

South Plainfield OBSERVER

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Member New Jersey Press Association

60 CENTS

DECEMBER 30, 2011

2011
LOOKING
BACK

The Year in Review

*The Observer takes a look back at
the stories that made news in 2011*

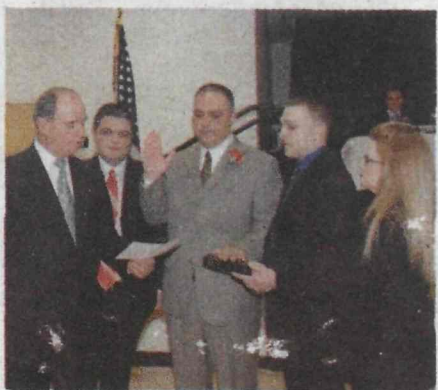


Matt Anesh Sworn In As 18th Mayor

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

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

Rusnak was unanimously elected to serve as council president and former New Jersey Governor Donald DiFrancesco administered the oath of office.



Barletta to Fill Anesh's Unexpired Term

The council unanimously selected Alex Barletta to fill the unexpired council seat vacated when Matthew Anesh took the oath of mayor at the reorganization meeting. Barletta will serve for one year. A special election will be held in November to fill the seat for the remaining year of the three-year term.

Slick Ice + Alcohol = Home Gas Explosion

An out-of-control vehicle, driven by Michael R. Maher, 25, of Tannersville, Pa., slammed into a duplex located at 1204 Rush St. around 1:44 a.m. on January 8 causing a gas line to rupture. Five occupants of the home who were sleeping escaped unharmed. The explosion rocked the neighborhood and damaged homes adjacent to the blast on Rush Street, Woolworth Avenue and Christopher Street. There were no injuries reported.

Maher was charged with driving while intoxicated after he lost control of his 2008 Ford while traveling down New York Avenue, according to South Plainfield Police Lt. Kevin Murtagh.



Council Promotes James Parker to Chief

South Plainfield Police Captain James Parker was promoted to chief of police at the January 14 Borough Council meeting.

Parker is a 17-year veteran of law enforcement, and joined the South Plainfield Police Department in August of 1993.



Troop 125 Celebrates 75-Year Anniversary

Boy Scouting in South Plainfield dates back well over 70 years and Boy Scout Troop 125 boast that they are the oldest active troop in town. On January 9 the troop held a 75-year reunion dinner at the VFW.

Troop 125 was formed in 1933 and holds a copy of the original charter from the former Willis School on New Brunswick Avenue.



Midget Cheerleaders Take First Place—2010 National Champions are: (top row) Jamie Donato, Chelsea Housel, Brooke Barry, Alyssa Capone, Lauren Dicellis, Ashley Franchek, Shayna Hodge, Brittany Della Sala, Asst. Coach Kelly Addario. Middle Row: Head Coach Melissa Smith, Diana Pender, Wiktorja Blazejowicz, Diamond Pender, Alexis Cavaliere, Shannon Fonti, Jennifer Teece, Asst. Coach Wendi Donato. Bottom row: Asst. Coach Doreen Massaro, Katie Addario, Emily Smith, Kara Podlovits, Zoe Falcone, Lauren Zekas and Cheer Commissioner Abra Hodge.

Council Establishes Ad Hoc Library Committee

The Borough Council approved the formation of an Ad Hoc Library Committee at the January 28 council meeting. The committee's job will be to oversee the progress of library negotiations in regards to constructing a new, larger building on the site of the present library.

Most of the members of the new ad hoc committee will include those who served on the library committee, with the exception of former Mayor Charles Butrico, who will be replaced by Mayor Matt Anesh. No Democratic councilmembers were named to the committee.

The new committee will be comprised of Mayor Matt Anesh, Councilman Robert Bengienga and public members Bob Golan and Suzanne Lepore. The Library Board of Trustees is expected to name Eric Aronowitz and Nina Rohrer, who both served on last year's committee.

Wrestlers Secure 3rd Consecutive GMCT Title

South Plainfield High School Tiger Wrestling team, ranked number two in the state by *The Newark Star-Ledger*, sent seven wrestlers to the Greater Middlesex Conference Tournament (GMCT) in Piscataway. The team captured the GMCT team title for the eighteenth time. This is the third consecutive win for the Tiger wrestlers.

Judge Denies Negrón's Contract Renewal Request

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

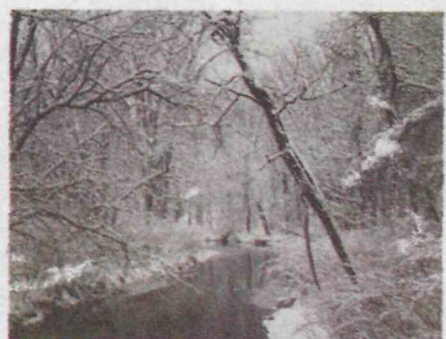
In September of 2007 Negrón was hired for a three-year term expiring on June 30, 2011. On June 29, 2010 the board voted 4-2 in favor of renewing his contract for an additional year through 2012, with abstentions by BOE President Jim Giannakis, Vice President Pio Penisi and Steve Bohn.

Members of the board later decided to place Negrón on a paid leave of absence by a vote of 5-0 during the September 30, 2010 meeting. Maria Lepore, Negrón's attorney, argued that "a simple majority of the quorum is required to carry resolution."



Coaches Care Honored for Contribution—(L-R) Donna Meade, executive director of JFKMC Foundation; Coaches Care Vice President Thomas Lanza, Board Member Rich Little, President Tom McCreesh and Trustee Tony Cassano.

While Mother Nature provided this picturesque scene in the borough (photographed from the South Clinton Avenue extension), she wreaked havoc on the roads with ongoing winter storms that dropped significant ice and snow accumulations.



(Continued on page 5)



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

FYI

Borough Council & BOE

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**
Reorganization Meeting January 7 (1 p.m. at Senior Center)
January 9 January 9

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
• January 10—Reorganization Meeting at 6:45 p.m.

zoning board of adjustment

Meets second and fourth Thursday of the month, *except where noted.
Borough Hall Council Chambers, 7 p.m. Questions? 908-226-7641
• January 12—Reorganization Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

board of education

Meets Wednesdays at Roosevelt Administration Gymnasium on Jackson Ave.
Committee of the Whole meetings (begin at 6:00 p.m.)
Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 14 and April 4.
Regular Public Meeting (begin at 7:30 p.m.) except where noted*
Jan. 18, Feb. 15, March 21, April 11.

BOE curriculum/technology/student activities

Meets once a month at 4:30 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.

library board of trustees

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

recreation commission

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

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.

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

To be announced, 7:30 p.m. in the Senior Center Questions? 908-226-7605

Too cold to go out? To get home delivery of the Observer, call (908) 668-0010 or email spobserver@comcast.net.

South Plainfield Observer

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SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES

We encourage the submission of stories and photos. To have 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 story idea, contact the editor at (908) 668-0010.

The publisher is not responsible for typographical errors.



Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas hosted Breakfast with Santa on December 10 at the Senior Center. Approximately 200 attended. They raised over \$600 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Santa's Team (L-R) are: Pat DeSantis, Nina Rohrer, Charlie Butrico, Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas, Santa, Gail Ramos, Debbie Boyle, Megan Boyle, Natalie Bergen, Joe McGeehan, Chris McGeehan, Billy Butrico and Ken Cavanagh.

In My Opinion

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

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the Roosevelt Elementary School's Student Council, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to our Roosevelt families, teachers and staff, for their generous contributions during our sweatshirt drive. Because of their generosity, four large boxes were overflowing with sweatshirts that were donated to South Plainfield Social Services. This was a great opportunity for our students to witness and participate in a project promoting community involvement and assisting those in need. It also highlights and incorporates our December character trait of "Caring."

We would also like to thank Mrs. DeAndrea for delivering our sweatshirts to Marge Ackerman at Social Services and for spending the day with her putting together the bundles for the needy families in our community. Again, thank you and best wishes for a joyous, peaceful holiday and New Year.

**MARGARET MOSLEY,
STUDENT COUNCIL ADVISOR**

To the Editor:

The South Plainfield Education Foundation completed our annual telethon fundraiser the week of December 5. The students raised over \$6,500 in pledges during the week.

For those who made pledges to our students—thank you very much! Please mail your pledge to the Foundation as soon as you can. We need to distribute the money to various groups before May 2012.

We mailed a letter to every resident of South Plainfield also. Look for your letter in the mail. We included a questionnaire this time for the

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.

Alumni Association. We are planning on having a "buy-a-brick" fundraiser. Please complete it and send it back to us so we can contact you once we are ready to begin in the spring. Also, check out our website. We will have the updated information on there soon. We have not had our raffle yet—we will be pulling the winners at our wine tasting on April 13 at the Senior Center.

There are so many people to thank for making this telethon a huge success. We would like to thank Adele Veirs in the superintendent's office, Barbara Schlactun in the assistant superintendent's office and the teachers in the high school who work with the peer leadership students. Thank you to all of the students for all their hard work and effort! Without them we wouldn't have done nearly as well.

We would like to thank Sodexo and Mary Cameron for providing the soda, water and paper goods each night. We would also like to thank Ciccio's Pizza and Hometown Heros for helping us with the food each night. For the members of our Foundation who paid for the food each night and for helping each and every night. Also, Presto Printing—they donate the raffle tickets to us each year and all of our supplies are printed by Rich at Presto.

Thank you again to our entire community for helping the Foundation continue to provide incentive programs in the district, and to continue providing scholarships to deserving graduating seniors.

**SINCERELY,
MARJORIE M. REEDY, PRESIDENT,
SP EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

To the Editor:

First of all, 2011 was a record-setting year for my coin and scrap gold business. None of it would have been possible without your patronage, your referrals and my wonderful relationship with the *Observer*. Here's looking to an even better 2012.

As I am attempting to remove duplicates from my coin, history and sports-related collectible library, the South Plainfield High School Media Center is receiving very contemporary, informative and enlightening references on behalf of me and my wife, Lisa. One book in particular is a large, coffee table book on significant sports card and memorabilia items.

Others include a brand-new, 2012 *Redbook*, the highest quality and most respected reference on United States coinage that it is put out annually.

There will be more coming to the high school and to the middle school as well. Regardless of what many people might think, libraries are an important and vital resource to any community. As one of my former teachers pointed out aptly: "How can you perform research correctly if you have not been told how or have a means to perform research correctly?"

GREG HEIM



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Kennedy Principal Lisa Parker Receives Tenure

By Libby Barsky

Lisa Parker received tenure as principal of Kennedy School at the meeting of the Board of Education held on December 21. Acting Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Gary Bowen presented the certificate of tenure to Parker.

Parker began teaching after receiving a BA from The College of New Jersey and a master's degree from New Jersey City University. She began her 20 year teaching career in Piscataway ascending to dean of stu-

dents before coming to South Plainfield in October 2007 as assistant high school principal and assistant middle school principal.

In November 2008 she was appointed Kennedy School principal. Under her leadership the NJASK test scores in math and language arts literacy for third and fourth grades have increased yearly from 2009-2011. In 2011, Kennedy School third grade test scores increased in both language arts (+10.9%) and math (4.7%). Fourth grade increased its passing rate in language arts by 23% and math by 6.9%.

Under Parker, the Listen To Children Program—an inter-generational program—continues to bring seniors together with students to form beneficial associations for both.

Missing Woman Found

Marilyn Mitchell, a 43 year-old borough woman who was reported missing last Tuesday by family members, was found the next day at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick.

According to South Plainfield Police Sgt. David Delair, a friend of Mitchell's son saw the missing woman at the hospital and notified authorities. Delair also said that an

investigation into Mitchell's disappearance revealed that she had spent time traveling by train and bus before she turned up at the hospital. No information was given on where she might have traveled to or why.

According to Public Information Officer Lt. Kevin Murtagh, Mitchell was admitted to the hospital for an undisclosed medical condition.

The Institute at MCC Provides Free Training for Employees

Employees of area businesses and organizations can get free training in computer applications, English as a Second Language, math and customer service. It is being offered at Middlesex County College's Edison campus, the college's Perth Amboy Center and the Carteret Library.

If the employer has 10 or more employees in the program, the training can be done at the job site.

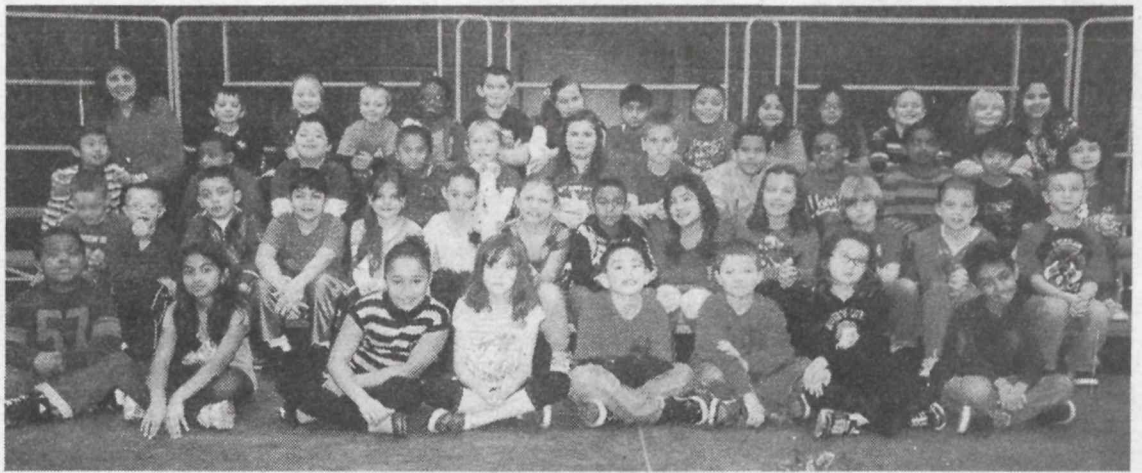
"I would encourage employers to take advantage of this free training," said Patricia Moran, director of the college's Institute for Management and Technical Development. "It's a great way to upgrade your employees' skills, and it is free."

The program is funded by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Labor, the New Jersey Business & Industry Association and the New

Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce & Economic Development. This grant has been in existence for the past five years and Middlesex has been extremely active in using it to upgrade the skills of the current workforce.

Employees can get basic skills training in English as a Second Language, written and verbal communications, computer applications (Windows, Word, Excel, Outlook), and mathematics and measurement.

For more information, contact Milena Quiles at (732) 906-4681.



Kennedy School third graders with music teacher Barbara Habeeb.

Kennedy Third Graders Finalists in Choir Contest

Kennedy School music teacher Barbara Habeeb was rehearsing with students last month for the annual holiday concert when she learned of the 101.5 FM Radio Choir Contest from parent Jennifer Ratti. As the contest was ending on November 23, Habeeb quickly recorded the song the third graders had mastered, *Holly Jolly Christmas*, and entered the contest electronically via the radio station's website.

"They knew all the words," said Habeeb, who for the past month has been preparing the combined third grade classes twice a week during the music period of teachers Teresa Luck, Kevin McCann and Britany DeNitzio.

At 11 a.m. on December 21, the radio station notified Habeeb that Kennedy School was a finalist. The station played the song on the Denis and Judy show at 11:50 a.m. Habeeb sent out a notice advising parents to begin voting for the students by going to station's website, www.NJ1015.com, beginning at noon on December 21 through noon on December 22.

The contest is now over and the wait is on. Kennedy is one of three finalists in the elementary school division of the contest. If they win in their division there will be a \$1,000 prize to be used by school.

There are 16 finalists, three from

each of the three groups: elementary, middle school and high school level. The finalist who receives the most votes of all 16 schools will receive a Harris studio piano from the Great American Piano Company of Edison.

Larry DelNegro Promoted to Vice President at Fyre Technology

Fyre Technology Inc. has announced the promotion of South Plainfield resident Lawrence (Larry) DelNegro to the position of vice president and general manager.

DelNegro's career with Fyre Technology began in June of 1995 as a lead technician. He has held various positions within this local organization.

DelNegro is a lifetime resident of South Plainfield and graduated South Plainfield High School in 1983.

His term with South Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department began in 1984 as a firefighter. He was elected in 1990 to lieutenant, then captain, deputy chief and fire chief. He also was employed by the borough as a fire inspector from 1988 to 1993.

Fyre Technology Inc. was founded in South Plainfield in 1989 by Joseph Celentano and Larry Meservy. As 2012 approaches Fyre Technology will be celebrating 23 years and has grown from three employees to over 20 locally employed personnel, serving the community and the entire state as one of 22 out of 700 companies licensed "All Fire Protection" for the State of New Jersey.

Tax Assessment List for 2012

The 2012 Tax Assessment List will be available for review on January 25, 2012 in the Tax Assessor's office located at 2480 Plainfield Ave. The office will be open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This notice complies with all state of New Jersey and County Tax Board directives.

Mary Frances Hildebrandt
Borough Assessor

Veterans Administration Opens New Service Facility

The Veterans Administration recently opened a new local service facility at 14 Wills Way, off Old New Brunswick Road in Piscataway. This service office is open to all armed forces veterans male and female of all ages.

Hours are Monday to Friday 8

a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A shuttle-bus service is also available.

The phone number to register or for information is (732) 981-8193.

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<p>\$65 Eyelash Extension</p> <p>With coupon only. Not to be combined with any offer or gift certificate. Expires 2/31/2012.</p>	<p>New Customer Special (Any service)</p> <p>With coupon only. Not to be combined with any offer or gift certificate. Expires 2/31/2012.</p>	<p>50% OFF</p> <p>Autoclave Sterilization Same Method Used by Hospital</p>

events

Around Town

SENIOR CENTER Calendar

2012 Annual Membership fees (\$10) are now due!
Please stop in & check out our new and exciting programs.

MONDAYS

Active Seniors 8:30 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

Exercise Class 8:45 am
Shopping 9 am
Line Dancing 10 am
Computer.. 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm
Crocheting 1 pm
Tai Chi 2 pm

THURSDAYS

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

FRIDAYS

Bingo 10 am-2 pm

VFW Country Breakfast

January 8

The South Plainfield VFW, 155 Front St., is holding a country breakfast on Sunday, Jan. 8 from 8 to 11 a.m. The public is welcome.

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

Historical Society Monthly Meeting

January 10

The first Historical Society meeting in the new year will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 10 in the History Center, located in the BOE building, 125 Jackson Ave., at 7 p.m. Parking and entrance is on Jackson Avenue. Annual membership fees are due. New members can also sign up.

If you have historic artifacts you would like to display at the center, we would gladly welcome them. A history buff recently found seven musket balls in a former camp site in town.

— Out of Town —

Singles Dance Party

December 30

Steppin' Out Singles will be hosting a pre-New Year's upscale singles dance party at the Woodbridge Hilton, 20 Wood Ave. South in Iselin on Friday, Dec. 30 at 8 p.m. Ages 40 and up. Admission: \$17.

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

Middlesex East WOWs Business Mtg.

January 2

Middlesex East Widows Or Widowers will conduct a business meeting on Monday, Jan. 2 at 7 p.m. at the Carteret Community Center located at Pershing and Cooke avenues. All widows or widowers are invited to attend.

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



To Promote & Protect Public Health & Welfare

MIDDLESEX COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

By Ronald G. Rios, Chair, Committee of Law and Public Safety

Holiday Safety

The winter holidays are a time for celebration, and that means more cooking, home decorating, entertaining, and an increased risk of fire and accidents. Each year fires occurring during the holiday season claim the lives of over 400 people, injure 1,650 more, and cause over \$990 million in damage. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), there are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday. Please exercise extra caution during this special season. Trust your instincts; if something does not look or feel right, it probably isn't. Remember, being safe doesn't take a holiday. We recommend that you follow these guidelines to help make your holiday season safer and more enjoyable.

Holiday Lighting: Use caution with holiday decorations and, whenever possible, choose those made with flame-resistant, flame-retardant

and non-combustible materials. Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials and do not use candles to decorate Christmas trees. Carefully inspect new and previously used light strings, and replace damaged items before plugging lights in. Do not overload extension cords. Keep children and pets away from light strings and electrical decorations. Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use. Make sure all the bulbs work and that there are no frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections. Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground-fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shocks. Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.

Holiday Entertaining: Test your smoke alarms, and let guests know what your fire escape plan is. Keep matches and lighters up high, out of the sight and reach of children (preferably in a locked cabinet). Provide plenty of large, deep ashtrays, and check them frequently. Cigarette butts can smolder in the trash and cause a fire, so completely douse cigarette butts with water before discarding. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S. When cooking for holiday visitors, remember to keep an eye on the range.

Trees: When purchasing an artificial tree look for the label "fire-resistant." When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches, and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces, radiators and portable heaters. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways. Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption and will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard. Be sure to keep the stand filled with water, because heated rooms can dry live trees out rapidly. Make sure the base is steady so the tree won't tip over easily.

Fireplaces: Before lighting any fire, remove all greens, boughs, papers and other decorations from fireplace area. Check to see that the flue is open. Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

Toys and Ornaments: Purchase appropriate toys for the appropriate age. Some toys designed for older children might be dangerous for younger children. Electric toys should be UL/FM approved. Toys with sharp points, sharp edges, strings, cords, and parts small enough to be swallowed should not be given to small children. Place older ornaments and decorations that might be painted with lead paint out of the reach of small children and pets.

Children and Pets: Poinsettias are known to be poisonous to humans and animals, so keep them well out of reach or avoid having them. Watch children and pets around space heaters or the fireplace. Do not leave a child or pet unattended. Store scissors and any sharp objects that you use to wrap presents out of your child's reach. Keep decorations at least six inches above the child's reach.

Security: Use your home burglar alarm system. If you plan to travel for the holidays, don't discuss your plans with strangers. Have a trusted friend or neighbor to keep an eye on your home.

And most of all have a safe and joyous holiday season.

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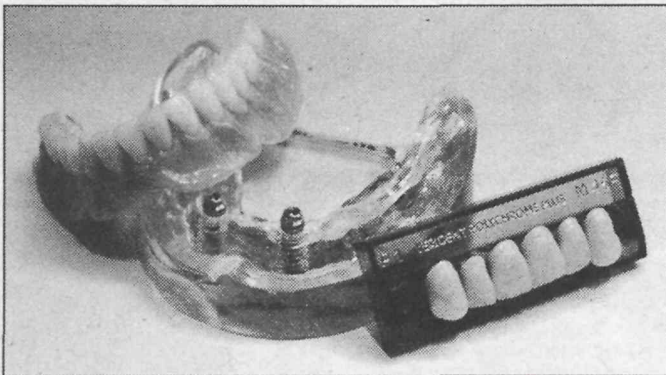
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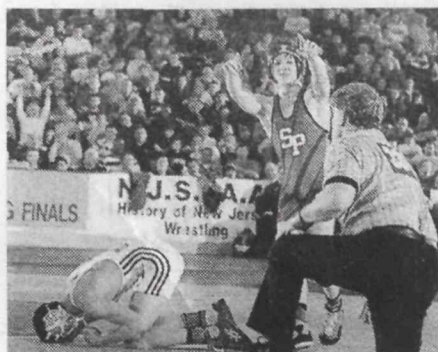
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2011

LOOKING BACK

The Year in Review

The Observer takes a look back at the stories that made news in 2011



Ashnault Makes History

Sophomore Anthony Ashnault of South Plainfield raised his hands in victory after defeating freshman Mike Magaldo of Watchung Hills, 7-1 in front of a crowd of 11,000 at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City on March 6. With the win, Ashnault also made history as the first wrestler from South Plainfield High School to secure first place in the state championship two years in a row. Last year Ashnault competed in the 103 lb. weight class; this year he wrestled in the 112 lb. weight class in the finals. Ashnault finished his year with an impressive 42-0 record and a 86-0 career total.

Council Approves PBA Contract

The Borough Council approved a new four year contract for the South Plainfield PBA Local 100 at a public meeting on February 22. Democratic Councilmembers Chrissy Butcas 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.

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.

Police Officer Delivers Breech Baby in Auto

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. The premature infant was transported to JFK Medical Center in Edison by Somerset EMS and medics from Mercy 9.



The Cat in the Hat (Reading Specialist Christine Warian) shares some green eggs with students. (L-R) Maria Callanan, Zaire Spears, Joseph Troiano and Isabella Flanagan.

BOE Adopts Tentative 2011/2012 Budget

The Board of Education adopted a tentative school budget for the fiscal year 2011/2012 on March 3 with a proposed tax levy of \$42,136,706, up \$2.7M from the 2010/2011 budget. If the levy amount remains constant, the tax rate based on an average property assessment of \$123,000 would cost each household an estimated additional \$211 a year. The BOE was required to adopt and submit a tentative budget to

the state by March 4. The preliminary tentative budget of \$52,616,717 is an increase of \$1.4M over last year, or 2.85%. According to recently released state aid figures, the borough will receive a total of \$7,779,921 in Equalization Aid and Special Education Categorical Aid, which are termed differently than in past years. The district saw an increase of \$473,231 over last year's state aid.

Stephen Maszczak Mourned

Stephen Austin Maszczak, 7, passed away on March 14.

A viewing was held on March 16 at the Fleming-ton Presbyterian Church. Stephen's funeral was held at Evangel Church in Scotch Plains.



Bus Company Cleanup Cost Lower Than Anticipated

A remedial investigation report submitted by Maser Consulting PA in Mt. Arlington shows that the cost to clean up the old Suburban Bus Company site on New Market Avenue is far below what was projected back in 2007.

The new estimate, which includes well sampling, soil excavation, tank removal, post remedial soil sampling, consulting services and remedial action and outcome reports, totals \$138,000 and should take approximately 10 weeks to complete.

A similar report released four years ago by PMK Group of Cranford estimated the cost to remediate the site between \$342,000 and \$442,000. CFO Glenn Cullen commented that the new report shows the contamination to be "well below DEP standards," which might explain the difference in the prices.

The 2.6-acre property had been utilized as

a bus depot since the late 1950s, and was put up for sale by the owner's heirs. Middlesex County Open Space funds were used by the borough in December of 2006 to buy the property for \$750,000.

GOP Taps Barletta, White, Frank to Run For Borough Council

Councilman Alex Barletta, Zoning Board member Derryck White and former American Legion Commander Dick Frank will lead the GOP ticket when voters go to the polls this fall to fill three council seats. Barletta currently sits on the council; he filled the seat Anesh gave up after being sworn in as mayor.

Hanlon Named Principal Of Holy Savior Academy

Melinda Hanlon, a highly experienced educator in the Diocese of Metuchen, has been named principal of Holy Savior Academy in South Plainfield. She will replace Acting Principal Donna Kanowitz, who will return to her position as assistant superintendent of schools for the diocese.



Furry Intruder Drops Into Unity Bank

Early on the morning of February 17 the alarm sounded at Unity Bank on Plainfield Avenue. Maria Sivo, assistant vice president and relationship manager, was contacted almost immediately by the bank's alarm company who asked her to meet South Plainfield Police at the scene.

Police had arrived within minutes and

(Continued on next page)

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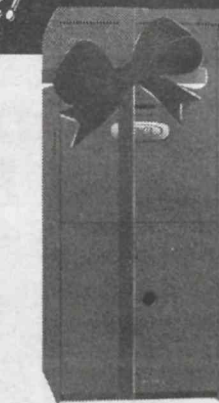
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2011 LOOKING BACK

The Year in Review

The Observer takes a look back at the stories that made news in 2011

(Continued from previous page)

quickly ascertained that a person had not broken into the bank; but rather it was a raccoon, which they observed through a window crawling across the tellers' counters and leaving behind a trail of disaster in its wake. Once inside the bank, three police officers were able to corner the raccoon which had scurried into the safe deposit box area to hide from all of the commotion. The raccoon was then "pardoned" by bank personnel and let go. He was last seen running off into the woods and up a tree behind the building.

Borough Budget Introduced; Tax Rate to Remain Flat

At a special Borough Council meeting, members of the Library Board of Trustees learned that \$750,000 of the nearly \$2M in surplus funds which they have been putting aside for a new library will instead be used to balance the 2011 municipal budget.

The council introduced a 2011 budget figure of \$25,899,182, with \$16,040,365 of that amount to be raised through tax dollars. The total budget is down \$72,008 from last year; however, taxes will remain flat at 1.225 or approximately \$225 a month based on a home assessed at \$123,000, according to CFO Glenn Cullen.

A new law enacted last week states that the money collected from taxpayers to fund a local library has to be separated in future tax bills.



Music Festival, Art Exhibit Features Fifth through 12th Grades

The South Plainfield School District held the 42nd annual All District Music Festival and Art Exhibition on March 27. The event featured band, orchestra and choral groups from Grant School, the middle school and the high school.

The hallways were filled with artwork from the various schools and offered guests a well-rounded representation of the arts in the schools. There were performances by Grant Elementary Orchestra, Middle School Onyx, Middle School Orchestra, the high school Emeralds and high school orchestra.

Residents Meet the BOE Candidates

The South Plainfield Middle School PTO sponsored the Board of Education (BOE) Meet the Candidates Night at Kennedy School. The seven candidates, incumbents Steve Bohn, Sharon Miller and Pio Pen-

nisi and challengers John Farinella, Michael Gregov, Jignesh Shah and Joseph Sorrentino, answered tough questions from a crowd of approximately 55 residents.

SPHS Production of Footloose Opens

South Plainfield High School presented the musical *Footloose* in the high school auditorium.



The cast of Footloose

Women's History Month Essay Winner Recognized



South Plainfield High School student Albert Vill was the winner of the Women's History Month essay contest. He was recognized at a Borough Council meeting.



John Mocharski receives a plaque from Dan Uken recognizing him as Citizen of the Year.

Elks Name Mocharski Citizen of the Year

South Plainfield resident John Mocharski Sr. was honored by the Elks Central District Americanism Committee on March 27 when he was named the local Citizen of the Year by the South Plainfield Elks Lodge. The ceremony and dinner were held at the Brunswick Elks Lodge.

Proposed BOE Budget To Eliminate 30 Jobs

Acting Superintendent Dr. Gary Bowen and Interim Business Administrator Nick Pulcio gave their final budget presentation to Borough Council members at the regular public meeting held April 25.

The proposed budget for the fiscal year 2011/2012 is \$52,675,285. Residents will vote on the proposed school board budget tax levy portion of \$40,665.182. If ap-

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2011

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The Observer takes a look back at the stories that made news in 2011

proved, the new tax rate will be 2.845, resulting in an additional annual assessment of \$130.77 for a home assessed at \$123,000 (average assessed home). According to Bowen, voting in favor of the budget will still mean a staff reduction of 30+ employees "across the board in every category."



Ponytail Softball Opening Day

The Recreation Department's Ponytail Softball held opening day ceremonies on April 9. The girls marched proudly across the field and listened to Recreation Director Kevin Hughes' remarks about the highly acclaimed program and his best wishes for a successful season. Laine Harris sang *The Star Spangled Banner*, and Recreation Commission President Calvin Gross offered the invocation.

Special guests at the ceremony were members of the high school varsity softball team along with their coaches, Don Panzarella and Joe Blondo. Also attending the event were Recreation Commission members Bill DeNitzio and Christine Marks, Council President Ray Rusnak and councilmembers Tim McConville, Chrissy Buteas and Rob Bengivenga.



Junior Baseball Club Holds 58th Annual Opening Day Ceremony

April 9 was a beautiful day for the South Plainfield Junior Baseball Club opening day parade and ceremony. The morning began with the 29 teams walking to the beat of the high school marching band through the streets being led to the fields on Spicer Avenue by the fire department and rescue squad.

Master of ceremonies was Past Commissioner and Lifetime Member Phil Aiello, Sr., who offered up a moment of silence for the men and women serving our country around the world. Doves provided by Kaila's Love Doves were released; Laine Harris sang the *Star Spangled Banner* for the crowd and Rev. Gray gave an invocation and blessing.



Lion Mike Zushma prepares a made-to-order omelet.

Lions Club Hosts Annual Gourmet Breakfast

It wouldn't be Palm Sunday in South Plainfield without the Lions Club hosting the annual gourmet breakfast. The event, held in the high school cafeteria, officially began at 8 a.m., but Lions members and their families, including children, were on the scene much earlier setting up and doing food prep long before the doors opened. During the early hours of the breakfast there were long lines of hungry patrons.



A Maple Avenue home sustained damage after a van traveling at a high rate of speed crashed into it and damaged the gas line.

Voters Say Nay To BOE Budget

South Plainfield voters rejected the proposed 2011/12 Board of Education budget by 108 votes at the April 27 election. The final vote was 1,020 to 912. If approved, property taxes would have increased by approximately \$135 on the average home assessed at \$123,000. Of the 13,712 eligible voters, 1,932 cast votes (14%).

Seven candidates vied for a three-year term. The top vote getter was incumbent Sharon Miller, who received 906 votes, followed by Joseph Sorrentino, 765 and John Farinella, 730. Incumbents Steven Bohn received 715 votes; Pio Pennisi received 624. First time candidates Jignesh Shah and Michael Gregov received 525 and 492 votes, respectively.

SPEA Accepts Three-Year Contract

After nearly a year of negotiations with the South Plainfield Education Association (SPEA), the Board of Education announced the settlement of a new, three-year contract with teachers, teachers' aides and secretaries units at the May 4 meeting.

According to BOE Vice President Debbie Boyle who chaired the negotiating team with the SPEA, the contracts call for a 2.6% salary increase for the 2010/2011 school year (the previous three-year contract expired last June), a 2.1% increase in 2011/2012 and a 2% increase for 2012/2013.

Wells Fargo Robbed

Wells Fargo Bank, located in Middlesex Mall at the corner of Stelton and Hadley roads, was robbed on May 17 at 2:30 p.m.

The suspect is described as a Hispanic male wearing black clothing and a red baseball cap. He demanded money and fled on foot with an undetermined amount of cash.

The FBI and the South Plainfield Police Department are investigating the incident.



Ashley Lopez performs at the Cultural Arts showcase held on May 1.

New Truck Route Applications Under Review by DEP

After nearly three years since its genesis, the Ad Hoc Truck Committee took a monumental step on May 3 by submitting applications for the Hollywood Avenue Extension to the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Committee member Terry Vogt hand-delivered the Freshwater Wetlands Individual Permit and Flood Hazard Area Permit to the DEP's Division of Land Use Regulation, which will begin review for "administrative completeness" in accordance with application checklists and regulations.

Once the DEP's review is concluded and the applications are deemed complete, the project will move into the "technical review phase."



BOE members Sharon Miller, John Farinella, Jr. and Joseph Sorrentino.

Council Cuts School Budget by \$526,000

The Borough Council approved \$526,000 in cuts from the 2011/2012 school board budget at the May 17 meeting. The proposed budget, which reflected an increase of \$1.24M over last year's school budget, was defeated by voters in the April 17 elections.

The 2011/2012 Fiscal Year budget, to which the Board of Education must adhere, will be \$52,149,285; \$40,139,182 of which will be raised by property taxes. State aid figures for the district total \$7,779,921 in Equalization Aid and Special Education Categorical Aid, an increase of almost a half million dollars over last year.

The Board of Education is scheduled to meet and a vote will be taken to approve the cuts suggested by the council, and then formal action will be taken on the 2011/2012 school year budget.

Gerber Named County Pole Vault Champion

South Plainfield High School junior James Gerber was named Middlesex County Champion after a jump off against South Brunswick's Jaleel Alston in the pole vault competition at the Greater Middlesex Conference (GMC) Track and Field championships. Everyone at Jost Field watched the event unfold as the two rivals took eight additional jumps to determine the outcome. A personal best, Gerber's winning jump height was 12 feet, six inches. James is the first county champion in the pole vault in South Plainfield history. Sophomore Jesse Deffler, who also jumped a personal best at 11 feet, six inches, joined James at the podium.



Board of Education Votes to Cut 22 Staff Members

On May 11, members of the Board of Education officially approved the elimination of 21 tenured teachers, as well as Sophia Domogala, director of the adult school and continuing education. Domogala's duties also include grant writing and oversight of the latch key and preschool programs.

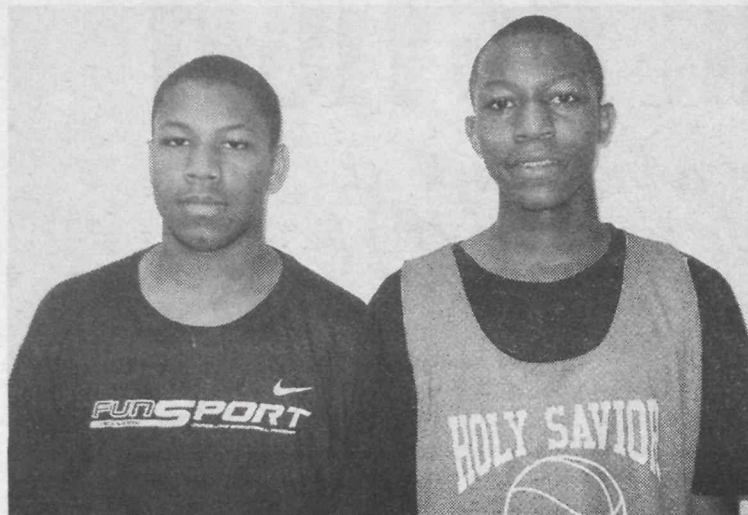
Cut from the high school are a social studies and physical education teacher. Five positions were cut from the middle school, including three reading teachers, an English and a music teacher. Five Grant School teachers were also eliminated.

Full-time kindergarten will continue in September; however, because considerably fewer children (50) are currently registered, three kindergarten teachers have been cut. In addition to the kindergarten teachers, Kennedy, Roosevelt and Riley schools will also lose teachers.

For part two of 2011: A Year in Review, see next's week issue.

sports

Holy Savior Basketball Players Rank in Top 100



Idris Joyner and Tyus Battle are two of the top 100 eighth grade basketball players in the United States.

By Jane Dornick

Holy Savior Academy, located on South Plainfield Avenue, is home to two of the top 100 eighth grade basketball players in the United States as ranked by Hoop Scoop.

Tyus Battle of Edison is a 6'5" point guard who transferred this year from Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Edison. He is ranked third nationally

for the Class of 2016 by Hoop Scoop. "Tyus is an exceptional talent being 6' 5" with great ball handling skills," said Holy Savior Academy Storm Coach Young. "He plays hard on every possession on both ends of the floor. There is no doubt you will hear his name for many years to come."

Last season Tyus played in two different Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) programs, Team Final and the

New Jersey Demons. Team Final was ranked third in the country at 11U and fifth in the 12U league.

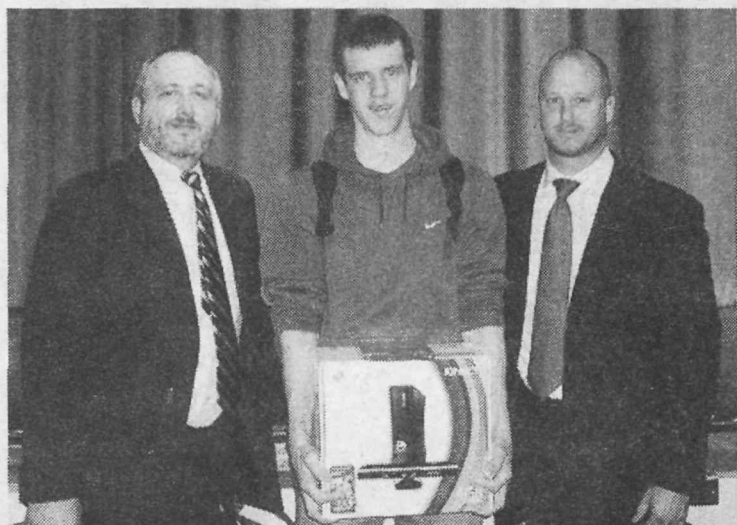
Plainfield resident Idris Joyner is a 6' 6" forward who transferred from St. Helena School in Edison and is ranked in the top 100 for the Class of 2016 by Hoop Scoop. "Idris is a real steady player," remarked Coach Young. "If you look at the box score after a game you realize he has made a solid contribution. He shoots the ball really well for someone his age and size."

"It is rare that two top players in the United States play on the same team," said Coach Young. "Over two games, Tyus is averaging 26 points per game while Idris is averaging 11 per game." The team is now 2-0 for the season with wins over St. Helena's and St. James.

"It is an honor to coach two great players this early on in their playing careers," commented Coach Young. "They both will do great things, hopefully on the basketball court and in the classroom in the coming year. Both are sons of basketball coaches so it's a pleasure to have them in our program. As their coach, I have about three more months to help contribute to their basketball development."

Both students are looking at high school programs next year at St. Anthony High School in Jersey City and St. Joseph High School in Metuchen, among others.

Holy Savior Academy, previously Sacred Heart School, first opened on September 2 and is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. They hold pre-school through eighth grade classes.



SPHS Principal Dr. James Pedersen and Assistant Principal Joe Cirigliano with Hulk Hogan's Main Event prize winner Jack Green.

Jack Green Wins Hulk Hogan Sweepstakes

By Jane Dornick

South Plainfield High School senior Jack Green was the grand prize winner in Channel One News' Hulk Hogan's Main Event Sweepstakes held last month. Representatives from the news station held a surprise assembly at the school on November 29 and awarded Jack \$3,500 for the school's athletic department, along with an Xbox 360 Kinect gaming system and the new Hulk Hogan's Main Event game for himself.

The visit was filmed with students giving their best Hulk Hogan impersonations. The footage was aired during a Channel One News broadcast on December 29 and can be seen on the high school's website, spboe.org, under "SPPS Pride." Hogan was supposed to make an appearance at the school; however, he had a prior engagement.

The contest was open to students 13-18 years old throughout the country and, according to Jack, his name was chosen out of 679 entries. "I was really surprised," said Jack, who received a call from Channel One a week prior to the event.

Principal Dr. James Pedersen remarked, "We are very proud of Jack and are extremely grateful he entered

the Main Event contest. Because of him, our school's athletic program will be able to do a few things extra this year. Great job, Jack!"

Broadcasting since 1990, Peabody Award-winning Channel One News is the top source of high quality, unbiased news and information for young people. A dynamic 12 minute news broadcast is delivered daily to nearly six million teens in approximately 8,000 middle schools and high schools across the country, providing global and national headlines from a teen perspective with a fast-paced production style, youthful reporters and contemporary music.

Graphic Arts Club Advisor Rich D'Urso coordinates the Channel One News station for the school which consists of many student volunteers. Each day a live broadcast of the morning announcements airs via classroom TV's throughout the school. There are also news clips that are presented to students during the day. Although interest in Tiger TV has grown since its inception a couple of years ago, the club is always in need of new and used video equipment donations. Channel One News segments are also viewed by students in the Middle School and Grant School as well.

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SPHS WEEKLY SPORTS SCHEDULE

South Plainfield High School

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31

9:00am V Wrestling-Delbarton/Par/Mt. Lks (A) Bus 7:00

TUESDAY, JANUARY 3

3:45pm G&BV Bowling-Perth Amboy at Carolier (A) Bus 2:30
3:45pm G Fr Basketball-Monroe (A) Bus 2:30
3:45pm B Fr Basketball-Monroe (H)
4:15pm V Swimming-Colonia (A) Bus 3:30
6:00pm V Wrestling-Ridgewood JV/4:30 (A) Bus 2:30
7:00pm GV Basketball-Monroe JV/5:15 Bus 3:45
7:00pm BV Basketball-Monroe (H) JV/5:15

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4

7:00pm V Wrestling-East Brunswick JV/5:30 (A) Bus 3:30

THURSDAY, JANUARY 5

3:45pm B Fr Basketball-North Brunswick (A) Bus 2:30
3:45pm G&BV Bowling-Sayreville at Carolier (A) Bus 2:30
3:45pm G Fr Basketball-North Brunswick (H)
7:00pm BV Basketball-North Brunswick JV/5:15 (A) Bus 3:45
7:00pm GV Basketball - North Brunswick (H) JV/5:15

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6

3:45pm V Swimming-Parsippany (A) Bus 2:30
7:00pm V Wrestling-St. Peters Pr (H) JV/5:30

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Grant School Student Council members enjoy a holiday party and made holiday cards that were delivered to the Senior Center, as well as a local nursing home, in order to spread a little extra cheer to the people that live there.

Grant First Marking Period Honor Roll

High Honor Roll

Adam Abdeljaber, Clifford Adkins, Karly Almanzar, Alejandra Arboleda, Jacquelyn Battista, Katalina Bedoya, Michael Behr, Branden Berardi, Rishi Bhalodi, Anjali Blow, Ryan Boettcher, Matthew Cassio, Ming-Wai Cheung, Arianna Clark, Michael Clevenger, Kausik Das, Isaiah David, Skylar Davisson, Ryan DeGroot, Catherine DeLair, Megan Dincen, Jessica Dug-tong, Omnia Ediris, Connor Eggert, Jake Elsmann, Lynda Farinella

Kyle Gallardo, Priscilla Gavilanes, Wyatt Gerber, Marc Giordano, Nithya Goel, Jennifer Grasso, Alexis Grayon, Sarah Gwaizda, Brenden Hedden, Joseph Heilmann, Jillian Holoboski, Ezinne Ibeku, Maricelys Inoa, William Keane, Tiffany Le, Robert Lenau, Cassidy Leonardis, Olivia Leonardis, Christina Lobosco, David Loniewski, Martha Lopez, Charles Lovett, Adithyan Menon, Jayesh Mistry, Jonathan Nguyen, Oluchi Nwankwo

Ashley Olson, Brandon Pascale, Akaash Patel, Amit Patel, Harshit Patel, Meera Patel, Alexander Peer, Sahit Penmatcha, Victoria Pipolo, Shea Price, Aishwarya Rajesh, Neelam Rana, Pratyusha Ravulapalli, Sarah Regan, Emily Resal, Jacob Rivera, Zenen River, John Roarty, Laura Rodriguez, Joseph Sacco, Taylor Santamaria, Jade Scotti, Dylan Silverstein, Bridget Simpson, Sarahann Singh, Ria Soni, Brianna Spadavecchia, Vito Tartza, Nancy Tran, Daria Turner, Edwin Vasquez, Kenneth Williams, Alyzah Ziga

Honor Roll

Tala Abdeljaber, Sarah Abdelsalam, Sarah Abrego, Aniket Agnihotri, Maya Ahmed, Sabrina Ahmed, Eric Akpan, Yenefiker Alamerew, Conner

Aleksandrowicz, Kinza Ali, Alexander Amato, Gavin Apgar, Alexander Ardito, Isabella Ardito, Irvin Arevalo Carballo, Brianna Atkinson, Andrea Avelar, Ryan Bali, Anthony Barge, Yanderi Batista, Hrithik Bawa, Justin Bell, Jillian Bengivenga, Ryan Berardi, Tyler Berardi, Kaziah Betts, David Bickunas, Jacob Blend, Patrick Both, Domonique Bowe, Kristen Brady, Sonali Budhan, Bradley Butler

Shawn Callanan, Cara Capone, Ryan Carey, Olivia Carone, Michael Castagno, David Chatel, Julianne Chavez, Christine Chen, Amanda Cheng, Daniel Ciardiello, Steven Colicchio, Brianna Crabtree, Alexis Curtis, Steven Dang, Jenna DaSilva, Julie Davis, Philio DeFort, Leanna DeLisa, Jake DelPaoli, Zachary DelVecchio, Deanna DeVizio, Caylee Dress, Joshua Eggert, Francine Esiape, Alannah Esporin

Jennifer Flasser, Pavan Gandhi, Alejandro Garcia, William Glynn, Lailah Goldberg-Mora, Donald Grabinsky, Allison Graves, Kayla Greenleaf, David Gross, David Guevara, Xiann Guzman, Mackenzie Hall, Brian Harper, Troy Harzula, Devin Hastings, Jeffrey Heine, Dishon Hessing, Tiana Hooks, Gabriel Humphreys Lippel, Ashlee Jacobs, David Jaipersaud, Jason Jaramillo, Chance Jones, Gwentyth Jones, Justin Jones

Mehdi Kamal, Joseph Kelly, Shivam Khandelwal, Grace Lagasse, Michael Lapolla, Courtney Lee, Julian Lee, Neha Lund, Brandon Luster, Kaylie Macpherson, Kristi Maher, Kieran Mangra, Alexa Manno, Krystal Manobanda, Aubrey Marish, Michael Marrero, Thomas Massaro, Mikayla Mastroianni, Brian Maszczak, Christopher Mayorga, Jessica McGuinness, Hailey Medina, Michael Menkin, Simran Modhera, Anaid Mohtadi,

Mayra Moreno, Darius Mullens, Jonathan Munillal

Sahith Nagireddy, Jackson Nguyen, Tyson Nguyen, Luke Niemeyer, John O'Brien, Brandon O'Leary, Alexandria Obregon, Brittany Olsen, Haley Olsen, Ryan Olson, Gabriella Ortiz, Genesis Ortiz-Samayoa, Zachary Paluch, Tiffany Parajon, Michelle Pastuna-Arias, Biren Patel, Jil Patel, Roshni Patel, Vishika Patel, Erwin Pelacz, Henrique Pereira, Joshua Persad, Nicholas Petersen, Cole Peterson, Bao Pham, Jose Ponce, Alona Prokofieva, Louis Quintanilla

Rhea Rajpal, Ashnaf Rashid, Samiya Reid, Isabella Rochford, Rachel Rokicki, Shamir Roque, Bryan Rudnick, Megan Russo, Natalie Rutkowski, Jennah Sadiq, Benjamin Sanko, Shannon Santora, Sebastian Santos, Jack Scrudato, Brian Sesta, Grace Sesta, Christian Shea, Keiko Shegog, Christopher Shine, Jordyn Simmons, Brianna Slover, Courtney Smith, Kaitlyn Smith, Zion Spears, Melanie Stewart, Tatianna Sutor, Megan Szeman, Lucas Tamburro, Diane Tapia Tacan, Dayanara Tavarez, Sid-dharth Thuppil, Claudia Timmerman, Jaclyn Timmerman, Jocelyn Toca, Francesca Torralba, Jenna Toth

Akachukwu Uba, Anthony Vallejo, Dayana Velasco, Emily Velasco, Jonathan Veliz, Nicole Villagomez, Michael Villany, Vena Viran, Rachel Voelkel, Alexis Walker, Alexia Wargacki, Stephanie Waters, Alea Watson, Jacqueline Watt, Jessica Wiczorkiewicz, Samantha Williams, Timothy Wilson, Connor Wolpin, Cole Young, Azreen Zaman, Joseph Zuffanti, Lauren Zultowski

Obituaries

Michael J. Yednak, 93

Michael J. Yednak died on Tuesday, Dec. 20 at JFK Medical Center in Edison.

Born in Jersey City, Mike was raised in South Plainfield and settled in Metuchen in 1950.

A veteran of WWII, Mr. Yednak served with the U.S. Army. He was a combat infantry man in the 9th Infantry Division and fought in eight major campaigns: Algeria-French Morocco, Tunisia, Sicily, Normandy, North France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace and Central Europe. As a result from these hard fought battles it was estimated about 4,000 American lives were lost. For his dedication and distinctive service to his country and his unit, Mr. Yednak received various citations and medals such as the Combat Infantry Badge, three Bronze Stars, one Silver Star, three Presidential Citations, the American Defense Medal, WWII Victory Medal, European African and Middle Eastern Medal, Normandy Medal, NJ Valor Service Medal and the Germany Clasp Occupation Medal. In addition, Mike was a member of the Plainfield VFW Storr-Richie Post #506.

He is predeceased by his wife, Lucy, who died in 2010 and by five siblings.

Surviving are three daughters, Barbara Lublanecki and husband Walter of Long Valley, Carolyn Sbrilli and husband Arthur of North Brunswick and Jane Camilletti and husband Robert of Midland, Mich.; a brother, Joseph of South Plainfield and five grandchildren, Jennifer McGuigan, Michael Lublanecki and Robert, Megan and Stephen Camilletti. Also surviving is a great-grandson, Liam Michael McGuigan.

Funeral Services were held at Mc-Criskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals.

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January 2, 2008

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1110 Hamilton Boulevard or call 908-668-0010.





Menlo Park Veterans Home residents and Knights members.

Knights Host Annual Luncheon for Veterans

The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 held a luncheon on December 4 for veterans from the Menlo Park Veterans Home who served in World War II, the Korean and Vietnam wars. Every year the Knights celebrate Flag Day by inviting the veterans to the council hall for lunch. This year the Knights wanted to celebrate all that the veterans have given to the United States

for our freedom as well as remember the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

The veterans were served prime rib, baked potatoes and fresh vegetables. After dinner the Knights played Bingo and gave away many prizes, which were donated by Irene Butrico.

Co-organizers, Grand Knight Joe Scudato and Bill Butrico, would like to thank the following Knights for their help: Joe McGechan, who

cooked all of the food; and servers Joe Rea, John DeAndrea, Joe DiSimone, Tom Frantz, Rob Richkus, Mike Butrico, Myrna Morales, Ann King and Joan Ficke. The 4th Degree Color Corps also attended the lunch, headed by Faithful Navigator Ted Rubino, Dan Ratti, Roberto Morales, John Bush and Joe Wilkowski.

Another special event at the lunch was the dedication of a flag that was donated to the Knights. The flag is currently flying at the council hall, and was draped over the coffin of Brother Knight Joseph Zaber at his funeral.

Zaber served our country under General George S. Patton with the tank division. While on his way overseas, he lost his son, who was two months old, and also lost his mother. Joe is remembered as a wonderful family man who avidly attended church. He lived in South Plainfield with his wife Florence and two daughters, MaryAnn and Theresa. Zaber's family wanted to donate the flag and see it flying so when they drive by the Knights Hall they'll know it was their father's flag.

programs as well as other organizations who support the scouting movement, such as the Elks Club and Polish Home on New Market Ave. "It's really great to see different organizations support the scouts by either advertisement or letting us give presentations to their clubs," said Scoutmaster Jim Donelson.

To pre-register for this event, please contact Jim Donelson at (908) 361-9699 or by email to rvtr00p125@aol.com. Please pre-register by Monday, Jan. 23.

There is no cost for this event!

Second Be-A-Scout Workshop

The Be-A-Scout Workshop #2 will be held on Monday, Jan. 30 from 7 to 8 p.m. A small social will be held afterward. This workshop is designed for the boys who couldn't make the first workshop, but still want the opportunity to find out all the outdoor excitement of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts of South Plainfield would like to thank the *South Plainfield Observer* for advertising the first workshop event on the front page. Scouting would also like to thank the four sponsor organizations in town for their continued support for the

How Homeowners Can Eliminate the Number One Cause of All Home Fires

One Call Electric Service is providing a series of safety tips that homeowners should know to eliminate the number one cause of all home fires. This release discusses an important topic: Eliminating home fires due to cooking equipment.

According to the Home Safety Council, cooking equipment creates more home fires than anything else.

"When in the kitchen, it can take just a momentary lapse of concentration, and you have a potentially serious problem on your hands," Mark Hollain, owner of One Call said. "You should never leave anything cooking while unattended. That's a recipe for disaster."

Here are some kitchen safety tips everyone should know:

- Remove or distance combustibles that are stored near the cooking surface, including curtains, decorations, and towels.

- If interrupted while cooking, turn the burner to low, and throw a towel over your shoulder or carry a spoon with you as a reminder to return quickly to the range after taking care of the interruption.

- When frying with oil, never leave the pan and heat it slowly so the oil doesn't reach the ignition point. When finished cooking, turn the burner off, move the pan to a cool burner, and put a lid on it.

- If you should have a pan fire, put a

heavy oven mitt on and slide a lid over the pan from front to back. Then, turn the burner off. This method is a better option for household pan fires than fire extinguishers, which if used improperly can spray burning grease out of the pan, actually spreading the fire.

- Store pan lids near the cooking surface so you don't waste time locating one if you have a pan fire.

- Never move the pan when there is a fire in it.

Of course, cooking equipment isn't the only cause of home fires. Faulty electric is among the most common as well. For more information on One Call, visit www.onecallectrical.com and to schedule a free electrical safety inspection, call (908) 769-8200.

duCret School of Art Spring/Fall Semesters

duCret School of Art is currently accepting applications for part time and full time students for the Spring and Fall 2012 Semesters. Graduating high school students, as well as adults in the general community, can take one or multiple classes, or take a full three year accredited art career course.

To apply to the school, call (908) 757-7171 or visit the school between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday-Friday. Admission information can be found at www.ducret.edu.

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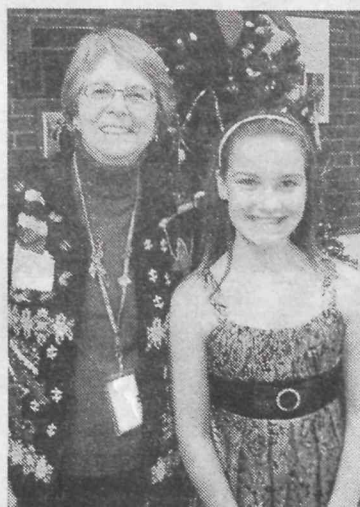
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O'Brien Named Junior Journalist



Mackenzie O'Brien with her teacher, Cynthia Severini.

Mackenzie O'Brien, Kennedy School fourth grade student, is this week's winner in the Junior Journalist program. Her poem, "Winter is Now," has earned Mackenzie dinner for her family, courtesy of Hometown Heros.

The program, which encourages students to express themselves through creative writing, is a joint cooperation between Hometown Heros and the South Plainfield Observer. Students should submit their

original works to their teachers, the Observer or to Hometown Heros. Winners are selected weekly; students and their works are published in the Observer. Hometown Heros makes arrangements to deliver dinner for the winner's entire family.

At the end of the school year in May, Hometown Heros and the Observer host a banquet celebrating all of the weekly winners and their families. A \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bond is awarded to one student by Hometown Heros; additional U.S. Savings Bonds are also awarded. Students are recognized by the mayor and the state assembly as well.

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

Winter is Now

By Mackenzie O'Brien

Winter is now,
Get out your snow plow.
You feel a quiver.
Then you start to shiver.
Let's put up the tree.
Now let's see,
The lights are glowing.
And we are knowing...
WINTER IS HERE!

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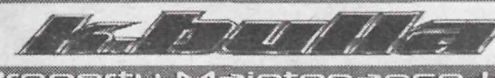


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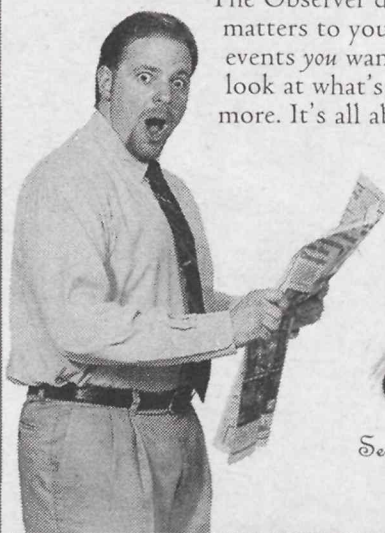
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The following is from the South Plainfield Sustainable Jersey Green Team. This and future news releases are meant to provide the community with an understanding of how the choices they make can lead to a more sustainable future for themselves and the Borough of South Plainfield.

Celebrate the Season While Caring for the Earth

Winding Down the Holiday Season

By Dorothy Miele, SP Green Team

It is important to continue good reduce, reuse and recycle habits during the holidays, especially considering that Americans generate 25% more trash than usual each week between Thanksgiving and New Years. Here are a few suggestions from the South Plainfield Green Team.

Once the swag is removed, flatten cardboard boxes and tie in small bundles. Separate cans and glass bottles that may have gotten into your regular trash. Bundle holiday catalogs and put them at the curb on your pickup day. Don't include tissue paper, metallic or foil gift wrap with mixed paper. Recycle coffee grinds, tea bags, fruit and vegetable scraps in an established compost pile.

Electronics—everything from laptops to home theater units—are always hot holiday gift items. What do you do with the old unwanted models? Recycle electronics properly at the South Plainfield Recycling Center on Kenneth Avenue, hours of which are:

Tuesday from 12 to 7 p.m.; Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and Saturday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Your garbage hauler should not be taking electronics away as it is against NJ state law. Used rechargeable batteries, lithium and button batteries should be recycled at the Recycling Center or Borough Hall on Plainfield Avenue as well as cell phones, too.

If you are clearing out old clothes to make room for new gifted garments, recycle the clothes in the drop boxes that are around town, or donate to a charity of your choice.

After the holidays, the South Plainfield Department of Public Works will pick up your live holiday tree at the curb and turn it into mulch. Remember, you must avoid burning Christmas tree branches in your fireplace. Creosote, a flammable compound, can build up in your chimney.

The holidays do not have to be a burden on the environment. Continue good recycling habits throughout the year.



High School Athletic Department Toy Drive—The South Plainfield High School Athletic Department and Booster Club, with the help of Peer Leaders, sponsored a toy drive prior to the Thanksgiving Day football game. Students who brought a new, unwrapped toy received free admission to one high school sports event in December. Dozens of gift cards, toys and bicycles were donated. The items were delivered to the Social Services Department to distribute to needy families in the borough. (L to R): Kathleen Vincent, Alexis Cargill, Nick DeMarco, Steven Petriello and Joe Krawiec. Not pictured, but participated in the program were Joe Skwiat, Casey Butrico, Khadija Gilmore, James Gerber and Dylan Dorey.



The Public Works Department recently took delivery of a 2012 five-yard salt truck. The truck will replace one of three 1990 salt trucks that are still in service. (L-R): Councilman-Elect Alex Barletta, Councilman Rob Bengivenga, Schwartz & Sons Manager Cid Citarelli, DPW Supervisor Robert Capparelli, Councilman Tim McConville, Council President Ray Rusnak, Councilman-Elect Derryck White and Administrator/CFO Glenn Cullen.

The South Plainfield Health Department Is Conducting Its Annual **RABIES CLINIC**



At the
South Plainfield Borough Garage
(corner of Spicer and Belmont Ave.)
Dog and Cat Owners are urged to bring
their pets for inoculation.

2012 Dog & Cat Licenses Will Be Available
Please Note: Cats must be in a carrier

DATE:

Saturday, January 7, 2012
9:00 am - 12:00 noon



**PLEASE
NOTE:**

The Health Department will no longer mail license or rabies clinic reminders. Please check the Borough Web site (www.southplainfieldnj.com) for current license/late fees and clinic information.

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