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FEBRUARY 24, 2012



Mayor Proclaims March 2 Read Across America Day—(L-R) Linda Hansen, newly appointed library director and children's librarian; Library Director Sunnie Randolph, Grant School Assistant Principal Rob Richkus, Mayor Matt Anesh, Franklin School Principal Ralph Errico, Roosevelt School Principal Robert Diehl and Roosevelt School teacher Susan Gwiazda.



Girl Scouts Faith Dodge (left) and Jamie Metz with the display of Girl Scouting memorabilia currently exhibited at the public library.

Girl Scouting Marks 100th Anniversary

Juliette Gordon Low organized the first girl scout troop in Savannah, Ga. on March 12, 1912. Now, 100 years later, there are over 3.2 million girl scouts across the United States. South Plainfield has a very active Girl Scout Service Unit with over 270 current members at every level of scouting, from Daisies in kindergarten to Ambassadors, who are seniors in high school.

As part of the year long celebration of the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouting, the South Plainfield Service Unit has multiple activities planned, including a display of historical and current Girl Scouting memorabilia at the South Plainfield Library.

All South Plainfield Girl Scouts are welcome to participate in Girl Scout Sunday on March 11. Special services will be held at Sacred Heart Church at 9 a.m. and at St. Stephens Lutheran Church at 10:30 a.m.

Girl Scout Sunday will also include a town-wide celebration of the 100th

anniversary. Beginning at 12:30 p.m., all South Plainfield Girl Scouts are invited to meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Hamilton Boulevard to walk over the Hamilton Boulevard bridge and then on to Holy Savior Academy on South Plainfield Avenue. The symbol of crossing a bridge is rich in girl scout tradition as girls "bridge" from one level to the next.

The fun and activities will take place at Holy Savior Academy as the local service unit has prepared an afternoon of exciting events. The girls will have the chance to play video games and possibly go rock climbing. There will be food and crafts, and the service unit has committed to a service project for the VA Hospital in Lyons which includes making 100 picture boards for the residents of the facility.

To find out more about Girl Scouting in South Plainfield or any upcoming events, email Jane Becker, South Plainfield Girl Scouts service unit manager, at janebecker@optonline.

Library Board of Trustees Names New Director

By Libby Barsky

The Library Board of Trustees appointed Linda Hansen to the position of library director of the South Plainfield Public Library at the February 15 meeting.

Hansen, who currently serves as the children's librarian, has been with the library since 1993. She worked as a page at the library while attending South Plainfield High School, and continued working at the library while in college, eventually earning a graduate degree in library science from Rutgers University.

Hansen has been involved in expanding the scope of the library's children's programs to include babies. The Babytime program, held on Friday mornings at 10:30, features nursery rhymes and finger plays for infants up to age two. "Time for 2s and 3s," for children ages two and three, is held on Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 10:30 and includes stories, crafts and songs. For children ages three to six, storytimes



Linda Hansen

are held Tuesday morning at 10:30; Wednesday evenings at 6:30; and Thursday afternoons at 1:15 p.m.

The Summer Reading Program for school-aged children is held at the library during summer recess, and includes many activities and the opportunity for participants to receive prizes.

(Continued on page 10)

SOUTH PLAINFIELD
Cultural Arts Commission

Got Talent? Try Out for the Upcoming CAC Showcase

Got talent? The South Plainfield Cultural Arts fourth annual Talent Showcase tryouts will be held on Sunday, Feb. 26 from 2-5 p.m. and Saturday, March 3 from 1-4 p.m. at Wesley Methodist Church, 1500 Plainfield Ave. All ages are welcome.

If you have any questions regarding the tryouts, contact us by sending an email to spcac.nj@gmail.com.

Borough Buys Two Used Garbage Trucks

By Jane Dornick

The Borough Council approved the purchase of two previously owned garbage trucks at a cost of \$70,000 from Atlantic Sales & Salvage of Delran at the February 6 council meeting. A bond ordinance for the purchase was passed that same evening.

The trucks will be used to provide residents with a bulk pickup service beginning this spring. Households will be given two vouchers for free pickups called "Pickups on Demand" and will eliminate the necessity of waiting for a scheduled borough-wide pickup.

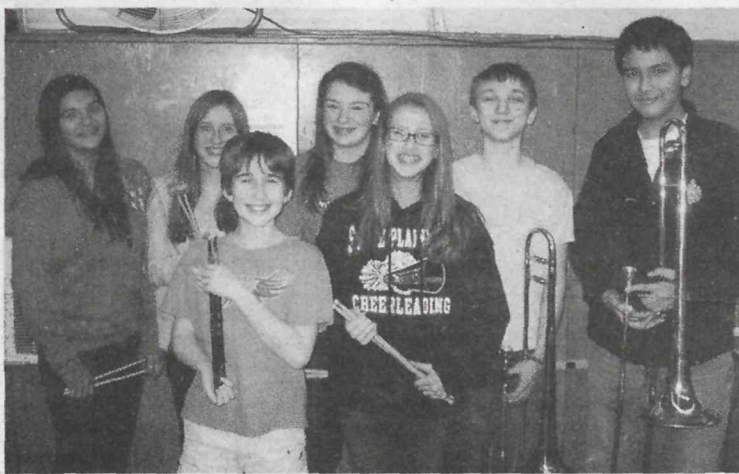
According to Mayor Matt Anesh, homeowners would have been better served after Hurricane Irene and last October's snow storm if the borough had their own method of garbage removal.

"We felt if we had garbage trucks in our fleet, the debris pickups would have been finished even faster and in a more cost effective manner," said Anesh.

The borough previously owned and maintained their own garbage trucks and provided the service to residents; however, in 2004 it was discovered that outsourcing the work was more economical. According to CFO Glenn Cullen, it had become costly to drive the garbage a half hour away to the closest transfer station. Since the opening of South Plainfield Transfer & Recycling on Roosevelt Avenue, debris can be dumped locally, sparing the cost of gas, wear and tear on the vehicles and the loss of Department of Public Works manpower time. He estimated a cost savings of approximately \$35,000 a year.

The garbage trucks will be used for curbside bulk pickup, leaf pickup and senior citizen brush pickup.

"Residents will be able to schedule pickups when they actually need them," commented Anesh.



Middle School students who were accepted to perform with CJMEA Region II Concert Band or Orchestra.

Local Students Earn Spots in Region Band

South Plainfield Middle School hosted the Central Jersey Music Educators' Association (CJMEA) Region II Intermediate Band and Orchestra Auditions on January 28. Approximately 800 band and orchestra students from Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset and Union counties participated.

Students were required to learn solos, memorize eight scales and perform some sight reading. The students were competing for an opportunity to perform with the Region II Concert Band or Orchestra. The CJMEA recently added a percussion ensemble to ensure that percussion students have an equitable opportunity to perform. The region band rehearses in various places throughout Central New Jersey to perform in this concert.

This year, seven South Plainfield students were selected for the ensembles. Scott O'Brien and Jon Blanco were accepted to the band on trombone. Percussionists Scott Riccardi, Megyn DeCarlo, Gabriella Cangialosi, Justice Lipuma and Emma Regan were accepted to the percussion ensemble. Additionally, Emma Regan was accepted to the percussion ensemble on mallets.

The concert for the band and orchestra will be held on Sunday, March 4 and the percussion ensemble concert will be held on Sunday, March 11. Both concerts will be held at Monroe Township Middle School.

Band Director Andrew Weiss and the middle school community is very proud of the accomplishments of all the students who auditioned.



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.)

councilmeetings

Meets twice a month on Mondays, *except where noted.
Borough Hall Council Chambers • Questions? 908-226-7605

Agenda Meeting Public Meeting
March 5 March 5

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.

planningboard

Meets second and fourth Tuesday of the month, *except where noted.
Borough Hall Council Chambers, 7 p.m. Questions? 908-226-7641

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

zoningboardofadjustment

Meets first and third Tuesdays of the month, *except where noted.
Borough Hall Council Chambers, 7 p.m. Questions? 908-226-7641

March 6, March 20, April 3, April 17, May 1, May 15, June 5, June 19, July 3, July 17, Aug. 7, Aug. 21, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, Oct. 16, Nov. 20, Dec. 4, Dec. 18

boardofeducation

Meets Wednesdays at Roosevelt Administration Gymnasium on Jackson Ave.
Committee of the Whole meetings (begin at 6:00 p.m.)

March 14 and April 4.

Regular Public Meeting (begin at 7:30 p.m.) except where noted*

March 21, April 11.

BOEcurriculum/technology/student activities

Meets once a month at 4:30 p.m. in 2nd floor conference room,
Roosevelt Administration Building on Jackson Ave.

BOEbuildings & grounds

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

culturalarts commission

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

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

libraryboard of trustees

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

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

recreationcommission

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

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

taxpayersadvisorygroup

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.

siteplansub-committee

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

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

environmentalcommission

Meets once a month (second Wednesday) Borough Hall Conference Room, 8 p.m.
Questions? 908-226-7621

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

businessadvisorygroup

Meets once a month (first Wednesday) Borough Hall Council Chambers, 5 p.m.

In My Opinion

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

To the Editor:

As council liaison to the Board of Education, I felt the need to write to the paper after reading the board's rebuttal last week and attending the recent BOE meeting.

Although I agree that improvements need to be made to buildings and grounds such as roof repair, I don't feel that every dime found in the recent audit is the most efficient way to do it.

If you read their rebuttal, it states the balances of funds that are currently available for such projects. The Capital Reserve and Unassigned Fund balances alone total \$2.2 million plus.

As head of Administration and Finance to the borough, I totally understand that we need to embrace the concept of constant improvement; however, does the Board of Education need to spend every taxpayer dime available? The balance of \$1.3 million was found by their auditor and he recommended that their money should rightfully go back to the taxpayers as tax relief, a savings for the averaged assessed homeowner of approximately \$120 a year.

Last May 16, the council cut \$526,000 from the defeated budget only after meeting with representatives from the Board of Education and trusting what we were told. The idea of threats to jobs and education is not the way to accomplish a balanced approach especially when you find out later that more money was available for tax relief without hurting students or teachers. At the recent meeting when I asked why we were not given full disclosure, silence filled the room. Now I must admit, not every board member acts that way; however, some believe as though the tax dollars given to the Board of

Education is their own fund to spend as they please.

Although I can't make decisions for them, I would urge the board to return a majority of the \$1.3 million to the taxpayers for relief and use the money totaling \$2.2 million for their projects.

An educated society benefits everyone and so does a group that spends our tax dollars wisely.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT,
RAY RUSNAK**

To the Editor:

Recently, the *Observer* printed comments from Jake Cataldo, which I agreed with; I have expressed the same viewpoints in the past year.

Board of Education members and also Library Board members, who do not work for the library, should reside in the borough. They vote on financial matters which impact the real estate taxes of South Plainfield homeowners. The non release of surpluses from the library budget and now the BOE budget may be the result of decisions which do not affect the finances of board members of either organization. If these people feel the obsession to make important decisions for taxpayers, I think they should seek that authority in their own hometown.

In response to Senator Buono's comments, I commend her for her concern in medical matters, as her husband is a doctor and she sees firsthand the ravages of cancer. Sometimes, when one is in a decision-making role, a choice has to be made. Was she vocal in the adjusting of generous pensions and medical care paid by the taxpayers for state workers or did she feel that homeowners should finance every benefit coerced from willing politicians?

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.

Most people pay for critical life-saving diagnosis themselves, when necessary. Every financial cutback can produce heart-wrenching cases that can be attributed to the cutting of a medical fund, but to place the blame on Governor Christie seems to be a politically driven view of Democrat Buono. Her position in life doesn't require that taxpayers pay her medical costs, but if a person needs critical care, there is always a way it can be accomplished, as the closing of Muhlenberg Hospital can attest to the direct result of free care.

Senator Buono had an influential position in the Democratic party for the last decade. I fail to see where she allocated money from sweetheart legislation for these projects. Governor Christie is not denying women access to medical exams. We are taxed enough, and it should be paid for by the patient, as I did.

BILL MCCARTHY

To the Observer:

Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Gary Bowen's press release admitted there was a surplus of \$1,343,501.54 as of June 30, 2011. The school district auditor reported this to the board in his audit, and also stated the surplus should be returned to you, the taxpayer, for tax relief.

The mayor and council and interim superintendent and interim business administrator met on May 16, 2011 to discuss possible additional cuts in the defeated school budget. The district representatives said there was

(Continued on page 8)

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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.**

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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.

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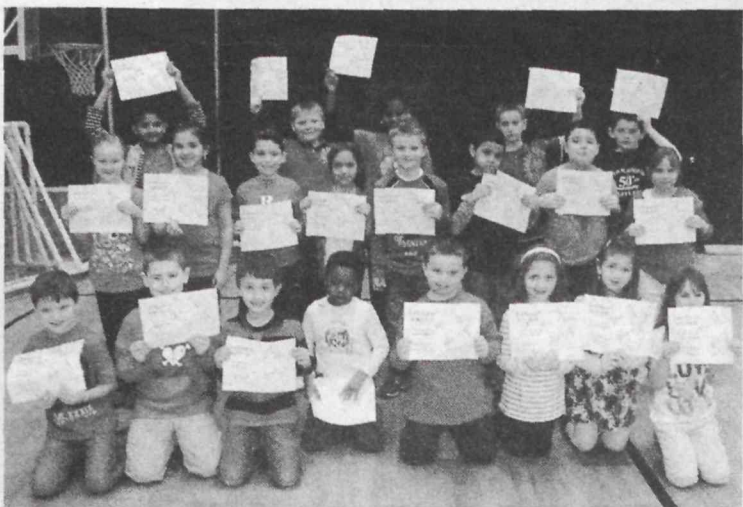
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Kennedy School Kindness Challenge winners

Kennedy Kindness Challenge Winners Announced

By Jane Dornick

Kennedy School Student Council completed the Kindness Challenge on February 14 with an assembly that recognized the winners and handed out certificates.

The Kindness Challenge began on January 6 when large red paper hearts with the teachers' names was placed outside of each classroom. Each time that a student performed a kind or caring act towards a fellow classmate, they received a red paper link with their name on it to connect to the heart. Students were "challenged" to perform as many acts of kindness as they could so as to link the entire building and classrooms together with a chain of "kindness."

The winners in the kindergarten class were Sarah Mustafic and Alex-

andra Sacco. First grade winners were Ashton Donovan, Megan Scheide-mann, Rohan Castillo, John Nagy, Colin Droge, Christopher Franco and Chidubem Onuoha. Winners in the second grade were Brianna Harris, Jordan Sacco, Michael Garcia, David Amador, Paige Hall, Michael Kurilew and Catherine Scheidemann. Third grade winners were Kenny Clevenger, Troy O'Connor and Cliff Zambri, and fourth grade winners were Jeet Patel, Ashwin deGroot and Cody Hunterton.

The teachers chose winners who will attend an ice cream party, sponsored by the student council today.

The next Character Challenge will be respect beginning in April and end in June. Students will again receive links that will be yellow to show acts of respect.

Woman Seriously Injured in Hyrail Truck Accident

Victoria Reves Guy, 58, of Plainfield, was operating her 2007 Cadillac southbound on the Clinton Avenue extension, when she was struck by a 2006 Ford 350 "hyrail" truck owned by Conrail around noon on February 16.

The truck, operated by Conrail employee Jeffrey A. Campbell, 59, of New Kensington, Pa., was traveling west on the railroad tracks, but failed to stop due to the wet rails. His vehicle entered the roadway and struck the Cadillac.

A passenger in the Cadillac, Mary E. Reves, 70, of Plainfield, was seriously injured during the crash. Reves was the front seat passenger and suffered injuries to her head and pelvic/leg area. She was treated at the scene by paramedics from Mercy 6 at Muhlenberg Hospital and personnel from Somerset Medical Center. She was transported to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, where she was admitted in serious condition.

The railroad grade crossing on the Clinton Avenue extension has flashing lights, audible bells and gates but was not activated at the time of the crash. Railroad traffic was suspended along the Lehigh Valley Railroad for approximately 45 minutes.

The crash is being investigated by Officer Peter Magnani. Motor vehicle charges against Campbell are pending.

Project Graduation Auction April 28

The South Plainfield High School Project Graduation auction will be held on Saturday, April 28, 6 p.m. (doors open) to 11 p.m. in the SPSHS gym. Profits will go towards Project Graduation for the Class of 2012. Information regarding tickets and reserving a table will be available soon.

For more information, call Barbara Mennuti at (732) 549-6703 or Sharon Miller at (908) 754-6461. This is a great event for a very worthwhile cause. We look forward to your support of the Class of 2012. Together we can make a difference.



Members of the First Baptist Church senior high youth group prepare for canning. The youth group participates annually in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine. This is the groups' seventh year, having raised over \$28,000 to help feed, clothe and provide clean water for children in need all over the world.

Keystone Vocational Program Renews Adopt-A-Spot Contract

Mary Ann Williams, program director of the Keystone Vocational Enhancement Program, has renewed Keystone's Adopt-A-Spot agreement with the South Plainfield Clean Business Association for the next two years. She has been supervising the program at the Keystone Community located on Front Street since 1997.

A crew of 10 to 12 people goes out every Thursday to remove litter and recyclables along both sides of Front Street between Maple Avenue and the railroad tracks. They also sweep the sidewalks and curb and pull out any weeds.

In a separate contract with the Clean Business Association, Keystone

provides litter removal services at borough parks and municipal buildings spring through fall.

This Adopt-A-Spot is important to the downtown area. The CBA is looking for more businesses to adopt spots in the commercial districts. Hamilton Boulevard, Church Street, South Plainfield Avenue and Oak Tree Avenue all attract litter. Plainfield Avenue between Sampton Avenue and the Middle School is another area that needs attention.

For information about the Adopt-A-Spot program, contact the Clean Communities coordinator at (908) 226-7621 or e-mail atempel@south-plainfieldnj.com.

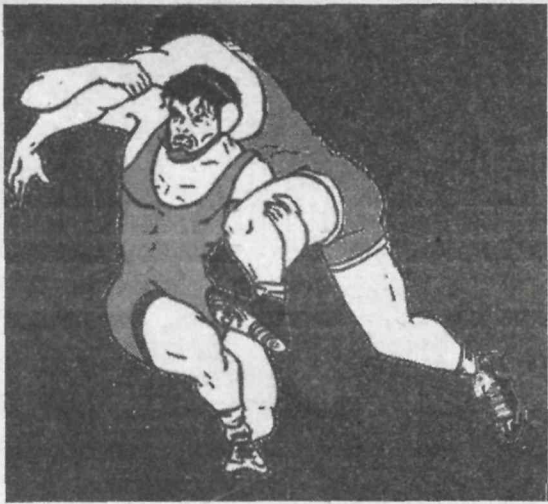
Contest to Choose Labor Day Parade Theme

How would you like the opportunity to be a part of this year's Labor Day Parade? The Public Celebrations Committee is holding a contest for all South Plainfield students, grades three through six, to come up with the theme for this year's annual Labor Day Parade. All you have to do is submit your ideas and the top five themes will be voted on.

Your ideas must include a descrip-

tion of the theme, use of examples of the theme, your name, school and grade. See your homeroom teacher for an entry form and return it to your teacher by Friday, March 9.

You will be contacted if your entry is chosen as the winner and your winning theme will be posted on the South Plainfield web page, www.southplainfieldnj.com.



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events

Around Town

Sacred Heart Church Lenten Fish Dinners

February 24,
March 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30

South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 and Sacred Heart Church will sponsor fish dinners on Fridays during Lent; February 24, March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30. Dinners will be served from 5-7 p.m. in the Holy Savior Academy cafeteria (formerly Sacred Heart School), 149 South Plainfield Ave.

The menu features filet of fish (fried, broiled or parmesan), cheese ravioli, manicotti and linguini or pizza, fresh garden salad, rice pilaf, French fries or macaroni and cheese, cole slaw, coffee, tea or cold drink, plus dessert.

Adults, \$9; seniors, \$8; children \$5. Pay at the door. Take out available. Stations of the Cross will be held in the church at 7 p.m.

Plaza Suite at Edison Valley Playhouse

February 24 through March 10

Neil Simon's Plaza Suite will be performed at the Edison Valley Playhouse, located at 2196 Oak Tree Rd., Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. starting February 24 through March 10. Adults, \$15; students and seniors, \$12.

For reservations, call (908) 755-4654. Dinner theater package available.

Grant School Zumba Fitness Fundraiser

February 24

Grant School Stokes Committee is hosting a Zumba fitness night on Friday, Feb. 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. at Grant School, 305 Cromwell Place. Doors open 6:30 p.m. Experience a live class featuring premier fitness instructor

Staci Taylor, featured in infomercials and seen on *The Today Show*.

Purchase tickets at the door. Adults, \$15; seniors/students, \$10. Raffles, 50/50, healthy snacks and drinks.

Spaghetti Dinner at American Legion

February 25

American Legion Post #243, 243 Oak Tree Ave., will hold a spaghetti dinner fundraiser on Saturday, Feb. 25 from 3-6 p.m. Sponsored by JJ Gardner Detachment, Marine Corps League. Adults, \$8; seniors and children 12 and under, \$5.

For more information, call Bob Hatton at (908) 354-1640.

Atlantic City Trip To Showboat

February 25

American Legion Post #243 will host an Atlantic City bus trip to the Showboat Casino on Saturday, Feb. 25. Bus departs the post at 9:30 a.m. sharp. You can also enjoy the car show being held at the convention center. Cost is \$30 per person with a \$30 return. Refreshments served on the bus.

For more information, call (908) 668-9414 or stop at the Legion, 243 Oak Tree Ave. to purchase tickets.

Cultural Arts Talent Show Tryouts

February 26, March 3

Got talent? The South Plainfield Cultural Arts fourth annual Talent Showcase tryouts will be held on Sunday, Feb. 26 from 2-5 p.m. and Saturday, March 3 from 1-4 p.m. at Wesley Methodist Church, 1500 Plainfield Ave. All ages are welcome.

For questions regarding the tryouts, email spcac.nj@gmail.com.

Boy Scout Troop 309 Clothing Drive

March 3

Boy Scout Troop 309 will hold a clothing drive on Saturday, March 3 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Please drop off your donations to Wesley Methodist Church parking lot located on Plainfield Avenue. We accept wearable clothing, shoes, accessories, linens, stuffed animals, hard toys, small and medium bikes and children's activity sets.

Can't get out? We'll pick up! Please call Nancy at (908) 917-4700.

Woman's Club Sponsoring Plaza Suite

March 4

The Suburban Woman's Club of South Plainfield is sponsoring a performance of Neil Simon's *Plaza Suite* at Edison Valley Playhouse, 2196 Oak Tree Rd. in Edison, on Sunday, March 4 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$20.

For tickets, call (908) 757-3680.

Girl Scout Sunday

March 11

South Plainfield Girl Scouts will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouting on Sunday, March 11 with several events. The girls will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Hamilton Boulevard at 12:30 p.m. and walk over the Hamilton Boulevard bridge and proceed to Holy Savior Academy for several planned events.

For more informations, email Jane Becker at janebecker@optonline.net.

All-You-Can-Eat Spaghetti Dinner

March 11

St. Stephens Lutheran Church, 3145 Park Ave., will hold an all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner on Sunday,

March 11 from 5 to 7 p.m. Includes beverage and dessert. Free-will offering. Suggested donation: Adults, \$5; children, \$2. All proceeds will go to charity. No reservations needed.

For more information, call the church at (908) 757-4474.

43rd Annual District Music and Art Festival

March 15

The 43rd annual District Music and Art Festival will be held on Thursday, March 15 at South Plainfield High School. The orchestra portion starts at 6:30 p.m.; choral portion at 7:30 p.m.; and band portion at 8:40 p.m. Artwork will be displayed and the Winter Guard will perform during intermission.

Tickets are \$2 if purchased in advance; after March 8, tickets will cost \$5 each. A separate ticket must be purchased for each portion.

Tickets are available online at www.ticketriver.com/event/2713, by contacting Andrew Weiss via email at aveiss@spboe.org or by calling (908) 754-4620, ext. 378.

Blood Drive at OLC

March 16

Our Lady of Czestochowa Church is sponsoring a blood drive on Friday, March 16 from 3 to 7:30 p.m. in the parish hall. Donors must be 18 or older. For more information, call Dawn at (908) 444-8994.

Elks Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner

March 17

The South Plainfield Elks Veterans Committee, 1254 New Market Ave., is sponsoring the annual corned beef and cabbage dinner on Saturday, March 17 from 4:30 to 9 p.m. All you can eat, includes soda and dessert, cash bar. Adults, \$12; children, \$5.

For more information, call Lou Peralta at (908) 756-6406.

SENIOR CENTER Calendar

March 2	Passport Services 12-2 pm
March 6	Free vaccination seminar 9am
March 7	Taj Mahal, \$20 Bus-9am
March 15	St. Patty's Day Festival, Platzl Brauhaus-\$65, sign up at the Senior Center
March 17	St. Patty's Day Luncheon food, entertainment-\$17 p/p, sign up at the Senior Center
MONDAYS	
Active Seniors	8:30 am
Crocheting	9:30-11:30 am
Yoga	10:30 am
Art Class	11:30 am
TUESDAYS	
Bingo	10 am-2 pm
Ladies Social 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.
(908) 754-1047

Franklin School PTO Auction/Raffle

March 24

The Franklin School PTO will hold its annual auction/raffle on Saturday, March 24. Proceeds will be used to fund several school programs.

If you are a business and would like to donate merchandise, a gift certificate or make a monetary donation, call Tara Rocco at (908) 668-1458.

Tickets are now available by calling Jenn at (908) 769-5849 or Tara at (908) 668-1458.

— Out of Town —

Bishop Ahr 33rd Annual Tricky Tray

February 24

Bishop George Ahr High School, One Tingley Lane in Edison, will host the 33rd annual tricky tray, "Luck of the Irish" on Friday, Feb. 24.

Admission: \$20, includes door prize ticket and light refreshments; guests can bring additional snacks. Doors open 5 p.m.; drawing begins 8 p.m. Prize baskets, 50/50s, other prizes.

For tickets, call (201) 522-6184, email BGATrickytray@gmail.com or visit bgahs.org or trickytray.com. No one under 18 will be admitted.

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and the former Johnson Ave. Bakery

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James Farm Cheese, 8oz.	\$1.99	Idaho Potatoes, 5 lb.	\$2.49
Eggplant Cutlets	\$6.99 lb	Jumbo Bosc, Anjou Pears	\$1.29 lb
Eggplant Parm	\$7.99 lb	Lg. Gala, Fuji, Granny Smith, all	\$1.19 lb
Egg Salad	\$4.99 lb	Golden Pineapples	\$2.99 ea
Tuna Salad	\$5.99 lb	Baby Peeled Carrots, 1 lb.	\$1.29
Fresh Pierogi	Starting at \$3.99	Grape Tomatoes	\$1.49 ea
Puglisi XL Eggs	\$1.09/doz	Strawberries, pint	2 for \$5.00
Celery	\$1.09 ea	Clementines	\$4.99 box
Tomato, 5x6	89¢ lb		

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or email: labella9594@gmail.com**

The Odyssey at Kean University

February 24, 25,
March 1, 2, 3

Kean University will present *The Odyssey* in Wilkins Theatre on Friday, Feb. 24 at 8 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 25 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.; Thursday, March 1 at 5 p.m.; Friday, March 2 at 8 p.m.; and Saturday, March 3 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets: \$15; seniors, \$12; student or child, \$10.

Purchase tickets by calling (908) 737-7469, at www.keanstage.com or in person at the theater box office, 1000 Morris Ave. in Union.

Blackrose to Perform

February 25

Blackrose, a band performing classic rock and roll music and today's hits, will perform at Rug's & Riffy's Bar and Grill located at 493 Rahway Ave. in Woodbridge on Saturday, Feb. 25 at 9 p.m. No cover charge.

Depression/Bipolar Support Meeting

February 29

The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance will feature Douglas Baum, LCSW, at its meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 29 at 7:45 p.m. at the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship, 21 Normandy Heights Rd. in Morristown. The public is invited; a nominal donation is requested from non-members. Free literature is available to all attendees.

For more information, call (973) 994-1143 or the New Jersey Self-Help Group Clearing House at (800) 367-6274.

Flight School Hosts Open House

March 3

American Flyers Flight School, 50 Airport Rd. in Morristown, will be hosting an open house and barbecue on Saturday, March 3. This free event begins at noon with a BBQ lunch. Facility tour and presentation follows. No reservations required.

For information, call (973) 267-3223 or visit www.americanflyers.net/about/aviation_seminars.asp.

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Somerset Brass Quintet Concert

March 4

The Fleetwood Museum and Friends of Vermeule Mansion will present a free concert featuring the Somerset Brass Quintet on Sunday, March 4 at 3 p.m. This will be the sixth in the series, Music at the Mansion, held in the restored 25 room Vermeule Mansion located at 614 Greenbrook Road in North Plainfield. Light refreshments will follow.

For more information, call Nicholas Ciampa at (908) 757-507.

George Winston to Perform at Kean

March 4

The Gene & Shelley Enlow Recital Hall will present piano legend George Winston on Sunday, March 4 at 3 p.m. performing selections from his recently released solo piano recording, *Love Will Come—The Music of Vince Guaraldi (Vol. 2)*.

Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased by calling Kean Stage box office at (908) 737-SHOW (7469) or online at enlowhall.kean.edu.

Middlesex East WOWs Business Mtg.

March 5

Middlesex East Widows Or Widowers will conduct a business meeting on Monday, March 5 at 7 p.m. at the Carteret Community Center, Pershing and Cooke avenues, Carteret. All widows or widowers are invited.

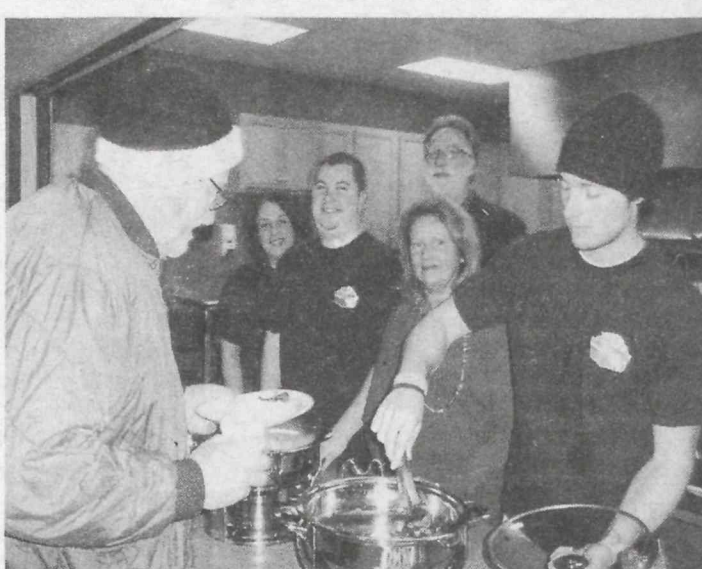
For more information, call (732) 969-2228 or (908) 757-0515.

Metuchen-Edison Women's Club Mtg.

March 7

Metuchen-Edison Women's Club will hold its monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 7 at 7:30 p.m. at The Heritage at Clara Barton, 1015 Amboy Ave., Edison. Guest speaker Samantha Monday, owner of Gardinia's Floral Shop in Metuchen, will discuss her success as a young entrepreneur and introduce us to her exquisite, eco-friendly floral creations. The program is free and open to the public.

For more information, call Diana at (732) 548-0925.



Anthony and Rose Petriello, Ken Fry, and Kathy and Mike Downes, members of the Time2Shine Foundation, host a Valentine's Day breakfast at the Senior Center. The Time2Shine foundation is a non-profit organization established in 2011 to keep the legacy of Michael James Fry alive. It focuses on raising money for young students interested in continuing their education in the arts and sports, and giving back to the community.

Central Career School Hosts Health Fair and Open House

Central Career School will host a free community health education event to coincide with the launch of its new medical assisting program. The event takes place on Wednesday, Feb. 29 from 3 to 7 p.m. at the school's campus located at 126 Corporate Blvd.

The health fair and open house will highlight the importance of overall health and nutrition and provide the opportunity for the public to obtain free health screenings, information about healthy living, and the ability to connect with organizations that provide free and low-cost resources to families and individuals in Central New Jersey. Attendees will also be able to learn more about medical education and scholarship programs and opportunities to further their education and pursue a career in the medical field.

The event will include a ribbon cutting ceremony with Mayor Matt Anesh at 6 p.m., as well as giveaways, a free raffle and lots of great information on how to live and promote a healthy lifestyle. More information can be found at www.centralcareer.edu or by calling (908) 412-8600.

Central Career School is a post-secondary institute that has been offering career-related training in South Plainfield since 1995. The school is dedicated to those individuals who

seek to improve their careers through vocational training in the healthcare and business fields. Central Career offers programs that teach specific hands-on skills in areas such as dental assisting, medical assisting, medical billing and business and technology administration. They work closely with their students to provide them with the knowledge they will need to seek gainful employment and achieve their career goals. Central Career School is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC). The ACCSC is listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a nationally recognized accrediting agency.

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Whitefleet Named To Dean's List at Loyola University

Allison Whitefleet, a member of the Class of 2012 from South Plainfield, has been named to the Fall 2011 dean's list at Loyola University Maryland. In order to qualify for the dean's list, a student must have a GPA of at least 3.5, with a minimum of 15 credits.

Established in 1852, Loyola University Maryland is a Catholic, Jesuit comprehensive university comprising Loyola College, home to the university's arts and sciences programs; the Sellinger School of Business and Management; and the School of Education. Loyola enrolls 3,700 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

Stephanie Alexander Named to Dean's List at Kean University

Stephanie Alexander has been named to the dean's honor list for the Fall 2011 semester at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kean University.

Moates Leads MU to Best Finish at MAC's

Misericordia University standout Matt Moates of South Plainfield helped the university's men's swim team to a second place finish at the MAC Championships.

Moates finished second in the 200m backstroke (1:59.61) while placing fourth in the 100m backstroke (54.35). He also finished third in the 100m butterfly with a time of 52.40.

Moates helped the 800 free relay break a school record with a time of 7:06.97. He also helped the 200m free relay (1:25.66), 400m medley relay (3:30.28) and the 400m free relay (3:10.00) all reach the top of the podium.

Appointment to the dean's list is based on successful completion of at least 12 credits with a semester grade point average of 3.45 or better.

Robert B. Matthews, P.E Named Stockholder at Gannett Fleming

Robert B. Matthews, P.E. was named a stockholder with Gannett Fleming. With more than 15 years of experience, Matthews serves as the manager of civil/highway engineering for Gannett Fleming in the South Plainfield office.

Matthews is responsible for the management, design, planning and coordination of transportation projects. He specializes in highway engineering and design and has worked on several high-profile projects for both the New Jersey Department of Transportation and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, including the Route 18 Extension, Section 3A, in Middlesex County and the I-78 and Garden State Parkway Interchange 142 Improvements in Essex and Union Counties.

A registered professional engineer in New Jersey, Matthews holds a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from Rutgers University. He is an active member of the American Society of Highway Engineers where he served as director of the North Central New



Robert B. Matthews

Jersey Section from 2008-2011, after serving as president from 2007-2008.

Matthews is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) where he served as director of the New Jersey Section from 2009-2011. He was recognized as ASCE's North Jersey Branch's "Young Engineer of the Year" in 2008.

Ullom Named To York College Dean's List

Brandon K. Ullom has been awarded dean's list recognition for the Fall 2011 semester at York College.

To be eligible for this honor, a student must earn a semester grade point average of 3.5 or above while carrying a coarse load of at least 12 academic credits.

Nicole Aiello's Article Published In Cell

Nicole M. Aiello, a 2006 graduate of South Plainfield High School, was published in *Cell* on January 20, a bi-weekly publication of research articles.

Nicole, who is working towards her Ph.D. in cell and molecular biology at the University of Pennsylvania, was the third author in an article about pancreatic tumor formation. The article, *EMT and Dissemination Precede Pancreatic Tumor Formation*, describes how affected pancreatic cells are entering the bloodstream earlier than thought and suggests inflammation speeds up the cancer process, which may offer new avenues for treatment of pancreatic cancer.

Carly Ashhnault Inducted into National Honor Society

Carly Ashhnault of South Plainfield, a student at Dominican College in Orangeburg, N.Y., was inducted into Alpha Lambda Delta, the national honor society for first year students, on February 22.

Founded in 1924, the Alpha Lambda Delta National Honor Society has been recognizing the best first year students for over 80 years. With chapters at over 250 institutions of higher education, Alpha Lambda Delta extends membership to those students who have succeeded in maintaining a 3.25 or higher GPA, and who are in the top 20% of their class in the first year of college. The society's mission is to encourage superior academic achievement, to promote intelligent living and continued high standards of learning, and to assist students in recognizing and developing meaningful goals for their unique roles in society.

Changes to Senior PAAD Income Limits

The Department of Health and Senior Services published notice of an administrative change to the Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD) Eligibility Manual at N.J.A.C. 8:83-6.2 to reflect an increase of the maximum annual income limits for PAAD eligibility by 3.6%. The maximum income that a person can have to be eligible for PAAD is now less than \$25,312 for single persons and less than \$31,035 combined income for married couples.

The adoption also aligns eligibility for Hearing Aid Assistance to the Aged and Disabled to the PAAD eligible income levels. The maximum annual income limits for Senior Gold eligibility are also increased by 3.6%, or to between \$25,312 and \$35,312 for single persons, and a combined income between \$31,035 and \$41,035 for married persons.

Notice of this adoption appears in the December 19 *New Jersey Register* at 43 N.J.R. 3365(a.) These changes became effective on January 1, 2012.

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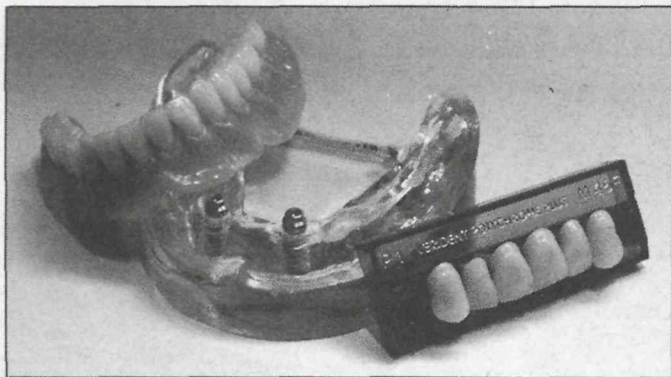
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**TALENT
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Dates: Sunday, February 26th, 2PM – 5PM
Saturday, March 3rd, 1PM – 4PM

All ages and types of acts are welcome to audition
For more information email us at spcac.nj@gmail.com
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TALENT SHOWCASE DATE:
Sunday, March 25th at 2:30PM
at Wesley Methodist Church

In My Opinion

(Continued from page 2)

no money in surplus. As a result, there were no additional changes made to the defeated budget and taxpayers had to pay \$111.93 more in school taxes for the average home assessed at \$123,000.

The school administration has a number of financial monthly reports they could analyze to project the status of the budget. One such report is Fund 11 General Current Expense. With the experience of our superintendent, who is retired from another district, and the board members who have served on the board for a number of years, they, in my opinion, could have extrapolated monthly data to project performance to budget. For example, the June 30, 2011 report showed funds available of \$1,711,210.17.

Also for the record, the *Observer's* article on the audit reported a fund balance of \$3,876,035. This was identified as follows:

Excess surplus.....	\$1,343,401.54
Emergency Reserve Account.....	\$196,532.50
Maintenance Reserve Account.....	\$449,481.18
Capital Reserve Account.....	\$551,606.00
Encumbrances.....	\$386,078.43
Designated for Subsequent Year.....	\$600,000.00
Unassigned Fund Balance.....	\$348,942.43
Total Fund Balance.....	\$3,876,035.88

It is clear that there was no misrepresentation in the *Observer*. The superintendent may not feel comfortable with the public having the total audit value made available. But it is what it is. Also, the Capital Projects fund balance was reported in the audit at \$1,628,534.31.

The board and the superintendent, instead of returning the \$1,343,401.54 surplus to you, want to use these funds to replace or repair the roofs. At the meeting, board member Joseph Sorrentino said that the return to taxpayers would be only \$20 or \$30. It is better to use surplus for the roofs. However, Council President Ray Rusnak said the taxpayers would get between \$110 and \$120 in tax relief on a home assessed at an average of \$123,000.

A legitimate question to ask might

be, when was it determined roofs were defective? Why have an architect provide cost estimates? When you have a problem with the roof of your home, do you contact an architect or call a roofing contractor? The architect's estimates for the roofs range between a low of \$4,976,000 to a high of \$11,190,500, and their fees range from a low of \$372,866 to a high of \$756,570, depending upon which work is the priority and when the work will be performed. Why go to developing specs and go out to bid? Do we have a need to replace or repair roofs, or are we designing new buildings? Remember, roofs for all the schools in the district, with the exception of the new Roosevelt School, were completely replaced in 1991 and 1992. This was a complete replacement, not just an overlay over the existing roofs. I would suggest contacting a local roofing company—like Penyak—to check the roofs and provide a report on the condition of roofs.

There are funds available in three reserve accounts of \$1,197,613.68 and a Capital Projects fund balance of \$1,628,534.37. Use these funds and return the surplus to the taxpayers. The current school budget allocates \$4,522,114 for Operation and Maintenance of Plant Services. Why were not some of these funds used to provide preventive maintenance of roofs?

Since I was limited to speaking for only three minutes at last Wednesday's board meeting, I decided to write this letter to the *Observer* and hope it will be published.

Here is some additional information from the audit. For the period 2002 to 2011, school taxes increased from \$29,210,934.66 to \$40,128,573.58, an increase of your school, tax of \$10,917,639 over 10 years. School enrollment went from 3,877 in 2002 down to 3,713 in 2011. Cost per student went from \$10,081 in 2000 to \$14,213 in 10 years. There are presently 500 full time employees in the district. Also, there are a number of part time employees.

As of June 30, 2011, the school district had \$4,958,932.01 in cash and cash equivalents.

The superintendent refers to state aid. For the school year 2011/2012,

the aid is \$8,340,323 or \$938,912 more than last year. In addition, Governor Christie provided an additional \$1,120,805 in state aid and requested that this be used for property tax relief. The school board and the superintendent said no, and said they will use it for next year's budget. It was claimed that the district was informed too late in June and July and could not provide the relief to you. The superintendent claims the additional aid was \$678,309, not \$1,120,805. I have a document in my possession that shows the amount to be \$1,120,805.

FRANK MIKORSKI

To the Editor:

March is Red Cross Month in recognition of the work done by the American Red Cross in communities across the country and around the globe—and of how we depend on public support to help people in need.

Thanks to support from individuals, organizations and businesses in Union County, the Raritan Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross is able to respond to disasters both large and small; help members of the military, veterans and their families; provide blood for those in need and teach lifesaving skills.

We want to thank those whose generosity enables us to continue our work, both here at home and around the world. You can help by making a donation, becoming a volunteer, taking a class, or giving blood.

The Red Cross responds to nearly 70,000 disasters a year in this country, providing shelter, food, emotional support and other necessities to those affected. We provide 24-hour support to members of the military, veterans and their families, collect and distribute more than 40 percent of the nation's blood supply and train more than nine million people in first aid, water safety and other life-saving skills every year.

Here in the Union County area, the Raritan Valley Chapter responded to 120 local emergencies, assisted 80 military families and trained 53,206 people in the region in lifesaving skills. In addition, people from this area donated 1,438 units of blood.

Red Cross Month is the perfect time for people to become a part of our mission and help people in need by making a donation, volunteering, giving blood or taking a class. Please help us help those in need—please support the American Red Cross.

**SINCERELY,
SUZANNE M. LUTZ, EXEC. DIR.
RARITAN VALLEY CHAPTER**



Ben Ullrich Named Junior Journalist



Junior Journalist winner Ben Ullrich with teacher Lara Kensey.

Ben Ullrich, Franklin School third grade student, is this week's winner in the Junior Journalist program. His story, "What I Am Thankful For," has earned him dinner for his 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 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.

What I Am Thankful For

By Ben Ullrich

I am thankful for my little sister, Maya. I am thankful for Maya mostly because she loves me unconditionally. Even when we bicker or fight, she never wants me to get in trouble. Even though she can get a little annoying and cause problems, she is the love of my life. I think most of you are jealous right now and I know how you feel; Maya is a dream come true!

Holy Savior Academy Announces Honor Roll Students

Melinda Hanlon, principal of Holy Savior Academy, has announced the principal's list honor students and honor roll students.

Students eligible for the principal's list must have achieved A+ or A in all academic subjects and a grade of "satisfactory" in all ancillary subjects.

Principal's list students are:

Grade 5: Sarah Adlassnig; Grade 6B: Ruyichi (Cameron) Guanlao and Timothy Sauer; Grade 7: Myrna Brignol, Kaylee Dynda, Gabrielle Jacob and Nathaniel Lee; and Grade 8: Dhara Patel and Nicole Walker.

Students eligible for the honor roll must have achieved As and Bs in all academic subjects and "satisfactory" in all ancillary subjects.

Honor roll students are:

Grade 5: Julianna Arocho, Mat-

thew Calora, Isabella DeMesa, Zarina Dranchak, Narasha Gantaram, Cara Makoski, Erica Munoz, Nicolette Nunes, Girley Oyola and Girley Oyola; Grade 6A: Joseph Antonucci, Emily Duggan, Kathryn Guiang, Thomas Knapp, Sean Lavelle, Joseph Makoski, Matthew Panganiban and Julianna Sevilano; Grade 6B: Maree (Rain) Fuentes, Walter Lopez, Pauline Marzan, Michael Parsacala and Alyssa Waldron; Grade 7: Roysworth Grant, Emily Kearney, Zeli-Anne Policarpio, Rachel Reyes and Alexa Williamson. Grade 8: Nkechi Amadiogwu, Alexandra Antonucci, Joshua DeCastro, Daisy Garcia, Angela German, Vilton Mellijor, Gabrielle Mendonez, Matius Moncada, Adriana Pasquale, Bhumi Patel, Lizelle Policarpio, Lauren Yanick and Madison Zeiger.

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sports

SPHS

WEEKLY SPORTS SCHEDULE

South Plainfield High School

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

11:00am G V Basketball-Freehold Twsp
(A) Bus 9:30am
G&B VW Track-Bennett Cen St. Champ
(A) Bus TBA
Comp Cheering-Colts Neck HS (A)
Bus TBA
V Wrestling-Region Union (A) Bus
6:30am, one way

FRIDAY, MARCH 2

V Wrestling-State Trn @Atlantic City
No Bus

SATURDAY, MARCH 3

V Wrestling-State Trn @Atlantic City
No Bus

SUNDAY, MARCH 4

Competition Cheering @Sun Nat. Bank
(A) Bus TBA
V Wrestling-State Trn @ Atlantic City
No Bus

MCC to Host Free Program Of Baseball Literature

Spring training will have just started for Major League Baseball, but major league authors will be in mid-season form as Middlesex County College hosts "A Night of Baseball Readings & Writings" on Tuesday, March 6. The program will include four local authors discussing baseball and their books. The first pitch is at 6:30 p.m. in the Gallery on the top floor of the College Center on the Edison campus, 2600 Woodbridge Ave. Refreshments will be served and the public is invited to this free event.

"This is going to be a great evening for baseball fans and for those who are interested in history and sociology," said Mark Thompson, director of the college library. "We've lined up four very accomplished authors who will share their experiences and talk baseball. We will also have a panel discussion, which allows the audience to ask questions and interact with the authors."

Lawrence Hogan, senior professor of history at Union County College, is one of the nation's foremost experts on baseball's Negro Leagues. He is the principal author of *Shades of Glory: The Negro Leagues and the Story of African-American Baseball*. Dr. Hogan's recent talks include the opening for the *History of Black Baseball at Yankee Stadium* and *Pride & Passion: The African-American*

Baseball Experience, a traveling exhibit in Chicago, organized by the National Baseball Hall of Fame and the American Library Association Public Programs Office. He will speak on *Pride & Passion: The African-American Baseball Experience*.

Bill Morales, the author of *Farewell to the Last Golden Era: The Yankees, the Pirates and the 1960 Baseball Season*, is a professor of history at Bergen Community College. He will speak on the founding of the New York Mets 50 years ago in *Inventing a Tradition: Casey Stengel, Gil Hodges, and the First Year of the New York Mets*.

Gene Racz and Frank Russo have written *Bury My Heart at Cooperstown: Salacious, Sad, and Surreal Deaths in the History of Baseball*, a volume of stories on the many unusual ways the early baseball players died. The two writers investigated and compiled this volume of stories on the bizarre, hard-to-believe, and fascinating ways that some of the early ball players met their end. Racz is a staff writer of the *Home News Tribune*, and Russo publishes a website, www.thedeathballera.com.

"This is a very eclectic group of very interesting authors," Thompson said. "I think it is going to make for a fascinating night, and also a lot of fun."

Deborah Egan-O'Rourke, 49

Deborah Egan-O'Rourke of South Plainfield entered into eternal life on Monday, Jan. 30.

For many years, Deb worked at the Plainfield Country Club as hostess and manager, and later became a homemaker.

Debbie was a loving mother to her daughter Kaitlin of Daytona Beach, Fla. and a devoted daughter to her late parents, Janet and Eugene Egan. She will be remembered and cherished by a brother, Gene of Parlin; two sisters, Arlene of Rahway and Ellen of North Carolina, as well as David Schaffer; two nieces, Brianne and Kelsey; and two nephews, Ryan and Brandon of Connecticut.

Debbie will also be greatly missed by her longtime companion, George King of South Plainfield; her former husband, Kevin O'Rourke of Daytona Beach, Fla.; as well as the extended Egan and O'Rourke families and her many friends and co-workers of so many years.

Funeral services were under the direction of McCriskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals.

Deborah L. (Schultheis) Leigh, 50

Deborah L. (Schultheis) Leigh passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 14 after a courageous battle against cancer.

Born in Plainfield, Deborah has been a lifelong resident of the Borough of South Plainfield where she attended the public schools and was a graduate of South Plainfield High School.

Being a true animal lover, Deborah had been employed at the Fanwood Animal Hospital for the past 14 years where she had been working in various capacities including reception and as a veterinary technician.

Deborah also enjoyed music, was family-oriented and, most importantly, was a loving mother to her children.

She leaves behind two beloved children, daughter and son-in-law, Jacquelyn and Sean Wilson and son, Douglas Leigh; her parents, Sandra and William Schultheis, Sr.; a brother;

William Jr.; and a sister, Christine Potak and husband Matthew.

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

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations sent to Haven Hospice, c/o JFK Medical Center, 65 James St., Edison, N.J. 08820 or the American Cancer Society, 2600 U.S. Highway 1, North Brunswick, N.J. 08902 would be appreciated.

Stephen E. Johnson, 48

Stephen E. Johnson, formerly of South Plainfield, died in Colorado.

Born in Trenton, Steve resided here most of his life before settling in Colorado eight years ago.

He is a graduate of the former St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Edison. A true outdoors man, Stephen had a love for nature. He was an avid hiker, loved to fish and ski, and took a particular interest in the Rocky Mountains. In addition, he was a skilled carpenter and musician.

Steve is survived by his parents, Robert and Irene Johnson of South Plainfield; a sister, Kathleen Ehlers (Darren) of Park City, Utah; and two nephews, Brenden and Jackson Ehlers. Also surviving are several loving aunts, uncles and dear friends.

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

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude's Children Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, Tenn. 38105.

Marion "Joy" (Hunt) Minarck, 80

Marion "Joy" (Hunt) Minarck died suddenly on Tuesday, Feb. 14 at home.

Born in Dunellen, Joy was raised in North Plainfield prior to settling in South Plainfield many years ago.

She graduated from North Plainfield High School.

Known by many as Grandma Joy, she had various interests. Joy loved to

fish along with her late husband Jack, vacation with family and friends, play cards and enjoyed family gatherings and reunions.

In addition to her late husband, Joy is predeceased by a son-in-law, Nicky DeCillis, and a brother, Howard Hunt.

Surviving are two daughters, Carrie George and husband Charlie of South Plainfield and Stacy DeCillis, also of South Plainfield; two brothers, Emery Hunt and wife Florence of Manasquan and Andrew Hunt and wife Jean of North Plainfield. Also surviving are seven grandchildren, Amanda, Charlie, Michael, Nicholas, Dana, Jaclyn and Leann.

Funeral services were held at McCriskin-Gustafson Home For Funerals. "Joy to the World"

Antoinette M. DellaVentura, 98

Antoinette M. (Campolattano) DellaVentura died peacefully on Friday, Feb. 17 at her home.

Born to the late Rose and Vincent, she was the last surviving sibling of 14 brothers and sisters.

She was raised and had resided in Plainfield. She also lived in Warren, Berkeley Heights and Toms River.

A resident of South Plainfield for almost 30 years, Antoinette spent her time caring for her family as a homemaker. A former parishioner and member of the Rosary Altar Society of St. Bernard and St. Stanislaus Kostka RC Church in Plainfield, Antoinette attended mass at Sacred Heart RC Church in South Plainfield.

She was predeceased by her husband, Anthony J. DellaVentura, Sr., and by her siblings.

Antoinette leaves behind a son, Anthony J. DellaVentura, Jr., and wife Edie of Dunellen; two grandchildren, Mr. and Mrs. Marc DellaVentura and Mr. and Mrs. Anthony DellaVentura; and her great-grandchildren.

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

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It's a Winner!

Charlie and Debbie Kurland of Hometown Heroes deliver dinner to Junior Journalist winner Faith Abraham pictured with her dad Tom, mom Sue and brother Steven.

From the South Plainfield Library Bookmarks

By Eve Pasternak

Everywhere you look, you see labels. Labels are useful in clothing (What size is this? How do I wash it?) and at the grocery store (Are these the regular or low fat crackers? Is there anything gluten-free?). We sometimes get hung up on labels, and that can lead us to miss out. We use lots of labels in the library to help patrons find things or to identify genres such as mystery or romance. But sometimes it's a good idea to look beyond the labels. I encourage all adult readers to explore the section of the library labeled "Young Adult Fiction."

Although many of the characters are young and the stories are sometimes set in high school, adult readers will find plenty of value in books written for younger readers. After all, we were all teenagers once. Our experiences as teenagers helped shape us and our lives, and revisiting that time through fiction is worthwhile. Besides, a lot of the novels are well written and just plain fun.

One of the first things you'll notice in your exploration is the presence of many familiar authors. James Patterson, Kathy Reichs and Neil Gaiman write for younger audiences with the same skill they use for all their work. You will also find many books that have recently been made into movies, such as *I am Number Four* by Pittacus Lore, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins and the *Twilight Saga* by Stephenie Meyer.

Twilight was an early entry into the burgeoning field of vampire stories. Fans will find plenty to bite into in the young adult section. Try the *House of Night* series created by the mother and daughter team of P.C. Cast and Kristin Cast, or the *Blue Bloods* novels by Melissa De la Cruz. Lili St. Crow and L.J. Smith frequently populate

their novels with vampires. *iDracula* by Bekka Black brings Bram Stoker's classic tale into the 21st century with instant messaging and smart phones.

Plenty of other mythical creatures are found on the shelves. (But they're not the only ones. See below for more realistic books.) Amanda Hocking's *Switched* features trolls, and Kate Klimo offers *Daughter of the Centaurs*. Werewolves are in the *Wereling* novels by Steve Feasey, and in *Raised by Wolves* by Jennifer Lynn Barnes, to mention just two. Dragons are central to Christopher Paolini's *Inheritance* series, as well as in *Eon and Eona* by Allison Goodman, and works by Obert Skye, C.J. Hill and many others. Read *Half Human*, a collection of stories compiled by Bruce Coville, to find a wide variety of creatures exploring ideas of identity and self-understanding.

No discussion of young adult fantasy is complete without mention of Terry Pratchett and *Discworld* novels that have been enjoyed by readers young and old for a decade or more. The works of Cassandra Clare bring together many elements of the supernatural. Rick Yancey and Kristin Cashore have many fans; Cashore's *Fire* won the Garden State Teen Book award this year. Jessica Day George earns raves for her retelling of fairy tales with a little more spice than found in the children's room.

Fantasy and the supernatural are not all you will find in the young adult section. Adolescents are just beginning to think about the world in a mature way, and they are looking for understanding and insight about big questions: Why do we suffer? What is the purpose of life? How can we build and maintain relationships with others?

Two other Garden State Teen Book Award honorees include asking these questions. In *Wintergirls*, Laurie Halse Anderson's characters must

come to terms with death, and the central themes of *Hate List*, by Jennifer Brown, are forgiveness and the need for emotional growth. *Alice Bliss*, by Laura Harrington, is the story of a military family that will resonate with anyone who has waited for a deployed family member to come home. *The Fault in Our Stars* and other novels by John Green earn their critical acclaim by addressing serious issues in realistic ways.

Readers of historical fiction are not ignored. The *Luxie* novels by Anna Godperson portray high society in New York in the 1890s. Jerry Spinelli gives an unexpected perspective to life in Europe during the second World War in *Milkweed*, as do Markus Zusak in *The Book Thief* and Joseph Bruchac with *Code Talker*. Nick Lake writes about more recent history, the earthquake in Haiti, in *In Darkness*.

I could keep listing books, but I think you are eager to begin reading. Cut out this article and bring it into the library to help you explore the Young Adult section. There are treasures to be found.

Special Event: Starting Monday, Feb. 27, the library will be screening movies for kids and other young people. Call or come by the library to find out what's playing. Showtime is 6 p.m.

Storytimes are following the usual schedule this week: Children ages three to six should come to the library Tuesday mornings at 10:30 a.m., Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. and Thursday afternoons at 1:15 p.m. to enjoy stories, songs and a related craft. "Time for 2s and 3s," especially geared toward children of those ages, is Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 10:30 a.m. is a lap sit program for infants up to two years old, with nursery rhymes, finger plays and fun.

Library Board of Trustees



Library Board Secretary Pat Gustafson

(Continued from page 1)

The search for a new library director began in August when Director Sunnie Randolph announced she planned to retire. Initially, the library board utilized the services of Pro Libra, a library service company that provides experienced personnel who are specialists in all facets of library service. They received 30 resumes, including applicants from Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey. Pro Libra recommended six to eight applicants, and the board interviewed them on January 26.

The board was unanimous in their praise for Hansen and her selection to the position of library director.

"She is exactly the kind of person for this position. She is bright and has earned our respect, but most important, she loves the library and will

lead this library in the 21st century," said Board President Eric Aronowitz.

Robert Bengivenga noted, "It's wonderful to have someone from this town. With a younger person, you get new thoughts."

"She was up against great applicants. I'm really happy to see you stay with us," said Board Treasurer Nina Rohrer.

"You were an outstanding applicant, but you will have a hard act to follow," said Pat Massey, South Plainfield High School librarian and alternate board member for Interim Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Gary Bowen.

"I would like to thank everyone. I am excited by this opportunity," Hansen said. Later, she confided that the hardest part of the process was not telling her fellow librarians about her appointment until it was announced at the meeting.

Hansen will still continue in her position as children's librarian after Randolph leaves on March 31.

"For a short time we will not be going to have a children's librarian. It will effect some savings in that way," said Aronowitz.

The Library Board of Trustees also appointed Pat Gustafson to the position of library board secretary; she is responsible for taking the board's minutes. Gustafson replaces Barbara Pleasant who resigned during the summer. For the past three years, Gustafson has led the library's program for knitters which meets every Thursday evening.



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SENIOR CENTER HOSTS MEDICARE PATROL—Tunde Akinrolabu of Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) of New Jersey answers a question at a recent SMP of NJ presentation about common Medicare scams at the South Plainfield Senior Center. Under the auspices of Jewish Family & Vocational Service of Middlesex County (JFVS), the SMP of New Jersey is part of a national program whose goal is to educate seniors so they can spot a scam and report it before it happens.

Unity Bank Sponsors Fundraiser for Flood Victims

Unity Bank's South Plainfield branch recently sponsored a special Piscataway Rotary fundraiser that raised \$6,000 to aid people in the Manville area who suffered flooding damage during Hurricane Irene.

The January 27 event attracted 175 people, said Piscataway Rotary Secretary Maria Hamilton, assistant vice president and relationship manager at the South Plainfield branch. The Hillsborough-Manville Elks Club donated its facility for the dinner and Unity Bank donated food. Ticket sales and donations from the Piscataway

Rotary, Hillsborough-Manville Elks Club and an anonymous donor supported the Manville flood relief fund.

"We are thankful for this opportunity to partner with the Rotary and Elks to help the people of Manville," said Unity Bank President James A. Hughes. "We encourage our employees to be very active in the communities where they work and the fundraiser is just one of the many ways we try to make a difference."

For more information on the relief fund, visit www.piscatawayrotary.org.

Rec Offering Mommy and Me Class

The South Plainfield Recreation Department introduces a "Mommy and Me Class" for children ages 1½ to three years old on Thursdays from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. at the PAL.

The ongoing eight-week sessions started on February 9. Cost of \$40 is non-refundable. Parent/guardian participates with child. Sign up at the PAL on Maple Avenue.

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NORTH EDISON BASEBALL/SOFTBALL League located off Oak Tree Rd., is hiring P/T groundskeeper for weekday afternoons & Sat. mornings. \$10/hr. to start. Baseball field maintenance and machinery knowledge needed. Call Tom at (732) 379-8234.

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The next borough wide issue will be delivered to every address in South Plainfield on March 23. Don't miss your chance to place your ad; deadline is March 2. Reserve early for best placement. Call 908-668-0010 to speak to an advertising sales representative.

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Elks Fundraisers Send Kids to Camp, Support Blood Cancer Research



Elks Special Children's Committee Members—Back row (L-R): Tom Hoff, Janet Donnelly, Chris Dziomba, Pat Donnelly, Fred Moretti, Tim Dziomba, Debbie Czech and Kevin Schweers; kneeling: Janice Campos and Kim Hoff

By Patricia Abbott

The South Plainfield Elks Lodge was the hot spot last weekend for fun and fantastic food. The community had the opportunity to enjoy two great meals while supporting two great causes. On February 17 the Elks held their annual Beef 'n Beer night. The successful event was hosted by the lodge's Special Children's Committee. Guests feasted on hot roast beef sandwiches and salads. For a few dollars

more diners could choose to add beer to their meals.

This is the fourth year the Special Children's Committee has held the fundraiser. Lodge Chairperson Debbie Czech commented, "Our committee raises money from the heart—we are passionate about putting a smile on the faces of our special needs children!"

Czech, along with committee members and cooks Fred Moretti, Kevin Schweers, Pat Donnelly, Tim Dziomba, Tom Hoff and Jim Buckelew, take

great pride in this event. Every detail is important, from set up to the meal and more.

Approximately 90 guests filled the hall and the bar to enjoy a meal with friends and family. The event, which included a 50/50 and raffle, raised \$1,300. Janice Campos, Sue Schweers, Janet Donnelly, Chris Dziomba and Kim Hoff assisted with the 50/50, raffle and ticket sales. Czech noted that Mr. Subs proprietor Dipin Patel generously donated the all-important sub rolls for the event.

One hundred percent of the proceeds will benefit a broad spectrum of services at Elks Camp Moore that will enable the Elks to facilitate summer camp programs, purchase much needed items for the camp and provide ongoing training of counselors, many of whom return each year and are familiar with the campers.

Elks Camp Moore is the N.J. State Elks Association's major state project and is wholly funded by the Elks of N.J. It is located off Rt. 287 in Haskell. The camp will celebrate its 40th anniversary with a picnic on Sunday, May 6 from 1-4 p.m. Ticker price of \$10 will include hot dogs, hamburgers, salads and beverages. Camp Director Todd will provide tours of the camp.

For more information, contact Debbie Czech, state public relations chairman, at (732) 491-5310.

Two days following the Beef 'n Beer fundraiser the lodge played host to a second dinner—the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) Team in Training pasta dinner.

Team In Training, created 23 years ago, is a worldwide program that helps train athletes and potential athletes for various events that raise money for LLS, the world's largest voluntary health organization dedicated to funding blood cancer research and providing information and support to blood cancer patients and their families.

Guests enjoyed faire that featured a pasta theme. Most of the food was donated by area restaurants. The meal was served buffet style by members of the New Jersey Team In Training. A 50/50 raffle and karaoke singing were part of the benefit.



Artie Sabino enjoys his meal.

Among the volunteers were members of Riley School fourth grade Girl Scout Troop 664.

The dinner was a fundraiser for the upcoming triathlon to be held in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. on June 24. Sue Kessen, who handles public relations for the local chapter, helped organize the event along with Andrea Elyea and Meryl Noble.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's (LLS) Team In Training has grown to be the single largest and most successful endurance sports charity training program. Participants are prepared for race events worldwide such as marathon, half-marathon, triathlon, hiking, 100-mile bike ride and more. Individuals can travel with a team or participate in an event close to home.

For more information, visit www.teamintraining.org/mail.



Meryl Noble serves meatballs at the pasta dinner.

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YOUR BUSINESS IS OUR BUSINESS

LEGAL NOTICE

TAKE NOTICE that on Tuesday, March 6, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the municipal building 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Borough of South Plainfield will conduct a public hearing to consider the application of VNO 7000, LLC. The application involves property known and designated as Lot 46.05 in Block 528.01 of the Tax Map, located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Hadley and Stelton Roads and commonly known as 7000 Hadley Road. The application relates to the existing pylon sign located at the Stelton Road entrance to the property. Applicant proposes to replace the lettering on the bottom board of said sign for two (2) new tenants "Chipotle" and "Cups". The applicant is seeking a variance from the permitted size of the sign face, 100 S.F. per side permitted, applicant is proposing a total for both sides of 718.82 S.F., a variance for the height of the sign from ground level, 10 feet permitted 6.25 feet existing and such other variances as the Board may deem necessary in order to grant the application as proposed.

Any interested party may appear either in person, or by agent or attorney and participate in said hearing in accordance with the rules of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Borough of South Plainfield.

The application and supporting documents have been filed and may be inspected at the office of the Zoning Board of Adjustment Secretary at the municipal building 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ Monday through Friday during regular business hours.

Vastola, Fackelman & Sullivan
Attorneys for Applicant
495 Union Avenue, Suite 2D
Middlesex, NJ 08846
(732) 560-0888

\$42.00 February 24, 2012

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the special ABC hearing of the South Plainfield Borough Council originally scheduled for Thursday, March 1, 2012 has been changed to Thursday, March 8, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. in the Courtroom at the Municipal Building, 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ 07080. The purpose of this meeting is to conduct a hearing regarding charges alleging violations of State regulations concerning liquor licenses and business brought against J.P.R.C., Inc., d/b/a Liquid Assets and the imposition of penalties if appropriate. Questions should be directed to the Clerk's Office at 908-226-7606. Notice of this meeting has been posted on the borough Website and duly advertised according to law.

Joann L. Graf
Municipal Clerk

\$29.92 February 24, 2012

LEGAL NOTICE

SOUTH PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS SOUTH PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY CHILD FIND

South Plainfield Public Schools are seeking to locate resident children with disabilities. This also includes mobile migrant and homeless children, who may need but are not receiving special education services.

Attention: South Plainfield Parents

Any parent who has concerns about the development of:

- A preschool child attaining age 3 within the next year;
- A child between the ages of 3 and 5;
- A school age child between the ages of 6 and 21.

Please note: The child can be experiencing physical, sensory, emotional, communication, cognitive, or social difficulties.

Please contact: The South Plainfield Special Services Department Child Study Team at: (908) 754-4620, ext. 238 or 239, with your concerns.

Please share this information with family, friends, and neighbors.

\$32.00 February 24, 2012

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

ORDINANCE NO. 1950

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 84 TITLED "POLICE DEPARTMENT" OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD was adopted after a Public Hearing and final reading were conducted on Tuesday, February 21, 2012 at the Public Meeting of the Governing Body which began at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 2480 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ 07080 and is being advertised in The Observer on Friday, February 24, 2012.

Joann L. Graf
Municipal Clerk

\$24.25 February 24, 2012

BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

LEGAL NOTICE

ORDINANCE No. 1951

BOND ORDINANCE STATEMENT AND SUMMARY

The bond ordinance, the summary terms of which are included herein, has been finally adopted by the Borough of South Plainfield, in the County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey on February 21, 2012 and the 20 day period of limitation within which a suit, action or proceeding questioning the validity of such ordinance can be commenced, as provided in the Local Bond Law, has begun to run from the date of the first publication of this statement. Copies of the full ordinance are available at no cost and during regular business hours, at the Clerk's office for members of the general public who request the same. The summary of the terms of such bond ordinance follows:

Title: "Bond Ordinance Providing for Improvements to the Pool Utility in and by the Borough of South Plainfield, in the County of Middlesex, New Jersey, Appropriating \$90,000 Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of \$85,500 Bonds or Notes of the Borough to Finance Part of the Cost Thereof."

Purpose: Various improvements to the pool utility, consisting of the removal and replacement of both pool recirculation pumps, the removal and replacement of both motor starters, the removal and replacement of a suction strainer, the removal and replacement of all throttle and isolation valves, and piping modifications to suit the above improvements, including other related work in and around the pool and including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto.

Appropriation: \$90,000

Bonds/Notes Authorized: \$85,500

Grants Appropriated: N/A

Section 20 Costs: \$10,000

Joann L. Graf
Municipal Clerk

\$40.32 February 24, 2012

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