" Presentation

March 11

The I.L. Peretz Secular Jewish Community presents "Women, Jews and Art" by Rutgers Professor Emerita Judith Brodsky on Friday, March 11 at 8 p.m. at the Reformed Church of Highland Park, 19-21 2nd Ave. The public is invited; \$5 fee for non-members.

For more information, call Ira Mintz at (732) 545-9691.

### St. John the Apostle School Tricky Tray

March 11

St. John the Apostle School parent/faculty guild will hold a gift auction/tricky tray on Friday, March 11 in the school auditorium on Valley Road in Clark. Doors open 6:30 p.m.; drawing begins 8 p.m. Super duper prizes, 50/50 raffle. Light fare will be sold. Admission: \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door. Free sheet of center table tickets comes with your admission.

To purchase tickets, call Linda at (908) 276-0498.

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## Erika Lynn Foundation Asking for Support

By Patricia Abbott

South Plainfield resident Mike Dixon, founder of the Erika Lynn Foundation, is asking the community to support the family's campaign to "Send Erika to Vista."

Erika is the Dixon's special needs daughter. She attended school in South Plainfield from Future Stars through 11th grade. It's not very often that a fundraiser comes along that will help a deserving individual, is good for the environment and free, but the Erika Lynn Foundation is offering people an opportunity to participate in such a fundraiser.

The "Send Erika to Vista" program requires no donations. The foundation is working with the energy company, Viridian. By switching to this 'greener' electric company families can save money knowing they are also helping Erika and the environment at the same time. Donations are made by Viridian. The not for profit part of Viridian is assisting charities such as Special Olympics of NJ and the American Cancer Society. For every customer they sign up, the Erika Lynn Foundation will receive \$2 each month as long as they are a Viridian customer. To participate in the program, log on to viridian.com/erikalynnfoundation.



Erika Lynn Dixon

Vista, (vistavocational.org) a vocational program in Connecticut, helps individuals with a variety of disabilities develop the life skills they need to live independent, fulfilling lives. "This program will help Erika throughout the rest of her life. Her doctor highly recommends this special school and we are sure this would cap off 27 years of work and accomplishment for her," Dixon explained.

However, tuition is costly, about \$60,000 a year. Erika will most likely need to attend two to four years. The Erika Lynn Foundation has helped support many local charities since becoming a 501(c)(3) organization established in South Plainfield, including Easter Seals of NJ, Open Your Heart Foun-

ation, South Plainfield Social Services, St. Jude Children's Hospital, Susan Komen Cancer Research, Autism Speaks, Imus-For Kids With Cancer, Children's Cancer Research Fund, Covenant House, Stephen Austin Maszczak Fund and the South Plainfield Golf Association.

Viridian Energy's website explains that they offer high-quality renewable energy products that meet or exceed the proposed 2020 federal environmental goal of 20% renewable energy. This allows customers to choose energy that exceeds the renewable portfolio standards in their own states for rates that are often lower than the local utility. That's the Viridian difference. Many states have already adopted Renewable Portfolio Standards, which require electricity suppliers and utilities to source a minimum amount of their electricity from clean energy sources. Viridian exceeds this requirement in each state in which they operate.

"Everything we have done has been through hard work and good people donating clothes, shoes, toys and other items to the thrift store. Here is a way to give and save money; it doesn't get any better than that. So please help send Erika Lynn to Vista. Erika's story can be found on the Erikalynn.org website," Dixon said.

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# Elks Beef and Beer Night Raises \$1,350

By Patricia Abbott

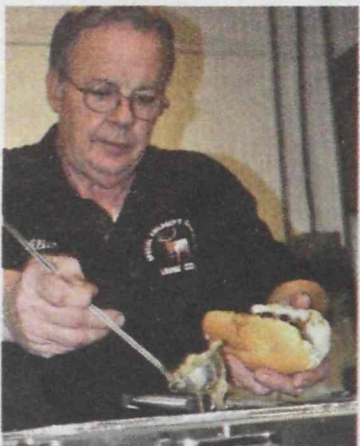
The rain and chill did not deter those bound to the Elks Lodge to attend the annual Beef and Beer Night on February 25.

The event was a fundraiser for the Special Children's Committee, which sponsors a number of children's charities. Benefiting from the Beef and Beer night are the children who attend the Elks Camp Moore and special needs children in the Somerset Treatment Center.

Guests had a few options, including a choice of roast beef sandwiches with brown gravy or au jus, and sautéed mushrooms and onions, plus a choice of salads.

There was no lack of action in the kitchen as Pat Donnelly, Tim Dziomba, Al Lamonda and others were kept busy cooking and plating sandwiches, gravy and salads and washing dishes in an attempt to keep up with the crowds. Guests filled tables in the hall as well as the bar area.

Committee members working the



Al Lamonda

event were Lodge Chairman Geoff Champion, Debbie Czech, Kevin Schweers, Pat Donnelly, Fred Morretti, Tim Dziomba and Al Lamonda. General Lodge Members Joe Czech, Sharon Reuter, Irene Polanco, Tom Brady, Ed Martin, Janet Donnelly and Kris Dziomba were also on hand.



Vanessa Champion with her dad, Geoff.

Geoff Champion's daughter, Vanessa, also helped. She is a special needs child who has benefited from her experience at Camp Moore.

State Public Relations Chairman/Past Vice President Debbie Czech, who has been running this fundraiser with the Special Children's Committee since 2006, commented, "This event was outstanding. Thanks to the large response from those attending and their generous donations, we will be able to send several campers to Elks Camp Moore and assist our special needs children in the Somerset Treatment Center. We can't thank everyone enough for caring about the children!"

"The Order of Elks was founded to provide community service by each lodge to help those less fortunate in time of need. Community service is what Elksdom is all about. As Elks, we are expected to be faithful to our communities, and it is our civic duty to support and provide assistance where needed," Czech said.

The Elks raised over \$1,350, which included several generous donations above and beyond the cost of a meal.

The Special Children's Committee exists solely for children with special needs. Throughout the year, the committee raises funds to send campers to

Elks Camp Moore in Haskell. Elks Camp Moore is the state project for the New Jersey State Elks Association. They continue their hard work for this very special cause with an annual motorcycle run in July that benefits Camp Moore, also known as "Miracle on the Mountain." Donations are accepted throughout the year.

For more information or to make a donation, call Debbie Czech at (732) 491-5310.

For additional information, visit [www.njelks.org](http://www.njelks.org). Search for Camp Moore and you will find videos from News12 NJ and Cablevision's Neighborhood Journal as well as photos of the camp.



Tim Dziomba

## WHAT'S GOING ON IN MY TOWN FROM A BUSY BUSY MOM *jd*

The 42nd annual Music and Art Festival will take place in the high school auditorium on Thursday, March 17 at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase for each segment: orchestra, choral and band.

Thank you to Flanagan's Restaurant and Pub owner John Zymanski, and Nick and Erica for the excellent food and service at the high school swim team dinner held on February 22, and, as always, accommodating the students' dinners. Thank you to Barbara Valentino, Keith-Ann Cornelius and Jackie Vill for helping with set up, flowers and balloons. Thank you to Superintendent Bowen, Assistant Principal Ralph Errico and BOE member Steve Bohn for attending the swim team dinner. The team had an awesome season of 7-4, with swimmers receiving medals at the GMCs on February 5.

Thank you to Athletic Director Mike Buggy and Administrative Assistant Mickey Wrublewski for always going above and beyond in helping arrange gym time for the basketball fundraiser for Jerry Bartolotti.

The Middle School PTO will host the Dance Troupe Bullying Assembly on Tuesday, March 15 at 9 a.m. The "Bully Bill" was signed into law in January by the governor. This will continue to lead the way to help teach young students how to handle these issues, and what better way than to learn from their dance troupe peers.

The Middle School PTO used clothing, accessories, bedding and toy drive will take place on Saturday, April 9. The third annual blood drive will be held on Tuesday, April 12 in the high

school gym from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. in honor of Jerry Bartolotti. The high school student council will be assisting. All residents are urged to participate. Proceeds from the blood drive will be donated to Project Graduation for the rental of The Club at Ricochet.

Interim notices and report cards are posted on the South Plainfield School District website, [spnet.k12.nj.us](http://spnet.k12.nj.us), on MMS. If you are experiencing difficulty in using the system or do not have access to a computer, do not hesitate to contact Interim Superintendent Dr. Gary Bowen at (908) 754-4620.

Congratulations to high school freshman boys' basketball coach Al Czech and his team for moving on to the GMC finals. They had a great season, with a record of 16-2. We are proud of your accomplishment. Go Tigers!

Good luck to high school girls' varsity basketball Coach Kevin Hughes and the team in the state championship.

The South Plainfield Education Foundation will host its third annual Fine Wine, Spirits and Draft Beer Tasting Fundraiser on Friday, April 29 at the Italian-American Club on Garibaldi Avenue from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Supporters of the event are Oaktree Buy-Rite, Flanagan's Restaurant and Pub, Paulo's Barbeque, Adelines Ristorante and Hometown Heros. Tickets are \$30 per person; four for \$100 or \$35 at the door. This event supports the students. For tickets or information, call Marge Reedy at (908) 561-5800, ext. 302; Carolyn Allen at (908) 561-3275; Bob Boyle at (908) 599-0699 or Debbie Boyle at (908) 803-1573.

## BOE Holds Budget Workshop

(Continued from page 1)

Currently the employee must receive full salary beginning on the 121st day of suspension.

The board also approved a resolution opposing Senate Bill S1872 and Assembly Bill A2810 entitled, "The Opportunity Scholarship Act," which provides vouchers to students in 13 "targeted districts" including Camden, East Orange, Newark, Perth Amboy, Lakewood and Plainfield. Students would be eligible to receive \$8,000

in elementary or \$11,000 in high school vouchers to attend a public or non-public school of the student's choice in New Jersey. These vouchers don't benefit the district's students because diversion of district revenue to cover the costs "could severely inhibit the district's ability to provide a quality education and that the funds could be better used in the failing districts or divided amongst all school districts to make up for lost revenues resulting from loss in state aid."

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South Plainfield Cadette Troop 65-699 had an exciting tour of TD Bank on February 14. Pictured are Ally Makowski, Jenna Karcher, TD Bank Supervisor Kimberly Poggio, Katelyn Borsos and Elizabeth Lee. TD Bank is offering tours to scout troops of all ages. For more information, contact Kimberly Poggio at (908) 561-3275.

## Council Approves PBA Contract

(Continued from page 1)

"The borough went from seven grades to nine. The grades were added to decrease salaries, and not increase them," said Cullen. "Under the old contract an officer made \$61,144 after six months. That now takes two full years." The following three years on the contract amount to a 1.9% raise. This is in keeping with Governor Chris Christie's 2% salary cap increase mandate.

Cullen said he expects to save \$171,000 due to the step changes on the new hires alone and will see a lowering of the PBA salary and wage budget by 2% this year.

Councilman and Public Safety Chair Rob Bengivenga gave a PowerPoint presentation to the audience at the meeting and cited what he termed as positive aspects to the new contract. Some of the concessions made were a reduction in minimum overtime hours from four to three, a 1.5% contribution toward medical benefits for current officers, 3% for new hires and prescription co-pay increases. The starting salary of officers in the police academy was lowered, and two new step pay increases were added.

Longevity pay, which costs the borough approximately \$250,000 a year, was eliminated for new hires. "This is a long-term structural change that will greatly benefit future generations," said Bengivenga. The borough is the second municipality in the county to eliminate longevity for new hires. Cullen said the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees agreed to give up longevity 17 years ago; however, the five PBA contracts since then have included it.

Other items that were negotiated were a clothing allowance, which was increased for current officers but eliminated for new hires; and the reimbursement for a 25% savings in the

difference between their choice of an HMO versus a PPO medical plan was eliminated. Officers will now have an additional three days off, and the language defining a "working day" was ironed out to avoid costly grievances to the borough.

Buteas explained her reason for her vote saying, "Please don't take my abstention on the PBA contract as anything other than questions I have." She felt that the public did not see a "full picture" of the contract and that they have a "right to know the perimeters."

Mayor Matt Anesh read a statement asking each councilmember to state whether they had given the contract to members of the public prior to it being approved that evening. All members of the council replied no. When it was Buteas' turn to reply she stated, "I did not release the contract to anyone. Since I am the one being implicated, I do have to say that a couple members of the public did ask me a question and I did answer it."

Former mayor and Democratic Party Chairman Charlie Butrico continued to question the council as to how they arrived at the 1.75% increase. "I have no issue with the contract," said Butrico, who wished they would "tell the whole story" and not "half-truths."

"The numbers don't add up," Butrico said. He also pointed out that there is only one officer out of 33 currently being paid in the lower classification, and there is no one in the academy. Most officers are well into the higher ranges of pay. Butrico also noted that an extra percent was added to the current longevity pay of officers and he questioned if the borough would have to pay additional overtime to work the extra days off. "Down the road this [contract] looks great. Now is the crucial time," said Butrico.

## 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 will 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](mailto:spcac.nj@gmail.com). You can also follow the SPCAC on Facebook.

## Columbiettes Holding Easter Bunny Brunch

The South Plainfield Columbiettes will hold their annual Easter Bunny Brunch on Sunday, April 3 beginning at 10 a.m. in the Sacred Heart School cafeteria. Continental style breakfast. Games and prizes for the youngsters, followed by a visit from the Easter Bunny. No cost for the event, but a goodwill basket will be available for those wishing to contribute. Reservations are recommended so we can get a head count of how many children will attend and their ages.

To register, call Kathy at (908) 756-3772 or Emma at (732) 287-2346.



## Justin Jones Named Junior Journalist



Junior Journalist winner Justin Jones with teacher Janet Donnelly.

Justin Jones, fourth grader at Franklin School, is this week's winner in the Junior Journalist program.

His poem, "My 'NO Bullying' Rap Song," has earned Justin dinner for his 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 on May 11.

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

## My "NO Bullying" Rap Song

By Justin Jones

You think you're strong  
But you're really wrong.  
You think you're cool  
But you're really being a fool.  
You think you can do whatever you please  
But your bad attitude is going to bring you to your knees.  
You think you're on top  
But someday you'll flop  
And now this has to stop.  
You should always treat  
People the way you want to be treated  
Or someday you'll get defeated!

## Register for Kindergarten

Kindergarten registration in the South Plainfield School District for the 2011/2012 school year will be held March 28-April 13. Kindergarten enrollment packets are available in the enrollment office located in the Roosevelt Administration Building, 125 Jackson Avenue.

Students entering kindergarten must be five years old on or before Oct. 1, 2011. Enrollment is by appointment only.

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# Sports

## St. Joseph HS Competes in NJSIAA Group Tournament



Members of St. Joseph's Falcons at swim meet against Christian Brothers. Pictured is Dylan McDermott (second from left) of South Plainfield.

Although the Falcons swim team of St. Joseph High School in Metuchen played well in the group tournament, in the end they fell to Christian Brothers, 78-92.

The Falcons hadn't been in the finals of this swim tournament in four years, and the team closed the season with an impressive 11-3 record.

The Non-Public A swim championship round was held on February 26 at The College of New Jersey in Ewing.

We look forward to following the Falcons next season.



2010 LBI President's Cup Champions—Sea Oaks, Shore Gate and Harbor Pines of South Jersey were the hosts for the grueling two day, 63-hole LBI President's Cup. The champions withstood a fierce rally in the individual match play portion and managed to squeeze out a 29½-24½ victory. Standing (L-R): Mike Sikanowicz, Chip Grundman, Capt. Bill Pavlak, Bill Schulte and Jae Han. Kneeling (L-R): Eric Houseknecht, Rob Disch and Mike Lyons.

## Ponytail Softball Registration Ending



Ponytail softball registrations will end on Monday, March 7. Register at the PAL on Maple Avenue.

By Gary Lampasona

## JUNIOR BASEBALL CLUB NOTES

Winter seems to be finally letting go of its grip, with just some grayish snow mountains left to remind us of its fury. We can start thinking about opening day, Saturday, April 9, just five weeks away.

**Player Evaluations**—For Small Fry C and Small Fry B players at the PAL building on Saturday, March 5, 8:30 a.m. All registered children should have received a postcard with their specific time to report. If not, please come to the PAL after 8:30 a.m. and ask to see a board member. All players should come prepared with a glove and wear sneakers. Attendance is important, because these evaluations allow managers and coaches to select competitive teams, which leads to more fun for all players and parents.

The Women's Auxiliary will be on hand to support the club. Continental breakfast and SPJBC clothing will be available for purchase.

**Player Draft**—Small Fry B and C draft nights are next week, beginning with the SFC Draft on Wednesday, March 9. SFB Draft is Thursday, March 10 and Small Fry A Draft will be held Wednesday, March 16. All drafts will be held in the clubhouse beginning at 7:30 p.m.

**Preseason Work Detail**—Begins on Saturday, March 13 for parents of seven and eight year old players. Participation in work detail is vital to preparing the baseball fields for the start of the season. All parents are welcome to come and help us get the fields and complex ready. After this hard winter, we need as much help as we can get!

**Rutgers Certification Class**—The lone class will be held on Tuesday, March 15 in the SPJBC clubhouse at 6:30 p.m. The fee will be waived for South Plainfield residents. If you are interested in participating on the field with your child's team, a SPJBC membership card and Rutgers certification are a must.

"Little League baseball is a very good thing because it keeps the parents off the streets." —Yogi Berra

## REC WRESTLING

By Joe Sacco

## Heilmann, DelVecchio, Lundy, Win League Titles

This past weekend, the South Plainfield Recreation Central Jersey wrestling team participated in the annual year-end league tournament. The young Tigers were heavy favorites going into the tournament after finishing the regular season undefeated, 16-0.

Winning individual titles were Joey Heilmann at 63 lbs., Ben Lundy at 110 lbs. and Zach DelVecchio in the heavyweight division. Both Heilmann and DelVecchio finished their seasons undefeated, while sixth grader Ben Lundy finished with a record of 17-1.

Also appearing in the finals for South Plainfield were Alex Amato at 70 lbs., Jake Giordano at 73 lbs. and Kyle Bythell at 95 lbs. All three fought hard battles to finish in second place. Amato finished his season at 16-3,

while sixth graders Jake Giordano and Kyle Bythell finished 17-2 and 16-3, respectively.

In the consolation round the Tigers were well represented. Taking home third place finishes were David Loniewski at 60 lbs. and Joe Penyak at 87 lbs. Fourth place went to Anthony White at 53 lbs., Joe Sacco at 67 lbs. and Jacob Painton at 77 lbs. Finishing in fifth was Jake Hoffman; sixth place finishers were Jake DelVecchio and Brenden Hedden. Also competing for the Tigers were Nick Loniewski at 57 lbs., Luke Niemeyer at 90 lbs. and Ryan Marston at 102 lbs.

Despite the strong performance, the Tigers came up short finishing in second place behind Cranford, 71-65. Great job boys, we are proud of you.

## SPHS WRESTLING

## Ashnault, Heilmann Win Gold Wrestlers Advance to State Tournament

South Plainfield's Anthony Ashnault and Troy Heilmann will be on their way to Atlantic City to face their respective opponents in the N.J. State Wrestling Tournament. This comes after winning in last Saturday's Regional Championships held at Union High School gym, crowded with over 2,000 attendees.

Ashnault, with a record of 78-0 for his career, pinned M. Magaldo of Watchung Hills in 1:47, winning the title in his 112 weight class.

As for Heilmann, he faced his adversary, Joe Giaccio of Cranford who

defeated him a year ago in the 112 pound semi-finals. The defeat was not to be repeated. Heilmann won his first Region 3 Championship with a 9-4 decision in the 119 weight class final.

Both young men are now planning their strategy for the state tournament scheduled to take place at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City. The three-day tournament begins on Friday, March 4. It concludes on Sunday, March 6 with consolation rounds and state finals.

Good luck Anthony and Troy!

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## Enter Women's History Month Essay Contest

Deadline is March 11

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](mailto:chrissybuteas@comcast.net). Include your name, address, grade, phone number and email address.

## Michael Warin, Sr., 89

Michael Warin, Sr. entered peacefully into eternal life on Tuesday, Feb. 22 at his home in Edison.

Born and raised in Old Forge, Pa., Michael lived in Paterson briefly, Newark for six years and then moved to South Plainfield where he raised his family and lived for 46 years. He has been a resident of Edison since December 2002.

As a youth, he worked in the Civilian Conservation Corps in Pennsylvania, planting trees and learning skills. In August 1942, he enlisted in the service. Michael was a WWII army veteran and served in the 287 Field Artillery. He served in the South West Pacific Theatre in Guadalcanal, New Guinea and the Philippines.

A former member of VFW Post #4954 of Old Forge, Michael was a member of the South Plainfield VFW Post #6763 and the American Legion Chaumont Post #243.

He retired from the E.I. Dupont Newark plant in 1982 after 31 years of employment as a continuous unit operator.

Michael, the family man, would always encourage any entrepreneurship endeavor. He would always be there to help with projects and hard work along the way. Michael, the parishioner, always enjoyed helping out his church.

He is predeceased by his dear and loving wife of 47 years, Ann (Stefano) Warin and five siblings, Anna Kravchuk, Olga Smith, Walter, Peter and John.

He is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Joanne (Maier) Warin of New Providence; a daughter, Shirley Ann Warin of Edison; a brother, Steve Warin of Sparta. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews and great-great nieces and nephews.

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

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be sent to St. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, 605 Washington Ave., Manville, N.J. 08835 or to the South Plainfield Senior Center, 90 Maple Ave., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080.

## Barbara Ann (Schults) Di Biase, 70

Barbara Ann (Schults) Di Biase passed away on Sunday, Feb. 20 at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick.

Born and raised in Rahway, Barbara lived in Manhattan and Metuchen before moving to South Plainfield with

her husband in 1973.

She attended Rahway public schools and graduated from C.W. Post College in N.Y. She was a member of Pilgrim Covenant Church in South Plainfield for many years. After being an active member, volunteer and leader with the Girl Scouts of the USA since childhood, she then worked as the membership services secretary for the Washington Rock Girl Scout Council for 19 years, retiring in 2009.

She will be forever cherished in the many hearts she touched for her kindness, faith, giving spirit, great love of family and friends and unfaltering strength.

Surviving are her loving husband of 39 years, John; two devoted children, Christopher and Jennifer; her mother, Vivian Schults; and a sister, Dorothy Boos. She is also survived by several cousins, nieces and nephews.

A memorial service to celebrate Barbara's life will be held on Saturday, March 5 at 11 a.m. at Pilgrim Covenant Church.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Walter J. Johnson Funeral Home in Clark.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that any memorial gifts be made to The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, 785 Springfield Ave., Summit, N.J. 07901.

## Florence (Naclerio) Guarente, 89

Florence (Naclerio) Guarente, formerly of the Bronx, N.Y., died on Thursday, Feb. 24 at The Woodlands in Plainfield.

Born and raised in the Bronx, Florence spent the majority of her life in New York.

### Novena to St. Jude

*O holy St. Jude, Apostle and Martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, near kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage, in time of need, to you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present and urgent petition. In return, I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked. Say three Our Fathers, three Hail Marys and Glorias. Publication must be promised. St. Jude pray for us and all who invoke your aid. Amen. This novena has never been known to fail. It must be said for 9 consecutive days. M.N.*

# Obituaries

She is predeceased by her first husband, Joseph Privitar; her second husband, James Guarente; and a son, Richard Privitar.

Surviving are a granddaughter, Donna Privitar and a daughter-in-law, Virginia Privitar, both of New York. She is also survived by several nieces and nephews, as well as several grand-nieces and nephews.

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

## Ruth E. (Kmosko) Kraus, 86

Ruth E. (Kmosko) Kraus died on Thursday, Feb. 24 at the Community Medical Center in Toms River.

Born in Plainfield, Ruth was a lifelong resident of South Plainfield.

Mrs. Kraus is a former member of the St. Peter's Lutheran Church in North Plainfield. In her younger years, Ruth worked various jobs but was primarily a homemaker caring for her family.

She is predeceased by her husband, Louis; a daughter, Judith Kraus; a sister, Dorothy Sooy; and a brother, William Kmosko.

Surviving are three daughters, Linda Kraus of Whiting, Kathleen McLaughlin and husband Michael of South Plainfield and Carolyn Brown and husband Charles, also of Whiting; a son, Alan Kraus and wife Kim of Millsboro, Del.; a sister, Florence Ross and husband Jack of Bridgewater; and a brother, James Kmosko and wife Gertrude of South Plainfield. Also surviving are six grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandson.

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

## Andrew H. Minarck, 91

Andrew H. Minarck died on Monday, Feb. 21 at the Runnells Specialized Hospital in Berkeley Heights.

Born in Bayonne, Andrew grew up and resided in Plainfield before settling in South Plainfield nearly 40 years ago.

He worked for Mack Motors in Plainfield as a machine operator until he retired.

During WWII, Mr. Minarck served with the U.S. Army and was honorably discharged as a corporal in 1945.

Andrew enjoyed family gatherings, the South Plainfield Community Pool and attending the South Plainfield Senior Citizens Center.

He is predeceased by his parents, Andrew and Anna Minarck; and seven brothers, George, John, Frank, William, Jack, Albert and Robert.

Surviving are a sister, Dorothy Nace of Clinton and several special nieces and nephews, as well as several great-nieces and nephews.

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

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## Congratulations Sara! JUNIOR JOURNALIST #1



Debbie and Charlie Kurland of Hometown Heros deliver dinner to Junior Journalist winner Sara Dabul, pictured with her parents, Stacey and Emilio, and grandparents, Arline and Marvin Zelenetz.



## In My Opinion

(Continued from page 2)

with sports, but it's not always about winning. I myself have played high school sports and I've seen the unfairness and the impact that it has had on these students.

Kaitlyn does not deserve this at all. She was simply trying to take out her frustration in a safe way. Some people express themselves with art, music, etc., so how come she can't write a harmless poem about her feelings? I know her and I know that she would never try to personally target someone to ridicule them. Not once did she say the coach's name or even what volleyball team she was on. Also, she was not "trash talking" the coach, she was only telling the truth about what she had personally experienced.

Based on what the responders said about her right to free speech, last time I checked freedom of speech meant being able to say your opinion, no matter if it was good or bad. So why would you say that you're all for freedom of speech, but then bash her when she expressed her opinion? Just because you don't like it doesn't mean that you have to be rude and pick apart her wonderful writing. The people who have responded to the poem were the ones who took it to another level. Then to say that the principal was blindsided by this is so childish. Why don't you all "grow up" because the one thing that she is maybe good at, which is writing, you're trying to take away from her, too?

Why don't you be an adult about this and write an apology to her because there is absolutely no reason that you should bring down a 17 year-

old girl for something that she is very passionate about. It's really something how adults take a good thing and turn it into something bad.

**STEPHANIE SHERWOOD**

Dear Editor:

I would like to bring up the issue of Geary Drive. I have complained numerous times to police about cars speeding constantly down the street and asked about radar enforcement or speed bumps. Both times I was told that was not something that could be requested by a citizen of the town. As a young married couple we are nervous about having children playing on this block with this issue. I was hoping maybe others feel the same and would also speak up. Thank you.

**JOHN PEACH**

Dear Editor,

With so much bad news in the media lately about public employee contracts, we thought it important to update the public about the recently signed four year contract between the borough and the PBA. The new contract proves that local government officials and public employees can work together and make an agreement that recognizes the tough economy we're in, while at the same time, looks out for both the long-term interests of the PBA members and the local taxpayers.

The new contract contains several changes that will benefit the town in the long term. We've eliminated longevity for new hires, we've reduced starting salaries, and increased the amount new hires will pay for health insurance. These are just a few of the changes that will help South Plainfield financially over the years to come.

In addition to this, we've kept annual merit increases below the state's 2% tax levy cap. While increases were 3.9% each year for the last five years, raises will be 1.75% this year and 1.9% each year for the next three years. All employees will also be paying 1.5% of their salary toward healthcare starting this year. So, in reality, we're looking at only a .25% increase this year, which is almost a wage freeze. This does not even include the 25% reduction in minimum call-in time for overtime.

The contract negotiations this year proved that the governing body and the PBA can work together, bargain in good faith, and come up with a

contract that benefits both the police officers and the taxpayers.

Someone recently asked in the newspaper what the taxpayers will be getting out of this new contract. As you can see, they will be getting quite a bit. Most notably, though, South Plainfield gets one of the best police forces in the state. In addition, unlike other towns in the area, residents have not experienced the type of large-scale police layoffs that can put a crimp in public safety. So when you look at it, the new contract is a big win for everyone.

Our thanks go to everyone involved in the negotiations: PBA Vice President Lloyd McNelly, PBA Representative Brian Iarrapino, PBA Representative Robert Rogers, CFO/Administrator Glenn Cullen, Mayor Matt Anesh and Councilman Rob Bengivenga.

**VERY TRULY YOURS,  
RAY RUSNAK, COUNCIL PRES.  
PETE MAGNANI, PBA PRESIDENT**

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to a letter published in the *Observer* on February 25 regarding the Junior Journalist poem in the February 18 issue.

I want to commend the writer, Kaitlyn Graziano, for such bravery in revealing her deepest and most profound feelings regarding HER rejection by a coach in a sport that she loves. Just because she mentioned the sport does not give anyone the right to make a public display of the journalist for insinuating that she was singling out anyone.

The poem was about her; her struggles, her initiative, her commitment, her bravery in the face of defeat, and her dedication to living above her circumstances. I applaud her and hope she continues to write from the heart.

Every experience in life should not have to be measured by the impact it has on one person, but how that one person can impact so many. Her poem should be an encouragement to those children who have had to warm the benches more than they had playing time as well. Reread the poem and omit the sport and see what she is really saying about indifference.

We should be heralding our Junior Journalists to continue writing and pursuing an outlet for their creativity.

**DONNA BURNHAM**

From the South Plainfield Library

## Bookmarks

By Chris Grippio

Mammal Mania is coming to the South Plainfield Library at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 23. A live animal show for children four years of age or older will be held in the Senior Center, located on 90 Maple Ave., due to the lack of a meeting room at the library. While no registration is required and the event is free, we do request you bring an unopened non-perishable food item which we will donate to the Middlesex Food Pantry.

We also would like to remind everyone that the library tries to buy all the new hot movies that are issued on DVD. New titles run the gamut from *Despicable Me* and *Toy Story 3* to *The Town* and *Inception*. All new DVDs are on a spin rack by the circulation desk and circulate for two days; you may renew them once. In order to make them available for the most people you cannot place a hold on these new titles. We also have a huge older collection of video titles including many television series. They circulate for seven days and can be placed on hold. They are free, but if you return them late there is a \$2/day fine per item. So stop in and check out our selection.

You can renew materials three ways, calling the library when we are open, calling ELVIS (908-757-3280) or through our website at [www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us](http://www.southplainfield.lib.nj.us). No matter how you renew, if you use ELVIS or our website, you must renew your materials before midnight on the day they are due. If you renew anytime after midnight the system will charge you a late fee. Many people think if they put material in the bookdrop before we open, that they can renew anytime before we open. That is not the case. We manually set the calendar back before we check in bookdrop items. The automated systems go by the time you are renewing. So, if you renew after midnight on the day an item was due, you will be charged.

Miss Linda and Miss Mija will have their usual storytimes next week. For three to four year olds and up, it is Tuesday at 10:30 a.m., Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. and Thursday at 1:15 p.m. Time for 2s & 3s are Wednesday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. and Books and Babies is Friday morning at 10:30. All programs are drop in and are free.

If you have any questions you can call the library at (908) 754-7885 or visit us at 2484 Plainfield Ave., across the parking lot from Borough Hall.

## Students Don Pajamas for Sick Child

The John E. Riley School Student Council, in conjunction with the entire faculty and staff, held "Pajama Day" on February 24 to raise money for Stephen Austin Maszczak.

Stephen is the grandson of Theresa Huslage, former instructional aide at Riley School. While Theresa was employed at Riley School, her son, Austin, a student at Roosevelt School, passed away from brain cancer when he was nine years old. Stephen, who is seven years old, was diagnosed with brain cancer.

Pajama Day, which raised money

to help the Huslage-Maszczak Family with medical expenses, was a big success. The students, teachers and staff raised \$1,677.

Pink Socs, a foundation established by Riley School fourth grade teacher Christine Dispenziere and her family to honor her sister who passed away from breast cancer, donated additional funds to reach a total amount of \$3,500. The Riley School community hopes that this fundraiser will demonstrate their concern and help make a difference for Stephen and his family.

—Submitted by Barbara Harris

## Lenten Fish Dinners at Sacred Heart Church

The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 and Sacred Heart Church will again sponsor the yearly Lenten fish dinners beginning Friday, March 11 at Sacred Heart School in the cafeteria, 149 South Plainfield Ave. Dinner will be served from 5 to 7 p.m. Take out orders will also be available.

The menu will feature filet of fish (fried, broiled, parmesan), cheese ravioli, manicotti and linguini or pizza; fresh garden salad, rice pilaf, French fries or macaroni and cheese, cole slaw, coffee, tea or cold drink, plus dessert. Admission is \$9/adults, \$8/seniors and \$5/children. Pay at the door.

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## southplainfieldpeople

# Milestones

### Courtney Marie Schaefer Named To Dean's List at Rutgers University



Courtney Marie Schaefer

Courtney Marie Schaefer, a 2010 South Plainfield High School graduate, has been named to the dean's list for the Fall 2010 semester at Rutgers University School of Arts and Sciences. A freshman at Rutgers University, she achieved a 4.0 GPA for the fall semester.

Courtney is a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and a pending member of the National Society of Leadership of Success. She plans to double major in psychology and another program of interest. In addition, she plans to minor in human resource management.

Courtney Marie is the daughter of Barbara and Michael Schaefer of South Plainfield.

### Two Named to Gettysburg Dean's List

Rebecca Deffler and Douglas Porzio, both sophomores from South Plainfield, have been named to the dean's list for the Fall 2010 semester at Gettysburg College. Students must achieve a quality point average of 3.33 or higher for a semester's work.

Founded in 1832, Gettysburg College is a highly selective four-year residential college of liberal arts and sciences with a strong academic tradition that includes Rhodes Scholars, a Nobel laureate and other distinguished scholars among its alumni.

### Brittany Musolino Named to Ramapo College Dean's List

Brittany N. Musolino of South Plainfield, a student at Ramapo College of New Jersey in Mahwah, has been named to the dean's list for the Fall 2010 semester.

Brittany is majoring in environmental studies.



Brittany N. Musolino

**Share Your Good News...  
Send us your Milestones!**

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



(L-R): Susan Espin, Andrea Lacerda, Jesse Lacerda and Michele Leavy.

### Lacerda Earns Circle of Excellence Award

Andrea Lacerda, a realtor associate with Century 21 Moretti Realty in South Plainfield, has achieved the 2010 New Jersey Association of Realtors (NJAR) Circle of Excellence Award-Gold Level for the ninth time in her career. In addition, Andrea has again been honored with the Century 21 "Double Centurian" award.

Andrea partnered with her husband, Jesse Lacerda, in 1998. With the strength of teamwork and the reputation for results the team has grown to four members, including Michele Leavy and Susan Espin. The Lacerda Team appreciates their past clients and numerous referrals. The Lacerda's background in banking has been key to understanding what has been happening with the tough economy and tightening credit. "We understand all

aspects of mortgage financing in addition to knowing our market inside and out," stated Andrea. "2011 will continue to be a challenging year in the real estate industry; we attribute our success to working hard and always putting the customer first. In fact, we have helped over 725 families buy or sell homes in our career."

Andrea resides in South Plainfield with husband Jesse and son Joseph, a sophomore at The College of New Jersey. Jesse also was honored this year with the Paul Harris Fellow Award from Rotary International for his years of dedication to the Green Brook-Dunellen Rotary Club.

For more information, visit [www.LacerdaTeam.com](http://www.LacerdaTeam.com). Andrea can be reached at (908) 578-1166 or via email [Andrea@LacerdaTeam.com](mailto:Andrea@LacerdaTeam.com).

### Sara Holbrook Named to Dean's List

Sara Holbrook of South Plainfield has been named to the Dean's List of Academic Achievement for the Fall 2010 term at Elmira College.

The dean's list recognizes students who have a grade point average of 3.6 or higher for the Fall 2010 academic term.

Sara, who is majoring in visual arts,

is the daughter of Michael Holbrook.

Elmira College, located in the Finger Lakes Region of beautiful, historic upstate New York, is one of the great small colleges of the nation.

To learn more about what Elmira College has to offer, go to [www.elmira.edu](http://www.elmira.edu) or call (800) 935-6472 to schedule a visit.

### Zachary Sikanowicz Named to DeSales University Dean's List

Zachary Sikanowicz, a mathematics major and South Plainfield resident, was among more than 500 traditional day and adult evening students from DeSales University named to the dean's list for the Fall 2010 semester.

DeSales University in Center Valley, Pa., is a private, co-educational, four-year liberal arts university affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. Founded by the Oblates of Saint Francis de Sales in 1965, the 450-acre suburban campus is located 50 miles north of Philadelphia and about 90 miles south of New York City. A total enrollment of nearly 3,000 includes undergraduate day and evening students and graduate students. DeSales offers 37 bachelor's degrees and six graduate programs in a wide range of disciplines. The university also offers the ACCESS Program, the region's leading accelerated degree program for adults.

### Rachel C. Smith Named to Dean's List at TCNJ

Rachel C. Smith, a South Plainfield High School graduate and Edward J. Bloustein Distinguished Scholar, was named to the dean's list at The College of New Jersey for the Fall 2010 semester. A student must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher to receive dean's list recognition.

Rachel is a sophomore at TCNJ where she earned a 3.92 GPA with a major in English and a minor in political science.

Rachel has also interned for the past three summers with State Senator Barbara Buono, 18th District.

### Nicholas Baldasarre Named to Roger Williams Dean's List

Nicholas Baldasarre, a resident of South Plainfield, has been named to the Fall 2010 dean's list at Roger Williams University. Full-time students who complete 12 or more credits per semester and earn a GPA of 3.4 or higher are placed on the dean's list that semester, provided that they have not received any of the following grades: F, I, NP or NS.

Roger Williams University (RWU) is a leading independent, co-educational liberal arts university at which students live and learn to be global citizens. With 41 academic programs and an array of co-curricular activities on its Bristol, R.I. campus, RWU is committed to its mantra of learning to bridge the world. In the last decade, the university has achieved unprecedented academic and financial successes and continues to be recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the top 10 educational institutions in its class.

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