

South Plainfield OBSERVER

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60 CENTS

JANUARY 6, 2012



A house fire broke out on Irving Street on the morning of January 1. Numerous fire companies were called in to assist South Plainfield Fire Department; Plainfield and New Market fire departments were two of the companies responding. For story, see page 10.

All-Republican Governing Body Takes Over Saturday

For the first time in borough history, the governing body will be comprised entirely of Republican members after tomorrow's Borough Reorganization meeting, which will be held at the Senior Center at 1 p.m.

On November 8 residents elected Derryck White and Alex Barletta to three-year terms. Dick Frank, who was sworn in on November 21, 2011, will finish out Mayor Matt Anesh's last year of his unexpired three-year

term on the council.

During his term Derryck White hopes to "control taxes and spending" and preserve South Plainfield's "small town atmosphere." He would also like to "improve the quality of life for families" and "focus on keeping the borough a safe community."

"I cannot do it alone," said White, who is looking forward to working closely with residents and various

(Continued on page 10)

Police Report Rash of Auto Burglaries

South Plainfield Police are investigating a rash of vehicle burglaries that occurred during the week of December 25. All the vehicles burglarized were left unlocked, and the perpetrators entered without force. Some of the stolen items included GPS navigation units, laptops and cash. All of the burglaries occurred

in and around the South Plainfield/Plainfield border near Clinton and Plainfield avenues.

The police are reminding residents to lock their vehicles and to report any suspicious individuals they observe in the area. Anyone with information should contact Sgt. David Delair at (908) 226-7682.

2011 LOOKING BACK

The Year in Review

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



Twenty-five students were named winners in the 2010/2011 Junior Journalist program at the May 11 banquet held in their honor. Also pictured are program sponsors Charlie and Debbie Kurland of Hometown Heros and South Plainfield Observer publisher Nancy Grennier.

SPBA/SPHS Co-Sponsor Career Day

The South Plainfield Business Association (SPBA) and South Plainfield High School (SPHS) co-sponsored Career Day on April 26. The panel discussion was intended to expose students to a variety of professionals and careers with an opportunity to ask questions about their education employment requirements.

Fourteen members of the SPBA volunteered their time to be on the panel and answer questions from 300 SPHS juniors. The panel discussion took place in two sessions, with approximately 150 students in each group. Students asked the panel members questions about various careers, who in turn referred to their own education and careers.

Five Girl Scouts Earn Gold Award

The South Plainfield Girl Scout community held a Gold, Silver and Bronze Award ceremony at South Plainfield High School on May 14. A total of 45 girls received awards—five gold, one silver and 39 bronze.

The Gold Award is the highest achievement within the Girl Scouts of the USA. Only 5.4% of eligible Girl Scouts successfully earn the award. The achievement of the award demonstrates leadership and organizational skills through the development of a plan, putting it into action and successfully completing a project that benefits the community. Gold Award recipients are: Elizabeth J. Becker, Amelia Rose Lyte, Sarah A. McCarthy, Sheetal P. Sharma (Troop 65118, leaders Jane Becker, Carol McCarthy and Kathy Hoagland) and Sarah Elizabeth Hageman (Troop 65888, leader Sue Hageman).



Mark Tomei Named Star-Ledger Player of the Week

South Plainfield High School junior, Mark Tomei was named the *Star Ledger* Player of the Week for week eight in varsity baseball. Mark plays outfield for the Tigers and is their lead-off batter. He is batting an even .500, and at 96 at bats Mark has 48 hits which include 17 doubles, four triples and seven runs batted in.

Mark has greatly assisted the Tigers during the Greater Middlesex Conference tournament games. In the quarter-finals Tomei singled, doubled, tripled and scored three runs. Additionally, in the semi-final game against Perth Amboy, Mark hit a three-run home run, and along with his teammates advanced to the final game of that tournament against Old Bridge.

299 Fifth Graders Complete DARE Program

A graduation ceremony was held at Sacred Heart School on May 23 for the fifth grade DARE class.

Specially trained South Plainfield Police Officer Lloyd McNelly spent 16 weeks teaching the children the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs and violence. Attending the ceremony was Police Chief Jim Parker, Capt. Matt Koep, Mayor Matt Anesh and Councilman Alex Barletta.



Members of Boy Scout Troops 125 and 207 look on as Master Sergeant John Welgos, U.S. Army Special Forces (Ret.) and VFW Post #6763 Commander Vincent Perry (right) salute after placing wreaths to honor fallen veterans at Veterans Memorial Park.

(Continued on page 5)



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 17 (Tuesday)
January 17 (Tuesday)	February 6
February 6	

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.
Jan. 17, Feb. 21, March 20, April 17, May 15, June 19, July & Aug.-No Meeting, Sept. 18, Oct. 16, Nov. 20, Dec. 18

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.

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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How to Reach Us



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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.



Riley Students Present Winter Concert

By Patricia Abbott

The John E. Riley School's winter concert was held on December 21. The concert featured the school orchestra conducted by Bruce Mikol. The young musicians performed *March of the Cadets*, *Beginner Medley* and *Jolly Old Saint Nick*.

The chorus, directed by Tobie Baldwin, performed *Hine Matov*, *Will You Be Here This December*, *Someone in the Chimney* and *St. Nick at Night* accompanied by the Language, Art, Music Program (LAMP) students who played recorders.

LAMP students were Brianna Padovano, Alex White, Chris Rodriguez, Michael Skolnick, Julia Parker, Sherlyn Tamayo, Alex Us, Harrison Anesh, Joseph Anesh, Ryan Frontz and Robert Rivera.

Orchestra members were: Violin-Victoria Akpan, Allyson Betyeman, Kaylee Bisantes-Llevena, Kaitlyn Block, Danielle Bythell, Danielle DeCarlo, Kelly Gorman, Jacob Heacock, Jay-La Lin, Nichelle Mercado, Johan Ovalle Morales, April Nguyen, Skyla Negron, Brianna Padovano, Elizabeth Ramnarine, Shabana Rashianally, Christopher Rodriguez, Natalie Romano, Jessica Romero, Jeffrey Rosario, Julia Parker, Mackenzie Surowiec, Sherlyn Tamayo, Puja Vengadasalam, Alex White, Ryan Winick, Samantha Zelek, Viola-Harrison Anesh, Joseph Anesh, Kayla Cooper, Obinna Ibeku, Alyssa Palmeri, Emrehan Seferoglu, Michael Skolnick; Cello-Sara Daloul, Anya Wilson; Bass-Dominic Faus-

tini.

Riley Chorus members were Cody Adams, Victoria Akpan, Jack Anderson, Jessica Andrade, Joseph Anesh, Sebastian Annamantado, Moira Apgar, Olivia Ardito, Kyle Bali, Caitlin Barbara, Kayle Besantes, Kaitlyn Block, Courtney Bohl, Deleaney Born, Jackie Borrero, Gensis Bosse, Heather Braun, Cynthia Calix, Nicola Carannante, Marissa Castagna, Alexys Craggan, Joseph DiFrancesco, Katherine Dwyer, Kennedy Ferguson, Griffin Fraser, Nicole Freire, Ruby Garcia, Emily Goncalves, Jonathan Gonzalez-Ross, Nicholas Hannon, Jacob Heacock, Chimoa Ibeku, Nour Ediris, Jessica Jelall, Katelyn Luster, Mia Lynch, Angelica Marroquin, Emily Martinez, Shailynn Martinez, Caitlin McConville, Nicole Mehl, Diondre Mondesir, Jocelyn Mortensen, Jean-Luc Olry, Nicole O'Sullivan, Alfred Pace, Brianna Padovano, John Padovano, Hailey Palmer, Ericka Paredes, Angelena Parlapiano, Ace Price, Sergey Prokofiev, Alanna Rivera, Chris Rodriguez, Jeffery Rosario, Alexis Russo, Justin Shay, Emily



Soden, Nicholas Sosa, Lisarielle Soto, Brianna Tirado, Michael Turner, Puja Vengadasalam, Amanda Yuill, Samantha Zelek and Jasmine Zubieta.

BOE Vice President Debbie Boyle attended the concert.



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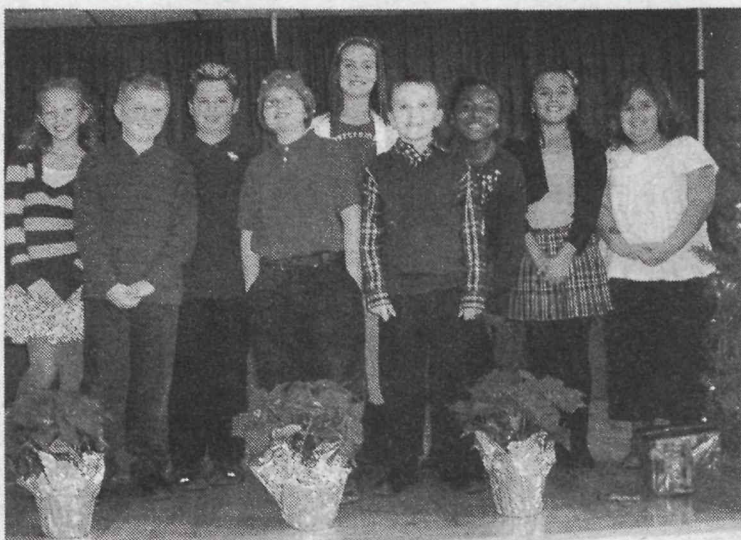
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Kennedy School Student Council members volunteered their time to help out at the Senior Center holiday luncheon on December 17. The children sang two songs from their winter concert. They also enjoyed a pizza party the next week for their efforts. Students who attended were Brody Donovan, Robby Ginda, AJ Massaro, Sebastian Rohrer, Colin Farrell, Mackenzie O'Brien, Erika Rems, Saru Castillo and Jordan Lovett.

New Business to Improve Borough's Economic Forecast

By Libby Barsky

The new year brings prospects of increased building and increased employment in the borough. A revised application to build an auto claims center on McKinley Street will bring Progressive Insurance Company before the Planning Board soon.

Progressive had initially proposed the redevelopment of the Dombroski Salvage Yard in 2008 by replacing it with a two story, 50,000 ft. building. The first floor would have a claims center for cars damaged in accidents, with a regional headquarters on the second floor. At an informal hearing of the Planning Board's November 22 meeting, attorney Walter K. Abrahms requested guidance on how Progressive Insurance can proceed to build a claims center on the 4.75 acre lot on McKinley Street, essentially reducing the size of the building and scope of the initial project.

When Progressive made the original proposal, the council authorized the Planning Board to perform a preliminary investigation of the property to determine if it was in need of redevelopment. In May 2009 the property was rezoned from M-3 heavy industry to OPA-1 to accommodate office buildings, resulting in the cleanup of the area and improving the borough's gateway appearance at the Route 287 exit on Durham Avenue.

Also, PSE&G has received preliminary and final site plan approval to make improvements on an existing building at 4000 Hadley Rd. The inside of the 28,000 sq. ft. warehouse would be reduced to 15,000 sq. ft. Offices would be built on two different floors. The existing second floor would be expanded by adding 22,000 sq. ft. and creating a total of 93,000 sq. ft. of office space. The plan required 477 parking spaces, but PSE&G requested to have 414 parking spaces and bank the additional spaces. PSE&G is also planning to build a new facility on Cragwood Road.

Councilman Alex Barletta noted the following businesses will also be coming before the Planning Board with the following proposals:

- EE Cruz, a heavy construction company, is seeking to relocate its main headquarters to South Plainfield on Ryan Street.

- Ferro Corporation, located at 3900 South Clinton Ave., global suppliers of technology based materials for a wide range of manufacturers

and markets, is proposing a possible \$1M expansion.

- Hobby Lobby, a retailer selling arts and crafts materials, fabrics and party supplies will be moving into the space vacated by Sears in Middlesex Mall.

Plainfield Animal Hospital to Host Dental Fair

Plainfield Animal Hospital, located at 2215 Park Ave., will hold a Dental Fair on Sunday, Jan. 29 from 2 to 4 p.m. in celebration of National Pet Dental Health Month.

The festivities will include free dental check-ups, discounts on future services, tooth brushing and home care demonstrations, giveaways, contests, door prizes, tours of the hospital, refreshments and much more.

National Pet Dental Health Month is held to promote public awareness of the importance of dental care for pets in order to prevent dental problems, gum disease and the general health of your pets. All are welcome to attend.

For more information, call or visit the website at www.plainfieldanimal-hospital.com. If you plan to attend, you can register by calling (908) 755-2428 by January 21.

Tax Assessment List

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



South Plainfield Director of Social Services Marge Ackerman (left) receives a \$1,000 check from Unity Bank South Plainfield Branch Relationship Manager Maria Sivo for the Social Services Holiday Project. The donation was part of a special community service project where Unity Bank and its employees donated a total of \$14,000 to organizations throughout its service area. The funds were donated by Unity Bank employees and matched by the bank.

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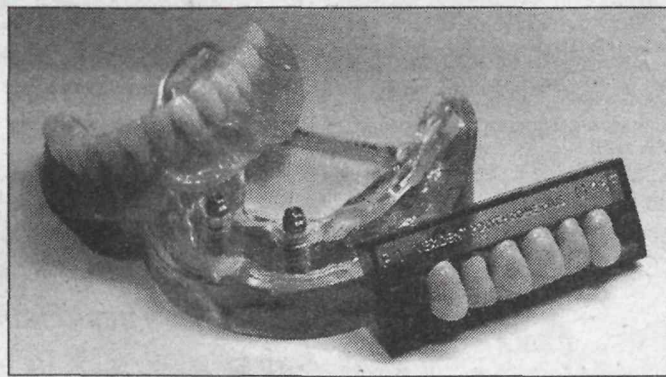
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SENIOR CENTER Calendar

2012 Annual Membership fees (\$10) are now due!
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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

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

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.

Singles Lunch

January 15

A lunch for singles between the ages of 45-60 will be held at Ruby Tuesday, 4701 Stelton Rd., on Sunday, Jan. 15 at 12:30 p.m.

To register or for more information, contact Dennis Scalera at (908) 222-2683. Price is cost of meal.

National Pet Dental Health Month

January 29

The Plainfield Animal Hospital, located at 2215 Park Ave., will hold a Dental Fair on Sunday, Jan. 29 from 2 to 4 p.m. in celebration of National Pet Dental Health Month.

The festivities will include free dental check-ups, discounts on future services, tooth brushing and home care demonstrations, giveaways, contests, door prizes, tours of the hospital, refreshments and much more.

For more information call (908) 755-2428, or visit www.plainfieldanimalhospital.com Register by January 21.

Be-A-Scout Workshop

January 30

Be-A-Scout Workshop #2 will be held on Monday, Jan. 30 from 7 to 8 p.m. A small social will follow. 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. There is no cost for this event.

To pre-register, please contact Jim Donelson at (908) 361-9699 or by email rvtroop125@aol.com. Please pre-register by Monday, Jan. 23.

Sacred Heart Concert

February 12

The Sacred Heart Music Ministry will present "Another Night on Broadway" on Sunday, Feb. 12 at 3 p.m. The concert will feature music from such beloved musicals as *West Side Story*, *The Sound of Music*, *Peter Pan* and *Beauty and the Beast*.

For more information, call Dan Mahoney at (908) 756-0633, ext. 139. A free will offering will be taken at the door.

— Out of Town —

Tickets on Sale for Taste of Somerset

May 21

The 20th annual Taste of Somerset is scheduled for Monday, May 21 from 6 to 9 p.m. at The Palace at Somerset Park, 333 Davidson Ave. in Somerset. Proceeds from the event support the PeopleCare Center and the non-profit tenants housed in the facility at 120 Finden Ave. in Bridgewater.

Taste tickets are available at a discounted price of \$65 if purchased before January 31. Tickets are available online at www.peoplecarecenter.org or at the PeopleCare Center office.

For more information, call (908) 725-2299.

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2011 LOOKING BACK

The Year in Review

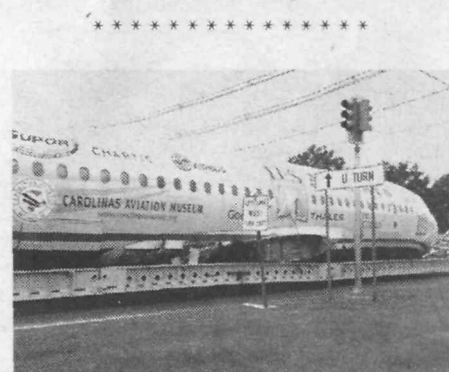
The Observer takes a look back at the stories that made news in 2011

(Continued from page 1)

Library Gives Back \$146,302 to Borough

At a special meeting held May 25, the Library Board of Trustees approved a resolution to make a one-time contribution of \$146,302 to the borough's taxpayers. The board also adopted new strategic, technology and capital plans to submit to the New Jersey State Librarian.

According to Library Board of Trustees President Eric Aronowitz, "The actual amount of the funds to be transferred was determined by the library's auditors." The one-time contribution was made in compliance with the N.J.S.A. 40:54-14 law which covers the necessary steps to transfer excess library funds to municipalities.



US Airways Flight 1549, better known as "The Miracle on the Hudson," is seen on Hadley Boulevard as it passes through South Plainfield on its 650-mile journey which ended at the Carolinas Aviation Museum in Charlotte, N.C. The Airbus A320, traveling from New York to Charlotte, N.C., was made famous when its engines were crippled after it struck a flock of geese. The 155 passengers and crew all survived.

New Downtown Location Proposed for Library

Councilman Rob Bengivenga made a proposal that the South Plainfield Library consider relocating its facility across from Borough Hall to the former site of Oak Tree Farms and a portion of Walgreens, which is planning to downsize. The proposed

12,000 ft. space is located on South Plainfield Avenue, across from the post office.

Bengivenga had already met with the owner of the property, Frank Butrico, who said that no special permits will be needed for the library to relocate in the shopping center.

Bengivenga met with Library Board of Trustees President Eric Aronowitz on May 24 to discuss the new location. He also spoke to the members of the Library Board during its special meeting on May 25.

Mass, Reception Held To Mark Closing of Sacred Heart School

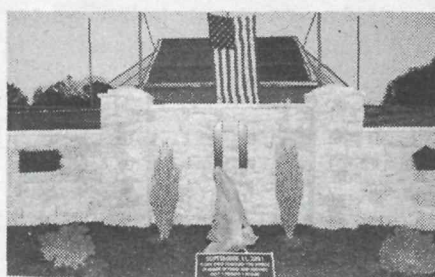
Sacred Heart School, which has taught hundreds of children during its 58 year history, closed its doors shortly after the eighth grade graduation ceremonies were held. Pastor Father John Alvarado celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving on June 5 honoring the 58 year history of the school. After Mass, a reception was held in the school cafeteria. Sacred Heart students and teachers gathered together along with past teachers and alumni to reminisce about their experiences while attending the school.

Victims of 9/11 Honored At Middle School Ceremony

A solemn ceremony was held at the Middle School on September 9 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the September 11 attacks on the Twin Towers. The ceremony took place outside on the grounds of the inner courtyard of the school. Students assembled in a semicircle around a special flagpole and small model of the Twin Towers with a plaque listing the four hijacked airliners—American Airlines Flight 11, United Airlines Flight 175, American Airlines Flight 77 and United Airlines Flight 93—that were all destroyed on September 11.

Wesley Methodist Welcomes New Pastor

Reverend Gina Kim was officially installed as new pastor at Wesley United Methodist. Kim replaces Reverend Nehemiah Thompson who was transferred to North Brunswick. Thompson is credited with enlarging Wesley's congregation during his eight years of leadership.



A monument honoring the victims of 9/11 was dedicated at the Junior Baseball Club on Saturday. The memorial includes a steel beam from the Twin Towers.

Student Charged With Disorderly Conduct

Two South Plainfield High School students were taken into custody after a New Jersey State Police Bomb Squad search discovered an Airsoft rifle and Claymore Mine device while searching the students' lockers. The investigation began after a report was made of a suspicious object located in an athletic field behind the school on Lake Street. The object was discovered by a maintenance worker from Sodexo Inc. in the open field behind the gymnasium.

Members of the New Jersey State Police Bomb Squad responded and identified the item as a "destructive device." The device, constructed of commercially available pyrotechnics, was determined to be safe and was secured for forensic examination by the New Jersey State Police Crime Lab.

Library is Covered By Insurance for Flood

South Plainfield Library, which was flooded with four inches of water by Hurricane Irene on August 28, was recently notified that they will receive insurance reimbursement and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds to pay for the ongoing cleanup. The borough had initially been told the library was not covered by flood insurance.

The borough's insurance carrier, New Jersey Municipal Self Insurers Joint Insurance Fund, will be providing \$50,000 less the \$1,000 deductible. FEMA will cover the remainder of the cost. To date, the library has accrued nearly \$100,000 in costs for removal and storage of library items currently stored in trailers donated by Hall's Fast Motor Freight.

UNICO Celebrates Columbus Day

Plainfields' UNICO Chapter sponsored the annual Columbus Day program at the South Plainfield Municipal Building. Dignitaries from throughout the state, as well as guests, attended the ceremonies, who on this day were all Italian. Columbus Day became an official federal holiday in 1968.



(Continued on next page)

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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)



The Observer and the South Plainfield Business Association co-sponsored a "Meet the Candidates Night" on October 26 at the Senior Center. The moderator for the evening was Mary Lea Schmidt from the League of Women Voters, pictured with Council candidates (L-R) Derryck White, Dick Frank, Councilman Alex Barletta, Schmidt, Councilwoman Chrissy Buteas, John Sorrentino and Paul McCullen.

Kids Learn Fire Safety Up Close at Public Safety Day

South Plainfield's annual Public Safety Day on October 15 offered fire and safety facts combined with fun, food, adventure and an all around favorite—freebies.

The day featured the police department, rescue squad and the Office of Emergency Management offering children and adults firsthand experience about the important work they do. DARE police officers were on hand to fingerprint children, the rescue squad displayed their rigs and assisted in an automobile extrication demonstration and the Office of Emergency Management was on hand to answer questions and talk about their procedures in the event of an emergency. Close to 200 people attended the annual event.

Buddy Walk Raises \$31K for Advocacy

The Buddy Walk 2011 was held on October 1 at Putnam Park. More than 550 attended the annual walk. Twenty-eight "teams" participated. Parents, family members

and friends each organized a team for their family member with Down Syndrome.

Republicans Sweep Council Seats

Thirty-three percent of South Plainfield's 13,699 eligible voters went to the polls on November 8 and elected the three Republican candidates running for Borough Council. Alex Barletta received the higher number of votes (2,420) to earn a three-year council seat. Newcomer Derryck White garnered the second highest number of votes (2,374). With 2,349 votes, newcomer Richard Frank will fill the unexpired one-year term left vacant by Matt Anesh.

Incumbent Chrissy Buteas, who has been a council member for three years, was the highest Democratic vote getter with 2,062 votes. Paul McCullen, running to fill the one-year unexpired term left vacant by Matt Anesh, received 2,023 in his first election bid. John Sorrentino received 1,948 votes.



Wood Shop Fire Forces High School Evacuation

Firefighters from the South Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department and Plainfield Fire Department responded to a fire at South Plainfield High School. A small fire was located in the dust collecting unit in the wood shop. The fire created a heavy smoke condition in the industrial arts classrooms. There were no reported injuries.

Library Repairs Complete

The South Plainfield Library Board of Trustees meeting on November 1 was held in the library for the first time since the library was forced to close its doors due to flooding from Hurricane Irene on August 28. The library was expected to re-open on Monday, Nov. 14 at 10 a.m.

As a result of Hurricane Irene, library records that were stored in cardboard boxes were impossible to salvage. To safeguard and provide a more permanent storage method of the library's records and minutes, the board voted to accept the proposal from Innovative Imaging for \$7,920 to digitize the records. They were also authorized to digitize 10 years of the *South Plainfield Observer*.

Labor Day Throat Slasher Gets 26½ Years

Anthony K. Cole, 25, of Woolworth Avenue was sentenced to 26½ years in prison with credit for two years served in Middlesex County Superior Court by Judge Bradley Ferencz on various charges, including the attempted murder of Department of Public Works (DPW) employee David Donatelli. The incident occurred after the Labor Day fireworks display in Spring Lake Park on September 7, 2009.

Cole was convicted on August 12 of attempted murder, unlawful possession of a weapon, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose and hindering his apprehension after fleeing the scene. A separate indictment charged Cole with a count of certain persons not to have weapons.

Ashnault Joins the Ranks of Cappy Recipients

Longtime volunteer wrestling and baseball coach Bill Ashnault was named the recipient of the ninth annual Cappy Award, and honored with a dinner at the Senior Center.

Named for late Deputy Police Chief Tulio "Cappy" Capparelli, the Cappy Award recognizes those individuals who selflessly

donate their time for the betterment of the youth of South Plainfield.

Ashnault volunteered as an assistant wrestling coach with the high school, was the middle school wrestling coach, and served in various capacities with the South Plainfield Wrestling Club. He coached a variety of teams at the South Plainfield Junior Baseball Club and was an all-star coach for over 10 years. Ashnault was also a Pop Warner coach for a year.

In addition, Ashnault has been a member of the Recreation Commission since 2001.

Scalera to Head Up SPVFD

Deputy Chief Tom Scalera of the South Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department will take the reins as chief this month from Larry DelNegro, who held the position since 2002.

Scalera, known to many as "Bubba," is a lifelong resident. He has held the position of deputy chief for the past 11 years and is currently employed as a lieutenant with the Plainfield Fire Division for the past 25.

Franklin Students Honor Local Veterans

Franklin School's annual Veterans Day program was held on November 9.

The students spent several weeks learning how these brave men and women keep our country safe by listening to stories, drawing pictures, writing poems and more. Their efforts were rewarded with a large turnout of veterans of all ages, ranks and branches of the military. Many of the older veterans wore their original uniforms, some decades old. It was the largest turnout in many years.

Redevelopment Plans Proposed For Former Cornell-Dubilier Site

It has been 13 years since the former Cornell-Dubilier Electronics site on Hamilton Boulevard was placed on the Superfund National Priorities List by the U.S.

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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

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The property has been in the final stages of cleanup for the past three years, with the EPA recently completing a five-year review. Groundwater testing will continue on the site.

In August property owners DSC of Newark Corporation came before the South Plainfield Planning Board to outline their plans for the redevelopment area, which included a Wawa store/gas station, an STS Tire Service retail store and a building that would contain 10 units of flex space with a small office/warehouse in each unit.



Civil War Flag Dedicated

A 33-star flag flies over the Civil War Memorial Stone in Monument Park in honor of those residents of South Plainfield who gave their lives in defense of the Union after ceremonies held on November 27. The pole and replica flag were gifts from the American Legion, UNICO and Robert Bengivenga, Sr. to the South Plainfield Historical Society.

Rafalowski Appointed Curriculum Coordinator

The Board of Education appointed Paul Rafalowski curriculum coordinator at the November 16 meeting. The position has been vacant since Dr. Lorraine Cella replaced Dr. Fred Oberkehr in February 2010. Rafalowski will officially start his new position on January 2, 2012.

Rafalowski, a graduate of Montclair University, received a master's degree in education administration and supervision in May from Rutgers University. He is currently teaching mathematics at the middle school.



Four South Plainfield Police Officers were sworn in during Monday's council meeting. Pictured (L-R): Officers Brian Zielenski, Christopher Reid, Michael Sikanowicz, Christopher Robles and Police Chief James Parker. Reid and Robles are former Newark Police Officers. Zielenski was a Westfield Police officer and Sikanowicz took the alternate route, attending the police academy on his own.

Sewer Increase Goes Into Effect Jan. 1

The Borough Council passed a resolution to increase the sewer tax by 1½% at a public meeting held on December 5. The increase amounts to an additional \$5 per year for homeowners, increasing the annual fee to \$320, which is billed twice a year in March and October. For those who qualify for a senior reduction, the increase is \$2.50 a year. The increase will take effect on January 1.

Fire Chief to Step Down

South Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department Chief Larry DelNegro will be stepping down to become one of four deputy chiefs



on January 1 after serving as its leader for a decade. Deputy Chief of 11 years Tom Scalera will be taking his place.

DelNegro had been a borough firefighter since 1984. During his tenure, DelNegro was able to secure over \$500,000 in federal grants to expand and modernize the department.

Annual Tree Lighting Honors Plane Crash Victims

For the 27th year, the 85-foot high fir tree that sits on the front lawn of the McCriscin-Gustafson Home For Funerals was the center of attention during the tree lighting ceremonies. When lit, the magnificent tree

can be seen several blocks away.

Members of the South Plainfield High School Traveling Choir, led by Joan Stasio, entertained the crowd by singing holiday songs before, during and after the ceremony.

Two Police Officers Promoted

Two South Plainfield police officers were promoted during the Borough Council meeting held December 5. Sergeant Daniel Noonan was promoted to lieutenant and Officer Daniel Hoppe was promoted to sergeant.



Midnight Madness Kicks Off Basketball Season

The South Plainfield High School Varsity and Junior Varsity Boys and Girls basketball teams celebrated the start of their season by borrowing the college tradition, Midnight Madness, which was held in the high school gym on December 2.

Midnight Madness offered a number of contests for the teams and audience members. Teams participated in a three-point shooting contest and a dunk contest.

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 DeNizio.

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 the station's website, www.NJ1015.com, beginning at noon on December 21 through noon on December 22.

Ralph Fech Coached Bowling for 37 Years

When Ralph Fech retired in 1997 after teaching math for 38 years at South Plainfield High School he did not leave his students.

Fech remained to coach the bowling team which he started in 1970. In all, Fech coached bowling for 37 years, amassing 28 championship teams, five individual student champions, three First Team All-State Groups



selection and many team sportsmanship awards. He was selected Coach of the Year 17 times as well as being inducted into the NJSIAA Hall of Fame Class of 2000.



Students Perform in 38th Annual Tuba Christmas

South Plainfield Public School students performed at the 38th annual Tuba Christmas Concert on December 11. The first Tuba Christmas was presented in Rockefeller Center in 1974, and was conducted by Paul LaValle of Band of America fame. This unusual Christmas tradition is firmly established in over 200 cities around the world.

Sacred Heart Church

149 South Plainfield Ave.
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Rev. John Paul Alvarado, Pastor

Mass Schedule:

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

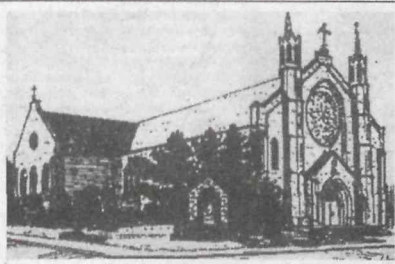
Sunday 9:00, 11:30 a.m.

Daily 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday

7:00 p.m. Monday (Church), Thursday (Parish Center Chapel)

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

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



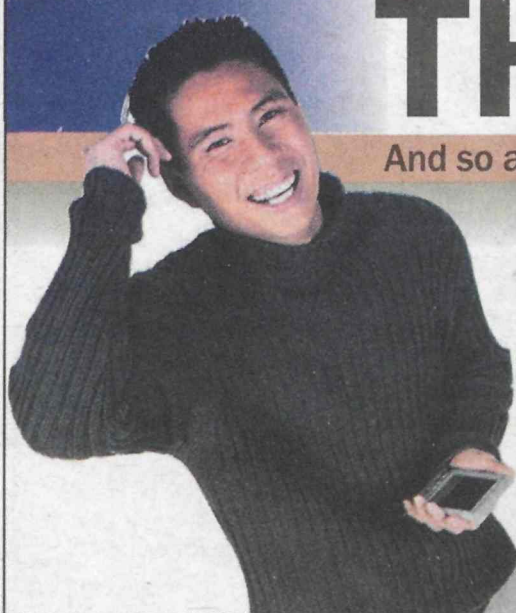
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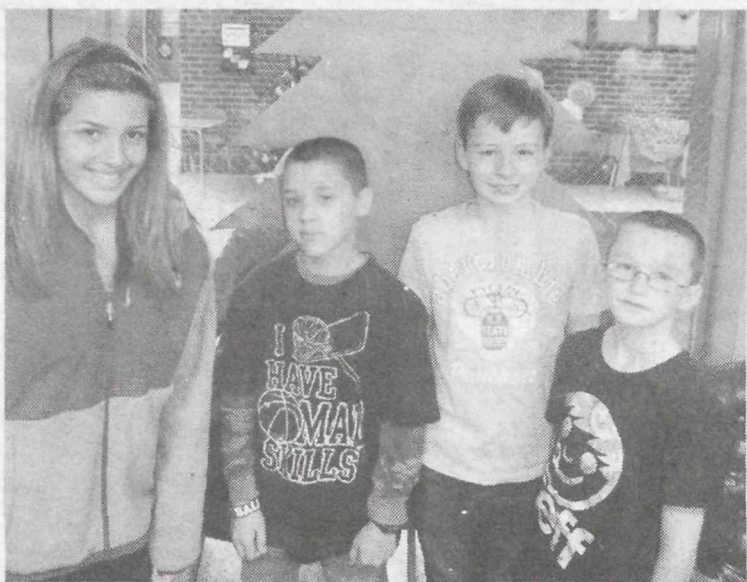


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Student Council Treasurer Cara Capone, Vice President Niko Vasquez, Secretary Mikey Behr and President Brandon Wizda stand in front of the Giving Tree where all of the requested gift items were filled by students, teachers and staff.

Student Council Hosts a Flurry of Activities

By Jane Dornick

Grant School Student Council has been working hard this school year. In October, the council helped plan and also facilitate a "spirit week" in honor of National Red Ribbon Week, a program that addresses alcohol, tobacco, other drug and violence related issues. The event was immediately tied in to the "Week of Respect" in November.

The student council also held a canned food drive during the week of Thanksgiving during which time

students, faculty and staff donated canned items that were donated to Social Services in the borough.

During the month of December, Student Council Advisors Susan Grey and Julie Flasser and members created a "Giving Tree." Members created ornaments which indicated clothing and items that families were in need of during the holiday season. Each year, students, parents, faculty, administrators and staff members purchase the items which are collected and delivered to Social Services.

PBA, Middle School PTO Benefit Volleyball Tournament

The second annual benefit volleyball tournament is slated for Sunday, Jan. 29. The event is being co-sponsored by the South Plainfield PBA Local #100 and the South Plainfield Middle School PTO. The tournament will be held at the high school and middle school and will feature three divisions: Adults, teenagers and kids.

All proceeds from the tournament will go towards additional scholarships for borough high school students in 2012. Each year, the South Plainfield PBA Local #100 and South Plainfield Middle School

PTO offer multiple scholarships to graduating seniors based on merit, school activities and community involvement. These proceeds will help each organization reward additional deserving students from South Plainfield.

More information about registering and other activities that day will be released in the coming weeks. If you would like to sponsor prizes and/or product for the event, please contact Officer Pete Magnani at (908) 226-7678 or email pmagnani@southplainfieldnj.com or call Debbie Boyle at (908) 803-1573.

Sports



Pictured is the 1962 South Plainfield High School Varsity wrestling team. Coach Al Ranger (far right) started the wrestling program 50 years ago this season. Friday, Jan. 20 is SPHS Wrestling Alumni Night; come out and watch the Tigers take on Camden Catholic as we honor our wrestling alumni and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of SPHS Wrestling. Pre-match ceremony to start at 6:15 p.m. Post-match reception at Flanagan's, sponsored by the South Plainfield Wrestling Club. All wrestling alumni, family and friends of South Plainfield wrestling are invited, adults only please.

Rec Wrestlers Ring in the New Year At Golden Bear Tournament

The South Plainfield Recreation Wrestling team spent New Year's Eve day at the second annual Golden Bear Tournament in Kenilworth. Over 600 wrestlers from the surrounding tri-state area participated with South Plainfield sending 50 of its own wrestlers.

Striking gold with a first place finish were Nick Campagna, Steven Twist, Johnny Padovano, Anthony White, Tommy Fierro, Luke Niemeyer and Zach DelVecchio. Second place went to Andrew Loniewski, Bobby White, Joseph Diffrancesco, Jake DelVecchio, David Loniewski and Divon Pender. Finishing in third place were Noah Santos, Roger McCoy, LJ Watt, Mike Marrero, Daniel Borsos, JJ Giordano, EJ Nieves, Justin Bell, Joe Sacco, Jake Giordano and Brenden Hedden. Fourth place went to Robert Barrios, Jeff Jacome, Christopher Poggio, Zachary Esporin and Isaias Ramos.

Also participating for the young Tigers were Mustafa Beg, Bradley

Zepek, Rohan Castillo, Nicholas Robertson, Mikey Kurlew, Xavier Santos, Frankie Flannery, Chase Donovan, Nick Loniewski, Sebastian Santos, Alex Amato, Connor Adams, Ryan

Marston, Connor Patterson, Louis Diffrancesco, Lucas Amato, Tyler Amato, Ryan Patterson, Anthony Penyak, Colby Huber and Darius Mullens.

BY GARY LAMPASONA

JUNIOR BASEBALL CLUB

Spring 2012 Registration

Final registration for the Spring 2012 Season is Saturday, Jan. 14 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. After this date, the registration fee will increase \$20 per registrant. First time participants must bring a copy of their child's birth certificate. Also available are sign-ups for managers, coaches, umpire classes, committees and Snack Stand Captains.

Call the clubhouse at (908) 754-2090 for further information. You can also download the registration

form from our handouts section on our website at www.leaguelineup.com/spjbc. Just fill it out and mail it to our address.

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Clients and pet lovers alike donated food, treats, toys and more to Plainfield Animal Hospital's annual pet food drive held during December. All items were distributed to area shelters, including Plainfield Area Humane Society. (L-R) Laurie Green, president of Rawhide Rescue; Dr. Scott Linick, director of the animal hospital; and Rawhide Rescue volunteer Lynn Donnelly.



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.

Put Some Green Resolutions on Your List for 2012 ...and try to live up to them.

By Dorothy Miele, SP Green Team

How many of us make New Year resolutions and don't stick to them? The list of typical ones such as lose weight, exercise daily, be nicer to the boss, go to church, win the lottery, is endless, but hopefully, not useless. We make resolutions because we think we need improvements.

It's not too late to think bigger. The planet is in peril. Global warming, wild erratic weather, land, air and water pollution and loss of irreplaceable natural resources are fact, not fiction. We can all pull together by acting responsibly for the greater, greener good of our community, state, nation and planet. Put some green in your life. Change some habits that contribute to an unhealthy environment. The changes you make affect not just you, but everyone else.

Stop prolonged vehicle idling. Besides emitting air pollution and contributing to asthma, idling for more than three minutes is unlawful.

Reduce, reuse, recycle. By doing so, you will help to conserve natural resources, landfill space and energy.

Launder using cold water. You don't need to waste money running

the hot water heater for laundering clothes. They get just as clean in cold water as hot and this reduces your carbon footprint.

Install a low flow toilet. You'll save money with every flush. If you can't replace the toilet, place a plastic bottle filled with sand in the toilet tank (be careful not to interfere with the mechanisms inside). Other types of low flow hardware can be installed on showerheads and faucets.

Lower your dependency on oil. Walk, carpool, ride a bike if possible. Join the Mayor's Wellness Campaign for solutions to healthier living.

Save energy. Lower the thermostat several degrees in the winter. Open windows or use fans instead of using air conditioners in the summer.

Conserve water. Take shorter showers; save greywater (dishwater, sink water) for plants; shut the water off while brushing teeth; water the yard during the cooler parts of the day.

Compost. Reduce the amount of household trash that's headed to the local landfill while producing nutrient rich soil for your gardens.

Buy rechargeable batteries. They can be used many times over and can be recycled.

Knights Annual Youth Free Throw

South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 is sponsoring the annual youth free throw contest on Sunday, Jan. 8 at Holy Savior Academy in the gym (old Sacred Heart School) located at 200 Randolph Ave. Boys and girls ages 10 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition. Winners will move on to the District Championships.

Registration will be held at 8:30 a.m. Competition starts at 9 a.m.

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

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



It's a Winner!

Charlie Kurland of Hometown Heros delivers dinner to Junior Journalist winner Ally Makowski pictured with her mom, Mary; dad, Edward; and sister, Meghan.

Anita Patricia Hook, 74

Anita Patricia (Slonaker) Hook passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 28 at RWJ University Hospital in Rahway.

Born and raised in Rahway, she was a 1955 graduate of Rahway High School and has lived in South Plainfield for the past 46 years.

She spent her time as a homemaker, cooking and caring for her family. Patricia was a hard working woman and her sarcastic wit will be missed by everyone who knew her.

She is predeceased by her parents, Jacob and Edna (Mintel) Slonaker and by four siblings.

Patricia leaves behind her loving children, Alan Hook and wife Stella of Lakewood, Christopher Hook with whom she lived, Donna Spector and husband Peter of Bridgewater, Patricia Hook of Kill Devil Hills, N.C. and Laura Hogan and husband Donald of Point Pleasant. She will be missed dearly by five grandchildren, Christopher, Ashley, Grant, Erin and Cait; six siblings and by many nieces, nephews and extended family.

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



Anita Patricia Hook

Obituaries

Plainfield. He also leaves behind many nieces, nephews and extended family.

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

In lieu of flowers, donations sent to the American Cancer Society, 2600 U.S. Highway 1, North Brunswick, N.J. 08902 or the American Heart Association, 1 Union Street, Suite 301, Robbinsville, N.J. 08691 would be appreciated.

Douglas E. Borchers, 60

Douglas E. Borchers died Christmas Day at his home.

Born in Summit, he resided there only a few years before moving to South Plainfield.

Douglas co-owned the Park Hardware Store in Plainfield with his brothers for over 25 years. He enjoyed playing basketball, especially during his high school and college years.

He is predeceased by his mother, Marguerite Faist Borchers.

Surviving are his father, Donald W. Borchers of South Plainfield; two brothers, William Borchers of New Hampshire and Richard Borchers of Plainfield; a nephew and a niece.

Funeral services were held at Higgins Home for Funerals in Plainfield.

Helen Ann Accuosti, 87

Helen Ann Accuosti of Bloomfield, peacefully entered into eternal rest on Sunday, Jan. 1.

Helen lived in Bloomfield for the last 50 years. She is the wife of the late James Accuosti, a veteran and former staff sergeant of the U.S. Army Air Corps and a graduate of Seton Hall University.

Helen had a full career spanning 35 years with both the Essex County Medical Examiner's Office and the New Jersey State Department of Criminal Justice, serving as head secretary to the state medical examiner and continuing in various administra-

tive positions with the State Department of Criminal Justice.

She is predeceased by her parents, Maria and Felice Romano; three sisters, Mary Cordasco, Constance Rose and Stella Colonnello; and a brother, Carlo Romano.

Helen is survived by three children, Carol and Michael Rose of Lake Shawnee, James and Patricia Accuosti of Cedar Knolls and Linda Scioscia of Bloomfield; four grandchildren, Michelle Venino, Michael Rose, Cynthia Jones and Stephanie Accuosti; three great-grandchildren, Ava Venino, Sophia Venino and Michael Rose, Jr.; two sisters, Rose Murphy and Josephine Stack; and a brother, Nicholas Romano and wife Mary.

Funeral services were held at Higgins Home for Funerals in Plainfield.

The family has requested that donations to the Church of St. Bernard, 368 Sumner Ave. Plainfield, N.J. 07062, be made in place of flowers.

Frank J. Gonzalez, Sr., 77

Frank J. Gonzalez, Sr. died peacefully on Sunday, Jan. 1 at his residence.

Born in Plainfield, he has been a lifelong resident of South Plainfield.

He was the proud owner of Marcel & Son Barber Shop in Iselin. Frank was a member of Sacred Heart RC Church and the B.P.O. of Elks #2298 both of South Plainfield, as well as belonging to the National Rifle Association.

He is predeceased by his parents and two brothers, Joseph and Cono Gonzalez.

Frank is survived by his wife of 56 years, Shirley (Stein) Gonzalez; three children, Frank J. Gonzalez Jr. and wife Donna of Belvidere, Dennis of South Plainfield and David and wife Emico of Gregory, Mich.; a sister, Marcella Augusto of Edison; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

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

Nicholas D. DiPaolo, 64

Nicholas D. DiPaolo died suddenly on Wednesday, Dec. 28 at JFK Medical Center in Edison.

Born in Plainfield, Nicholas has lived in Plainfield and North Plainfield before becoming a resident of Dunellen 10 years ago.

He worked for various trucking companies, most recently as a dock worker for Red Star Trucking.

He is predeceased by his parents, James and Mary (Dessino) DiPaolo and by a brother, James.

Nicholas is survived by four siblings, Michael and wife Prudence of North Plainfield, Thomas and wife Bonnie of Denver, Colo., Daniel and partner Jose Gomez of Piscataway and Dominic and wife Angela of North

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Woman Critical After New Year's Day House Fire

On the morning of New Year's Day the South Plainfield Police and Fire Departments were dispatched to Irving Street on a reported house fire with the female homeowner trapped in a bedroom on the second floor.

Firefighters' initial attempts to enter the house through the front door to rescue the victim, Elizabeth Wright, 73, were halted by high heat and dense black smoke on the first and second floors. Wright was on the second floor where conditions were worsening, but she made her way to a bedroom window where she signaled her location to the emergency personnel on scene.

The fire apparatus was not yet on scene, but Officers Francis Fusaro located an aluminum extension ladder in a neighbor's yard as Officers Joseph Papa and Daryl Strother attempted to keep Wright from jumping.

With assistance from Fire Department Chief Thomas Scalera and firefighter Anthony Tomacheck, Captain Joe Abbruzzese ascended the ladder and grabbed the victim from the window; she was losing consciousness at the time.

"She was ready to jump," Scalera

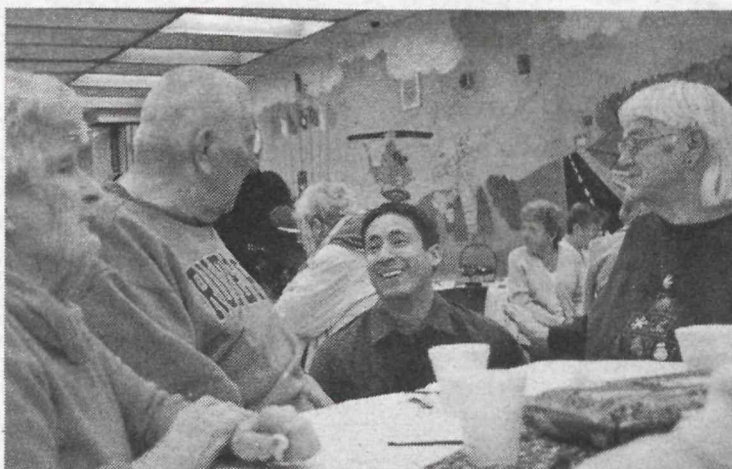
said. "She took a lot of smoke in." "I would also like to thank Police Officers Shanta Hunter, Joe Papa, Daryl Strothers, Frank Fusaro and firefighter Anthony Tomacheck who assisted in the rescue."

Wright was treated at the scene by EMS personnel from Somerset Medical Center and Paramedics (Mercy 9) from John F. Kennedy Medical Center. She was airlifted by the N.J. State Police Northstar medivac helicopter to Saint Barnabas Hospital, where she was admitted and is in critical, but stable, condition. She is being treated for collapsed lungs and smoke inhalation.

Lieutenant Charles Siedenburgh and Officers David Franchak and Chanta Hunter also assisted at the scene.

There were no other occupants in the home. The two alarm blaze was brought under control in about a half hour with the assistance of additional fire companies from Plainfield and Piscataway.

The cause of the fire was determined to be electrical, originating on the first floor of the home. The home was determined to be uninhabitable due to extensive smoke and fire damage.



Anthony Encinas chats with seniors at the annual South Plainfield High School senior luncheon.

SPHS Students Host Senior Luncheon

By Patricia Abbott

South Plainfield High School Student Council recently provided members of the Senior Center with a jump start on the holidays, combining entertainment and a delicious meal.

Seniors arrived en masse to the school where they listened to an abbreviated version of the annual winter concert. Guests enjoyed the concert and jazz bands, as well as the chorus and the Emeralds and Jades singing groups.

While the seniors were enjoying

the music, the final lunch period was in progress. After the remaining students left to return to class, the student council members moved in and quickly transformed the cafeteria into a holiday diner. The room was cleaned and each table was set complete with centerpiece, salad and hot homemade soup allowing the guests to begin their meals. Sodexo employees, who had cooked the meal, were kept busy in the kitchen plating the food.

Student servers delivered steaming dinner plates of turkey, gravy and vegetables to each table. They also provided coffee, water and desserts. The students took the time to welcome and chat with the guests. Student Council Advisor Anthony Encinas was on hand to supervise the students.

Radios played holiday music, and during a few free minutes many students gathered to sing to the seniors.

The annual holiday luncheon hosted over 40 seniors, with 15 student council members participating.

BOE Vice President Debbie Boyle, attended the luncheon.

Fundraiser for Snake Bite Victim Postponed

The Almost Famous Players (AFP) coffeehouse fundraiser has been postponed for several weeks while the group seeks additional volunteers. The event is a benefit for young Zack Szala, great-nephew of Plainfield Animal Hospital receptionist Barbara Drumgould.

The eight year old was bitten twice by a rattlesnake in his home state of South Carolina in late November. The family has no medical insurance. Although released from the hospital on December 30, he has a long haul in front of him and the financial toll on the family continues to be burdensome.

The coffeehouse will feature local performers of all ages. The tentative locale is the South Plainfield Senior Center. Numerous performers/bands have expressed an interest so far, but AFP is still in need of additional acts, including soloists and vocalists with or without accompaniment. There will be an interesting comedy act as well as the Montclair State voice majors performing a song a capella.

Additionally, AFP is seeking monetary donations, as well as donations of refreshments, raffle baskets and door prizes.

Additional help will be needed in the areas of selling tickets, handling the concessions, security and more.

Anyone interested in assisting is asked to contact Pattie at angel only@aol.com or to call (908) 346-2290.

Without the help of more volunteers, this event can not take place.

All-Republican Governing Body

(Continued from page 1)

organizations to accomplish his goals.

White has been a resident for the past six years. He is a C.E.R.T. Team member, has served on the Zoning Board and is the Riley School PTSO liaison to the school board. In his professional life White is a division sales supervisor and is also an ordained deacon at Christ Fellowship Church in Elizabeth.

Barletta, who was appointed by

the council in January of 2011 to fill the second year of Anesh's unexpired term, will now serve three additional years on the council. Last year he was chair of the Economic Development Committee and served on the Finance and Public Safety committees.

Dick Frank served as a U.S. Marine for eight years and was honorably discharged. Afterwards, he was given an elite assignment with the State Department Security Service. Frank

is a former American Legion commander and a commandant of the Marine Corps League. He has 30 years of experience in the corporate and private sectors in diversified management positions.

The annual Borough Council Reorganization meeting will take place this Saturday, Jan. 7 at 1 p.m. at the Senior Center. A reception at the American Legion on Oak Tree Avenue will follow.

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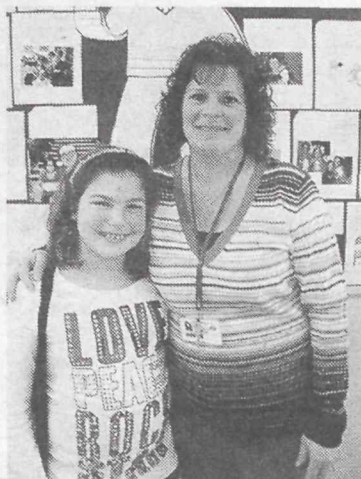
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Padovano Named Junior Journalist



Junior Journalist winner Brianna Padovano with teacher Christine Dispenzieri.

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.

Brianna Padovano, Riley School fourth grade student, is this week's winner in the Junior Journalist program. Her poem, "My Dog is..." has earned Brianna 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.

My Dog is...

By Brianna Padovano

As fierce as a lion
As fast as a cheetah
When I walk in the door
she gives me a big SLURP
like a wave knocking down a surfer!
When I watch her eat
It's like a flash of lightning,
you blink and she is done!
I love my dog,
she is the best!
I know she is getting older,
But I hope she lives
as long as me.
My dog is phenomenal!

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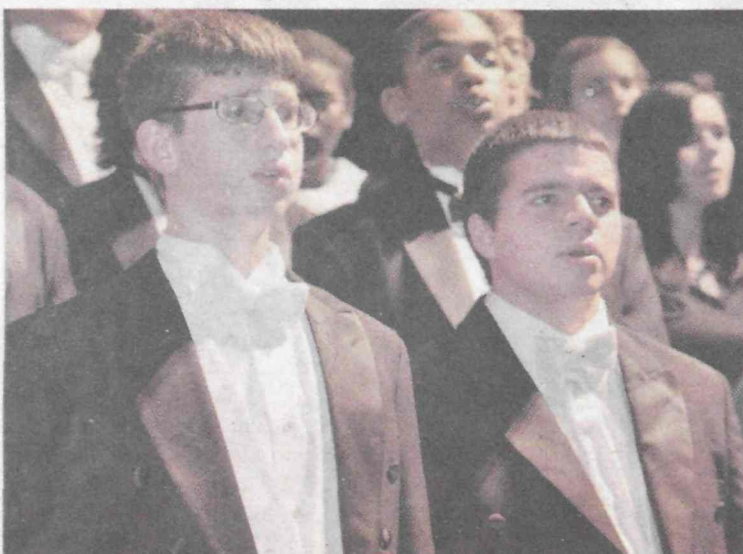


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Photos courtesy of Patricia Abbot and Louis Mormile

High School Holiday Concert Features Special Performances

By Patricia Abbott

The South Plainfield High School Music Department presented the annual holiday concert on December 20. This year's concert featured the jazz ensemble and concert band directed by Roger Vroom, the orchestra

conducted by Bruce Mikolon and the choir, traveling choir, concert choir, Emeralds and Jades directed by Joan Stasio. The holiday concert played to a full house and, as always, many alumni were in attendance.

The evening performance consisted of two acts with a short intermission.

The festive holiday numbers included *Dr. Calles, Spain, Concerto in D, Prayer from Hansel and Gretel, Sleigh Ride, A Christmas Celebration, Christmas on Broadway, Do You Hear What I Hear?, Merry Christmas Darling, The Coventry Carol, Light the Candles, Hanukkah, O Holy Night* and *Hallelujah Chorus*.

Retired SPHS Vocal Director Tracy Glenn Murray attended the evening concert. He received a thunderous round of applause upon his introduction to the audience.

There were special performances by senior Emeralds members and the Jades. A highlight of the evening

was the presentation of the *Hallelujah Chorus*. The entire stage and risers were filled with students; alumni choral members joined ranks with the students to present this amazing finale.

BOE members Bill Seesselberg and Debbie Boyle were in attendance at the holiday concert.

BOE Implements Recommendations to Improve Student Testing Results

By Libby Barsky

September traditionally brings in a new school year, but this new calendar year brought in many changes to improve testing results. In February 2011 and again in March 2011, members of the Department of Education visited the district to audit its compliance with the ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act), IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and NCLB (No Child Left Behind) programs and to recommend ways to improve the programs.

On November 22, State Consultant Terri Grey met with the district's CAPA (Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement) school leadership team, including Grant

School principal Ellen Decker-Lorys, Technology Supervisor Annemarie Stoeckel, Director of Special Education Laurie Hall and Victor Parisi, supervisor of math and science. Grey noted the following initiatives were implemented:

- A uniform lesson plan design, emailing of the lesson plan for review and having the building administrator make several daily classroom walk-throughs.
- Appointment of 16 on staff teachers to spend a maximum of two, one-hour classes a week in after school programs at Franklin School, Grant School and the middle school to prepare target students for the NJ ASK test in language arts or mathematics.
- Appointment of Victor Parisi as supervisor of math and science

and Paul Rafalowski as curriculum coordinator to align the State Board adopted version of New Jersey Common Core Curriculum Standards and Common Core State Standards to most recent content standards.

- Promoting student activities and Student of the Month.
 - Further implementation of encouraging students to write, with the appointment of Michelle Rafalowski, Grant School literary magazine advisor, at the December BOE meeting.
- The initiatives were implemented at a cost of approximately \$200,000 for the administrative salaries of the curriculum coordinator and science and math supervisor, and teacher tutoring hours. The compensation of approximately \$25,000 for student instructional time is contingent on funding.



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