

# Echo LEADER

Serving Springfield and Mountainside

SPRINGFIELD, N.J., VOL. 73 NO. 31

THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2002

TWO SECTIONS

## School board to present \$24-million budget to vote

### Tax increase for average Springfield home would be \$170

By Joshua Zaltz  
Staff Writer

The Springfield Board of Education unanimously approved the 2002-03 proposed school budget, a \$24.6-million spending plan with \$22 million to be raised through local property taxes, to be placed on the ballot in the April 16 Board of Education election.

If voters approve to pass the \$22,025,430 that will be raised via taxes, it would mean an annual tax increase of \$170 for the average home in Springfield assessed at \$157,000.

The 2001-02 school budget was \$23,755,673. The 2002-03 budget represents an increase of \$801,773 or 3.38 percent.

No present program or service is to be reduced within the 2002-03 budget and money is allocated for new maps and globes in grades one through four, small class sizes will be retained, wireless technology labs have been added to

the budget, a music teacher will be hired for the elementary grades, a substance abuse coordinator is planned for the high school, the main gym in the high school will be refurbished, and the maintenance budget for improving the fields has increased.

Superintendent of Schools Walter Mahler spoke about the Property Tax Reimbursement Program for senior citizens and the disabled.

"I'm going to each of the senior citizens meetings and I'm sharing this information because it's amazing how many people never heard of this," Mahler said. If seniors citizens qualify, they can receive a rebate on whatever school tax increase occurs. Residents who qualify for the program must pay their tax bill in full but will get the money reimbursed.

To be eligible, applicants must meet the following requirements for 2000 and 2001:

- They must be 65 years of age or older, or receiving Federal Social Security

disability benefits as of Dec. 31, 2001.

- They have lived in the same home or leased site in a mobile home park since before Jan. 1, 1998.

- They have lived in New Jersey continuously since Jan. 1, 1991 as either a homeowner or renter.

- Their 2000 income must be less than \$37,174 for single applicants, or \$45,582 for married couples.

- They must have paid their property taxes in full for both 2000 and 2001. Residents have until May 1 to apply for the program and they will receive their reimbursement checks by July 15.

An application must be filed each year to receive the reimbursement. "We made these available," said Mahler. "We offered to help fill them out."

Residents who think they might qualify can call 1-800-882-6597 for more information or stop by Sarah Bailey Civic Center on Church Mall to pick up an application.

By state standards, Springfield is considered a wealthy school district, therefore the township receives little funding from the state.

## Mystery guest shares joy of reading

By Joshua Zaltz  
Staff Writer

Susie Webster's kids sit and listen. They sit quietly, chins resting on hands, elbows resting on laps. Webster's first-grade class at Thelma L. Sandmeier School in Springfield is thinking. First, they were trying to guess who was coming in to be this week's surprise reader. Now, they're trying to figure out the ending to the book they're being read.

The kids have no idea who the surprise reader will be. Some of the kids, like Lilam Gutch, ask their parents every week if they're coming in to read.

"They all say, 'Oh it must be my mom or it must be my dad,' but they really have no idea," said Webster. "It's a complete surprise."

However, this week, Lilam was right. His stepmom, Rachel Gutch, came in to read. "Lilam was so excited about it," said Gutch.

Each week, a different surprise reader comes into the first-grade classes at Sandmeier. The surprise reader can be anybody — one of the children's parents, a grandparent, a brother or sister. The surprise reader comes in and they bring whatever children's book they want to read with them.

"One time, this father came in and made up a whole story — it wasn't in a book or anything — he just made it up out of his head," said Webster. "The kids really liked it. He was really animated and he got the kids real involved in repeating certain lines that were in the story and stuff. They still remember some of the lines and sometimes I hear them saying it."

There are four first-grade classes at Sandmeier. Each class has its own

surprise reader who comes on a specific day and time. Webster's class has the surprise reader come in every Thursday at 10 a.m.

Sandmeier Principal Michael Antolino said the surprise reader program is somewhat of a first-grade tradition at Sandmeier. Kids and their parents have been participating in it for the last seven years.

"This is my second year teaching here," said Webster. "The program started before I was here. I thought it was a really good idea so I wanted to continue it."

All the first-graders have the opportunity for their parents to come to their classroom, which Antolino describes as a great treat. The surprise reader helps to do something all the kids enjoy.

"The idea is to get parents to come in and be a part of the classroom," said Antolino. "It really reinforces the importance of parents reading to kids. It kind of emulates the bedtime ritual of reading to the kids before they go to sleep but it's just bringing it to the context of the classroom setting and sharing that special time with all the boys and girls."

During holiday time, the parents usually bring in a book relating to that particular holiday. Gutch bought a new book for the occasion, "Jack and the Leprechaun," by Ivan Robertson, corresponding with the celebration of St. Patrick's Day.

"The kids really like it, the parents can come in, they don't have to sacrifice much of their time," said Webster. "We try to get different people each time."

Gutch reads. She asks the class where they think the leprechaun is

hiding. She turns the book around and shows them the illustrations.

The kids shout, "I see him. I see him. There he is." They point.

"It makes me happy that they're so enthusiastic about reading," said Webster. "I think that's what's important. They like seeing their family members come in too. I think it's a great role model to have moms, dads, grandparents and siblings come in to read too."

The surprise reader also brings in some sort of treat. Gutch arrived with St. Patrick's Day cupcakes for the children to eat.

Webster passes them out. She goes from table to table, making sure that each of her children got one.

"I have one mother in here who's in charge of it. She's like my contact person that organizes it," said Webster.

People interested in being the surprise reader call Ginger Fiorilli, whose son Robert is in Webster's class.

"If children see that their parents are interested then they'll be interested," said Fiorilli. "Kids love it when they see their mothers or fathers or grandmothers come into the class. Reading is a wonderful thing, with everything going on right now in this country — in this world — with TV, advertisements, Nintendo, Gameboy, it takes away what used to be the simple things."

On the days when the surprise reader doesn't come in, Webster's kids regularly participate in a program called "Drop Everything and Read."

"We usually do that right after lunch," said Webster. "They really like it. What I usually have them do is share whatever it is they're reading. I



Photo By Joseph A. Sorrentino

Rachel Gutch was the surprise reader for Susie Webster's first-grade class at Thelma L. Sandmeier School in Springfield recently. Gutch is a parent to one of Webster's students, and each week, a new mystery guest is invited to read stories to the class as part of the surprise reader program.

pick a few kids each day and have them tell everyone what they're reading. It might turn somebody else onto that book."

"No matter what class you're in

when someone is reading to the students you have every child mesmerized as long as what they're reading is of interest to the student," said Antolino.

## Township breaks ground on new fire headquarters

By Joshua Zaltz  
Staff Writer

Construction of a new firehouse in Springfield began last week, as the township looks forward to having the project completed in about a year.

At the groundbreaking ceremony on March 21, Mayor Steven Goldstein thanked everyone involved with the project.

"What's happening here today is the culmination of a lot of effort, foresight, dedication, and hard work from people who were on the Township Committee before me, the fire chief, the deputy fire chief, and everyone else who had a hand in the planning, the design, and acquiring this piece of land," he said.

State Sen. Richard Bagger, as well as Assemblymen Eric Munoz and Thomas Kean Jr. were on hand for the groundbreaking.

"On behalf of my colleagues, Assemblyman Tom Kean and Assemblyman Dr. Eric Munoz, we

thank you for the invitation to join you this morning," said Bagger. "We are delighted to have the opportunity to represent Springfield. It's important for us to remember now, more than ever, how important our firefighters are to our community and our country."

The new firehouse will be erected where the former Schiabe Oil Co. stood, at the corner of Mountain and Tooker avenues, adjacent to the old Post Office. The building will be 26,000 square feet and have 40 parking spaces, all of which will sit on the 1.12-acre lot.

Silcon Inc. of Elizabeth was contracted by the township to build the firehouse. Silcon's bid of \$3,522,177 was the lowest bid of the 16 construction companies which submitted bids.

"Obviously this is going to be a great benefit to the community and I want to thank everyone for their hard work," said Goldstein. "Let's get this project finished and under budget."



Standing on the site of the new firehouse at Mountain and Tooker avenues during a groundbreaking ceremony March 21 are, from left, Assemblymen Tom Kean Jr. and Eric Munoz, Mayor Steven Goldstein, Township Committeewoman Clara Harelik, EMS Coordinator John Cottage, Township Committeeman Sy Mullman, Chamber of Commerce Co-Chairman Scott Seidel and Township Administrator Richard Sheola.

## Borough school for disabled children to open in fall

By Joshua Zaltz  
Staff Writer

In September, the ARC of Union County, an organization that helps children with disabilities, will open a special education school in Mountainside for developmentally disabled children.

"The school districts do an assessment of a child to determine what that child's needs are," said Frank Caragher, executive director of the ARC of Union County. "In many cases, families will go and look at different schools outside of their district to see

what they would feel comfortable with in regards to their child receiving an education.

"Parents have found our school to be a very family-oriented environment that they feel comfortable with raising a child. It's not easy being a parent and it's somewhat more difficult being a parent of a disabled child."

The ARC Kohler School has resided in Winfield Park since 1963 but will be replaced by the new school opening in Mountainside, at 1137 Globe Ave.

"Winfield Park was a much smaller building," said Caragher. "This will give us a modern facility for us to provide services to the children going forward. We should be there for a very long time."

ARC has been incorporated in Union County, statewide and nationally for 52 years.

"When the parents agree that they would like to see their child at Kohler, and if the school district is in agreement, then they make a referral and the school district discharges their responsibilities of educating the child

and pays the ARC of Union County to educate them. We're a tuition-based organization," said Caragher.

The Winfield Park school has 50 children with six teachers. Those children come from 10 different school districts within close proximity to Mountainside.

"We're targeting, for budgeting, about 65 students, but I believe the plan allows us to have 90," said Caragher.

The new school will be able to accept even more students into a modernized facility, benefiting the stu-

dents there as well as the public school districts from which these students derive.

"We want to provide the children who receive our services with a very complete and unique educational environment," said Caragher. "One that provides them with everything they could possibly ever need."

Public education laws state that special education students can receive public education from the ages of three to 21. This school will house children ages 3 to 10.

See SCHOOL, Page 2

## Board reveals tax hike

By Joan M. Devlin  
Staff Writer

The most conservative word to be used to describe the Mountainside Board of Education meeting Tuesday night would be "spirited." Actually, it could be called angry, as the media center at Deerfield School was packed and needed more chairs, for the public hearing on the new budget.

It was downhill right after the flag salute, as several senior citizens said they had not been informed ahead of time, and expressed shock. The bottom line numbers: a budget of \$11 million, which includes a tax increase of \$2.1 million, a proposed increase of \$675 for the average home assessed at \$150,000.

The president of the Board of Education and chief school administrator fielded the criticisms, questions and the outrage; both tried to answer the questions, which flew fast and furious at them during the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Board Secretary Florence Shukis pointed out that the budget, for the first time, is for two schools: Beechwood and Deerfield. First, she showed an artist's drawing of what the completed Beechwood School would look like; it was landscaped and spacious, and surrounded by trees in the drawing.

There were slides on revenues and expenditures, picturing where the money will go, as well as extra programs, tuition at Governor Livingston High School and other special schools, health services and other student support services, encompassing the increase in teachers' salaries and benefits, pursuant to contract negotiations. A nurse was added for Beechwood School, and the proposed summer school program was included.

The final slide, called "tax impact," gave the bad news and gasps were heard in the room.

The meeting was then open to public comment, and virtually all of the items were questioned. One woman asked, "What about the dissolution money — can't we apply that to bring down this tax?" Kress explained, "As we receive that money, we will use that to pay off the bond for the renovations. The anticipation is that we may get it this summer, but I spoke to the mayor today and he thinks it will be fall or next year at the earliest, so it cannot be included in this budget, as we don't have it in our hands."

Dissolution money relates to funds that the courts ruled Mountainside and Garwood are entitled to after contributing for years to the Union County.

See PROPOSED, Page 2

## Offices closed

The offices of this newspaper will be closed Friday in observance of Good Friday. We will reopen Monday.

The deadlines for the April 4 edition remain the same:

- Church, club and social — Friday noon.

- Letters to the editor — Monday 9 a.m.

- Sports — Monday noon.

- Display ads — Monday noon for Section B and 5 p.m. for Section A.

- What's Going On — Monday, 4 p.m.

- General news — Monday 5 p.m.

- Legal advertising — Tuesday, noon.

- Classified advertising — Tuesday, 3 p.m.







OBITUARIES

Gladys E. Burdge

Gladys E. Burdge, 94, of Baltimore, Md., formerly of Mountaineer...

Leawood in 1998. He was a sales associate for Shoppers Liquors...

Surviving are a daughter, Janice French; a son, Harold Jr.; two sisters...

Charles E. Conrad

Charles E. Conrad, 56, of Summit died March 13 in Saint Clare's Hospital...

Joyce M. Potashkin

Joyce M. Potashkin of Springfield died Feb. 8 in St. Barnabas Medical Center...

Adam V. Antoniuk

Adam Vincent Antoniuk, 70, of Summit died March 13 in Overlook Hospital...

Charles Amasio Sr.

Charles L. Amasio Sr., 69, of Springfield died Feb. 6 at home...

Ellen Hellquist

Ellen Hellquist, 95, of Maplewood, formerly of Summit, died March 22 in St. Barnabas Medical Center...

Mildred E. Baker

Mildred E. Baker, 75, of Springfield died Feb. 10 in Overlook Hospital...

Richard Marshall

Richard Marshall, 73, of Springfield died March 4 at home...

David A. Young Sr.

David A. Young Sr., 70, of Scotch Plains, formerly of Mountaineer...

Victor Neumark

Victor Neumark, 82, of Margate, formerly of Springfield, died Feb. 15 in Atlantic City Hospital...

Carl Hirschorn

Carl Hirschorn, 83, of Leawood, N.J., formerly of Springfield, died Feb. 15 in Shavane Mission Medical Center...

Eleanor Schmidt

Eleanor Schmidt, 85, of Springfield died March 13 at home...

Maria Recchia

Maria Recchia, 95, of Summit, formerly of Union, died March 18 in Overlook Hospital...

Erica Fried, MD, MBA

Erica Fried, MD, MBA, Investment Counsel, Specializing in investment planning for retirement...

A happy egg hunter



On Saturday, the Newcomers Club of Summit, Berkeley Heights, and New Providence will host its annual Easter Egg Hunt at Oakwood Park...

Parent's Guild prepares for Oratory's spring gala

The Parents Guild to Oratory Prep in Summit has begun making preparations for the annual spring gala to be conducted on April 12 at the Berkeley Plaza in Berkeley Heights...

EMT training course

Recent events have made it clear that emergency services and the people who are trained to provide those services are invaluable to society...

Kent Place's Spring Fling 2002 shows patriotic spirit

Preparations are under way for Spring Fling 2002. "Celebrate America." The annual Kent Place Parents' Association fund-raiser, slated for April 20 in the Kent Place Field House...

UCC offers security officer training program

In response to the events of the past few months, there has been an increased demand for additional security for many corporations...

Girl Scouts selling

What is the first thing that you think of when you think about Girl Scouts? Camping, community service and Girl Scout uniforms all come to mind...

Volunteers wanted for afterschool program

Have a big heart? Love to see young children light up with the wonder of knowledge? Have a little extra time? Why not unite your love of children with a desire to help a child become a successful student?

Photo IDs available

Union County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi has available a photography and county identification card service at her Westfield office...

Free veteran ID cards

The Union County Clerk's Office has announced the continuation of a public service program to provide free identification cards to all Union County veterans...

Worship Calendar

BAPTIST: EVANGEL BAPTIST CHURCH - "CHRIST OUR HOPE AND PEACE" 245 Shunpike Rd. Springfield, Rev. Frederick Mackey, Sr. Pastor...

JEWISH-REFORM

TEMPLE SHAI'AREV SHALOM 78 S. Springfield Ave. Springfield, (201) 379-5387. Joshua Goldstein, Rabbi; Amy Daniels, Cantor...

EPISCOPAL

SAINT STEPHEN'S CHURCH - 119 Main Street, Millburn, NJ 07041, (973) 376-0688. Sunday Worship at 10:30 AM...

LUTHERAN

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH 639 Mountain Avenue, Springfield, 07081, 201-379-4525. Fax 201-379-8887. Joel R. Yoss, Pastor...

NEWS CLIPS

Something to be happy about



Summit Middle School language arts teacher Patricia Lawrence, standing second from right, joins the middle school students who recently participated in the local Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee...

The newest services follow the recent reopening and enlargement of the satellite office to accommodate the large number of residents who use the office to obtain passports...

Program for seniors offers nutritious meals

One third of all Americans get almost half of their calories from nutrient-poor, high-calorie foods like desserts, chips, candy, soft drinks and ice cream according to a recent study...

Presbyterian Church

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 210 Morris Ave. at Church Hill, Springfield, 379-4320. Sunday School Classes for all ages 9:00 AM. Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 AM...

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST

UNITARIAN CHURCH IN SUMMIT, 4 Walden Avenue, Summit, NJ 07901, 908-277-7700. Sunday Services 10:30 AM, 12:00 Noon, 7:30 PM...

PENTECOSTAL-NON-DENOMINATIONAL

"RAISING PEOPLE OF POWER FOR THE 21ST CENTURY" 242 Shunpike Road, Springfield (located at Evange Baptist Church). Office located at 1132 Spruce Drive, Mountaineer, Phone: 908-928-0212. Pastors: Paul & Sharon Dean. Worship Service - Sunday at 2:00 pm, Prayer and Bible Study - Tuesday at 7:00 pm...

METHODIST

SPRINGFIELD EMANUEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 40 Church Hill, Springfield, SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:30 am. (July/August 9:30 am). Children and children's education during worship. Monthly services of...

Adopt-a-park

All groups, organizations, businesses and families interested in improving the environment in their community are invited to get involved with Adopt-A-Park...

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Professional Directory

Attorneys: IRS TAX PROBLEM? DON'T PAY THE IRS UNTIL YOU TALK TO ME! My clients never meet with the IRS. Call Raymond A. Brown, Jr., Esq. (973) 565-0150

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Investments: Erica Fried, MD, MBA Investment Counsel Specializing in investment planning for retirement, job separation, inheritance, divorce settlement, etc. Located in Westfield (908) 654-6623 www.friedfinancial.com

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Physicians: MALCOLM H. HERMELE, M.D., P.A. Internal Medicine, Arthritic Diseases, Osteoporosis 2333 Morris Ave., Suite C7 Union, N.J. 07083

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SHORT HILLS MATHEMATICS Private tutoring to: Improve high school and college performance Enhance math skills and problem solving Boost SAT performance Please call Mel Nathanson (973) 921-9615

Sweet 'n Fancy Emporium Open Good Friday, 10am-6pm • Saturday 10am-5pm Chocolate Bunnies, Cakes, Croissants, Doughnuts, Truffles, Lambics, Variety of Loaves • Easter Baskets Filled To The Brim • Diabetic Bunnies & Lollipops Jelly Beans & Chocolate Eggs • A Complete Line of Craft Supplies for Candy & Cake 17 North Avenue W • Cranford, NJ 908-272-0848 www.sweetinfancy.com

Deadline coming for AAUW scholarships

The Summit College Club branch of the American Association of University Women has mailed applications for scholarships to be awarded in June...

Students interested in making applications should obtain the necessary form from the guidance office for completion and return it during the last week of March...

The scholarships offered are based on an assessment of each student's academic excellence and leadership potential in the following areas:

\* Mary K. Tennant Merit Scholarship, for a female high school senior at Kent Place, Oak Knoll and Summit High Schools...

\* Summit College Club New Jersey Public University Scholarship, for a female high school senior who plans to attend a New Jersey public college or university...

\* Summit College Club Merit Scholarships, for female high school seniors at Kent Place, Oak Knoll and Summit High Schools...

Information accompanying the application should include the colleges to which students have applied...

In addition, an essay must be written on the following topic: "In today's society, if you lived in a country that had no civil rights/liberties for women and you were given the opportunity to introduce one civil right/liberty, which one would you choose, and why?"

Funds to the scholarships are made possible through donations and requests from members and friends, as well as from fund-raising events held throughout the year...

In addition to annual awards made locally to high school graduates, the Summit College Club Foundation contributes to the programs of the national AAUW Educational Foundation.

Violin virtuosos



Summit High School students Julia Castellanos and Blaine Iler both were selected to perform with the Central Jersey Music Educators Association orchestra.

Members prepare for 'Images 2002' gala

"Images 2002: The Art of Dining," the 21st annual gala to benefit education and outreach programs at the New Jersey Center for Visual Arts in Summit...

Nancy Y. Taylor, vice president and general manager for Neiman Marcus in Short Hills, serves as honorary chairwoman and host of the event...

The event will feature celebrity Executive Chef David Cunningham of Petrossian, New York, who will present caviar and French-influenced contemporary cuisine from Petrossian, New York, and Cuvée Faberge from Paul Goerg.

The evening will include cocktails, dinner and dancing, as well as live and silent auctions.

For information, call NCVCA at 908-273-9121, Ext. 4.

Teens get tips on coping with daily stress

Recognizing the many pressures teenagers face every day, The Summit Area Red Cross hosted a symposium to address their anxieties on March 10 at the Wilson School.

Stating that "Our lives are the sum total of the choices we have made," Underwood, a licensed clinical social worker with more than 30 years of experience dealing with youth in crisis, led a discussion on the nature of stress and ways to deal with it.

The teen-agers were asked to role-play certain "sticky situations," using the core values as criteria for resolving the situation in a positive way.

The symposium was sponsored by a grant from the Summit Jaycees and implemented by Alex Balish, director of the Summit Area Red Cross Youth Program.

Editor: JR Parachini Can be reached in Maplewood at 973-763-0700

SPORTS

Sports copy fax numbers Union County: 973-763-2557 Essex County: 973-674-2038

Dayton's Paz earns All-Conference First Team selection

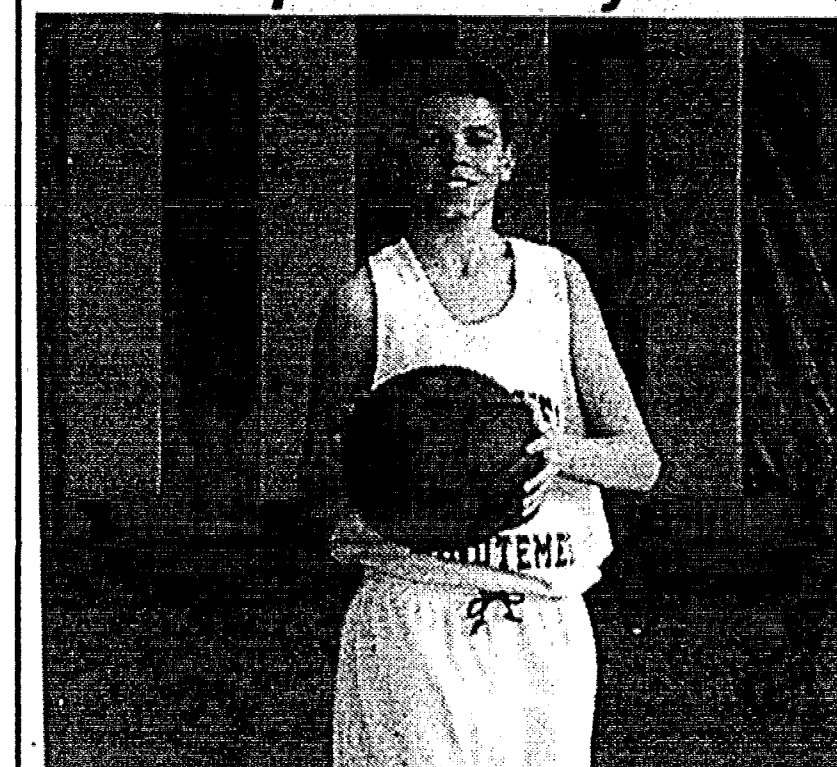
Dayton High School standout senior boys' basketball player Matt Paz earned First Team All-Conference honors in the Valley Division of the Mountain Valley Conference.

Paz finished his high school career with more than 1,000 points and helped guide the Bulldogs to a sectional championship last season and another winning record and state playoff appearance this year.

Roselle and St. Mary's dominated play in the Mountain and Valley divisions of the Mountain Valley Conference.

After sharing the Mountain Division crown with Roselle Catholic last season, Roselle won the title outright this year, finishing a perfect 16-0 in conference play.

Most Improved Player



Stephen Suarez was one of two players to earn the Springfield Minutemen 8th grade basketball team's Most Improved Player award, the other being Jesse Galinkin.

Boys' Basketball

St. Mary's, winners of the Valley Division now for four straight seasons, has won 60 consecutive Valley Division games and was a perfect 18-0 in the conference standings this year.

The Hilltoppers' streak began during the 1998-1999 season as they won their final 10 conference games that year.

Dayton was the last team other than St. Mary's to win the Valley Division as the Bulldogs were champs in 1997-1998.

Here is this year's Mountain Valley Conference All-Conference teams:

MOUNTAIN DIVISION FIRST TEAM Jesse Holley, Roselle

Jamaal Hilliard, Roselle Catholic Corey West, Hillside

Jason Dominique, Roselle Amir Singleton, Roselle

SECOND TEAM Keith David, Roselle Catholic Brad Clemente, Immaculata

Jason Johnson, Rahway Jonathan Hart, Roselle

Doug Caruso, Gov. Livingston Aaron Hill, Hillside

CHAMPION Roselle Rams

PLAYER OF THE YEAR Jesse Holley, Roselle

COACH OF THE YEAR Stan Kokie, Roselle

VALLEY DIVISION FIRST TEAM Mario Rivero, St. Mary's

Matt Paz, Dayton Wes Gimnius, New Providence

Brett Wyatt, St. Mary's Blake Weber, Oratory

SECOND TEAM Mark Wooden, Bound Brook

Colin Disch, North Plainfield Richard Brent, North Plainfield

Andrew Allen, Roselle Park Steve Byars, Brearley

CHAMPION St. Mary's Hilltoppers

PLAYER OF THE YEAR Mario Rivero, St. Mary's

COACH OF THE YEAR Art Cattano, New Providence

Men's softball seeking teams

The Springfield men's softball program is seeking teams to participate in its spring league.

Games are played on weekday evenings from April to August.

More information may be obtained by calling the Springfield Recreation Department at 973-467-4608.

Hoop camp for girls

The 16th annual Twin County Girls Basketball Camp, for girls ages 8-17, will be held at the Wardlaw-Hartridge School in North Edison July 22-26.

Clark went 3-for-3 with two RBI and three runs as Brahm belted an RBI single.

Dayton softball team capable of success

By Jeff Wolfrum Staff Writer

Cautiously optimistic. That's how Dayton High School softball coach Dave Rennie feels about his team.

"If we can pay attention to detail and limit our mental and physical mistakes, we'll have some success," Rennie said. "We didn't do that in a couple of games last year and it resulted in some close losses."

Rennie, in his third season at the helm, guided Dayton to a 6-12 mark last year. The Bulldogs also won six games during Rennie's first season.

"We have some returning players, but we're still a bit young," Rennie said. "We have a good group of juniors and sophomores that make up our nucleus."

Those players include junior third baseman Juliana Stravato, junior pitcher Kate Ciuolo, junior outfielders Val Zlotsky and Elissa Walters, sophomore shortstop Sara Steinman, sophomore first baseman Lindsey Brahm and sophomore catcher Lisa Clark.

Rennie is hoping to get some quality innings from Ciuolo, who saw limited time in the junior varsity squad last year.

"Kate went to a private pitching instructor over the winter, so we'll be counting on her to pitch in some games this season," Rennie said.

The coach is also relying on great play from Brahm, Clark and Steinman. "Lindsey is my most versatile player and can play at any position I need her to," Rennie said.

"Lisa has a strong arm and good bat, while Sara might be the best shortstop in the county."

The Bulldogs also return two seniors in outfielder Esther Aizenberg and pitcher Cheryl Deanning.

"Esther is our all-anything and led the team in batting last year with a .425 average," Rennie said. "Cheryl won two games on the varsity level last year, so she'll get the majority of the time on the mound."

Rennie feels strengths are defense and team speed. "We should also hit the ball better," Rennie said. "It's one of the areas I feel we'll be most improved in."

The coach feels that the Bulldogs need to work on their anticipation during game situations.

"The girls have to realize where to be stationed at on a defensive play and what to do while running the bases," Rennie said.

Dayton's goals this season consist of qualifying for the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 1 playoffs and making a good showing in the Union County Tournament.

"We can make the states if all the right things fall into place," Rennie said. "We have the talent to do so."

In last year's UCT, the 16th-seeded Bulldogs fell just short in their bid to upset top-seeded Scotch Plains in a 4-3 first-round loss.

"That game was our confidence," Rennie said. "It made us feel like we could compete with anybody in the county."

Dayton is scheduled to open its season Tuesday at North Plainfield in Mountain Valley Conference-Valley Division play. The Bulldogs are then scheduled to host conference rival Manville April 4 and then play at conference foe Brearley April 5.

"They'll be tough contests because the conference has quality pitchers," Rennie said.

Rennie realizes that things can go awry in a hurry if his team lacks discipline. "You always have to work hard and be ready for everything," Rennie said.

"Preparation is the biggest key to success." Dayton concluded last season on a high note as the Bulldogs bested Brearley 12-2 in conference play in Springfield.

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Dayton boys' tennis ready for another stellar season

By Jeff Wolfrum Staff Writer

What will the Bulldogs do for an encore? That's the question posed to the Dayton High School boys' tennis team.

The Bulldogs are coming off a magical season in which they captured their first-ever sectional championship, winning the Group 1 title en route to a school-best 22-2 record.

Dayton also won the Mountain Valley Conference-Valley Division crown outright after sharing it the previous two seasons with New Providence.

In the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 1 final, Dayton defeated New Providence 3-2 to capture the sectional championship. That match was played indoors at the Center Courts in Chatham.

Dayton dominated New Providence twice during conference play by 4-1 scores.

In the Group 1 final held at Mercer County Park in West Windsor, the Bulldogs defeated Haddon Township 3-2 after besting Cresskill 3.5-1.5 in the semifinals.

Dayton's season came to a close in the quarterfinal round of the Tournament of Champions when it dropped a 4.5-3 decision to Group 2 champion West Essex.

"We should be good this year as well," Dayton head coach Bill Prisco said. "In fact, we have the potential to be very good."

Prisco, who's entering his sixth season at the helm, has a career mark of 67-16.

"I never had a losing season in my five previous years," Prisco said. "It feels good to know I made an impact on the program."

With 60 percent of his team back, Prisco feels good about the Bulldogs succeeding again.

"We have a shot of repeating as conference and sectional champions," Prisco said. "There's no team that is head-and-shoulders above anyone else."

Prisco feels the worst-case scenario for his squad is a 15-5 record.

"That's even if we don't play well during the season," Prisco said. "So, overall, that's a pretty good mark."

Prisco has three seniors playing in the singles positions.

Jared Weisman, who occupied the second singles spot last year, will move up to first singles this season.

"It's going to be tougher on Jared this season than last year, because he'll be facing the best competition," Prisco said. "He's going to have a tough assignment every time out."

In the second singles spot is Chase Freundlich, who played at third singles a year ago.

"Chase has a desire not to lose and gives 110 percent in each match," Prisco said. "He's athletic and very quick on his feet. He brings a lot of intangibles."

Moving into the third singles spot is Adam Cohen, who played with Chase's older brother Chad on the first singles team last season.

"Adam played on the ice hockey team, so he brings a tenacious attitude," Prisco said. "He's a scrapper that hustles for every point. He has great endurance and can stay out there all day."

Making up the first doubles team are junior Brian Sperber and freshman Brandon Baron.

"Brian hits the ball hard and is very good on his groundstrokes," Prisco said. "Brandon is quick to the net and adept at hitting the overhead."

Prisco feels Baron has benefitted from private lessons and playing in USTA tournaments while in 7th and 8th grade.

Butler did it



Claire Butler of Mountainside excelled in the U.S. National Indoor Archery Championships held March 9-10 at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va. Butler, a member of the Summit Archers, placed first in Masters Division compound freestyle limited competition for the third year in a row.

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# Healthy Living

## Advances improve women's odds against cancer

According to the American Cancer Society, one out of nine women living to age 85 will be diagnosed with breast cancer, the second leading cause of cancer death in women after lung cancer.

While survival depends on the type and stage of the cancer, today's statistics paint a hopeful picture. The five-year survival rate for regionalized breast cancer is 72 percent; for localized tumors, it is as high as 93 percent.

Most at risk are women who are older than 60, for whom there has been prolonged exposure to estrogen and other hormones, as well as those who have had cancer previously. Other factors include family history, especially mothers and sisters; early age at first menstruation; late age a first pregnancy and/or menopause, and never having had children at all. Some studies suggest that excessive intake of alcohol and fat, the latter an estrogen producer, also may increase the risk for breast cancer. Still, John Cunningham M.D., attending breast surgeon at Atlantic Health System's Overlook Hospital in Summit, stresses, "Seventy percent of women with breast cancer have no known risk factors at all."

The best method of prevention is early detection, accomplished through regular breast self-examination and clinical breast examination by a physician, as well as mammography. Beginning at age 20, women should conduct a BSE every month, a couple of days after their period ends, either while lying down or in an upright position, which can be performed in the shower. Women should look for any changes in their breast, such as dimpling, swelling, thickening, scaliness, skin irritation or discharge from the nipple. Most lumps are found by women themselves, and while the vast majority are often benign, they should be checked by a doctor. Women should also contact their physician if they experience breast pain or tenderness of the nipple.

Between ages 20 and 40, the ACS recommends having a CBE every three years, provided there are no risk factors present. At 40 and older, CBEs should be performed annually, as should mammography. A mammogram of the breast requires a small amount of radiation exposure, is very safe and the most effective tool for finding breast abnormalities in their earliest stages and before they can be felt.

Biopsy techniques for diagnosing and staging cancer have advanced dramatically and have become less invasive. Stereotactic breast biopsy, a quick and extremely accurate outpatient procedure, uses a needle to obtain breast tissue samples, with minimal discomfort to the patient. Mammotome, one kind of stereotactic technique, allows physicians to perform a core biopsy on lesions that are non-palpable, or cannot be felt.

Surgery is the standard treatment for breast cancer and often used alone in cases where the tumors are small and the lymph nodes are not affected. Depending on the cancer's stage, surgery is either lumpectomy — local removal of the tumor — or mastectomy — surgical removal of the breast. Gaining widespread use is sentinel node biopsy, which involves injecting a dye or isotope under the arm to locate the node or nodes that primarily drain the breast cancer. By removing this representative node(s), doctors can determine whether or not the cancer has spread.

"The advantage to this biopsy is that you can avoid having to do a full axillary dissection" — removing all the lymph glands in the armpit — "which can cause swelling," says Dr. Cunningham.

In many instances, breast reconstruction can be done at the same time as mastectomy. Chemotherapy and radiation are administered frequently in combination with surgery — chemotherapy afterward if the lymph nodes are found to be cancerous and radiation after breast conservation in order to sterilize the breast.

Treatment also may include drugs, chief among them Tamoxifen. Used for more than two decades in treating metastatic breast cancer in postmenopausal women, Tamoxifen is now prescribed for five years following chemotherapy in nearly all cases. The drug also is given to high-risk patients as a preventive measure. Despite such possible side effects as uterine cancer

and blood clots, most experts agree that Tamoxifen's benefits outweigh its risks. Other medications currently under investigation include Herceptin, containing the Her-2-neu antibody expressed by cancer cells, and Raloxifene (Avisia), developed initially to treat osteoporosis.

"Breast cancer mortality has definitely decreased over the past 20 years," points out Dr. Cunningham. "This is due in large part to greater public awareness, more women having regular mammograms and our finding tumors at an early stage when they can be treated and cured."

Specializing in breast surgery and laparoscopic procedures, Dr. Cunningham joined Atlantic Health System in 1998 from Mount Sinai Medical Center, where he served as a full-time staff physician and assistant professor of surgery. He holds a medical degree from the University of Wisconsin and completed a surgery residency at Temple University in Philadelphia and a surgical oncology fellowship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. To obtain more information on breast cancer, Atlantic Health System's Women's Cancer Center, or for a physician referral contact Atlantic Health System's Web site at [www.atlantichealth.org](http://www.atlantichealth.org) or call 800-AHS-9580.

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