

Township releases report; aims to change ISO rating

By Rick Klittich
Staff Writer

Nearly six months after it was brought up at a Springfield Township Committee meeting in conjunction with the resolution of the Fire Department's new contracts, TriData Corporation's study of the department has been publicly released.

The report, which began in December 2000 and was completed by May 2001, cost \$25,000 and concluded with a Fire Department Management Plan, which makes 31 specific recommendations to Springfield's fire department.

The plan was composed by the Public Safety Committee, Springfield Fire Chief William Gras, Deputy Fire Chief Donald Schwerdt and the Township Committee.

While the recommendations vary in the sense of long and short-term completions, they include ideas such as forming a sub-committee

to analyze civilian dispatch function for all Emergency Services with representation from the Fire Department, Police Department, Emergency Management and First Aid Squad. It was advised that the subcommittee be chaired by Township Administrator, Richard Sheola.

Below each point made in the management plan is a response developed shortly after the report was finished. The item mentioned above, for example, is followed by a statement saying that numerous discussions have been held relative to this item, and that it continued to be addressed.

Two consecutive recommendations call for expanding recruitment efforts beyond word of mouth to include a variety of media and reaching as many citizens as possible, along with having the Fire Department and Emergency Management Coordinator working closely

together on the development of a Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Program. With the two departments now occupying the same building, it is said in the report that recruitment efforts will be coordinated.

According to Mayor Clara Hareluk, four new firefighters have been hired, effective immediately.

"It was something we've been considering for a long time," she said, noting that while the Insurance Services Office rating's rise to the poorest mark of a "10" is only a small factor that contributed to the hiring.

Hareluk said the most important reason for the increase in manpower is to more effectively "ensure the safety and well-being of the community, as well as the firefighters."

Several recommendations have been taken care of, such as creating mission statements, completing and overseeing the construction of

the new fire headquarters, along with the continuation of ensuring the Juvenile Fire Watch Program is maintained with status reports provided on a regular basis.

Some long-term goals include moving forward with the hiring of additional staff at the rank of firefighter and tracking total response times, inclusive of call processing and dispatch, turnout and drive time.

"I think what we do with the manpower we have, we do a fine job," said Firemen's Mutual Benevolent Association Local 57 President Jim Beyer. Beyer said that the main issue has been manpower, and that the department could use at least eight more firefighters.

Beyer said that as long as the report benefits the town and Fire Department, it is definitely worth the money spent on it. Whether or not the recommendations will be adhered to, however, remains to be seen.

Hareluk said that it is important to stand that each goal is, with that will take steps to complete that several items can be moved now that the new fire headquarters is finished and occupied.

While the Fire Department finished negotiations, as yet been signed. Beyer said the small things being worked out saying that there are language worked out to ensure that the agreement reflects the agreement and the arbitrator's decision.

As for the ISO rating, insurance policy of many said there is a meeting set with ISO.

"I'm pushing for an 11," she said regarding change

Springfield says yes to district's budget

By Rick Klittich
Staff Writer

Springfield's 2004-05 budget passed Tuesday night by less than 100 votes, according to unofficial results, with 794 residents in favor and 701 against.

"I'm thrilled the people of Springfield came out to vote for the children," said Board of Education Vice President Patricia Venezia, one of three incumbents who won re-election.

She expected the vote to be close. The budget, which was set at \$29,158,368, calls for an estimated annual school tax increase of \$150 for a homeowner in Springfield with a home assessed at \$100,000.

The budget included a large increase in costs for a rise in enrollment, along with the dissolution funds that Springfield will possibly be paying Garwood and Mountainside, once part of the regional high school district.

"I am thrilled that it passed," said board member Linda Duke, another incumbent. "I'm a little disappointed in the voter turnout."

The budget also accommodates an increase in staff, including a math teacher at Jonathan Dayton High School, along with a physical education and science teacher at Florence M. Gaudineer Middle School.

Decreases in the budget include athletics, facility projects and equipment, and state and federal programs, which dropped close to 30 percent.

"I'm extremely happy that it passed," said Brian Sheehy, who ran for the board this year, but lost.

Sheehy noted that the margin is higher than it was last year, when the budget was voted down.

Earlier in the day, several residents who did not want to reveal their names were out early in the afternoon to vote and said that they were against the school budget.

"We're against the budget because we're seniors, of course," said one resident on her way out of the polls.

Another resident simply said that she did not want the taxes to rise, and therefore wanted the budget voted down.

Time to play ball



Photo by Barbara Kukhalo

It's time for these young girls to play ball as Mountainside Youth Baseball celebrates its 51st year with the annual parade and kick-off festivities at Deerfield School on Saturday. Five different leagues and about 250 athletes are involved this year.

Borough budget supported

By Rick Klittich
Staff Writer

Based on unofficial election results, close to 700 voters got out to vote Tuesday night, as Gene Nagel, Carmine Venes, and incumbent Ray Haggar were voted onto the Mountainside Board of Education.

The 2004-05 budget, which was set at \$11,569,245, up 3.8 percent from last year, passed by a vote of 425 to 271. The estimated school tax increase will be \$174 per household, a 5.2-percent increase, for the average home assessed at \$159,300.

Last year, the school tax hike was \$411 for the average home.

"I am grateful to the citizens of Mountainside for their support," said Venes, who received the most votes out of all the candidates, 449. "I will do my best to represent all of the people

"Good public schools are a reflection of the people," he added.

"I'm looking forward to continuing the work we started," said Haggar, who will be starting his second term on the board. "I'm thankful to everyone who voted for me."

Haggar has two children in the school system and is the board liaison representative for technology.

Nagel, who has lived in Mountainside for 16 years and has a child in both Beechwood and Deerfield schools, received 429 votes. He has been active in coaching recreational sports around the borough and continually stressed the importance of communication between the board and the public. He could not be reached for comment by presstime.

Michael Melango, who also stressed communication and felt that his experience as a contractor would have helped in the Beechwood and Deerfield renovations and construction, was unable to be reached for comment by presstime as well.

With the passage of the budget by more than 150 votes, the board will look forward to providing the education they hoped they could for the children of the borough.

"I'm very happy the budget passed," said Haggar.

The total surplus to be used for 2004-05 will be \$252,504 from the general fund and \$438,680 from the dissolution funds the district expects to receive, for a total of \$691,184 toward the budget.

"I'm glad the budget passed," said Venes. "I believe the people are supporting the schools, and that's an indication that they want to see good education," he said.

One notable item included in the budget costs \$236,000 set aside for the use of Channel 35 to broadcast school board meetings and events.

The district will also see an increase in enrollment at the kindergarten level, along with an increase of 43 at the high school level.

A state-mandated increase in special education students is also compensated for in the budget, as the board agreed that money cannot be spared in this case, saying that every student deserves the best education they can get.

The dissolution funds coming to the district are not yet finalized. The schools that were once part of the Union County Regional High School District have been ordered by the state commissioner of education to pay approximately \$8 million to Mountainside and Garwood over the next five years.

Venezia, Duke and Sablosky win school board race

By Rick Klittich
Staff Writer

Springfield's Board of Education will remain the same, as the three incumbents who were up for re-election were voted back in Tuesday night.

Linda Duke, Patricia Venezia, and current board President Irwin Sablosky beat out the lone challenger, Brian Sheehy.

Duke, who received a total of 996 votes, was pleased with the outcome.

"I campaigned on this being my third and final term," said Duke, who has 24 years of teaching experience. She added that she looks forward to finishing the things that were started

when she began on the board, such as the school renovation and construction project that is ongoing at some sites. Duke said she is also eager to help new Superintendent of Schools Michael Davino get acclimated.

The current board vice president, Venezia, who received 994 votes, said she is glad people continued to have faith in the board's members.

Venezia said that going into the election, she "hoped people saw the relevance of education the board is providing for the children."

Venezia will be starting her second three-year term on the board and has two children in the school system.

Sablosky, who has 25 years of experience in the financial field as an accountant and retail firm owner, received 822 votes. He could not be reached for comment by presstime.

Brian Sheehy, who ran last year and did not gain a seat on the board, was happy for the incumbents.

"Congratulations to all three of the winners," he said.

"I wish them luck," Sheehy added, noting that they have a large task in front of them with the construction project. "I hope the completion is quick and efficient."

Sheehy, who has lived in Springfield for more than a decade and has

three children, including two in Springfield schools, said he will continue to attend Board of Education meetings and will stay involved in the district's happenings. He received 656 votes.

Earlier in the day, a trend of simply voting for the first three names on the ballot could be noticed at the polls.

Several voters were eager to voice their opinions regarding the budget, yet were unable to give reasons as to why they voted for certain candidates trying to gain a seat on the Board of Education.

While one resident remarked, "I don't really know any of them,

another relied on her sister to tell her who she should vote for.

Incidentally, the ballot positioning had Venezia at the top, followed by Sheehy and Duke, with Sablosky at the bottom.

"I voted for Brian Sheehy," said Joe Nagy, a Springfield resident for 11 years.

"I know him through the town and I know he wants to make Springfield a better town."

Nagy added that he simply did not know the other candidates well enough to vote for them.

A total of 3,468 votes were split up among the candidates.

District aims to keep teacher's spirit alive

By Rick Klittich
Staff Writer

After the emergency meeting was held after school informing faculty of 55-year-old Beverly Ellenport's death April 12, staff and students alike were in disbelief. A void has been left in Mountainside's school district.

"She was a respected colleague, talented teaching partner and a personal friend," said *Claire Sennett*, a seventh-grade teacher of Language Arts Literacy at Deerfield School. Sennett knew Ellenport for 11 years and worked closely with her in the reading and language arts department.

"The classroom is so empty without her," said Sennett, who co-taught in the seventh-grade language arts literacy classroom with Ellenport, planning, grading and teaching by her side.

The day after her death, Deerfield School's flag was at half mast. Families had already been called via the schoolwide phone chain, and crisis counselors were available for both staff and students.

"Teaching was indeed Beverly's true calling in life," said library-media specialist Sheila Silagyi. "Not only did her students learn from her classroom lessons, but Beverly taught many of her colleagues lessons for living life with a smile, a positive thought, a kind word. Bev always walked that extra mile to do things right for our school."

Linda Shanahan, an eighth-grade teacher of Language Arts Literacy said that when she began her now 13-year career at Deerfield, it was Ellenport who acclimated her to life and practices at the school.

"As time went by," said Shanahan, "I realized that my relationship with Bev was not unusual. She was everyone's friend and willing to help each of us as we strived to enhance the education of our students."

Sennett said that the Tuesday following Ellenport's sudden death began a new week in the school.

"The halls were subdued, students' faces somber and teachers saddened to face a day without one of their own," she said.

Ellenport had a bachelor's degree from Trenton State College, a master's degree in remedial reading from New York University, along with another master's degree in educational administration and supervision from Kean College. As a reading specialist at Deerfield School, she worked closely with students to help them overcome reading difficulties and improve organization.

Bev was the consummate professional and a genuine lady," said Shanahan. "She often complimented me, claiming to have learned so much from my classroom instruction, but truth be told, Bev was surely just



Photo by Barbara Kukhalo

Friends and family were shocked and saddened by the sudden death last week of Beverly Ellenport, a reading specialist in the Mountainside school system for many years. Students, faculty and staff created a memorial on her classroom door, decorated with photos, cards, drawings and fresh flowers.

being kind and boosting my self image. This was another of her talents," continued Shanahan, "making each person she came in contact with feel special and appreciated."

Since the tragedy, students have composed messages for the Ellenport family, signed cards, designed scrapbooks of memories and planted fur-

ther honors for Ellenport. Currently, her office door is covered with cards, notes, drawings and fresh flowers.

"She was a valuable resource," said Sennett. "She was a perfectionist in her field."

At Deerfield School's annual book fair earlier this week, students and teachers donated books to the library

in honor of Ellenport.

"We all know how important reading was to her and feel no better tribute could be made," said Shanahan.

At the beginning of Ellenport's April 14 memorial service, it was said that there are reading specialists and there are reading specialists — and then, there is Beverly Ellenport

SENIOR NEWS

Senior art workshops encourage creativity

Join senior residents of Summit Senior Housing in the Arts & Crafts Room of 12 Chestnut Ave., Summit, as they express their creativity in the "Creating Relationships Between Elements" a workshop lead by Evelyn Hassell.

Old Guard hears The Larks sing Tuesday

The Summit Junior League's singing group, The Larks, will start their spring program at 10 a.m. at the Tuesday meeting of The Summit Area Old Guard in the New Providence Municipal building.

The Larks were formed 18 years ago by members of The Summit Junior League, a national volunteer service organization. The Larks are under the musical direction of Old Guard member William Houpt.

The Larks are members of the Summit Junior League that includes more than 500 members from the communities of Chatham, New Providence, Berkeley Heights and Summit. They raise money and sponsor projects in local communities.

Present SAGE programs include HomeCare, Meals-on-Wheels, SHIP - State Health Insurance Assistance Program - of Union County, Checks and Balances, a shopping service, InfoCare, and Spend-A-Day Adult Day Health Center.

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All retired men are invited to attend the meetings of the Summit Area Old Guard on Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. at the New Providence Municipal Building, 360 Elkwood Ave.

Meetings feature timely, thought-provoking talks. Old Guard members participate in sports, bridge, and trips to various cultural events in the area.

For information, call Earl Gilkey at 908-464-2480 or log onto www.summitoldguard.homestead.com

For information, call 908-273-8282, ext. 16.

Senior van makes stops

The Mountside Senior Van is providing transportation service on Tuesdays and Thursdays for Mountside seniors age 60 and older. It is available for trips to doctors, dentist, shopping, hairdresser appointments, etc.

The van goes to Summit on Tuesdays between 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Westfield, including the Garwood ShopRite on Thursdays between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

To make a reservation, call 908-232-2400, ext. 5, weekly mornings.

MARS meets Tuesdays

The Mountside Active Retirees meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at Borough Hall. Upcoming programs include Simply Beautiful, this Tuesday, with Karen Enrie, a May 12 trip to the Dons Duke Estate, and on May 25 "What is a D.O.?" with Dr. Richard Mack.

New members are always welcome.

Senior Club meets

The Senior Citizens Club meets on the second and fourth Fridays of the month at noon at the Presbyterian Church on Meeting House Lane and Deer Path in Mountside.

Upcoming programs include: On Friday, a Nominating Committee report and on May 11, a trip to Doolan's for an old-time Polish Polka Party. Call Virginia Lucas, at 908-518-0231 for details.

Fitness Room keeps seniors in shape

The Senior Fitness Room at Borough Hall in Mountside provides seniors with an opportunity to improve and maintain a healthy lifestyle through the use of state-of-the-art fitness equipment.

Free Senior Fitness Room orientation tours are scheduled for Tuesday, May 4 and May 18 at 2:30 p.m. Call the Recreation Office at 908-232-0015, to sign up for a tour.

Local photographer exhibits at Bouras



Nature photographer Bruce H. Morrison of Chatham, formerly of Short Hills and Summit, will be exhibiting at Bouras Galleries in Summit on DeForest Avenue. These photos of wildlife and nature will be at Bouras Galleries from May 4 through June. The exhibit is open to the public by appointment only. For information, call 908-277-6054.

NJCVA exhibit explores multicultural art

"Unveiling the Image: Multicultural Woman Artists" explores the connections between the art of nine contemporary Latino, African-American, Asian-American and Middle-Eastern American women artists and their experiences. The exhibit, which will remain on view through May 26, has been co-curated by Nancy Cohen and Denise Call.

The exhibition is an attempt to "see" the images burned in the experience of the artists' different cultures. These "unveiled" images are illuminated for exhibition visitors and serve to build better bridges of understanding by becoming a part of the American visual vocabulary.

This exhibition is an opportunity that NJCVA believes, not only does this exhibition allow us to be involved in a statewide effort, it actualizes our mission, which is to provide access to art for all," said Eric Pryor, president of NJCVA.

Ida Goldschmidt

Ida F. Goldschmidt, 92, Union, formerly of Mountside, died April 5 in the Clark Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Born in Germany, Mrs. Goldschmidt lived in Mountside for 40 years before moving to Union four years ago.

Ruth L. Wood

Ruth L. Wood, 81, of Washington Township, formerly of Springfield, died April 6 in the Country Arch Nursing Home, Pittsford.

Born in Newark, Mrs. Wood lived in Springfield for 20 years before moving to Washington Township 20 years ago. She was an elder, Woman's Club president and chairperson of the antique show at the First Presbyterian Church in Springfield.

Surviving are her husband of 60 years, William; a son, Gary, and a daughter, Ruth.

John Cirrito

John Cirrito, 95, of Mountside died April 7 in Overlook Hospital, Summit.

Born in Jersey City, Mr. Cirrito lived there for 94 years before moving to Mountside last year. He was a brokerage manager at Herzog, Heine and Duld brokerage firm on Wall Street, New York City, for many years before retiring.

Mr. Cirrito was a lifelong member of the Holy Name Society at Our Lady of Mercy Church, Jersey City.

Surviving are two sons, John and Raymond, a sister, Jaya Tortore, three grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and a companion, Josephine Burnett.

Bessie Y. Karp

Bessie Y. Karp of Westfield, formerly of Mountside, died April 7 at the Westfield Center, Westfield.

Born in Boston, Mrs. Karp lived in Brighton, Mass., and Mountside before moving to Westfield four months ago. She was the co-owner, with her husband, Samuel, of Charles Karp & Sons, a retail clothing store, in Boston.

Mrs. Karp was a member of Hadasah in Boston and a past president of the Parent-Teacher Association at Temple B'nai Moshe in Brighton.

Surviving are two sons, Fred and Stanley, six grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

Emanuel J. Freda

Emanuel J. Freda, 81, of Springfield died April 8 at home.

Born in Newark, Mr. Freda lived in Maplewood for 43 years before moving to Springfield three years ago. He was a banker at Howard-Saving Bank, Newark, for 36 years before retiring many years ago.

Mr. Freda was an Army veteran and served during World War II. He was a member of the Maplewood Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10120, the Maplewood UNICO and the South Orange Elks.

Surviving are a son, William, a daughter, Nancy Jane Gunning, two brothers, William and Harry, a sister, Ann Russamano, and five grandchildren.

Margaret Behan

Margaret C. Behan, 96, of Springfield, formerly of Summit, died April 13 in the King James Care Center, Chatham.

Born in Williamstown, Glenamady, County Galway, Ireland, Mrs. Behan

Gertrude Johnson

Gertrude S. Johnson, 86, of Boca Raton, Fla., formerly of Springfield, died on April 9.

Born in Newark, Mrs. Johnson lived in Hillside and Springfield before moving to Florida last year. She was employed with SAGE in Summit before retiring.

Mrs. Johnson was a cook for Meals-on-Wheels and was active with Women's Club of Springfield.

Surviving are her husband of 64 years, Frank; two sons, Charles and Richard; five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

George Bleznick

George Bleznick, 77, of Manchester, formerly of Springfield, died April 10 in the Fountain View Care Center, Lakewood.

Born in Newark, Mr. Bleznick lived in Hillside and Springfield before moving to Manchester seven years ago. He had owned the Coronet Sweet Shop in Irvington and the Metzger Kasher Deli.

Mr. Bleznick later worked as senior toll collector for the Garden State Parkway.

Surviving are his wife of 51 years, Miriam; two sons, Steven and Alan; a sister, Miriam Telesnick; two brothers, Irving and Harry, and four grandchildren.

Eugene Hicks

Eugene Gordon Hicks, 92, of Bethlehem, Pa., formerly of Mountside, died April 2 Country Meadows, Bethlehem.

Born in Nashville, Tenn., Mr. Hicks lived in Mountside before moving to Bethlehem. He was superintendent engineer for American Trading and Production Co., New York City, for 20 years and retired in 1970.

Mr. Hicks served in the Merchant Marines during World War II and attained the rank of commander in the United States Maritime Service in 1949. He was a member of the Society of Marine Port Engineers for 50 years and a Coast Guard licensed chief engineer.

Surviving are a son, Dr. Gene Hicks; a daughter, Kimberly H. Jamison; five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Anne Gladstone

Anne Gladstone, 87, of Springfield died April 12 at home.

Born in New York City, Mrs. Gladstone moved to Springfield 52 years ago. She was a concert violinist and a graduate of the Institute of Musical Arts and the Juilliard School, both in New York.

Mrs. Gladstone performed with members of the Juilliard School at Carnegie Hall in New York City and Town Hall.

Surviving are two sons, Jay and Mark; two grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

Margaret Behan

Margaret C. Behan, 96, of Springfield, formerly of Summit, died April 13 in the King James Care Center, Chatham.

Born in Williamstown, Glenamady, County Galway, Ireland, Mrs. Behan

lived in Summit from 1925 to 1965,

when she moved to Springfield. She worked for Contemporary Ceramics, Chatham, before retiring many years ago. Earlier, Mrs. Behan worked for Best Pencil Co., Springfield, and Sage, Summit, and assisted in the home of the Phraner family of Summit.

Surviving are a son, James; two daughters, Maryret Covino and Danise Matlaga, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Albert Myerson

Albert L. Myerson of Sarasota, Fla., formerly of Mountside, died March 31 in Lakeside Terrace, Fla.

Born in New York City, Mr. Myerson lived in Atlantic City and Mountside before moving to Sarasota. He was a scientist and specialized in physical chemistry.

Mr. Myerson worked on various government projects during his career, including the Manhattan Project in New York City and Picatinny Arsenal in Morris County during World War II. He also did research for inter-continental ballistic missile systems while at General Electric in Philadelphia and the Cornell Aeronautical Laboratory, Buffalo, N.Y.

During the 1970s, Mr. Myerson was involved in air pollution research at Exxon Corp. in Linden, and in the 1980s, he investigated the causes of red tide at Mote Marine Laboratories in Sarasota. Mr. Myerson held patents in his field, one of which, on air pollution control, was used by automobile companies.

He was a chemistry graduate of Pennsylvania State University. Mr. Myerson was the 1941 recipient of the Pennsylvania State University by the university, as well as a Carnegie Scholar and an Avoca Scholar. He received a Ph.D. in chemistry and physics from the University of Wisconsin. Mr. Myerson was the author of numerous journal articles in the areas of combustion, kinetics of atomic chemistry and the collision of atomic species on surfaces. He was a classical violinist who had performed with community orchestras in New York, New Jersey and Florida.

Surviving are his wife of 51 years, Arline, two daughters, Arnee Kolbe and Lorraine McCarroll, a son, Paul, and three grandchildren.

Rev. Bruce Evans

A memorial service to celebrate the life of Rev. Bruce Whitfield Evans of Matthews, N.C., former pastor of Springfield Presbyterian Church, will be Saturday at 10 a.m. in First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, 210 Morris Ave. at Church Mall, Springfield. He died Oct. 29, 2003 in Matthews.

Rev. Evans, pastor emeritus of Springfield Presbyterian Church, served that historic church for 35 years before retiring. During his tenure, the Parish House was built. Temple Beth Ahm and Temple Sha'arey Shalom met in the Parish House as they formed their congregations.

Rev. Evans was instrumental in establishing the Overlook Hospital Chaplaincy Service, the Community Thanksgiving Service and the Springfield Clergy Association. He also

OBITUARIES

lived in Summit from 1925 to 1965, when she moved to Springfield. She worked for Contemporary Ceramics, Chatham, before retiring many years ago. Earlier, Mrs. Behan worked for Best Pencil Co., Springfield, and Sage, Summit, and assisted in the home of the Phraner family of Summit.

Surviving are a son, James; two daughters, Maryret Covino and Danise Matlaga, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Surviving are his wife of 51 years, Arline, two daughters, Arnee Kolbe and Lorraine McCarroll, a son, Paul, and three grandchildren.

Surviving are his wife, Ruth; a son, Bruce W. Jr., a daughter, Janet Evans Trampel, a sister, Gwendolyn Askew, two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Surviving are a son, Philip A.; a sister, Maureen Carey Pollock, and a brother, Thomas Edward Carey.

Surviving are a son, James; two daughters, Margaret Covino and Danise Matlaga, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

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Born in Newark, Mrs. Lehr lived in Springfield and West Palm Beach, Fla., before moving to West Orange four years ago.

Surviving are a son, Erwin, three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Eugene Hicks
Eugene Gordon Hicks, 92, of Bethlehem, Pa., formerly of Mountside, died April 2 Country Meadows, Bethlehem.

Born in Nashville, Tenn., Mr. Hicks lived in Mountside before moving to Bethlehem. He was superintendent engineer for American Trading and Production Co., New York City, for 20 years and retired in 1970.

Mr. Hicks served in the Merchant Marines during World War II and attained the rank of commander in the United States Maritime Service in 1949. He was a member of the Society of Marine Port Engineers for 50 years and a Coast Guard licensed chief engineer.

Surviving are a son, Dr. Gene Hicks; a daughter, Kimberly H. Jamison; five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Joyce Formicella

Joyce H. Formicella, 73, of Summit died April 5 at home.

Born in Berkeley, Calif., Mrs. Formicella lived in Chatham for four years before moving to Summit 48 years ago. She was a secretary for City Federal Bank in Summit for 38 years and retired in 1990. Mrs. Formicella was a member of the Business & Professional Women's Club of Summit.

Surviving are her husband, Mario A., and a sister, Patricia Mundy.

Margaret Behan

Margaret C. Behan, 98, of Springfield died April 13 in the King James Care Center, Chatham.

Born in Williamstown, Glenamady, County Galway, Ireland, Mrs. Behan lived in Summit from 1925 to 1965, when she moved to Springfield. She worked for Contemporary Ceramics, Chatham, before retiring many years ago. Earlier, Mrs. Behan worked for Best Pencil Co., Springfield, and Sage, Summit, and assisted in the home of the Phraner family of Summit.

Surviving are a son, James; two daughters, Margaret Covino and Danise Matlaga, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Jeannette Thatcher

Jeannette Barr Thatcher, 92, of Summit died April 6 at home.

Born in Lancaster County, Pa.

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Kent Place welcomes famed artist/architect

The 10th anniversary Speakers Series lecture at Kent Place School will feature renowned architect and artist Maya Lin. The presentation, "Projects and Process," will take place on May 20 at 7:30 p.m. Lin will present a lecture followed by a brief question and answer session.

Lin, whose artwork has been exhibited all over the world, was trained as an artist and architect, and her sculptures, parks, monuments, and architectural projects are linked by her ideal of making places for individuals within the landscape. She is fascinated with and inspired by the natural world, which fuels many of her ideas. She studies water patterns, satellite images and ocean fossils. Lin also takes her inspiration from her roots as a Chinese-American. Midwesterner and from her training as both an artist and sculptor.

A documentary about her life and work, "Maya Lin: A Strong, Quiet Vision," won an Academy Award for Best Documentary in 1995. In 2000, she wrote her first book, "Boundaries," which was hailed as a powerful literary and visual statement by a leading public artist.

"We are very pleased to bring Maya Lin to campus, both for the benefit of our students and families, and for the greater community," said Susan C. Bosland, Head of School at Kent Place. "As one of the most innovative artists working today, her Vietnam Veterans Memorial is one of the most highly respected works of art in the country."

"Maya Lin has established herself as a courageous and talented artist and as a role model of success for girls and women nationwide."

The Speakers Series lecture is open to the public. General admission for adults is \$25 and \$10 for high school students with a student I.D.

For ticket sales, call 908-273-0900 ext. 313. Tickets will also be available for purchase at the door.

For information, visit www.kent-place.org



Maya Lin

Girl Project programs promote activities for creative expression

The Girl Project, a program of the Women's Resource Center in Summit, has a variety of offerings this spring that will be held at 57 New England Ave. next to Christ Church.

To register or for information, call 908-273-7253 or visit the Web site at www.womensource.org and click on Girl Project.

A limited number of partial scholarships are available upon request.

Girls Who Write will be from 4 to 5:45 p.m. May 14 and the fee is \$20.

Chris Holte and Barbara Kenard will lead the workshop for girls age 9 to 12 who like to write for fun and self-expression.

Participants can experiment with different forms such as journaling, poetry or prose. No experience or special skill is necessary and only a favorite writing tool and a notebook are required.

"Sex and the City...And Your Teenager."

The Girl Project, the American Association of University Women Madison Branch and the Madison Alliance Against Substance Abuse are sponsoring this two-session program for adults only.

The first session will be Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Chase Room of the Madison Library, 19 Keep St. Madison, and the second session is scheduled for Nov. 8 at the same time and place.

Partial funding for this program is being provided with grant money from the Madison Alliance Against Substance Abuse and from the American Association of University Women NJ Charitable Trust Fund.

The AAWU promotes equity for women, life long education and self-development and positive societal change.

For information about the Madison Branch of the AAWU, call 973-377-2334 or 973-984-1936.

The fee for one session is \$5 and \$8 for both sessions. Advance registration is required.

Required for this program that will be facilitated by Barbara Kenard, who has a private practice in Madison.

The goal is to provide an opportunity for girls to share thoughts and feelings related to their mothers' cancer while encouraging them to talk about the issues in their own lives.

Healthy snacks will be provided.

Girls Who Write will be from 4 to 5:45 p.m. May 14 and the fee is \$20.

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Union County

- News
- Arts
- Entertainment
- Classified
- Real Estate
- Automotive

THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2004 - SECTION B

http://www.localsource.com

Same old story

Roughly half your property tax bill goes to fund your local school system. And part of your income tax sure ticks its way to Elizabeth or Plainfield, among the New Jersey's 30 "megalopolis" districts which receive millions in state aid.

Yet, every year, less than 10 percent of registered voters turn out in the annual school board election. In a good year, it climbs to 15 percent. Five times as many voters will go to the polls in November to vote for president, which won't have nearly the direct impact on most people.

County Seat

In some cases, voters reject the leanest of school budgets because it's the only place they can say no to increasing property taxes in New Jersey. If constituents had the same opportunity on their municipal or county budgets, you can bet they'd probably take advantage of it.

In 2000, it was a banner year for school districts in Union County, all 21 school budgets were approved by voters. That has since changed, with barely half of last year's budgets gaining approval.

By comparison, 88 percent of districts statewide approved budgets in 2000 while the figured dipped to 62 percent last year.

On average, it costs \$11,248 to educate a public school child in New Jersey - more than any other state - compared to the national average of \$7,376.

With such low turnout in school elections, even a small shift in the results last year, only 425 voters in Kenilworth turned out, rejecting a budget with a proposed average school tax hike of \$40. About 250 voters cast their ballots against the budget, in an election that also only saw two candidates file for the three seats on the school board.

This year, Kenilworth proposed a budget and second question that would increase taxes \$300 on the average home. In other towns, the proposed increases weren't quite as much, \$174 in Mountainside and \$155 in Linden. Other towns weren't quite as low, like Roselle, \$650, and Hillsdale, \$300.

If a school budget is rejected, it goes to the council for cuts. If a school board still is unhappy with the cuts, it can appeal to the state Department of Education, though that rarely occurs.

While the dollar figures varied from town to town, the reasons for the tax increases were more similar. Many municipalities for the school board this year spoke of skyrocketing employee healthcare costs and the cost of special education.

Districts are required to fund special education, regardless of cost, which in some cases includes transportation if the student is sent out of district. In some cases, one special education student can cost a district as much as \$100,000.

The federal government in 1975 enacted a law that would commit funding 40 percent of special education costs for school districts. Yet the funding level from the feds currently is more like 18 percent.

New Jersey passed a law to fund extraordinary costs, those that exceed \$40,000 per student, of special education. Last year, \$52 million for extraordinary costs was in the state budget, the budget money came too late for districts, so it had to go directly for property tax relief.

So if the feds aren't funding to the level they're supposed to and the state offers only some help, who covers the costs? The local school district, regardless.

In terms of healthcare, more districts in New Jersey are including it in negotiations with their local teachers unions. Since 1999, almost three-quarters of the state's school districts have negotiated provisions to contain the cost of employee health coverage, according to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

Mark Hrywna can be reached at mhrywna@localsource.com.

A call for gay marriage

Showing their support for making gay and lesbian marriage legislation a reality in New Jersey, nearly 600 people attended a recent town meeting at Temple Emanu-El in Westfield.

Dubbed "Equal People, Equal Marriage: Continuing All Roads to Justice," the April 15 meeting marked the 14th in a series of related meetings across the state sponsored by Lambda Legal, the New Jersey Lesbian and Gay Coalition and 100 other New Jersey organizations.

Although Congressman Barney Frank was among the guest speakers slated to appear, he had to cancel due to the sudden death of his niece. Instead, Jason West, mayor of New Palitz, N.Y., addressed the audience and shared some of his thoughts on a controversial topic that has drawn national attention.

West was sued shortly after performing 25 gay and lesbian weddings in New Palitz, but said the weddings have continued.

"The one thing I have been trying to tell people, at the heart of this, it's 'Basic fairness and human decency.'"

He described the fight for same-sex marriage legislation as a generational civil rights struggle and compared it to the struggle of feminists to get the right to vote and abolitionists to abolish slavery.

"What we are seeing today is the largest flowering of a civil rights movement that this country has seen in a generation," said West.

Regarding the same-sex marriages he performed, West said he obeyed his own moral compass and felt it was wrong to deny people their right to marriage. He said he would be happy to continue to fight for the rights of gay and lesbian couples.

Gary Buseck, legal director of Lambda Legal, provided an update on the performance, West said he obeyed his own moral compass and felt it was wrong to deny people their right to marriage. He said he would be happy to continue to fight for the rights of gay and lesbian couples.

Craig Hutchison, legal director of Lambda Legal, provided an update on the performance, West said he obeyed his own moral compass and felt it was wrong to deny people their right to marriage. He said he would be happy to continue to fight for the rights of gay and lesbian couples.



Jason West, the mayor of New Palitz, N.Y., speaks during a forum for gay marriage rights at Temple Emanu-El in Westfield last week.

New Jersey's marriage equality lawsuit. All seven of the couples involved in the lawsuit were also present.

Buseck said the government of Massachusetts was making a last-ditch effort to stop same-sex marriages.

"I don't think this will work," said Buseck. "On May 17, our couples will be getting their marriage licenses in Massachusetts."

Buseck called the recent court ruling of granting same-sex couples civil unions under the domestic partnership bill as one that creates a "second-class citizen status."

"It's a wonderful thing but it's not marriage," said Buseck. "We cannot stop until marriage equality is available to all of us."

He encouraged people to support the various organizations fighting for same-sex marriages, emphasizing that they not only need to win in court, but in the court of public opinion. He said the poll numbers on supporting same-sex marriages in New Jersey are the best in the country.

Each of the seven couples addressed the crowd to share some of their thoughts on the process they've been going through, with many of them describing difficulties with health care, financial and social issues due to their unmarried status.

Craig Hutchison, legal director of Lambda Legal, provided an update on the performance, West said he obeyed his own moral compass and felt it was wrong to deny people their right to marriage. He said he would be happy to continue to fight for the rights of gay and lesbian couples.

Budget reduced

Finance Committee slashes \$1 million. Freeholders are expected to introduce the 2004 county budget tonight, which should include a cut of \$1 million from the \$359 million budget presented by the county manager three months ago.

"We anticipate cutting \$1 million out of the budget that was sent to us," said Freeholder Alexander Mirabella, chairman of the Finance Committee, explaining that the savings was mainly derived from negotiating with health care carriers.

"The budget will be up for a final vote on May 20. Despite the extra savings, county taxes are expected to increase by approximately \$13.5 million this year. The proposed 6.6 percent increase over last year's tax levy will cost the average property owner in Union County an additional \$69 per household."

"Any time you reduce the budget there's less of a burden to the taxpayers," said Mirabella. Whether the reduction to the county budget will have an effect on the tax levy was unclear. "It will have some savings obviously."

Union County Manager George DeVaney introduced his executive \$359 million budget on Jan. 15. The \$359-million spending plan includes a \$204.8-million tax levy, an increase of \$13.5 million over last year's tax levy of \$191.3 million. The total spending plan represents a 7 percent increase over last year's \$335.4 million spending plan. In 2002, the tax levy was \$174 million.

Since receiving the administration's budget, the Finance Committee has held several public meetings to discuss the budget and determine if any cuts could be made.

"I think we're in a better position this year than we were last year," said Mirabella. "We have raised on some level the services to the county, and we're trying our best to hold the line on taxes."

"As a Catholic priest, I am opposed to it because they are inherently non-procreative," said Stage. "That's why See HUNDREDS, Page B2

Some local religious leaders who were not present at the meeting shared differing opinions on the subject.

Father Robert Stage of the St. James-Romano-Catholic Church in Springfield called marriage an intimate partnership of life and love, one that was a faithful, exclusive, lifelong union between a man and a woman.

"As a Catholic priest, I am opposed to it because they are inherently non-procreative," said Stage. "That's why See HUNDREDS, Page B2

Throughout the last five years the It the budget is approved, every See COUNTY, Page B2

WRC short-term support groups offer solutions, coping strategies

The Women's Resource Center will offer the following short-term support groups. Groups run for five, seven or eight weeks, are limited to a maximum of 10 participants, are facilitated by professional therapists and meet at the center located at 57 New England Ave. next to Christ Church in Summit.

The fee for the seven and eight week programs is \$105 for members and \$135 for non-members.

The fee for the five week program is \$85 for members and \$115 for non-members. Partial scholarships are available by request and, as always, there is no charge for the Rainbows programs.

For registration information, call the center at 908-273-7253 or for information about these or similar programs, visit their Web site at www.womensource.org.

"Relationships in Transition" Working through the crisis of separation and divorce takes time and saps too much of one's emotional energy.

With others going through the same process, participants can work out and bonding up the business of the past and looking toward the future with more confidence.

Held for seven Tuesdays beginning this Tuesday from 6:30 to 8 p.m., the group will be led by Ellen Sande-Kerback, a family therapist and experienced group leader with a private practice in Chatham. Babysitting will be available for younger children.

"Relationships in Transition Part II: Starting Over After Divorce"

Many participants of "Relationships in Transition" found "finishing

up the business of the past" required more time. They voiced the desire to continue on this path of change and growth in the company of other women in the same situation.

This group is for any woman who has attended "Relationships in Transition" and is looking for additional guidance in dealing with an ex-spouse, forming new relationships, handling family events as a single woman, and more. The group will be led by Helen Lindsay, for seven consecutive Tuesdays beginning this Tuesday from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Babysitting will be available for younger children.

"Rainbows for Kids of Divorce"

Separation and divorce have a profound effect on all family members, especially children. Children's expression of love and a normal reaction to a significant loss.

This group will explore the everyday problems that all couples face, the unique stresses that lesbians have, and help them to learn how to maximize their special advantages and celebrate who they are.

The group should be valuable for those who are single or coupled. The dates and times are to be decided, call the center for more information at 908-273-7253. Babysitting is available for younger children.

"Should I Stay or Should I Go?"

Maintaining committed, intimate relationships is never easy. This group will help women differentiate between relationship struggles that are natural and growth enhancing and those that are unhealthy or unsafe.

Explore the options in a safe environment. Led by Elaine Dill, it is intended for women in marital and non-marital relationships. The program will meet for eight Wednesdays beginning May 5 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

"New Twenty-Something Group"

This group will address the unique developmental issues faced by young women from their early twenties through age 30.

Pathways offers workplace rights program

Pathways offers a new law program at the Women's Resource Center, 57 New England Ave. Managing a career or an other illness in the workplace presents new challenges for the survivor. With "Legal Rights & The Workplace," participants can familiarize themselves with the laws that afford protection, such as the American with Disabilities Act and the Family & Medical

Leave Act. Gain tips on communicating effectively with your employers.

New legislation presents many changes and a multitude of questions relevant to your future. Cancer survivor and disability lawyer Agnes Wladka will present the workshop on Monday from 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

Woman shares her experiences as a cancer survivor Wednesday

hour long monologue into which she weaves stories about her own life experiences with cancer and divorce. The result has been described as a healing presentation that provides inspiration and humor. This performance received rave reviews from the Gilda's Club audience as survivors saw pieces of their own journey in Whitten's.

The performance will be followed by a question and answer session led by a Pathways group facilitator.

As with all Pathways programs there is no charge. For registration information, call the center at 908-273-7253 or for information about this or similar programs visit their Web site at www.womensource.org and click on Pathways.

Fund-raiser features safari theme

Spring is here and preparations are under way for Spring Fling 2004 "Safari Into Africa." The annual Kent Place Parents' Association fund-raiser, slated for May 1 in the Kent Place Field House, will have an African adventure theme this year.

Kent Place parents, faculty, staff members and alumni will be treated to African cuisine and musical entertainment including dancers and drummers performing numbers from the region. The evening will provide an opportunity for attendees to participate in both a live and silent auction with items ranging from luxury vacations to hand-crafted keepsakes made by the students.

A Nevis vacation home, quilts from the children, a camp-out on the Kent Place campus, and the opportunity to be a field assistant to a biologist in Costa Rica are just a few of the items to go up on the auction block.

Highlighting the evening's festivities will be a raffle drawing to win one of three prizes.

The grand prize is a 2004 Jeep Sahara, provided by Storms Motors of South Hampton, N.Y., or \$20,000 tuition credit toward a school, college or university of the winner's choice.

Second prize is a six-day, five-night trip to Disney World's Animal Kingdom. Third prize is four tickets to Broadway's "The Lion King." Raffle tickets are available to the general public and the winners need not be present to win. Only 625 raffle tickets will be available.

For information, about the raffle, call Helena and Steve King, raffle co-chairpersons, via the Kent Place Parents' Association Volunteer Office at 908-273-0900, ext. 234.

Proceeds from Spring Fling directly benefit the academic, artistic and athletic activities of Kent Place students. Thanks to its many supporters, last year's Spring Fling -- "Salsa Into Spring" -- raised more than \$200,000.

Kent Place School is a community of more than 700 students, faculty, and staff dedicated to providing quality education for girls from nursery through twelfth grade.

The students represent 550 families from 69 communities throughout northern New Jersey's largest independent, non-sectarian, college-preparatory day school for girls.

Prudential New Jersey Properties

Prudential New Jersey Properties congratulates the Millburn office's March Sales Associate of the Month - ROBBI USDIN.

Robbi is dedicated to helping buyers and sellers fulfill their real estate goals. A long-time resident of Springfield, she is very familiar with the surrounding area and school districts. A consistent award-winner, Robbi has been a member of Prudential's President Circle. She was also named to the Bronze Level of the 2003 New Jersey Association of Realtors Circle of Excellence. An Accredited Buyer Representative (ABR), Robbi has the resources to help you with all buying and selling needs. She can be contacted at 973-467-3883 ext. 234.

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Three emerge to grab GOP's reins

Three local Republican chairmen have emerged to seek the county chairmanship later this year.

Cranford Chairman Philip Morin has declared his intention to become the party's next chairman as have Elizabeth Chairman Daniel Nozza and Kenilworth Chairwoman Kathi Framingo. The three candidates would face off during the party's reorganization meeting on June 15 to replace Ronald Frigerio of Westfield, who is completing his second, two-year term.

"I hope I'll be fortunate enough to achieve a number of things as chairman including party building," said Morin, who served on Cranford's Township Committee for six years, including mayor in 2000. He has a private law firm within the township.

"The Elizabeth Republican Committee has asked me to run for the county chairmanship once again through the enactment of a real urban strategy," said Nozza. Nozza has served as Elizabeth Republican chairman since 2002. Last year, he ran unsuccessfully on the Republican ticket for Senate in District 20.

"I think I could do the job and what the job entails is getting this party in a better position than we've had of late," said Framingo.

Framingo, an attorney with a practice in Morristown, has been Kenilworth's GOP chairwoman for the past two years and lost a race for mayor last fall. Prior to that, she was the vice chairwoman.

"The county Republican Party has had trouble in the last many years achieving countywide success because the large urban organizations have received very little support," said Nozza.

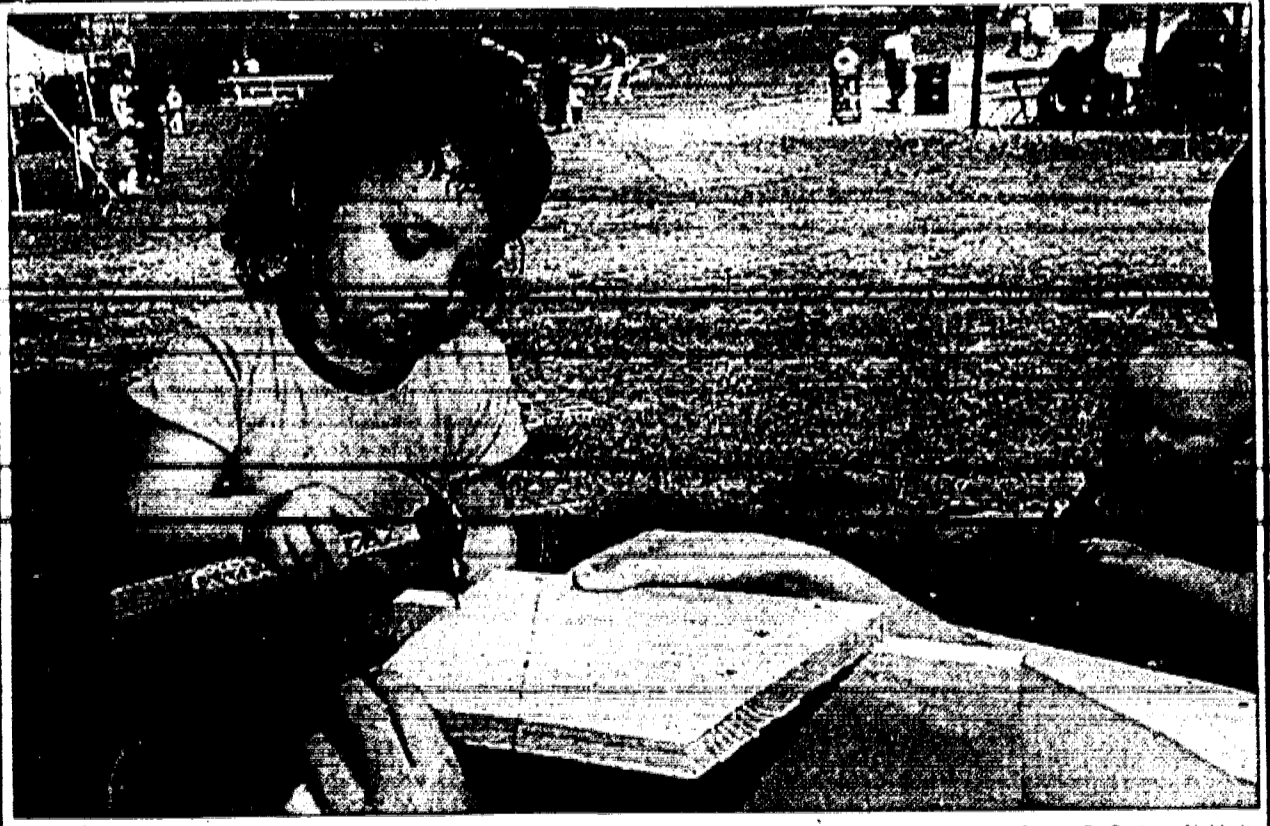
Enacting an urban strategic initiative -- rebuilding the party in urban areas such as Elizabeth, Roselle and Plainfield -- will effectively help countywide GOP tickets, said Nozza.

"There's been an outcry from Republicans in the urban towns for someone from an urban town to step up and lead the county organization," said Nozza. Historically, municipalities in the county's western region -- New Providence, Summit, Mountainside, Berkeley Heights, Scotch Plains -- have been Republican.

Nozza argues that the county's Republican leadership cannot just be content with having those municipalities remain Republican. Instead, the party must reach out to urban communities and rebuild the party there.

"Rebuilding the Republican party in this county is a mission that I have been dedicated to," said Nozza.

This is a strategy that Morin and Framingo agree with. "Party building in urban districts is important in the county and I'm willing to put in the time and effort to do it," said Morin.



WILDLIFE SUNDAY — Samantha Granizo, 2, makes a birdhouse while younger brother, Matthew, 1, looks on. The 14th annual Wildlife Sunday at Trailside Nature and Science Center in Mountainside offered demonstrations, presentations, entertainment and assorted displays and activities for children of all ages. Below, Jennifer Pena demonstrates how a falcon swoops from the tree tops to attack.



Mark Hrywna can be reached at mhrywna@localsource.com.

Gangs to be focus of 10th forum

A special presentation on gang awareness and why young people are attracted to the gangster culture and violence is featured for the 10th Annual "Standing Together Against Hate" forum this year on April 29, from 7 to 9 p.m. at First United Methodist Church on East Broad Street, Westfield.

Sponsored by the Union County Prosecutor's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Union County Superintendent of Schools, the powerful program presented by Lt. Edward Torres from the New Jersey Department of Corrections includes an inside and up close look at how gangs operate in New Jersey, how they actively recruit children and how they can destroy families and future dreams.

"We are proud to sponsor this exciting program for citizens, law enforcement representatives, educators and students who want to learn more about gang activity and the criminal violence that sometimes leaves behind a wake of innocent victims," said Prosecutor Theodore Romanow.

Union County School Superintendent Glenn Tullou will open the free program and also present an award for fighting bias to Anton Ford, Supervisory Special Agent for the FBI, in the memory of the late Union County Prosecutor Andrew K. Rutolo.

Each year, the annual forum Rutolo helped create with Community Chairwoman Terri Warmbrand brings together business leaders, government professionals, law enforcement personnel and members of educational, religious, media, civic and community organizations.

"This message will include some strong suggestions of how we might be able to keep our children safe from gang activity and how to deal with bullying, discrimination, violence prevention and family values," said Warmbrand.

"It should also allow us to examine our own sensitivities regarding these issues that impact on our local schools, workplaces and neighborhoods."

First Assistant Prosecutor Albert Cernadas Jr., a member of the county's Human Relations Commission, will be part of the annual forum and discuss how violence and gang activity actually can victimize an entire community.

"The whole notion of organized gang activity is one that has been given tremendous attention by law enforcement throughout New Jersey," he said, adding staff members have presented training and gang awareness programs for school officials, police officers, parents and students.

He congratulated the Committee Against Hate for coming up with yet another timely and topical forum of interest to the county's 520,000 residents and said the program offers Professional Development Credit for all educators and Kean University students who attend.

Other co-sponsors of the program offered each year include the New Jersey Hate Crime Officers Association, the state senators and assembly representatives from across the county, Kean University, the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey, the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Human Relations Commission.

There is free parking for the program.

County expects to trim budget

(Continued from Page 1) County's surplus has declined. At the end of 2002, the county had approximately \$14 million in its surplus. By the end of 2003 the surplus had increased to approximately \$19 million.

This year, the county is using a little over \$15 million

from the surplus to help balance the budget.

"We hope to regenerate that amount and more through the course of next year and next year's budget," said Mirabella.

The county is hopeful that it can replenish the surplus to nearly \$20 million by the end of next year.

Three to seek county chairmanship

(Continued from Page 1) He has such tremendous leadership skills that are going to make him an excellent county chairman," said Dougherty.

Last month, Trigeno said that he had every intention of seeking re-election.

"I think it's time to spend a little more time with my family," said Trigeno, who would have been seeking his third two-year term as chairman. He was first elected chairman in 2000.

Trigeno has not let his support to any candidates yet. "I'm not sure I want to draw any sort of attention of who to endorse and who not to endorse," he said.

Former Scotch Plains Mayor William McCintock has not made his endorsement yet either.

McCintock said he might possibly seek the party's chairmanship himself, although he's leaning against it.

"This thing is something that we pick in June so I don't know what the real rush is," he said.

Republicans have not held a countywide elected post since the mid-1990s.

The Union County Republican party needs a complete shake-up and until we investigate the urban committee, we're going to continue to lag behind," said Nozza.

Hundreds rally to support gay marriage

(Continued from Page 1) we don't recommend marriage."

Stagg said that the church condemns all forms of injustice and discrimination against homosexuals.

Rabbi Mark Mallach of Temple Beth Ahm in Springfield said there is both a religious and civil rights issue concerning same-sex marriage.

Mallach said Temple Beth Ahm relies on the Ritual and Law Committee of the Rabbinical Assembly and United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism to study these types of religious issues.

Composed of 25 members, the group makes a recommendation to the rabbi after studying an issue. The rabbi then decides what works best for the congregation.

"As of right now, I won't officiate at a gay and lesbian ceremony," said Mallach, referring to a religious ceremony.

He said he is still awaiting word from the committee on what their religious views on same-sex marriage are and acknowledged himself that there was an inconsistency in his own views.

From a civil rights perspective, Mallach said gay and lesbian couples should be entitled to all the rights that they are due under the law.

County's senior services visit PROCEED office in Elizabeth

The Union County Division on Aging in the Department of Human Services will bring its outreach services program for senior citizens.

The Outreach Services program offers senior citizens information and help with applications for a variety of important government assistance programs. Staff will conduct private interviews on request.

The outreach services program is held from 10 a.m. to noon at PROCEED office, 1126 Dickinson St., Elizabeth, 908-351-7925. Spanish English.

Union County representatives will be available to help residents complete the necessary applications for a multitude of programs, including gas and electric support, pharmaceutical assistance, home energy assistance, Supplemental Security Income, and counseling on senior health insurance.

For more information, call 1-888-290-8226.

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Timeless stories for young audiences

Sunday, April 25 - 2:00 PM
At the Chisholm Community Center
All Tickets \$10
Box Office: New Jersey Ballet
908-737-4355 973-687-9600

Girl Scout Leader's Day to be celebrated

Today, Girl Scout Leader's Day, Girl Scouts nationwide will show appreciation to the Girl Scout leaders and other volunteers who inspire them and give them the precious gifts of time and talent. Girl Scouts of the USA set aside this day to honor the 986,000 adult volunteers whose commitment, dedication and continuing support have made the movement possible.

Without these caring, hard-working individuals, it's hard to imagine where Girl Scouting would be. Approximately 99 percent of all adults in Girl Scouting are volunteers. In addition to special recognition ceremonies and events during National Volunteer Week April 22-28, volunteers will be recognized at the annual awards and Recognition event on Tuesday at the Girl Centurions banquet facility on Madison Hill Road in Clark.

The council store will be open Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for a book signing opportunity with Pilar Torres, author of "Learning and Being: Thoughts on Overcoming Problems and Living Fully." Usually only open on the first Saturday of every month, the shop will be open for business during this event.

For questions about the council store, call 908-232-3236, ext. 1225.

The Girl Scouts of Washington Rock Council serve almost 8,000 girls with over 3,000 adult volunteers in the following communities: Elizabeth, Hillside, Union, Kenilworth, Roselle Park, Roselle, Linden, Springfield, Cranford, Garwood, Mountainside, Westfield, Berkeley Heights, Scotch Plains, Lanewood, Plainfield, South Plainfield, Danellon, Green Brook, North Plainfield, Watchung and Warren.

Autism fund-raiser May 2

The Union County, St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, the New Jersey Day Parade Committee, the New Jersey Council for Outreach and Service for the Autism Community and UMDNJ's Autism Center will present second annual champagne brunch silent auction fund-raiser at James Ward Mansion, 169 Broad St., Westfield, at 11 a.m. May 2.

Parking is available. There is a \$100 per person donation.

The purpose of the event is to provide financial assistance for the research, treatment, education and services to the autism community and the developmental disability known as autism.

Tree planting Saturday

Area residents, businesses, scout troops, school and community groups are invited to plant native trees, 1 to 2 feet tall, in Lenape Park on Saturday. The saplings have been donated by the New Jersey Tree Foundation.

The tree planting will begin at the Broad Street and Springfield Avenue entrance to Lenape Park in Westfield. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Cranford campus of Union County College, 1033 Springfield Ave., Cranford, opposite Nanshegan Park.

All residents of Union County are eligible to participate at no cost.

A complete list of the materials that will be accepted on April 24 is available at the Union County Environmental Services Web site, www.uecnj.org/ocem.

The electronics collection and tree recycling will be held rain or shine, for Union County residents only and not for business. Proof of Union County residency is required.

Volunteers should call 908-527-4032 to register.

NAMI will celebrate the completion of a loved one's Pamela A. Eagan, editor of the resource guide, will review some of the highlights, tell about the compilation and answer questions.

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COUNTY NEWS

This ambitious project and hopes to make the guide available to those who may need assistance in coping with the debilitating effects of mental illness. If you would like a copy but are unable to attend the presentation, call 908-233-1628 or e-mail NAMI at namij@nami.org.

The information compiled in this handbook is comprehensive, timely and appropriate for those seeking help in locating psychiatric services, treatments, self-help groups, day programs, counseling, medication management, etc. Other topics include crisis intervention, emergency services, privacy and consent, housing, work and supported employment, legal help, transportation, long term planning, partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient care. Also, how to obtain free or low cost care, i.e. eligibility for public assistance programs, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, etc. are addressed in detail.

Refreshments will be served.

For more information, call 908-233-1628.

UCLSA meets Tuesday

UCLSA, an association for legal professionals, will have its annual meeting on Tuesday at Gate Z, 2333 Morris Ave., Union.

Following a social gathering at 6 p.m. dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Cost of dinner is \$23.

All legal professionals, secretaries and other support staff employed anywhere in the legal field — private practice, corporate practice, federal, county, state or municipal government, police departments, etc. — are welcome to attend. Prospective members and guests are also welcome, you do not have to be a member.

The association offers educational opportunities to legal professionals and members are eligible to receive nationwide discounts on products and services from NALS, the national affiliate.

For more information regarding reservations, call Reservations Chairwoman Judy Reed at 908-355-4892.

Recycle on Saturday

The County of Union will sponsor a recycling event for electronics and automobile tires on Saturday so that county residents can get rid of unwanted tires, computers and other electronic equipment in an environmentally proper manner. The collection will take place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Cranford campus of Union County College, 1033 Springfield Ave., Cranford, opposite Nanshegan Park.

All residents of Union County are eligible to participate at no cost.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Pottery show to take shape this weekend

The Potter's Guild of New Jersey will host its 10th annual Spring Sale of functional and sculptural ceramics and ceramic jewelry at the Community and Presbyterian Church, at 1459 Deer Path in Mountainside, on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m.

Admission is free.

This increasingly popular event draws hundreds of customers from throughout northern and central New Jersey. The show is the perfect place to find a unique Mother's Day gift or a special present for any occasion.

There will be several pottery from the area exhibiting their work this season. Judy Muisant of Mountainside exhibits her multi-colored functional pottery in fine arts galleries throughout the state.

Marie Signarile will be exhibiting her large carved vases, each one a unique work of art. Deborah Goletz, whose magnificent tile work has been on exhibit throughout the country, was recently featured in Ceramics Monthly, the preeminent national ceramics magazine.

Available for sale will be a fabulous selection of vases, wall pieces, pitchers, teapots, platters, casseroles, raku and painted vessels in varying colors and styles, and one-of-a-kind sculptures and decorative objects of art.

For direction to the show, visit www.PottersGuildNJ.org or call Muisant at 908-233-1633.

The Potters Guild is open to potters of all skill levels living in New Jersey. It was formed to share ideas, solve problems, sponsor workshops, help market members' work, and educate

communities on the value of hand-made ceramics. For more information about the Guild, or to join, see the Guild Web site.

Film critiques reveal unsung gems

I felt so negative about Mel Gibson's super-violent "The Passion of the Christ," that I thought I might self-medicate with the antidote of writing about seven less popular — and less hyped — movies from around the world which are currently on our neighborhood screens, but probably not for long.

"Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" surely the worst film title written in memory. I wish Charlie Kaufman's latest venture into our minds and lives as we live them. Jim Carrey and Kate Winslet battle to retain their memory of, and not incidentally their love for, each other in an overwritten and, sad to say, overwrought Hollywood film. To be fair to "Eternal Sunshine," however, it is necessary to add that it is not without humor, flair or a convoluted interest, and Ms. Winslet is, as usual, superb in a difficult role.

"Good Bye, Lenin!" is in conception a brilliant German romance about a son's struggle to keep alive his dying East German mother's vision of the communist state in the face of its demise. The trouble is that there are technical errors — you occasionally see the sound boom, for example and the narrative line unravels or is not pursued; there is a serious error in story telling when the mother learns the truth. Too bad, because the idea of a personal film about Germany in its tumultuous period is splendid. Katrin Bruhl has a truly lovely cinematic presence as the mother, particularly as

"The Station Agent" is a beautiful and sensitive, little independently made American film. To recount the story that it takes place in New Jersey and concerns railroads and the common humanity of a motley group, including most spectacularly a heroic dwarf. It is still playing around at a writing, but it is worth pursuing on video or DVD if necessary.

"The Lady Killers" is a remake by the Coen brothers of the classic English comedy. This time it stars Tom Hanks, in what surely is his most man-nered and inconsequential role. There is one really funny bit, though, when J.K. Simmons explains his IBS — irritable bowel syndrome — to his hip-hop black fellow gang member.

The Australian action movie "Ned Kelly" is about the frontier Irish folk hero of the 1870s who epitomizes for some Aussie those struggle against class and nationality. English-Irish distinctions in the early years of settling their continent. There are

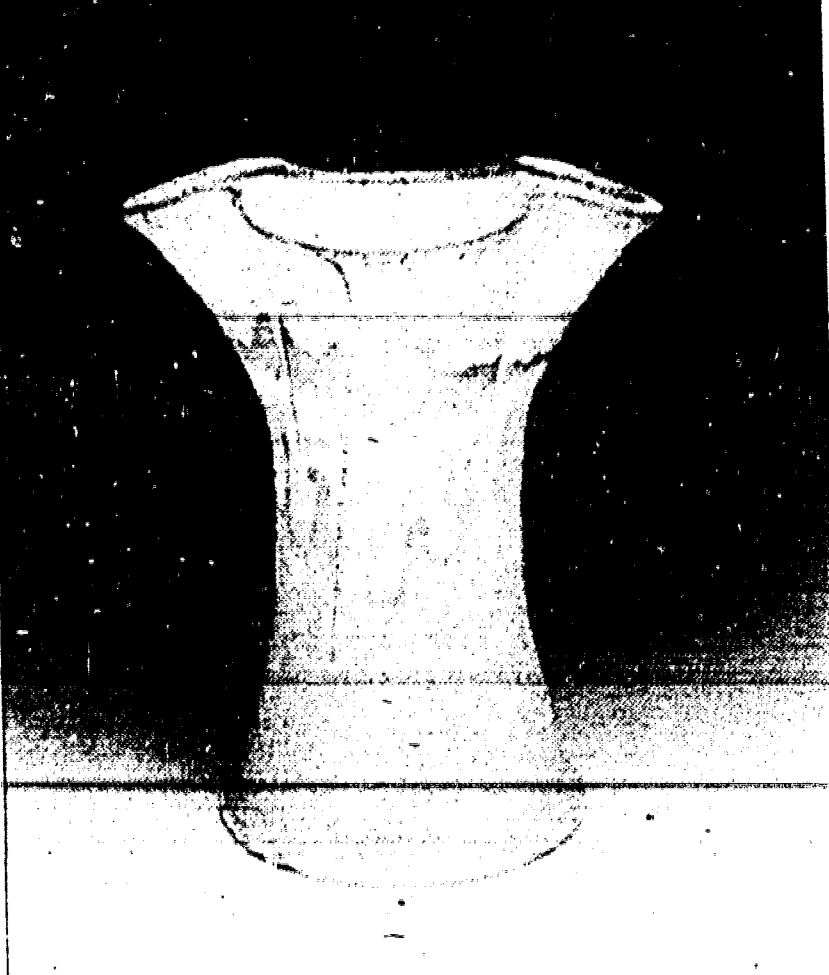
many books about Ned Kelly, with perhaps the best one by Thomas Kenally, but this is the first film about him and his violent insurgency around Melbourne that has reached our shores. While it is largely accurate in the big picture, director Gregor Jackman's movie compresses the narrative and fails to let us comprehend Ned Kelly's master of rationalizing or truth teller, as he records his thoughts and motivation through the bloody years in an uneducated but highly articulate, still available diary.

The movie "Ned Kelly" is violent, too violent, but not in derogation of the humans who are the subject of the narrative, and certainly not as a numbing totality, which is the way I would describe Mel Gibson's "The Passion."

But I don't want to end with the Gibson movie. So, I'll conclude with the last two films I have seen. One not so good — "Unwatchable" the New Yorker said — Lars von Trier's epic, "Dogville."

Nicole Kidman and a splendid supporting cast work hard to elevate this pedantic film about small town American life, but the movie simply entertains the audience. On the other hand, the French romantic film, "Bon Voyage," is attractive, funny, funnily paced and eventually courageous in its depiction of Vichy France. A great cast providing every shade of French men and women as the Nazi occupation advances is headed by Gerard Depardieu.

Jon Plaut is a resident of Summit.



A myriad of handcrafted pottery — such as this stoneware vase created by Judy Muisant of Mountainside — will be available at the 10th annual Spring Sale sponsored by the Potters Guild of New Jersey this weekend.

of all skill levels living in New Jersey. It was formed to share ideas, solve problems, sponsor workshops, help market members' work, and educate

communities on the value of hand-made ceramics. For more information about the Guild, or to join, see the Guild Web site.

On the Arts

By Jon Plaut

"Good Bye, Lenin!" reaches what should be the climax of the paired personal and epic stories.

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'Grave Concerns' is 'extraordinary'

When a playwright can accumulate every aspect of theater into one production with vast success, one can tip one's hat in bowed congratulations.

It seems that Karon Sue Semones did exactly that in the premiere of her play with music, "Grave Concerns," which opened April 16 at the Elizabeth Playhouse in Elizabeth. It will run through May 17.

Semones, a talented, creative artist, and wife of the theater's producer-director, Marlow Ferguson, has provided a conglomeration of actors, belatedly, character studies, a murder mystery, some comedic moments, a few dance routines and a solo and harmony in her play to the varied amusement of her audience. At least, this past Sunday afternoon, the amazed audience sat back in comfortable chairs and wondered what would happen next.

Ferguson, who also serves as set designer, dressed up this ambitious theatrical piece with more scenery than his audiences have seen in a long time. In the first row, a roped off section showed the police's chalk design of a man's body, actually that of Mr. Higgs, a theater director, which had plunged down a narrow, lengthy flight of stairs. In addition to the dangerous stunts that led all the way up, at least a flight up from the stage, upon which actors climb to the trepidation of the audience, also housed a real coffin Yikes!

It seems that each character despises at least one member of the cast, and their irreconcilable differences are permanent, yet, with a little understanding, a number of numbers sung

and danced, such as "Since You've Been Gone," "Love the One You're With," "Am I No Stopping Us Now," "Beulah Land," and "Impossible Dream," and some recitations of Emily Dickinson's "I'll Tell a Hunter in My Brain," Bessie's "Master of the House," and Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," the playwright has magnificently and harmoniously brought everyone together by the end of the second act. And she also solved the murder for the audience, whose suspicions were verified.

"Grave Concerns" is no ordinary play. It is, in fact, just about as extraordinary a piece of theater that any audience has experienced. This is Semones' fifth premiere production staged at the Elizabeth Playhouse. She converted a beautiful old church into a home, well-run theater.

The play is the Playhouse's final offering of the season. Ferguson has produced so many wonderful and unusual plays through the years, that one wonders — with awe — what he has in store for his audiences next season. Whatever is on the agenda, one can be sure it will be something exciting, surprising and appealing. Ferguson couldn't do less.

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"Grave Concerns" runs through May 17 at the Elizabeth Playhouse. For information, see the "Calendar" listing in the Stepping Out calendar on Page B6.

On the Boards

By Bea Smith Staff Writer

Even more ambitious was the large 13-member cast, all exceptional and all offering a professionalism rarely found in productions of this nature in community theater. From Libramme Hernandez, who plays Eric Jean Hankins, the mysterious daughter of the murdered man, to Peter Curley, who plays the reporter, J.D. Dawson, the versatile actors include Cynthia Ross, Judy English, Roberta, Steve, Clint Scott, Allan Gershenson, Tom Higgins, Patricia Remington, Rick Brown, John Ingram, Robert Pape, and Jesse Casuso.

The two-act play takes place in the summer time at the Praline Playhouse in Shelly, Va. The small theater is about to close, and everyone connected with this community theater is adamant about the situation. Some are devoutly devoted to this little theater, others want to close in order to get a man's body, actually that of Mr. Higgs, a theater director, which had plunged down a narrow, lengthy flight of stairs. In addition to the dangerous stunts that led all the way up, at least a flight up from the stage, upon which actors climb to the trepidation of the audience, also housed a real coffin Yikes!

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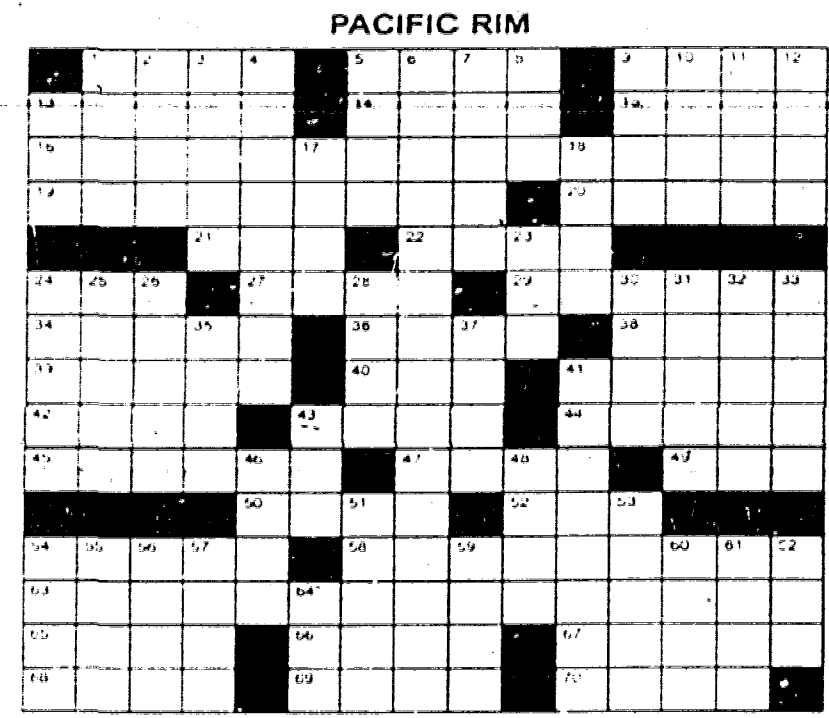
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ACROSS

- 1 Jog
- 5 Long range missile, e.g. abbr.
- 9 Rooster mates
- 13 Greek island
- 14 Go away!
- 15 On the briny
- 16 Swimming stroke
- 19 Big stick is one
- 20 Titrate
- 21 Stoid
- 22 Sailing character
- 24 Head cover
- 27 Barracks bees
- 29 Consume
- 34 Bang!
- 36 Rules, briefly
- 38 Warren
- 39 Peanuts character
- 40 D amonics
- 41 Trumpet kin
- 42 Diner's gr
- 43 Danish physicist of note
- 44 Kind of race
- 45 Intoxicated
- 47 Jane Austen novel
- 49 Curve
- 50 Narrative poem
- 52 Can province
- 54 Domicile
- 58 Seabird gear user
- 63 Decorative illumination
- 65 Aida or Arvin
- 66 Enticement
- 67 Island near Manhattan
- 68 Make angry
- 69 Disorder
- 70 Frigorie



- 3 Aquatic carnivore
- 4 Patios
- 5 Wight or Man
- 6 Popular assembly line
- 7 Fishing vessels
- 8 Cigarette abbreviation
- 9 Cause injury
- 10 Jacob's twin
- 11 Current events
- 12 Garage or fire
- 13 Scoundrel
- 17 Jason's ship
- 18 French seaport
- 23 Lead or lead lead in
- 24 Star, for short
- 25 Pivotal hemisphere
- 26 Kind of bean
- 28 Small musical group
- 30 Paste
- 31 Two under par

ANSWERS ON PAGE 10

What's Going On?

FAIR
SATURDAY
May 1, 2004
EVENT: Community Health Fair
PLACE: Green Hill, 103 Pleasant Valley West Orange
TIME: 10am-noon
PRICE: Free Admission
Screening information from Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation, Mountsinai Hospital, North Jersey Regional Arthritis Center, American Red Cross. For information call 973-371-2200
ORGANIZATION: Green Hill Retirement Community

FLEA MARKET
SUNDAY
April 25th, 2004
EVENT: Reilly Flea Market
PLACE: Jonathan Dayton High School, Mountain Avenue, Springfield
TIME: 10:00am-5:00pm
PRICE: Free admission. Over 130 vendors. Free blood pressure screening. Free Fire Prevention exhibition
ORGANIZATION: Springfield Rotary Club

SATURDAY
May 1, 2004
EVENT: OUTDOOR FLEA MARKET
PLACE: Fairmont Marina, Kearny, New Jersey (Garden Side) Passaic Ave & Bergen Ave (by Burger King)
TIME: 9am-5pm
DETAILS: New merchandise, crafts, collectibles, and a garage sale section. For information call 201-997-9535
ORGANIZATION: Sponsor by Kearny Recreation

SUNDAY
May 2, 2004
EVENT: FLEA MARKET, CRAFT & COLLECTIBLE SHOW
PLACE: Birchwood High School, 100 Passaic Ave., Belleville, NJ (OFF JORALE, MON ST)
TIME: 9am-5pm
DETAILS: New merchandise, crafts, collectibles, and a garage sale section. For information call 201-997-9535
ORGANIZATION: Sponsor by BHS BETA1 Committee

AUCTION
SATURDAY
May 1, 2004
EVENT: SPRING AUCTION
PLACE: St. Demetrius Greek Orthodox Church, 721 Parkway Avenue Union, NJ (off of Morris Avenue)
TIME: 10am-5pm
PRICE: Admission \$5.00 (includes coffee & pastries)
DETAILS: Lots of prizes, Crystal ball, appliances, food baskets, gift certificates, toys, holiday items and many, many more. Call 908-904-7957 for more information and directions
ORGANIZATION: Philoptochos, Adelphi's St Irene of St Demetrius Greek Orthodox Church

GARAGE/YARD SALES
SUNDAY
May 2, 2004
EVENT: 5th Annual Yard Sale
PLACE: Korean S.D.A. Church, 1305 Bryant Street, Rahway
TIME: 9am-5pm
DETAILS: Clothes, toys, furniture, home accessories, and more. For information call 908-988-8911
ORGANIZATION: Korean S.D.A. Church

OTHER
FRI., SAT., SUN., ONLY
April 23rd to May 2nd, 2004
EVENT: Home and the Holidays Spring Garden & Gift Boutique
PLACE: The Hefield House Foundation Plaza (off New Providence Road) next to library, Mountsinai, NJ
TIME: 10am-6pm
DETAILS: Featuring the "Annual Gardenum Sale" to benefit the Historic Preservation Committee for the Hefield House on Saturday, May 1st, 9am-3pm
ORGANIZATION: Mountsinai Historical Restoration Society

SUNDAY
April 25, 2004
EVENT: Opening Day Parade for River Park Baseball League
PLACE: River Park Sports Center, 1000 River Park Blvd, Newark
TIME: 10:00am-2:00pm
INFORMATION: 1-ball begins Saturday, May 1, 2004. Team pictures will be taken on Saturday, May 15, 2004. Please visit our website at: www.riverparkbaseball.com or www.riverparkbaseball.com for more information and directions
ORGANIZATION: Roselle Park Youth Baseball League 2004

What's Going On is a paid advertising service for non-profit organizations. It is a great way to get your message out to the community. For more information, call 800-564-8911.

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ARTS CLIPS

Kean students tell 'Tales'
Don't miss the spectacle, humor and baseness that characterizes the production of "The Canterbury Tales: Chaucer's Made," performed by Kean University theater students.
Based on Chaucer's modern adaptation of a classic story, the play is set in the present and the stories are told in the form of an annual Geoffrey Chaucer "Canterbury Tales" telling competition.
Four performances will take place in the University Center Little Theatre, 1000 Morris Ave., Union, on Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 2 p.m., and Monday at 3:30 p.m.
Tickets are \$15 for the general public, \$12 for senior citizens, and Kean faculty, staff, and alumni, and \$10 for students and children.
For more information or to purchase tickets, call the Wilkins Theatre box office at 908-737-7649.

ARTS CLIPS

Those auditioning should be 16 years of age or older and come prepared with sheet music and to sing 16 bars. Also, be prepared to execute a dance combination that will be taught. Auditions will be at the John J. Gergo Recreation Center, 330 Helen Street, directly behind the Union City City Hall.
For more information or directions, call 908-925-0908. Show dates are July 23 to 31 in the Irlan High School auditorium.
"A Chorus Line" is being directed by JJ Leonard.
Scholarships available
Hickory Tree Chorus is once again offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a musically talented young woman interested in pursuing a career in music.
Qualified high school senior girls with good academic records and exceptional talent in vocal music are encouraged to apply. Students should also have applied for acceptance into a music program at a college or university.
Applicants must submit an audiotape or CD of a short performance.

ARTS CLIPS

MVP's 'Line' to form
Mystic Vision Players of Linden will conduct auditions for the long-running spectacular musical, "A Chorus Line," today at 7:30 p.m. with call-backs on Saturday at 2 p.m.

LIFESTYLE

It's fiesta time with exotic-yet-easy recipes for Cinco de Mayo

By Saimi Rote Bergmann
Cupley News Service
Americans love stories about victorious underdogs, about Davids beating up on Goliaths.
Perhaps that's why the story of the Battle of Puebla is so appealing. A ragtag bunch of ill-equipped Mexican soldiers stands up to, and defeats, an advancing French army twice as big.
Whatever the reason, Cinco de Mayo is celebrated on a much larger scale in the United States than it is in Mexico. Mexican-Americans mark Cinco de Mayo — the anniversary of the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862 — with parades, dancing, music and feasting. Whether or not you are of Mexican heritage, you can join the celebration by planning a Mexican-themed meal.
The centerpiece could be "Tlayudas From Puebla," a dish that reportedly originated in Puebla, the site of

the famed battle. Make your own tortillas with cornmeal or corn masa mix, or start with ready-made tortillas, then top with a mixture of mole poblano, refried beans and shredded chicken breast.
Many versions of Tortilla Soup exist, but the must-have ingredient is fried tortilla strips. Some put the strips in the bowl first, then pour in chicken broth. Others use the strips as a topping. Some top with shredded cheese, while others drop in cubes. A simple recipe doesn't call for the expected lime juice, but the lime wedge garnish can be squeezed by the diner into the soup.
For your Cinco de Mayo salad, try jicama, a Mexican root vegetable that often shows up in salsas. It looks a bit like a brown turnip, with white flesh similar in texture to a radish. Donna Nordin, chef and owner of the respected Cafe Terra Cotta in Arizona, sug-

- gests adding jicama to a spinach salad.
In "Contemporary Southwest: The Cafe Terra Cotta Cookbook" (Ten Speed Press, \$29.95), Nordin creates a salad with figs and jicama and a jalapeno vinaigrette, then offers a variation. For a savory rather than sweet flavor, you can eliminate the figs and add grilled mushrooms.
Marc D'Antonio, corporate chef for Acme Fresh Market in Canton, Ohio, has created three Mexican-style desserts. Recipes for his Flam Especial and No-Halo Margarita Cheesecake can be found below. If you're looking for a recipe to make with your children, try his Baked Bananas.
Youngsters will love trying to get a banana out of the peel, rolling it in sugar, then getting it back into the peel to be baked. It's messy, but fun. The cooked banana is delicious eaten with a spoon right out of the peel while still hot, but can also be served over ice cream or pancakes with the syrup it forms while cooking.
To end the Mexican meal, consider a cup of hot chocolate or Champurrado, a very thick, hot beverage traditionally served with churros, a cruller-like treat.

INFORMATION SESSION
THURS. APRIL 29 AT 6:30 PM
CALL 201-559-6055

Time doesn't stand still. Why should you?
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HOROSCOPES

April 26-May 2
ARIES (March 21-April 19) Work hard to free yourself from a monetary burden. Say goodbye to a lifestyle of poverty. Welcome prosperity.
TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Put your best foot forward and accept a leadership role this week. Begin by setting a positive example for the individuals in your immediate circle.
GEMINI (May 21-June 21) Your time is best spent tying loose ends and preparing to move forward into a new cycle. Get on track.
CANCER (June 22-July 22) Avoid making a decision with your head in the clouds. Come down to earth and contribute your talents to a club or group enterprise.
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Expect recognition and reward for your skills or expertise. Take a bow for recent achievements or accomplishments in the professional arena.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) You deserve a break from your busy schedule. Shop around for a reasonable travel package and firm up your desired vacation plans.
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Review your options before making a monetary or investment decision that could wreck your finances. Avoid unnecessary changes.
SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21) A cultural or artistic event sets top billing in your world. Secure your tickets and start making plans for a grand time with a partner or mate.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Limit periods of procrastination and avoid wasting time on frivolous activities. Get in gear and tackle the chores and duties on your to-do list.
CAPELLORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Several wonderful opportunities are found along creative avenues. Explore different ways to stand out and express your individuality.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Your domestic environment cries out for tender loving care. Work with family to make needed repairs or improvements.
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) You stand to learn a lot from friends or peers in an educational environment. Welcome the mental challenge with an open mind.
If your birthday is this week, expansion is your key word for the coming year. This would be a great time to go back to school or learn about the world and its cultures through travel. Take time to clear up a misunderstanding about beliefs or philosophies between you and a friend. Be sure to give your full attention to financial matters and avoid making costly mistakes. Do your best to avoid manipulation in personal relationships.
Also born this week: James Monroe, Jet Li, Uma Thurman, Jay Leno, Dr. Benjamin Spock, and Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden.

Bill VanSant, Editor
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Organizations submitting releases to the entertainment section can mail copy to 403 Vaux, Street P.O. Box 158 Mapewood, NJ 07040

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- American Savings Bank: http://www.americansavingsnj.com
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- Crossroads Christian Fellowship: http://www.cdou.org
- Eye Care Center of NJ: http://www.eyecarenj.com
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The following schools will conduct reunions in the coming months:

- St. Ann High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, July 31
- Union High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, July 31
- High School, Berkeley Heights, Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Aug. 7
- Union High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Aug. 28
- Jonathan Dayton Regional High School, Springfield, Class of 1969, 35-year reunion, Nov. 26
- Governor Livingston Regional High School, Berkeley Heights, Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Aug. 7
- Westfield High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Oct. 23
- Hillside High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Nov. 26
- Union High School Class of 1994, 10-year reunion, Nov. 26

High School, Berkeley Heights, Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Aug. 7

Union High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Aug. 28

Jonathan Dayton Regional High School, Springfield, Class of 1969, 35-year reunion, Nov. 26

Governor Livingston Regional High School, Berkeley Heights, Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Aug. 7

Westfield High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Oct. 23

Hillside High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Nov. 26

Union High School Class of 1994, 10-year reunion, Nov. 26

1954, 50-year reunion, Nov. 26

Governor Livingston Regional High School, Berkeley Heights, Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Aug. 7

Westfield High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Oct. 23

Hillside High School Class of 1974, 30-year reunion, Nov. 26

Union High School Class of 1994, 10-year reunion, Nov. 26

For information, write to Reunions Unlimited Inc., P.O. Box 150, Englishtown, 07726, or call 732-617-1000

Community Classified

Healthy Living

Aide training available

The Union County Home Care Consortium, along with the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, has announced the next training dates for home health aides who provide in-home services to senior citizens.

The classes will begin on Tuesday, May 21. Classes will meet Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Pleasant Campus, 1100 North 25th Street, Union, N.J. 07083.

Certified home health aides are the backbone of the home care services," said Union County Freeholder Chairman Angel C. Estrada. "They provide the services needed to allow people to live independently."

The Union County Home Care Consortium was established in 1976 to attract, train and retain home health aides. The consortium comprises non-profit and profit agencies that are committed to providing home health services to Union County residents who are elderly and/or disabled.

"With the training provided through these courses, we are able to address the ever-increasing need for home health aides," added Estrada.

There is a \$75 registration fee that includes the cost of the textbooks and workbook. There also will be an application fee between \$60 and \$70 payable to the N.J. State Board of Nursing. A \$10 parking fee will also be charged for the use of the Union County College lot.

All applicants will be interviewed by one of the consortium's participating agencies before registration for the course. For additional information about this program, call Donna Farrell at 908-522-4858.

Program focuses obesity

Each year in the United States, more than \$33 billion is spent on weight-loss products and services.

Despite this huge amount of money, overweight and obese adults have been rising at an epidemic rate during the past 20 years.

To address the obesity issue, Dr.

Karen Laskie, department head of Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Union County, has developed a program called "Superstar America: Beat the Obesity Epidemic."

"The program will help people understand why portion sizes, food choices, and fitness activities are important on a daily basis. Food comparison quizzes with exercise examples will help the learner to understand the reality of our everyday choices."

"This program will give residents of Union County the knowledge they need to change their eating habits and work toward improving their overall health," said Union County Freeholder Daniel P. Sullivan. "Better eating and proper exercise will help reverse the disturbing trend of overweight and obesity in our society."

There are some of the risks facing overweight and obese adults:

- More than 300,000 deaths per year may be attributed to the obesity epidemic.
- People who are overweight have a higher incidence of high blood pressure.
- People who are overweight have increased "bad cholesterol" and reduced "good cholesterol" which increases the risk of heart attack and stroke.
- People who are 11 to 15 pounds overweight are at risk of developing Type II Diabetes.

For more information on offering this program for a "Lunch & Learn" group or for a community group in Union County, call E-mail at 908-654-9854.

Exercise program offered

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders has announced the availability of an exercise program for people who have had strokes and those who have other physical limitations.

The exercise classes address general fitness, needs and they are instructed by a recreational activities therapist and a recreational activities aide.

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NBIMC has a 'heart'

The Heart Hospital of New Jersey at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center is the only hospital in New Jersey and one of only 30 hospitals nationwide participating in a clinical trial to test the new Acorn CorCap Cardiac Support Device. The new device represents a promising and exciting potential advance that may extend and possibly improve the overall health of men and women suffering from severe heart disease.

The experimental device is designed to help New Jersey Heart Class III and IV patients with dilated cardiomyopathy, a severely enlarged and weakened heart, who are not candidates for heart transplantation. The device consists of a polyester mesh jacket that is form-fitted around the diseased heart. The Acorn CorCap Cardiac Support Device supports the diseased heart by passively preventing it from enlarging any further.

Generally, a damaged heart will become enlarged over time because it must compensate for its diminished capacity to pump blood by pumping more blood volume. As the heart enlarges and its ability to pump blood deteriorates, one of the heart valves is stretched and begins to lose its ability to close properly. As a result, blood leaks backward through the improperly functioning valve, causing fluid accumulation in the lungs and making it difficult for the patient to breathe.

According to Dr. Daniel Goldstein, surgical director of cardiac transplantation at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center and primary investigator of the trial, the device has the potential to become a promising treatment option for patients suffering from dilated cardiomyopathy.

"We hope to at least maintain the patient's current health and cardiac function and in some cases, improve the patient's condition by reducing the heart's size over time," explained Goldstein. "The early clinical results are encouraging."

According to study coordinator Jesse Casida, RN, the Heart Hospital has already treated a 42-year-old woman suffering from dilated cardiomyopathy, diabetes, hypertension and peripheral neuropathy. The patient is doing well after receiving the device in December 2002.

Although it is still too early to determine the device's overall effectiveness, Casida notes that the trial's data safety monitoring board recently and offered "no recommended modifications to the trial. That normally indicates that the study is progressing smoothly."

Currently, 240 patients are enrolled in the trial throughout the United States. The trial is expected to conclude in July 2003. Trial sponsors plan to enroll a total of 300 patients. The Heart Hospital of New Jersey continues to seek candidates for trial. To learn more about the criteria for this trial contact the following individuals:

Goldstein, surgical director of cardiac transplantation, 973-926-7446; Jesse Casida, RN, study coordinator, 973-26-3190; Dr. Mark Zucker, director of cardiac transplantation, 973-926-7205; Dr. Luis Arroyo, transplant cardiologist, 973-926-7205; and Dr. Ravindra Karaman, cardiothoracic surgeon, 973-926-2738.

Diabetics have support

A free support group for diabetics, friends and family is offered by the Diabetes Management Center at Trinitas Hospital on the first Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m.

Sessions are conducted by registered nurses and certified diabetes educators, and cover such topics as diet, latest treatments, self monitoring, and more. The group meets in the Diabetes Management Center, located in suite 202 of the Trinitas Hospital Medical Office Building, 240 Williamson St., Elizabeth. Support group members may park for free in the campus parking garage.

KidPeace intends to assist with fostering

Is it your chance to make a difference in a child's life by calling KidPeace New Jersey and opening your heart and your home to a child in need?

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This need for foster parents is at an all-time high," according to Dana Madri, family resource specialist for KidPeace New Jersey.

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'99 FORD ESCORT VIN #2M232181, 4 cyl, auto, a/c, p/s/b/winds/lks, cass, 27,375 mi.	'02 MERCURY SABLE VIN #2A632731, V8, auto, a/c, p/s/b/winds/lks/mirrs/seats, cd, cruise, alarm/sec sys, 21,634 mi.	'02 JEEP WRANGLER SPORT VIN #7P774077, V6, 5 spd, a/c, p/s/b, dual tops (soft & hard), large wheels, 29,910 mi. EXTRA CLEAN!	'02 JEEP WRANGLER SPORT VIN #7P774077, V6, 5 spd, a/c, p/s/b, dual tops (soft & hard), large wheels, 29,910 mi. EXTRA CLEAN!
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'88 FORD EXPLORER XLT 4WD VIN #UA32734, V6, auto, a/c, p/s/b, lhr, sunroof, airbags, 63,340 mi.	'02 FORD TAURUS SES CERTIFIED VIN #2A59259, V6, auto, a/c, p/s/ABS/winds/lks/mirrs/sts, cruise, alarm/sec sys, 20,695 mi.	'03 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5 S VIN #2C218576, 4 cyl, auto, a/c, p/s/b/winds/lks, lhr, sunroof, 43,334 mi.	'01 FORD F-150 FX4 CREW CAB VIN #1KA20711, V8, auto, a/c, p/s/ABS, am/fm stereo, dual airbags, 57,634 mi.

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\$8624

2001 HONDA MALIBU 4 DR
6 cyl auto p/str/brks/wind/lks air cd Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$9724

2000 HONDA CIVIC EX-2 DR GET READY FOR SPRING
4 cyl auto p/str/brks/wind/lks air cd Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$10,724

2001 CHEVY TRACKER LT 4X4 4 DR A REAL GEAR
6 cyl auto p/str/brks/wind/lks air cd security sys 31,783 mi. Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$11,924

2001 CHEVY BLAZER 4X4 2 DR SPORT SPRING STALLER
6 cyl auto p/str/ABS/wind/lks air cd Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$12,724

2001 VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE GLS 2 DR
4 cyl auto p/str/ABS/wind/lks air cd cd changer heat security sys Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$13,924

2001 CHEVY EXPRESS 12 PASS VAN 4 DR
8 cyl auto p/str/brks/wind/lks air cd Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$14,524

2001 DODGE DAKOTA SET QUAD CAB 4X4 4 DR
4 cyl auto p/str/ABS/wind/lks air cd Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$19,924

2000 CHEVY TRAILBLAZER LT 4X4 4 DR MOVE ANY TRAIL
6 cyl auto p/str/ABS/wind/lks air cd Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$22,524

2000 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE LTD BLACK BEAUTY
8 cyl auto p/str/ABS/wind/lks/seat air cd moonroof leather 31,944 mi. Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$19,924

2001 CHEVY TANOE LT 4X4 4 DR
8 cyl auto p/str/ABS/wind/lks/seat air cd moonroof leather 31,944 mi. Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$25,924

2002 CHEVY AVALANCHE 4X4 Z71 4 DR
8 cyl auto p/str/ABS/wind/lks/seat air cd moonroof leather 31,944 mi. Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$26,924

2001 CHEVY SUBURBAN 4X4 4 DR FIT THE FAMILY
8 cyl auto p/str/ABS/wind/lks/seat air cd moonroof leather 31,944 mi. Stk#40394 VIN#1118544A
\$27,524



WIGDER CHEVROLET

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