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FOOTBALL FINISH

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood and Westfield football teams concluded their respective seasons with Thanksgiving games last weekend. SP-F fell to Elizabeth, while Westfield defeated Plainfield. See Sports, Page C-1.



YOU GO, GIRLS!

Members of the Girls Learn International chapter at Westfield's Roosevelt Intermediate School are working in support of a secondary school for girls in Uganda. See the story on Page A-5.



HOLIDAY HELP

Thanksgiving was a little bit happier for one local family, thanks to the Fanwood A&P and Girl Scout Junior Troop 912 of Scotch Plains-Fanwood. To read why, turn to Page A-6.

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Family seeks answers about Villane's death

By **TERESA STULTZ**
 THE RECORD-PRESS

WESTFIELD — The family of the late Robert Villane has broken its silence about his death last month, following an incident that involved five local police officers.

In a letter published last week in the *Westfield Leader*, another local weekly newspaper, six members of the Villane family made clear their devastation over Robert Villane's sudden death. They also questioned the actions of police during the incident and the accuracy of some of the reporting about the episode.

Villane, 35, died on Nov. 6 after police

responded to his West Broad Street residence. According to Westfield Police Chief John Parizeau, police arrived at the scene at the request of members of Muhlenberg Hospital's mental and psychiatric screening outreach team.

According to authorities, Villane refused to cooperate with police, who reportedly used pepper spray and handcuffed him in an effort to move him to an ambulance that would transport him to the hospital. But while Villane was on a stretcher, he stopped breathing, and he was later pronounced dead at Muhlenberg.

Westfield Capt. David Wayman subsequently said Villane died from "acute

excited delirium resulting in a cardiac arrest."

But the official account doesn't entirely satisfy members of the Villane family, who say that Robert was forced to lie on his stomach outside his house for some time before an ambulance arrived at the scene. Now, they say they intend to make sure all the facts about the case come to light, and to use the incident to force a re-examination of police procedures.

In a phone interview conducted last Friday, Michael Villane, Robert's brother, said his family hopes to maintain a

(Continued on page A-3)

Council quarrels over attorney's pay

By **TERESA STULTZ**
 THE RECORD-PRESS

WESTFIELD — Tempers flared at Tuesday night's Town Council conference meeting, as local officials debated the implications of a survey detailing legal salaries in Westfield and a number of neighboring communities.

The study followed criticisms earlier in the year from Democratic councilmen Thomas Bigosinski and Dave Haas about the town's arrangement with attorney Bob Cockren. Cockren was appointed municipal attorney in 2001, though he has provided various legal services to the town for the past two decades.

Cockren is paid an hourly rate of \$150, and Finance Policy Committee chairman Peter Echausse recommended that the rate be maintained in 2007. The rate was \$100 until 2004, when the council decided to raise it. Supporters of the increase, including the Republicans on the council, have said the raise was merited to keep Cockren's compensation in line with that of other municipal attorneys.

But Haas and Bigosinski have said the town should solicit requests for proposal, or RFPs, for the town's legal services in order to create a competitive environment and lower legal expenses.

Most municipal attorneys are appointed on an annual basis, and it is not uncommon

for the position to become the subject of partisan wrangling. But in most communities, it is the identity, not the salary, of the attorney that is cause for debate.

Of the 31 municipalities surveyed by town administrator Jim Gildea and town clerk Claire Gray, 14 responded with information about how their attorneys are compensated and whether RFPs are used.

According to the survey, the average hourly rate for a municipal attorney among the surveyed towns was \$147. About half of the municipalities reported using RFPs for appointed positions.

The Republicans on the council were satisfied with the results, which they said proved that Cockren's \$150 rate fell in line with the average. "This is an exhaustive survey. I am happy we have these numbers to finally put to rest the misrepresentation about how much we pay our town attorney," said Councilwoman Jo Ann Neylan, a Republican.

However, Haas and Bigosinski disagreed over the interpretation of the survey results. "There are a number of communities in the survey that are not representative of Westfield," said Haas. In particular, he cited New Brunswick, which pays an hourly rate of \$175, as a demographic outlier that could skew the results.

Bigosinski and Haas also

(Continued on page A-2)

Tough competition in the Turkey Bowl



BROOKS CRANDALL/CORRESPONDENT

After a big Thanksgiving meal, everyone's looking for opportunities to get active and burn some calories the next day. For a few local teens, the way to do it was a spirited game of football — played in shirt sleeves thanks to some unseasonably mild weather — at the Elm Street field in Westfield. In the background, the Westfield Y Men's Club has already set up its trailer to prepare for the annual Christmas tree sale.

Westfield High principal will serve through June 2008

By **TERESA STULTZ**
 THE RECORD-PRESS

WESTFIELD — At its Nov. 21 meeting, the Board of Education voted unanimously to extend the term of interim Westfield High School Principal Dennis Fyffe through the 2007-2008 school year.

A career educator who was most recently the assistant superintendent of Sayreville Public Schools, Fyffe came to Westfield High in August following the retirement of longtime WHS Principal Robert Petix.

The high school is in a period of administrative turnover, with two of the school's three assistant principals new

to their role this year. Superintendent William Foley said Fyffe's presence will provide added stability for high school staff and give the school board more time to do a thorough job of finding a permanent replacement, which has proved to be difficult.

"I'm very pleased with the transition," Foley said following the board's decision. "The good things at Westfield High School will be preserved."

"Dennis has done a marvelous job at the high school, and I'm very happy that he will be able to stay an additional year."

Beginning in late January and continuing throughout next summer, the board will continue its search for a per-

manent replacement with the help of a national search firm. According to President Anne Riegel, the board hopes to be prepared to move forward with the search in the fall, which she said is the prime recruiting season for strong candidates.

Riegel said the national search firm Hazard, Young, Attea would begin the process by helping the board refine its needs. In the meantime, she said, Fyffe will provide a steady hand.

"One of Dennis' particular strengths is in mentoring," said Riegel. "His experience will be invaluable."

"This is really a very nice surprise."

(Continued on page A-2)

Students come together for a Thanksgiving celebration

Children in the Jump Start Pre-K classes taught by Bernadette Hoyer and Alyssa Schuchard participated in a "Thanksgiving Gathering" at Brunner Elementary School in Scotch Plains on Nov. 14. Students from Evergreen Elementary School attended the event as Pilgrims, while the Brunner students dressed as Native Americans. The teachers and students prepared for the event by learning about how the Pilgrims and Native Americans lived long ago. Each group crafted items to wear that emulated the clothing that may have worn to the first Thanksgiving celebration. The Native Americans made corn muffins and popcorn to share, while the Pilgrims brought cranberry muffins. The students sang songs and recited poems about the group they represented, and all of the children worked on a wreath to take home to their families. At right, Pilgrim Emani Russell, gives a hug to her friend Robert Mebes, dressed as a Native American.



Ferguson discusses Iraq, Medicare, energy policy

Local congressman faces new role in Democratic House

By **GREG MARX**
 THE RECORD-PRESS

When the 110th Congress convenes after the New Year, Mike Ferguson will find himself in an unfamiliar position: the minority.

Ferguson, a Republican who represents New Jersey's Seventh Congressional District, bucked the national anti-GOP trend on Election Day and defeated Democrat Linda Stender to win a fourth term in the House of Representatives. But with Democrats in control for the first time since 1994, Ferguson may find himself a little farther removed from the centers of power.

Still, Ferguson is optimistic that his role in the House will not change much, and he noted his bipartisan work in the past in support of special education and solar power. "I have very good relationships with folks on the other side of the aisle," he said.

With Congress in recess last week for the Thanksgiving holiday, Ferguson was in the area to drop off donations for a USO collection at the Westfield Library and chat with several local newspapers about a bill he has introduced that would

provide federal funds for respite care programs (see sidebar on Page A-2). He also fielded questions about a number of the most pressing topics that will confront the next Congress, including Medicare, stem cell research, energy policy and the war in Iraq.

He acknowledged that public "dissatisfaction" with the state of the war played a large role in his party's defeat on Nov. 7. "There's genius in (the American) political system, and we saw that at work a couple weeks ago," he said. Following the election results and the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, President George W. Bush will have to listen to a wider variety of perspectives and work with Democrats, which "will be good for the country," Ferguson said.

During the campaign, Ferguson said the U.S. should not withdraw its troops before achieving success in Iraq. His criteria for success, he said last week, are political stability between Iraq's warring factions; an improvement in the security situation so that Iraqi forces can control the country's most dangerous areas; and improvements to the country's economic, energy and transportation infrastructure, especially the unemployment

(Continued on page A-2)



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REMINDER

TREE-LIGHTINGS IN LOCAL TOWNS

This weekend is the time to really ring in the season. Tree-lightings and holiday parties are scheduled for 3-5 p.m. Sunday at the Fanwood train station and 5 p.m. Sunday at the Westfield train station. Holiday festivities are also planned Sunday afternoon in Scotch Plains.

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Ferguson discusses Iraq, Medicare, energy policy

(Continued from page A-1)

rate. Asked how he would respond if he found himself running for re-election again in 2008 with no substantial improvement in Iraq, Ferguson said: "If there is not significant change in the situation in the next 1 1/2 or two years, most people would classify that as a disaster."

On embryonic stem cell research, an issue on which Stender attacked him aggressively during the campaign, Ferguson reiterated his opposition to federal funding. Scientists believe stem cells taken from embryos hold promise for treatments to a number of diseases, but funding for the research is opposed by many in the pro-life camp, including President Bush, because it usually results in the destruction of the embryo.

Ferguson said he supports funding for research on stem cells taken from adults, and on embryonic stem cells if it is conducted in a way that does not destroy the embryos. But, he said, "We shouldn't be spending taxpayer money on research that destroys human life."

Asked why, if much research on embryonic stem cells amounts to the

destruction of human life, the process should not be banned entirely, he said: "That's just not where the public is." He added that he had never heard such a proposal from a colleague in Congress, and that if one came forward he would not support it.

Ferguson was also in favor of maintaining the status quo on Medicare Part D, the new prescription drug benefit. Current law prohibits Medicare from negotiating with pharmaceutical companies to lower drug costs, and many Democrats have said that provision should be changed. But Ferguson said that because of Medicare's size — it accounts for about 40 percent of the prescription drug market — negotiations would amount to "essentially a government price-setting." And that, he said, would have the effect of reducing incentives for further research.

He also noted that the costs for participating seniors have come in lower than projected. "Benefits are going up, costs are going down. That's a market at work," he said. "To throw a radical new wrench into the works of Part D in the form of negotiations would be a step backward."

While his positions on Medicare

and stem cell research are consistent with the consensus within his Republican caucus, Ferguson may find some common ground with the new Democratic majority on energy policy. America's overwhelming dependence on fossil fuels, which create pollution and have been identified as a source of global warming, "ultimately will be to the detriment of our country," he said.

A member of the House's Energy and Commerce Committee, Ferguson said he wants to extend federal tax credits for homeowners who install solar panels, and he was critical of tariffs that discourage use of sugar-based ethanol, an alternative fuel source that some analysts say is superior to corn-based ethanol. "That to me is short-sighted and bad policy," he said.

He also said the new Congress should provide an opportunity to adopt stricter fuel efficiency standards for the auto industry. Ferguson said he had been fearful in the past that tougher efficiency standards would mean lighter, less safe cars, but he now believes a balance can be struck.

Greg Marx is the editor of the Record-Press. He can be reached at (732) 396-4219 or gmarx@njpublishing.com.

Police focus on speeding, parking at SPF High School

By **TERESA STULTZ**
THE RECORD-PRESS

SCOTCH PLAINS — Police Chief Brian T. Mahoney briefed the Township Council about several local traffic issues at a conference meeting last week.

In one proposed resolution, a section of Sanger Place behind the municipal building would be temporarily closed to provide additional parking for the police department while construction is underway at the facility, Mahoney said in a telephone interview following the meeting.

Resident complaints about the need for parking restrictions on streets surrounding Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School also continue to be a major concern, Mahoney said. Mahoney said the police department has worked with the school board to try and alleviate problems. "The next step is to restrict parking on the surrounding streets and to make those restrictions uniform," Mahoney said.

In another pressing issue, Mahoney said complaints of excessive speeds are on the rise. "People use residential roads as cut-aways from main roads," he said.

The complaints have come especially from Raritan Park, Lamberts Mill Road and the side streets along Martine and Park avenues. "There is a big commuter problem in the morning," Mahoney said, as commuters use side streets to circumvent traffic along the main roads.

Mahoney said the department recently purchased more traffic equipment to better monitor driving speed and traffic volume. "We want to get a better handle of when the violations occur the most," he said.

The chief said he recommended increased patrols and the continued use of speed trailers, which can be programmed to issue warnings. "Part of the objective is to educate residents (about) the monitoring," Mahoney said.

STATE FUNDS FOR ROADWORK

Fanwood and Scotch Plains have received a combined \$328,000 to make improvements to local roadways, state legislators announced.

Fanwood has been awarded \$188,000 to pay for a complete reconstruction of Helen Street, while Scotch Plains will use the \$140,000 it was awarded to pay for repairs to a section of Westfield Road between Mountain Avenue and Westfield Avenue.

Details will appear in next week's edition.

Proposed legislation would support respite care programs

In 2003, after a six-year battle against multiple myeloma, Roberta Ferguson passed away.

The experience naturally left its mark on her son, Congressman Mike Ferguson. And one of the things he was most impressed by was the role his father, Thomas, played in caring for Roberta Ferguson during her illness.

"It became very apparent to me that someone who is a primary caregiver for a loved one does an enormous amount of work," Ferguson said.

As they make sacrifices to keep loved ones out of institutional settings, Ferguson learned, family caregivers suffer poorer health, more financial problems and shorter life spans than the general population. And though "respite care" programs exist to give caregivers a break —

opportunities to do such simple things as go grocery shopping, take a nap, or have coffee with a friend — they often come with cumbersome eligibility requirements regarding age or economic status. In particular, respite care can be hard to come by for people tending to loved ones between ages 18 and 60.

In response to that problem, Ferguson has introduced the Lifespan Respite Care Act, which he said "would create a coordinated national approach to help family caregivers get relief they need by creating a one-stop shop for family members with respite-care needs." The legislation would allocate nearly \$300 million over a five-year period in the form of grants to agencies that provide respite care services, train and recruit respite care workers and assist caregivers in finding those serv-

ices. Though the bill would introduce some new federal spending, Ferguson said it is cost-effective because it would enable people to continue caring for loved ones at home. If those patients were moved into institutional settings because the burden on caregivers became too great, the true costs might be much higher, he said.

Though the bill has support from many organizations across the nation, Ferguson has not yet been able to get it to the floor of the House for a vote. But it was recently moved out of committee, and he is now hopeful there will be a vote during the current lame-duck session of Congress. Many Democrats support the measure, but Democratic leaders will have their own priorities when they take the reins after the New Year.

— Greg Marx

Council quarrels over pay

(Continued from page A-1) expressed concern about the qualifications and experience

levels of attorneys within and outside Cockren's firm who conduct work for the town. And they again said the council should adopt the RFP model for legal services.

"It would provide an open book as to choices and possibilities. This is about what we should do to protect and maintain the openness and trust of the public going forward," Haas said.

Republican officials remained adamant that the current policy is open and serves the town's interests. "The process is not closed. This characterization, I'm not sure where it's coming from," said Mayor Andy Skibitsky.

For all the disagreement, both sides agreed that Cockren's service to the town had been exemplary. Cockren himself said that when he was appointed to the position of municipal attorney, he had to deal with "stacks of backlogged work. I created a system (in which I am) surrounded by experienced lawyers that help me to make better judgments about issues and keep the work flow going."

While he recommended that Cockren's rate be maintained at \$150, Echausse said the town should explore adjustments to the hourly rate paid to less experienced attorneys, and should also explore whether appointed part-time employees should be eligible for a pension.

Fyffe

(Continued from page A-1)

"I've felt very welcomed since I walked in the door. It feels very natural here, very good," Fyffe said at the meeting, after receiving a round of applause from school board members.

In addition to his time as an assistant superintendent in Sayreville, Fyffe has served as principal of Moorestown High School and Sayreville War Memorial High School. He earned a master's degree in administration and supervision from Rutgers University and has served in leadership roles in the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the New Jersey Association of School Administrators.

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Five-lot subdivision on Mountain Ave. is approved

By **THERESA STULTZ**
THE RECORD-PRESS

SCOTCH PLAINS — Despite objections from local residents, the Planning Board on Monday night approved an application to demolish an existing home at 2343 Mountain Ave., near Harding Road, and divide one existing lot into five new lots.

About 16 residents came out to voice their concerns about quality-of-life issues they fear may result from the project. But because the new lots will conform to local land use ordinances and do not require any variances, board members said they could not deny the application, even if they wanted to.

"This is a classic example (in which) our hands are tied," said Michael Michalisin.

"If we say no to this application, someone else is going to say yes, and that will be the courts. It would cost taxpayers a lot of money to fight against this, (and) they would lose because the developer is within his legal rights," added Joseph Doyle.

David Murray, a resident of

Watchung Terrace, shared his concern about the additional drain on gas and water supply at peak times that the new homes would cause. He also cautioned that the area's gas pipes are in poor condition and could leak and eventually lead

"If we say no to this application, someone else is going to say yes, and that will be the courts."

— **Joseph Doyle**
Scotch Plains Planning Board

to an explosion as demand for gas increases.

Board members told Murray that those particular issues are beyond their jurisdiction and suggested that the new development might force utility providers to replace the existing infrastructure if indeed a danger exists.

Another resident pressed Wilt for concrete answers to her questions about noise, traffic and safety concerns. "We're

not here to break laws," said Wilt, who along with representatives from his development firm tried to reassure residents that it was in his best interest to adhere to regulations, create a safe work site and maintain a good rapport with the board and residents.

Wilt, who will be joined by his brother as a partner in the project, lives in Westfield and serves as chairman of that town's Planning Board. He has 30 years of development experience, particularly in Jersey City and Hoboken, but this is his first venture in Scotch Plains. When completed, Wilt said, the five new homes would be priced at about \$550,000.

Other residents said they would not be pleased with the aesthetic changes to their neighborhood brought on by the new development. Currently, the property contains a vacant two-story house, built in the 1800s and nestled between trees, as well as a detached garage. Board members said some of those trees would be protected during construction, but that they could not guarantee that future homeowners on the lots would

not exercise their right to remove the trees if that was their preference.

Members of the Planning Board said they shared the residents' sentiments about the loss of open space to development. "We are residents too," said board member Alice Agran. "We can't say we don't approve this because we don't like it."

And Kenneth Greenman added that the situation could have been worse if another developer presented conforming plans to build townhouses, rather than detached single-family homes, on the property. With those final sentiments, the board passed the motion to approve the application.

"We knew that the board would probably approve the application, but we had to come down to voice our opinion," said resident Susan Reilert, who along with her husband will live across the street from one of the five new lots.

Theresa Stultz is a staff writer for the Record-Press. She can be reached at (732) 396-4204 or tstultz@njnpublishing.com.

POLICE LOG

WESTFIELD

Alan Futran, 18, was arrested at 4:20 a.m. Saturday outside his home on Barchester Way after police responded to the activation of a burglar alarm on the premises.

According to authorities, when police approached the garage they heard voices in the backyard, where Futran was found behind his house trying to conceal an object.

A police search led to the discovery of marijuana and drug paraphernalia. Futran said the illegal items were solely his and that his friends were not aware he had them, authorities said.

Futran was charged with possession of less than 50 grams of marijuana and drug paraphernalia. He was issued a summons and released with a Nov. 29 court date, authorities said.

A resident in the 300 block of Scotch Plains Avenue reported a burglary and theft of an Xbox game system and some video games at about 5:30 p.m. Friday. There was no forced entry to the residence, police said.

Shortly before 6 p.m. Friday, police received a report of an assault that had taken place in the 500 block of Downer Street.

The victim reported that a man he knew threw dirt in his face and then punched him several times. The victim was transported to Overlook Hospital.

At 10:50 p.m. Friday, a resident of Plainfield reported that his vehicle had been stolen from the municipal parking lot at the north side train station. The theft had apparently taken place between 11 a.m. and 10

p.m. that day, the victim told police.

SCOTCH PLAINS

Salvatore Cerchio, 29, of Scotch Plains was arrested Friday and charged with disorderly conduct after police received a call that an intoxicated male was banging on the truck of a vehicle parked in the municipal lot.

Cerchio was observed yelling in the lot and was transported to headquarters, where he was processed and released on a summons, according to police.

A patron at a Route 22 restaurant reported being a victim of a burglary on Saturday.

He stated that after he parked his vehicle in the lot, unknown suspect(s) smashed the window of the vehicle and removed his navigation system, valued at \$600.

Antonio DiMuzio, 41, of Scotch Plains was arrested Saturday on an outstanding warrant.

DiMuzio was wanted for eluding the Plainfield police; he reportedly drove away after police there stopped him for a motor vehicle violation.

He was arrested at his residence and transported to headquarters, where he was processed and turned over to Plainfield police.

Jose Diaz, 27, of Plainfield was charged Sunday with driving while intoxicated.

Diaz was stopped for a motor vehicle violation, and officers on the scene reportedly detected an odor of alcohol. He was transported to headquarters, where he was issued several summons and released.

Family seeks answers about death of Robert Villane

(Continued from page A-1)

cooperative relationship with law enforcement authorities.

"We're trying to get more information before we step out of line," said Villane, who added that a lawsuit is "the furthest thing from our minds."

But Villane said his family intends to find out the truth, and depending on what is discovered, may insist that the department change the way it trains officers to handle cases involving individuals with a mental illness.

In their letter, the family members noted that free police training is available from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). In the phone interview, Michael Villane said his family would like to partner with NAMI in support of legislation that would allow family members to take relatives with mental illness to the hospital, instead of calling police, whose presence may aggravate the patients.

In his brother's case, he said, "My parents were there. My mom was asked to leave because the police said they had it under control."

"There was a lot of screaming going on and there should not have been," said Villane, who added he did not believe police should have used pepper spray. "The police were there to help take my brother to the hospital, not send him to the hospital."

He also expressed displeasure with a story in *The Star-Ledger* that cited Union County Prosecutor Theodore Romankow and reported that Robert Villane had been high on drugs at the time of his death. After that story appeared, David Hancock, an assistant county prosecutor, told the *Record-Press* that until a toxicology report is completed, such a statement "is just pure speculation."

In their letter, the Villane family members said Robert was not high on drugs but had stopped taking his prescription medication.

Michael Villane said his brother had a doctor's appointment scheduled the day after he died to change the medication, which he did not like to take because of the side effects. Villane said the medication made his brother "cloudy and tired" and not like himself.

While press coverage has focused on Robert Villane's behavior just prior to his death, Michael Villane said the family would like his brother to be remembered for who he really was. "He was always, always willing to help people, even when he was sick," Michael Villane said. "Robert always helped."

"When you wanted things done right, he was your right-hand man. He was always concerned about issues that affected others. A very caring individual, without a doubt,"

Villane added.

While Villane stressed that his family intends to cooperate with the investigation being conducted by the county prosecutor and the police department, he said he was disappointed by the response of local authorities.

"We're four generations in this town. We want to be able to hold our heads up high," Villane said. "We would rather have the police involved say, 'I'm sorry.'"

The official investigation into Villane's death is continuing, but no further details are yet available. "We're still awaiting the results of the toxicology report. We may conduct a follow-up review or investigation in the case to see if there was anything else that needed to be done at the scene," said Robert O'Leary, executive assistant prosecutor for the county.

Chief Parizeau said this week that he understands the frustrations of the Villane family members, as they look for answers about Robert's death. "Unfortunately, we don't get the answers right away," Parizeau said.

Parizeau said police officers must complete state-mandated training about these types of

situations while in the police academy and have additional opportunities for training after they join the force.

"We only act on the request of the members of the (hospital's) outreach program. Ninety-nine-point-nine percent of the time, it's conducted without incident. In this case, the situation escalated," he said.

"I wouldn't second-guess the officers," said Parizeau.

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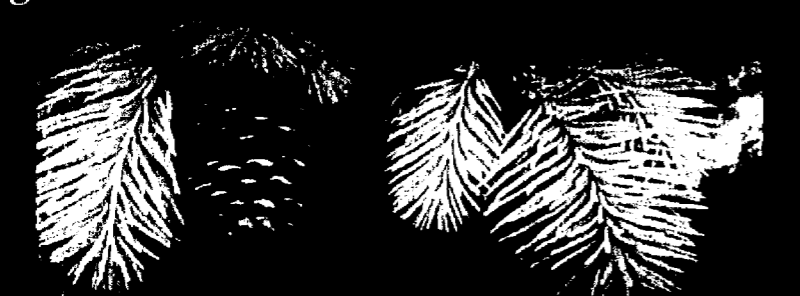
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Commentary

Assessing our congressman

Rep. Mike Ferguson came to the area last week, visiting with local papers in an effort to build support for a respite care bill he has introduced in the House of Representatives and also sharing his thoughts on a number of the key topics that will confront the next Congress. Like so much in politics, his positions are a mixed bag.

On two issues that will be terribly important over the next few years, Ferguson's views point in the right direction, but we hope he will go much further. About Iraq, he clearly recognizes the troubled state of the war, and he frankly acknowledged that the struggles in the Middle East played a role in his party's recent defeat at the polls. That's refreshing, because for too long our nation's policy has been guided by an almost willful blindness.

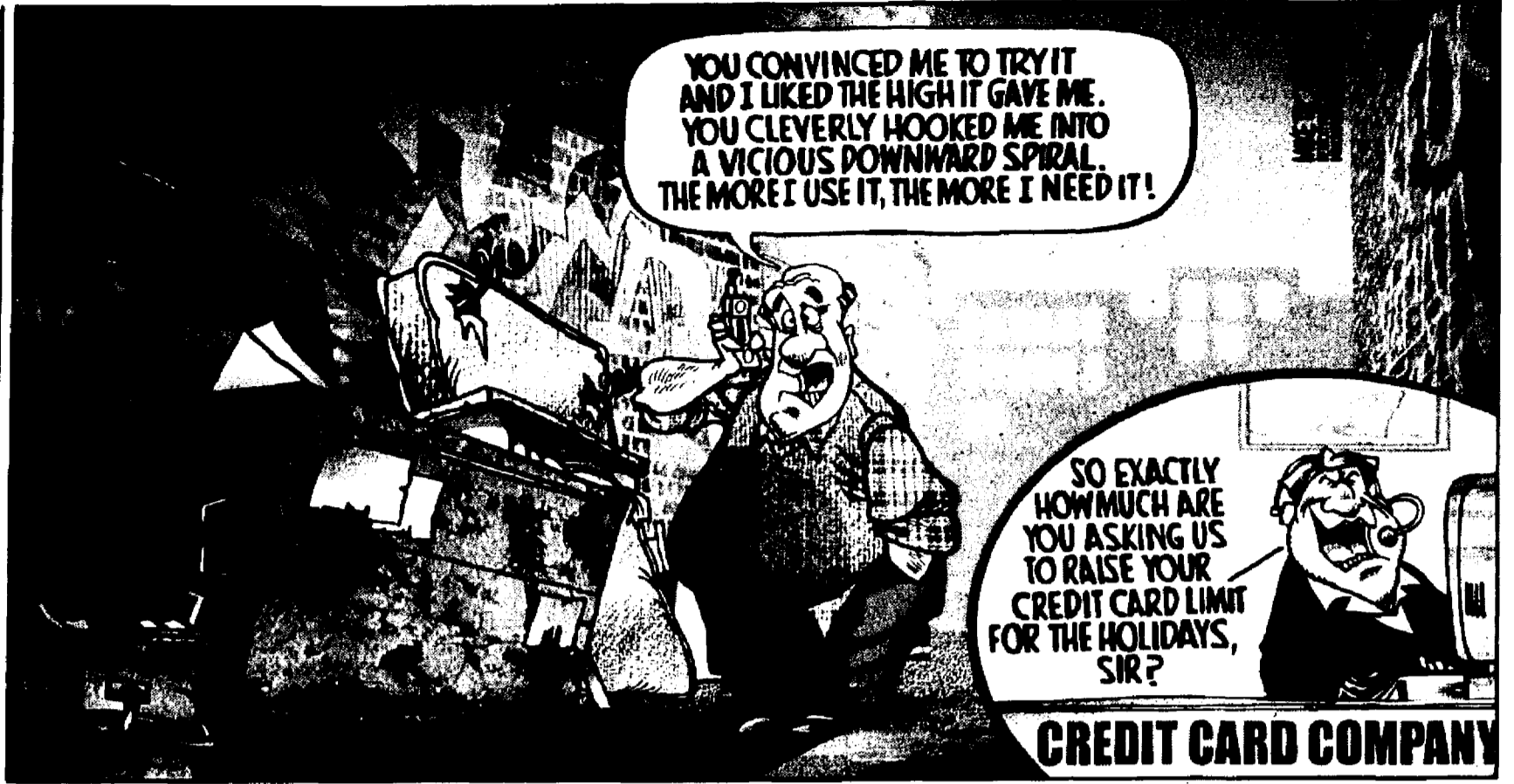
But as violence in Iraq continues to worsen by the month, Ferguson also seems to be naive about what American troops can be expected to accomplish. He has said our soldiers shouldn't leave until we achieve success, and he defined success as a stable Iraqi government, improved security, and a rebuilt economic and transportation infrastructure.

If it were possible to achieve those goals with minimal loss of life, a continued American presence would be a no-brainer. But it is becoming increasingly apparent that major change in Iraq is beyond our control, and our soldiers are in the middle of a civil war. That doesn't mean it's time to "cut and run" — a too-hasty withdrawal has its own drawbacks, and we have a moral obligation to make the best we can of a terrible situation. But finding the least-bad option in Iraq requires clearly acknowledging the limits of our power.

Ferguson's instincts on energy policy show promise, but again we hope he will follow them farther than he has in the past. While some members of his party have dismissed concerns about environmental pollution and derided global warming as a "hoax," Ferguson was forthright about the dangers posed by over-reliance on fossil fuels. He spoke with conviction, and he pointed with pride to his efforts to create incentives for homeowners to switch to solar power. But — and this is the case not just for him but for the vast, vast majority of politicians — his proposals aren't up to the task at hand. Given the scale of the environmental challenges we now face, mandating stricter fuel efficiency for new vehicles and encouraging solar power for homes are necessary but insufficient measures. We need to find ways to wean whole sectors of the economy, not just individual homeowners, off gas and oil. That means not just tinkering with miles-per-gallon standards, but creating irresistible incentives for industrial polluters to reduce emissions, and for auto manufacturers to replace internal-combustion vehicles with new models. It also means looking beyond our borders and finding ways to persuade emerging nations like India and China from forgoing fossil fuels without stunting their economic development.

On stem cell research, we can dispense with the "on the one hand, on the other hand" perspective. Ferguson's position just doesn't make sense. He likened the destruction of embryos for research purposes to the destruction of human life and said it shouldn't be supported with taxpayer funds, but also said he would oppose a ban on such research. As we've previously said, that argument is akin to saying it's okay if you hire a hit man, as long as you don't use your tax credit to pay the bill. Embryonic stem cell research is often considered an ethically complicated issue, but it's really not. Scientists believe the research holds great, even life-saving, medical promise. The only moral argument against the research is that it usually requires the destruction of an embryo. But if you believe an embryo holds the moral value of a human life, you have a moral obligation not just to withhold funding, but to protect the embryo unconditionally with an outright ban. It is utterly inconsistent to oppose federal funding on embryonic stem cell research without supporting a ban on such research.

Having attacked Ferguson on that issue, we'll close by praising him on another: his Lifespan Respite Care bill, which would provide funding to agencies and organizations that help care for caregivers. The proposal, prompted by his own family experience, will fill gaps in the nation's existing respite care program and should make it easier for Americans to care for their loved ones. It's a humane policy, it doesn't cost much, and Ferguson makes a persuasive argument that it will actually save the nation money by keeping patients out of institutional settings. We wish him the best of luck in getting it passed.



Environmental protection creates economic opportunities

By **MATT POLSKY**
CORRESPONDENT

From an environmental perspective, Governor Corzine's Economic Growth Strategy, announced in September, has some merit — but it is still lacking key themes.

The strategy includes a link to an improved State Development & Redevelopment Plan, an unusually good renewable energy component and brown-fields reuse. It mentions eco-tourism and "green" buildings. But it could be so much better in seeking simultaneous improvements to economic growth and environmental protection.

There are many existing writings on this topic, and the governor's old firm, Goldman Sachs, has been an effective voice in the business world. Why not take advantage of this type of thinking and consider what state government could do to make New Jersey the state with the greenest economic base, with companies encouraged to adopt similar environmental goals while building their businesses and creating jobs?

Green economic development includes: (a) companies with explicit environmental products and technologies such as solar power; (b) companies not necessarily in the "environmental business," but learning to find a sustainability-oriented competitive advantage in growing number of ways (for example, through purchases from suppliers, supporting the preservation of biodiversity and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, or helping communities that don't have access to clean drinking water); and (c) retailers and companies that deal with the end consumer in various ways: bankers and investment advi-

GUEST COMMENTARY

sors, restaurants, plumbers, landscapers, hardware stores, travel agencies, supermarkets, appliance and furniture retailers, farmers, architects — even developers.

As important as renewable energy and good planning are, there is a need for progress on many other environmental fronts as well, such as water (including efficiency, restoration of waterways, green roofs and sustainable fisheries), nontoxic products, products with more recycled content and indoor air quality.

And, of course, from the other end, green economic development needs the public, in our role as consumers, to favor these companies with our purchases, through word-of-mouth discussions, and even by a willingness to re-think established positions. For example, can we accept the environmental trade-offs from off-shore wind, or ethanol as a fuel, under certain conditions, given the growing and increasingly proven threat of global warming? Even companies that stumble a few times getting started may deserve some learning space as they try to figure it out.

In New Jersey, leading-edge sustainable business speakers occasionally come to the state, but they typically leave without making a mark on conventional economic or environmental thought. There are conferences and journals in the field, old reports and initiatives that could be dusted off and learned from, existing initiatives that could be integrated into a comprehensive green economic strategy.

However, in the past two months, there have been state-of-the-art lectures and

conferences at three New Jersey universities with no sign of state economic development or environmental protection senior managers (or even staff)! Fairleigh Dickinson's new Institute for Sustainable Enterprise, out of the Silberman Business School, is in the early stages of planning two initiatives: a "sustainable challenge" for New Jersey businesses and a sustainable business incubator. It would be nice if our state government would lend a hand.

When I've mentioned these ideas to high level state managers, they are always polite, but clearly no (compact fluorescent) light bulb goes on. You might think that hearing about a large carpet company that is aiming for zero emissions by 2020, or an NJIT student looking for help to design a family-owned zero-emissions brewery, would inspire a vision for overall economic development and environmental protection.

The one agency that has explicit direction to promote green economic development within its sector, the Board of Public Utilities, is starting to gear up with a couple of new staffers, but so far has only mentioned the conventional practice of helping companies to identify facility sites and leap through regulatory hurdles. Hardly very bold — yet.

Even at the municipal level, where a growing number of communities have accepted and are exploring sustainability, not one is going in this direction.

Actually pushing environmental protection would be a visionary, state-of-the-art economic growth strategy! What a wasted opportunity if we don't take advantage of it.

The writer is a volunteer sustainability consultant to many organizations and a member of the Cranford Environmental Commission.

Letters to the Editor

Chamber thanks supporters, announces upcoming events

To The Record-Press:

Wow! Thank you to everyone for supporting the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce at our premier golf outing. What a gorgeous day and a wonderful time we all had playing golf and catching up with business associates, family and friends. It was so successful that we are adding it to our annual calendar of events.

Thank you also to the following businesses, which participated in our Shop & Dine to Donate Day that benefited Autism Speaks: American Shoe & Leather Repair, Anais Boutique, B. Kubick Opticians, Boogie Tickets, Brick Oven, Brunner Opticians, Dave Rossi Photography, Douglas Cosmetics, Evalyn Dunn's Gallery, Flower Zone, Interiors, Jeffrey's of Westfield, Jersey Mike's, John Robert Custom Shirts & Suits, Just Bead Yourself, Maria Candida's Hair Forum, Pumpkins & Petunias, Scotts Shoes, The Mattress Factory, Tinga, Unlimited Communications and Your Naturals. Your generosity and willingness to support an organization that works tirelessly is truly appreciated.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to let the public know about some upcoming events. This Sunday, our annual tree-lighting event will take

place at the North Avenue train station from 5-7. This event is co-sponsored by the Town Bank and Bridget Nisovocchia Designs and is heavily attended by the local community.

Then, on Dec. 31, there will be a "Family Night" from 6-10 p.m. at the Westfield Armory on Rahway Avenue. Along with the Westfield Recreation Department, the Chamber of Commerce is providing this family-friendly indoor carnival on New Year's Eve. Member businesses that will be showcasing their offerings include, so far, Just Bead Yourself, My Gym, Make You Want to Dance and Abakadoodle. Please call if you would like to use this opportunity for your business as well.

NAOMI McELLYNN
Executive Director
Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce

Be responsible for the animals in your care

To The Record-Press:

On Nov. 11, while spending some time at the dog park in Echo Lake, a woman stood idly by while her two larger dogs aggressively attempted to attack my dog, and her third bit my dog as well as my hand as I tried to block it from doing further harm. Other than shouting out the names of the dogs, the woman did little to stop the incident.

While a crowd gathered and tried to keep the hostile dogs away from mine,

everyone repeatedly asked whose dogs they were. The woman finally stated the dogs were not hers, and that she was their dog-sitter. She unapologetically collected the dogs, after much effort on the parts of all that were helping me, and took off amidst the commotion. Surprisingly (and luckily) the bites to my dog's stomach did not puncture the skin. However, due to this woman's lack of responsibility, I was left without knowing her name, and without knowing if the dog that bit my hand even had its proper shots.

I am fully aware of the risk involved when bringing an animal into an area of intended recreation, and I understand that animals will act as such. What I find appalling is that people will bring in dogs that do not belong to them and then assume they need not be responsible for their actions.

I'd like to thank all of the people that helped keep the offending dogs away from mine, in particular the man who held back the dog that bit my dog and me.

If you are reading this, and are the owner of a medium-sized black and white short-haired dog that was in the care of a dog-sitter, you may want to inquire with the caregiver. And to the dog-sitter, if you can't handle more than one dog at a time, perhaps you should look into a new profession.

KAREN CANCELLIERI
Westfield

Contacting the Record Press

We welcome letters to the editor, press releases, photos, wedding announcements and story suggestions. The following information should help you get your ideas and community news into the Record Press:

For news, call editor Gregory Marx at (732) 396-4219. For sports, call sports editor Joe Serzan at (732) 396-4202.

Our address: The Record Press, 301 Central Ave., Clark, NJ, 07066.

Our fax number is (732) 574-2613. Our e-mail address is union@njnpublishing.com. Visit us online at nj.com/recordpress.

Deadlines. The deadline for submitting articles and press releases to the Record Press is 5 p.m. Friday. The deadline for submitting letters to the editor is 10 a.m. Monday.

Letter policy. Letters may be edited for content, brevity, good taste and libel. Letters should be typewritten and include the writer's daytime telephone number for verification, if necessary.

Photographs. Conventional photographs should be mailed or dropped off at our offices. Digital photos should be sent via email as JPEG attachments. Do not print out and mail in digital photos.

Correction policy. We will correct errors of fact, context or presentation and clarify any news content that confuses or misleads readers. Please report errors to editor Greg Marx at (732) 396-4219.



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WESTFIELD BRIEFS

Take a tour of NYC's holiday displays

WESTFIELD — Back by popular demand, the Westfield Recreation Department will lead three separate "New York City Night Light" tours this December.

The narrated tours include stops at Ferrara's Bakery, the World Trade Center site and the Winter Garden Atrium building, where participants will view the Christmas displays. Also on the schedule are Lord & Taylor's window display, the Christmas tree at Lincoln Center, Tavern on the Green and the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center.

Tours will depart 4 p.m. Dec. 5 and 19 and return at about 10:15. The cost is \$69; those tours include dinner at Sal Anthony's SPQR Restaurant, where guests will have a choice of chicken parmigiana or broiled salmon or veal marsala.

A third tour departs 5:30 p.m. Dec. 12 and returns at 10:15 that night. That tour excludes the restaurant meal but includes a stop at a local eatery for dessert and coffee. The cost is \$35.

Spots are limited. For additional information, contact the Westfield Recreation Department at (908) 789-4080.

'Carols in the Round' concerts are scheduled

WESTFIELD — Members of the Westfield Chorale will present the annual "Carols in the Round" concert at 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm St.

The musical program, under the direction of the church's minister of music and Westfield High School teacher Bill Mathews, includes classical, traditional and popular holiday music, plus sing-along carols and readings.

The first Carols in the Round concert was presented in 1987, and since that time 375 high school students have given of their time and talents to perform the annual show. Proceeds are donated to a local charity, and over the years more than \$29,000 has been given to area ministries. Tickets are \$8 per person and must be ordered in advance at (908) 233-2278.

Daycare center hosts an indoor garage sale

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Daycare Center is holding an indoor garage sale from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday at the Presbyterian Church of Westfield's Westminster Hall. Items for sale include clothing from newborn to size 14, board games, books, strollers, high chairs and activity centers. All proceeds from the sale will benefit the center's scholarship program.

To tour the center or for more information, contact Mary at (908) 232-6717.

Boy Scouts will sell wreaths, pine roping

WESTFIELD — Members of Boy Scout Troop 77 will be selling decorated wreaths, white pine roping and special-order grave blankets from 9 a.m.-noon this Saturday and Sunday, and again on Dec. 10.

The sale will be located in the parking lot of St. Paul's Church, 414 East Broad St. Anyone who is unable to travel and would like a wreath or roping delivered should call (908) 447-4880 between 1-6 p.m. before the sale begins this weekend.

Miller-Cory presents 'Gingerbread Sunday'

WESTFIELD — The Miller-Cory House Museum, located at 614 Mountain Ave., will present "A Gingerbread Sunday" from 1:30 to 4 p.m. Dec. 3.

The spicy scent of gingerbread has long been a part of the holiday season, and the many forms of gingerbread — houses, figures and cookies — hold a special appeal for children. Throughout the afternoon, children will hear stories about the Gingerbread Man and the Gingerbread Baby, learn about gingerroot and make a gingerbread house, plus one additional holiday craft to take home. Light refreshments will be served.

Pre-registration is required; call the museum office weekdays from 9 a.m. to noon at (908) 232-1776. The fee is \$4 per child; adults are free.

The celebration of the holidays will continue at the Miller-Cory House with "German Christmas and a Visit from the Belsnickel" on Dec. 10 and "Toys of Christmas Past" on Dec. 17.

Donate blood at local Red Cross Chapter

WESTFIELD — Local residents can give the gift of life this holiday season by donating blood. The Westfield/Mountainside Chapter of the

American Red Cross will be holding a blood drive from 3-8 p.m. Wednesday. The drive will be held at the Chapter House, located at 321 Elm St.

A complimentary cholesterol screening is available for all who donate. Walk-ins and first time donors are welcome.

Donors must present signed picture ID and know their Social Security number. Donors should also eat a meal before donating.

For more information, contact the chapter at (908) 232-7090 or go to www.westfieldmidside-redcross.org. Or, contact the Blood Center of NJ at (800) NJ-BLOOD, ext. 140 or www.bloodnj.org.

Y plans holiday events for kids, older adults

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Area Y will hold two upcoming holiday events at the Robert and Virginia Bauer Family Branch, 422 East Broad St.

The first event is for active older adults and will be held 12:45-2:30 p.m. Wednesday. Participants will enjoy lunch, prizes and entertainment. The cost is \$5 for members and \$8 for non-members; register by Monday at (908) 233-2700, ext. 414.

The second event, a "Lunch with Santa" for children and their families, will be held Dec. 10. There are three seatings: noon, 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. The event is open to members and non-members, but seats are limited. The cost is \$3 per child ages 1-9 and \$5 for ages 10 and up. To register, call (908) 233-2700, ext. 406.

Flu vaccine available to local residents

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Regional Health Department will host a flu vaccine clinic from 6-8 p.m. Wednesday. The clinic will be held in the Community Room of the Westfield municipal building, 425 East Broad St.

The clinic is open to residents of Fanwood, Garwood, Mountainside, New Providence, Roselle Park, Springfield, Summit and Westfield. Proof of residency will be required.

The clinic is open to people of all ages, even children six months and older. The vaccine will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis. Those who are Medicare eligible should bring their card with them.

Empty-Nesters plan a full Friday night

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Empty-Nesters Club will hold its regular get-together at 7 p.m. Dec. 8.

The club is open to couples who are "in-betweeners" and are interested in socializing at one another's homes for dinners and cook-outs, and for possible outings to restaurants, plays and attractions. For details, call Roberta at (908) 232-0537 after 5 p.m.

Plans in works for family fun on Dec. 31

WESTFIELD — On New Year's Eve, the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce and the Westfield Recreation Department will be hosting "Family Night" — a get-together for family, friends and neighbors that is sure to be safe and fun. The event will run from 6-10 p.m. at the Westfield Armory, 500 Rahway Ave.

Unlimited rides, slides, entertainers and music will be included in the admission price of \$10 for children and \$5 for adults. Additional activities will be provided by local businesses Just Bead Yourself, Abrakadoodle, Just Babies Daycare and My Gym, and a full food court will be provided by Brick Oven.

Space is limited, so call the Westfield Recreation Department at (908) 789-4080 or the WACC at (908) 233-3021 to register or for more information.

Singles find fellowship at First Baptist Church

WESTFIELD — Are you widowed, divorced, or never married? You may want to look into the Singles Group that meets at 9 a.m. each Sunday at the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm St.

The discussion group deals with singles issues and fosters friendships and a sharing of experiences. Activities include winter movie nights, picnics, and holiday get-togethers. Coffee, cake and bagels are served, and a \$2 donation is requested.

The program is non-denominational. For more information, call Lil at (908) 889-4751 or Ed at (908) 232-4159.

Students team up to support African school

WESTFIELD — Roosevelt Intermediate School's chapter of Girls Learn International (GLI) and the Sundance School of North Plainfield have teamed up to raise money for the Kangole Girls' Secondary School in Uganda, Africa.

Zoe Greenburg, an alumna of Sundance School, is now treasurer of her GLI chapter at Roosevelt. Greenburg and fellow GLI member Claire Dorwart, whose mother, Sara Miller, is a teacher at Sundance, approached Sundance founders Ginny and Jeff Tobey with the idea of working together.

According to Greenburg, the goal of the GLI is to provide human rights education to young women currently in middle school and high school across the globe. "We foster global communication and cross-cultural understanding. We encourage young women to become advocates for positive and social change. We raise money to help girls in less fortunate situations with financial support and educational supplies," she said.

Last year the Roosevelt chapter raised more than \$700, which was used to buy a photocopy machine for the Kangole Secondary School. This year, the chapter hopes to raise more, and the girls are off to a



From left are Girls Learn International members Zoe Greenburg, Beth Pindill, Claire Dorwart and Olivia Pecora.

great start.

GLI member Dorwart was aware that Sundance chooses a charitable organization to raise funds for each year, and she asked for their support. Every year, Sundance parents are asked to make donations for CDs made by Mrs. Tobey, Ms. Miller and other staff members. This year, the CDs contain songs about peace that the children at Sundance are learning to sing. So far, the CD donations have raised more than \$1,000 for the cause.

"Sundance School is celebrating its 30th anniversary and many alumni come back for a visit," said Tobey. "We were so happy to hear about the wonderful organization Zoe is part of, and the idea of helping a sister school across the globe goes hand-in-hand with our annual school theme, 'It's a Small World.' Every year Sundance explores new adventures in imaginative and creative learning for the children. Social awareness and helping others is an important part of the school's curriculum."

To make a donation for the CD, or to learn more about the Sundance School, call (908) 561-5055 or visit www.sundanceschool.net.

Rajoppi to discuss courthouse's historic dome

WESTFIELD — "A Rediscovered Treasure: The Union County Courthouse Dome" will be the topic of Joanne Rajoppi, Union County clerk, when she speaks to the First Wednesday Luncheon of the Westfield Historical Society at noon Dec. 6 at B.G. Fields Restaurant, 560 Springfield Ave.

The focus of Rajoppi's talk will be the Union County Courthouse, which houses a secret beneath its familiar appearance. Obscured by a 1960 drop ceiling and fourth floor construction, the original dome, built in 1903, lies invisible to visitors, but its beauty and design is a magnificent reminder of the grandeur of the building. Rajoppi will show photographs and architectural drawings of the dome.

Rajoppi has served as Union County clerk since 1995. In fulfilling her many duties and responsibilities, she manages an annual budget of more than \$30 million dollars.

Rajoppi has also been a pioneer in the woman's movement. Prior to becoming the Union County clerk, she had

served as county's register of deeds and mortgages from 1984 to 1995. She had also served as assistant Secretary of State for Governor Brendan Byrne, as chairwoman of the county freeholder board and as a mayor and councilwoman in Springfield Township. She was the first woman to have served in each of these positions.

Appointed to the Presidential Commission of

Scholars by President Jimmy Carter, she is also the award-winning author of "Women In Office: Getting There and Staying There."

Regular attendees of the luncheon will be contacted by a phone committee of the Society to verify their reservations. Space permitting, others may attend the luncheon by calling (908) 233-2930 by noon Monday.

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Advertisement for Holiday Lights Celebration & Charity Drive at Watchung Stables. From 2:30PM to 5:00PM. SUNDAY DECEMBER 3. Shuttle Buses Between All Events Starting at 2PM. Union County. We're connected to you. A Service of the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

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Advertisement for Phillip Lester. Encore Holiday Performance at the Westfield Memorial Library. Wednesday, December 6 at 7:00 pm. Classical Guitarist, Composer, Recording Artist. Returns to Library to bring Holiday cheer. This free program is open to Westfield Memorial Library and Mural cardholders. Register today. 550 East Broad Street, Westfield, NJ 07090. 908-789-4090. www.wmlnj.org

Advertisement for THE Allegro PROJECT. A Concert Series at All Saints' Church presents the second concert of its inaugural season featuring two of the best artists on the musical horizon. SUNDAYS AT 3:00. Michael Spassov, Artistic Director. ANDREI TCHEKMAZOV, cellist accompanied by MICHAEL SPASSOV, composer, organist. Sunday, December 3, 2006, 3 pm. Advance tickets \$15 • At the door \$20. Tickets are available online at www.allsaints-spjnj.org, or by calling 866-811-4111. All Saints' Episcopal Church, 559 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains, NJ, 07076 • 908-322-8047

Scouts help provide meals for local families

Junior Troop 912 of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Girl Scouts sponsored a Thanksgiving meal for a local family. On Nov. 17, the troop of nine fourth-grade girls from McGinn School went to the Fanwood A&P to shop for a "wish list" of items for a holiday dinner, which were generously donated by the supermarket. The troop members then delivered the food to the local Welfare Department, in addition to seven turkeys. The turkeys were donated by local residents in response to a last-minute plea by the department, and helped provide a holiday meal for seven more local families.



Residents can sign up online for a Westfield Library card

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Memorial Library has joined the statewide "Get a Library Card Online" (GALCO) project in hopes of simplifying the lives of local residents.

From the convenience of their homes, local residents can register for a library card and immediately gain access to JerseyClicks, which is New Jersey's statewide portal of databases. These high-quality databases allow New Jersey residents to conduct keyword and custom search-

es through a "federated search," in which multiple databases are searched simultaneously.

A Westfield library card will be mailed to residents who register online. Once they visit the library to activate their card, new cardholders will gain access to many other library privileges, including Internet training, access to photocopiers and professional reference services.

The library also announced its schedule of

upcoming events. Unless otherwise noted, registration is not required and programs are free and open to Westfield and MURAL cardholders. Programs for adults are listed below:

TGIF: Irving Berlin. At 1:30 p.m. Friday, residents can come enjoy America's best-loved songs by this Russian-born composer.

Phillip Lester performance. At 7 p.m. Wednesday, this classical guitarist, composer and recording artist returns to the library for an encore holiday performance. Registration is open now.

TGIF: Banjo Rascals. At 1:30 p.m. Dec. 8, come tap your feet to live music performed by a talented trio.

International Film Festival: The Closet. This light-hearted French comedy, to be screened at 2 and 7 p.m. Dec. 12, features a lead per-

formance by Francois Pignon. Westfield and MURAL cardholders should register in advance.

TGIF: Walt Disney. This program, set for 1:30 p.m. Dec. 15, features highlights of America's favorite cartoonist, who introduced a whole new vacation fantasy.

The library's schedule of upcoming children's programs includes **Art History Adventures.** At 3:45 p.m. Dec. 7, children learn about a great artist and are inspired to unlock their artistic flair.

Also, the Saturday morning chess sessions will continue according to their regular schedule.

For more information, call (908) 789-4090, visit the library's Web site at www.wmlnj.org, or stop by the library at 550 East Broad St. for a copy of the quarterly newsletter.

OBITUARIES

Heinz K. Fleck

Heinz K. Fleck, 78, died Nov. 22, 2006, in Overlook Hospital, Summit.

Born in Apolda, Germany, in 1928, Mr. Fleck emigrated from Sweden to the United States in 1956. He and his wife, Ursula Fleck, were longtime residents of Scotch Plains.

Before immigrating to the United States, Mr. Fleck was a textile engineer in Germany, Italy, Turkey and Sweden. His position as chief engineer for Stoll, a German knitting machine manufacturer, gave him the opportunity to travel and work throughout the North American continent.

In 1959, three years after immigrating to the U.S., Mr. Fleck established the Fleck Knitwear Co. Inc. of Plainfield. Subsequently, he established Fleck Realty Corp. in 1961 and the Permoka Corp. of New Jersey in 1963.

He was past president of the

Fanwood Lions Club, an elder of the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church, a member of the Deutsche Club of Clark and chairman of the trustees of the Plainfield Gesang and Turnverein. He was also past director of the National Knitted Outerwear Association.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Fleck is survived by two daughters, Karin Yoshimura of Bridgewater and Monica Henkel of Berwyn, Pa.; his son, Peter Fleck of Fanwood, and nine grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Sunday at the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church, Plainfield. Arrangements were by the Memorial Funeral Home, Fanwood. Donations may be made to Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church Stonework Fund, 716 Watchung Ave., Plainfield, NJ 07060.

George R. Edgcumbe III

George Robert Edgcumbe III, 97, died Nov. 19, 2006, in Overlook Hospital, Summit.

Born in Jersey City, he lived in that city for 50 years before moving to Fanwood 47 years ago.

He was employed with Chase Manhattan Bank in New York City for 45 years, retiring as head of the securities transfer division.

An accomplished pianist, Mr. Edgcumbe played on the radio station WHOM in the 1930s. He also performed with several bands during the

Big Band Era.

Surviving are his wife of 73 years, A. Carol Goldey Edgcumbe; two daughters, Marilyn Grant of Rowland Heights, Calif., and Joyce Edgcumbe-Kleine of Watchung, four grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Services were offered Monday from the Gray Funeral Home, Westfield. Donations may be made to the Fanwood Rescue Squad, 75 N. Martine Ave., Fanwood, NJ 07023.

Theresa Jean Buban

Theresa Jean Buban (O'Toole), 75, died Nov. 21, 2006, at her home in Scotch Plains.

A native of South Boston, Mass., Mrs. Buban lived in Bayonne for many years before moving to Scotch Plains in 1993.

She joined the Air Force Nurse Corps after graduating from nursing school and served overseas during the Korean War.

In 1975, Mrs. Buban received a master's degree in public health administration from Jersey City State College. She worked in nursing for 42 years before retiring as a Jersey City public health nurse supervisor in

1993.

Mrs. Buban was a member of American Legion Martin Wallberg Post 3 in Westfield.

She was the mother of Michael Buban of Scotch Plains and Susanna Bridget Finger of Virginia Beach, Va.; the grandmother of Kathryn and Kevin Patrick Finger; the sister of Josephine Marsolais, and the mother-in-law of Fred Finger.

Services were held Saturday at the Dooley Colonial Home, Westfield. Interment was in Fairview Cemetery, Westfield. Donations may be made to the Center for Hope Hospice, 1900 Raritan Rd., Scotch Plains, NJ 07076.

Denise Wittke

Denise Wittke died Nov. 19, 2006, at her home in Westfield.

Born in Strasbourg, France, Mrs. Wittke came to the United States as a small child. She grew up in New York City, where she worked for many years.

Mrs. Wittke became a worldwide solar eclipse chas-

er as a member of Amateur Astronomers, Inc., which is based at Union County College in Cranford. She was also an active member of the Musical Club of Westfield, the Westfield Historical Society and the Genealogical Society of the West Fields.

She was an avid gardener and enjoyed traveling, especially visiting family and friends in France.

She is survived by her husband, Edward Wittke; a daughter, Laurie Conrad of Ithaca, N.Y.; two stepdaughters, Gail Williams of Wilmington, Del., and Jill Swiecinski of Sewell; five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Interment was in the Presbyterian Burial Grounds in Westfield. Arrangements were by the Gray Funeral Home, Westfield.

Donations may be made to the ALS Association, Greater New York Chapter, 116 John St., Suite 1304, New York, NY 10038 or to the Cemetery Fund of the Presbyterian Church of Westfield.

Evelyn C. Sheffey

Evelyn C. Sheffey, 86, died peacefully at Overlook Hospital in Summit on Nov. 25, 2006.

Born in New York City, she lived for the last 60 years in the same house in Westfield.

She was the widow of John M. Sheffey, who died in 1976. Mrs. Sheffey was also predeceased by a son, John M. Sheffey Jr., who died in 1985.

She is survived by a daughter, Daphne Beckman of Ocean View, Del., four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Wednesday at the Gray Memorial Funeral Home, Westfield. Donations may be made to The American Heart Association.

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HealthLink Radio

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HealthLink Radio with Bob Mann
Sophisticated Technology Reveals Problems Inside the Heart!
Dr. Mohammed Saric describes how Electrocardiology Scans are used.

Saturday, December 2 at 9:30AM - WMTU 1250 AM
"Here's to Your Good Health"
Call-in Show with Gloria Rose (973) 267-9687
When is acupuncture most beneficial?
Dr. Cynthia Paige discusses how acupuncture and traditional medicine can be used together to treat medical problems.

Sunday, December 3 at 8:30AM - WFUD 89.1 FM
or at www.TheUniversityHospital.com
HealthLink Radio with Bob Mann
Stroke Interventions Can Minimize Disabilities!
Dr. Jawad Kirmani, Nurse Practitioner Pansy Harris-Lane and stroke patient Maria Garcia discuss stroke treatment and recovery.

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Folk-pop star Dar Williams will perform a special benefit concert in Westfield on Dec. 16. Tickets are \$30 and must be purchased in advance. For details, see Page B-4.

For some, it was more like a 'Gray Friday'

Crowds flock downtown, but day draws mixed responses

By **THERESA STULTZ**
THE RECORD-PRESS

WESTFIELD — Some nice weather attracted people from far and near to the downtown on the day after Thanksgiving, but retailers and shoppers both gave the day mixed reviews.

The Friday after the holiday feast is known as "Black Friday" because it marks the beginning of the holiday shopping season, when many retailers move from "the red" to "the black" for the year.

At the Gap on East Broad Street, Scotch Plains resident Toria Williams was busy shopping for a coat for her 16-year old niece. "It's almost a no-brainer," she said, about skipping the long lines and large crowds at the malls in favor of a trip downtown.

"My holiday shopping is going very well. The only bottleneck I'm finding is parking," added Williams. "Everything else is going smoothly. When I need help, store employees are easily available."

A manager at the retail giant was reluctant to say how brisk sales had been

for the day, but did indicate that the store was busy with a flurry of customers.

Around the corner at Randal's Shoe Store on Elm Street, employees said the register had not been ringing as often as expected. Valerie, who has worked at the family-owned business for the past 10 years, said sales were actually brisker prior to the holiday.

"Wednesday was good because it was cold and damp, so people would stop in to shop," she said. "We're seeing droves of families from out of town strolling by because of the nice weather."

Back on East Broad Street, at KB Toys, the aisles were stacked with rows and rows of radio-controlled trucks, board games and dolls, plus all of this year's "must-have" toys and gadgets, but store manager Alfonso Rivera said sales were not going as well as hoped. Increased competition in the area "took a lot of sales away," he said.

Rivera did offer a helpful rundown of the toys many kids will be looking for this holiday season. They include the

perennial favorite Tickle Me' Elmo; the Blue Man Group keyboard and music station; Speed Stacks, a cup-stacking competition that tests coordination and speed; and NintenDog, a cross between a video game and a virtual pet, in which the player can interact with virtual puppies using a stylus, touch screen and microphone.

Among the shoppers at KB were Westfield resident Jennifer Owens and her husband, Darren, who had set out at 5 a.m. to find gifts for their three children. But for the Owens family, shopping locally didn't prove to be a bargain. "It was crowded when we got here," said Jennifer. "The sales aren't that great, and parking was a nightmare."

Another shopper at KB Toys, though, had a much more positive take on her experience. Eileen said she took advantage of the nice weather and came all the way from Colonia to shop with her granddaughter. "Westfield is a great place to go. When you're in the mall, you can't breathe," she said.

Theresa Stultz is a staff writer for the Record-Press. She can be reached at (732) 396-4204 or tstultz@njpublishing.com.

THIS WEEK

THURSDAY, NOV. 30

'AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH' — the film, in which former Vice President Al Gore discusses the perils of global warming, will be screened at Temple Emanu-El, 756 East Broad St., Westfield. Doors open 7 p.m., film begins at 7:30. Free, but RSVP in advance to (908) 232-6770, ext. 139.

OLD TIME MUSIC — the Westfield Area YMCA presents a musical event focusing on Hollywood and Broadway hits from the 1920s and '30s; participants will learn basic musical theory and biographical details about the lives of the composers. 12:30-2:30 p.m. at the Main Y facility, 220 Clark St., Westfield. \$15 includes lunch. (908) 233-2700, ext. 414.

FINANCIAL AID INFO PROGRAM — the Westfield High School guidance department presents this program for local families. 7:30 p.m. at the high school.

FRIDAY, DEC. 1

MAYOR'S CHARITY GALA — the annual celebration in Scotch Plains will raise funds for the Municipal Alliance Committee and recognize outstanding volunteers. 7 p.m.-midnight. Shackamaxon Golf and Country Club. Nominate local residents for honors at www.scotchplainsnj.com. Tickets are \$55, call (908) 322-6700, ext. 221.

SATURDAY, DEC. 2

'DECK THE HALLS' HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR — the Rake and Hoe Garden Club's annual event offering inside looks at five local homes returns from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tickets are \$30 in advance, \$35 the day of the tour. For details, call (908) 232-0449.

INDOOR GARAGE SALE — at the Westfield Day Care Center, located in Westminster Hall at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Kids' clothing, board games, books, strollers and more. (908) 232-6717.

JLEP HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE — an opportunity to buy gifts for friends and family, at the Junior League of Elizabeth-Plainfield's Jumble Store, 110 Walnut Ave., Cranford. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (908) 276-0222.

JEFFERSON SCHOOL FUNDRAISER — At 2 p.m., Principal Jeannette Munoz will read stories to students at this event at the Barnes & Noble on Raritan Road in Clark. Purchases from the store accompanied by a voucher will result in a donation to the Westfield school.

CHRISTMAS PARTY — get away from the holiday craziness and reconnect with family and loved ones at Willow Grove Presbyterian Church, 1961 Raritan Rd., Scotch Plains. 4-7 p.m. Featuring gingerbread house-making, games for teens and more. \$5 per person, maximum \$15 per family. RSVPs requested at (908) 232-5678.

PHOTOS WITH SANTA & MRS. CLAUS — kids can get a free 5x7 photo when their families donate two cans of food. 1-5 p.m. 609 North Ave. West, Westfield.

WREATH AND GRAVE BLANKET SALE — Boy Scout Troop 77 will sell the seasonal items at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 414 East Broad St. 9 a.m.-noon; continues same time Dec. 3 and 10.

'CAROLS IN THE ROUND' — the Westfield Chorale offers this holiday concert at First Baptist Church, 170 Elm St. in Westfield, at 4 p.m., with an encore performance at 4 p.m. Sunday. Purchase \$8 tickets in advance at (908) 233-2278.

SUNDAY, DEC. 3

TREE-LIGHTING CEREMONY — the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce hosts the annual event at the North Avenue train station parking lot in Westfield. 5 p.m. For details, call (908) 233-3021.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION — Fanwood throws a seasonal party at the North Avenue train station. Santa arrives at 3 p.m., and the fun continues until 5. Preceded by a free holiday concert by the Sometones at 2 p.m. at the Kuran Arts Center.

GINGERBREAD SUNDAY — kids can make a gingerbread house, hear stories about the Gingerbread Man, and enjoy more fun activities at the Miller-Cory House Museum, 614 Mountain Ave., Westfield. 1:30-4 p.m. Pre-registration required; call (908) 232-1776 from 9 a.m.-noon weekdays.

JEWISH BOOK FAIR — the annual sale returns to the JCC of Central NJ, 1391 Martine Ave., Scotch Plains. Begins 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; continues 9 a.m.-4 p.m. daily through Dec. 7. (908) 889-8800, ext. 205.

CRAFT SHOW AND HOLIDAY LIGHTS CELEBRATION — the annual festivities return to the Watchung Reservation. Craft show 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Trailside Nature and Science Center, lights celebration and charity drive 2:30-5 p.m. at the Watchung Stables. (908) 789-3670 or (908) 789-3665.

MONDAY, DEC. 4

MEDICARE D CHANGES — Ed Evans, a local expert on health care, will lead this talk at the Scotch Plains Public Library, 1927 Bartle Ave. 1 p.m. (908) 322-5007.

CHRISTMAS PARTY — the St. Bartholomew's Rosary Altar Society invites women of the parish and friends to the annual holiday celebration. 8 p.m., after the 7:30 p.m. Mass and Novena. To donate gifts to the 50/50 or for details, call (908) 322-5019 or (908) 322-5046.

'A PLAYHOUSE CHRISTMAS' — members of the public are invited to join the Gad-Abouts of Willow Grove Presbyterian Church on this excursion to the Hunterdon Hills Playhouse. Carpools leave Willow Grove, 1961 Raritan Rd. in Scotch Plains, at 10 a.m. \$55. (908) 322-7892.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 6

FLU VACCINE CLINIC — the Westfield Regional Health Department hosts this program for residents of Westfield and Fanwood. Proof of residency is required. People of all ages may receive the shots, which will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis. 6-8 p.m. Community Room of the Westfield municipal building, 425 East Broad St.

MOTHERS & MORE MEETING — the group will host a program about children's health with Dr. Kristen Shapen of the Paramount Medical Group. 8 p.m. Forest Road Park building, Fanwood. (908) 620-3202.

'A REDISCOVERED TREASURE' — County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi will discuss the dome of the Union County Courthouse with the First Wednesday Luncheon of the Westfield Historical Society. Noon. B.G. Fields Restaurant, 560 Springfield Ave., Westfield. (908) 233-2930.

HOLIDAY CONCERT — the Westfield Community Band will be joined by the Edison Intermediate School Broadway Singers at this traditional program. 7 p.m. Edison School, 800 Rahway Ave., Westfield.

ANOTHER HOLIDAY CONCERT — spiritual and secular Christmas music will be performed at Fanwood Presbyterian Church, Martine and LaGrande avenues. 7 p.m. (908) 889-8891.

BLOOD DRIVE — give the gift of life this holiday season. 3-8 p.m. Westfield/Mountainside Red Cross, 321 Elm St., Westfield. (908) 232-7090.

THURSDAY, DEC. 7

'PROJECT WILD' — Trailside Nature Center hosts a teacher-training workshop for adults ages 18 and older. Learn about how to present science, social studies, math, literacy or art to any grade level. \$25. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Register at (908) 789-3670.

RINGING IN THE SEASON



The members of the Westfield Community Band, joined by the student group the Broadway Singers, will present their 17th annual holiday concert next Wednesday at Edison Intermediate School.

Community Band, Broadway Singers present holiday show at EIS

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Community Band will join the Edison Intermediate School Broadway Singers for their 17th annual holiday concert, to be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Edison School auditorium, located at 800 Rahway Ave.

To get audience members ready for the holiday season, the band will start the program with "An Irving Berlin Christmas," highlighting classic favorites such as "Happy Holiday," "White Christmas" and "Let's Start the New Year Right."

The band will also explore holiday music from different cultures and time periods with selections such as "Chanukah

is Here," a collection of Hebrew Folk Music arranged by Calvin Custer; the "Ukrainian Bell Carol," arranged by Philip Sparke, and "Fantasia on a 13th Century Carol," by James Hosay.

Additional selections will include "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," a new holiday favorite now on Broadway, "Angels from the Realms of Glory" and "A Rhapsody on Christmas Carols."

The Broadway Singers, directed by Kristine Smith-Morasso, is an extra-curricular singing group made up of select seventh and eighth students. The ensemble, which tours frequently outside of the school district, will sing a collection of holi-

day favorites.

The students will perform well-known holiday classics such as "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm," "Hey Santa" and "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Other selections will include "Happy Hanukkah, My Friend," "Who Would Imagine a King" and "All Along Beneath the Mistletoe."

The band and choir will conclude the concert with a joint performance of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus."

For further information regarding the concert, contact the Westfield Recreation Department at (908) 789-4080 or go to the band's Web site at westfieldcommunity-band.com.

At Jefferson, 'Every day is Earth Day!'

On a chilly Saturday morning, families of Jefferson Elementary School students, alumni and neighbors turned out for a grounds beautification day. All of the planting beds around the school were weeded and mulched to help prepare the grounds for winter, and new seasonal mums were planted. The event reflected the school's two-year theme, "Jefferson — Where Every Day is Earth Day!" Mulch was generously provided by Westfield Lumber. The Beautification Committee also extends a thank you to Jefferson parents Mary Beyert and Ellen Cronin, who braved rain and bees to weed non-stop for nearly six hours the day before the event to ensure that the grounds were ready for mulching.



Cellist Tchekmazov will join Allegro series at All Saints'

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Allegro Project continues its season of performances by up-and-coming musicians with a concert by noted cellist Andrey Tchekmazov at 3 p.m. Sunday at All Saints' Episcopal Church, 559 Park Ave.

Tchekmazov will be accompanied by Michael Spassov, the artistic director of the Allegro series.

Hailed by the *Washington Post* as an "extraordinary musician," Tchekmazov is known for his versatility as a soloist, recitalist and chamber musician.

Ever since his critically acclaimed debut at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, Tchekmazov has enjoyed an active career as recitalist and chamber musician. The Grand Prize winner of Vittorio Gui International Chamber Music Competition and the Premio Trio di Trieste, Tchekmazov has performed extensively throughout North and South America, Europe, Russia and Asia, appearing at the Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, Osaka Symphony Hall in Japan, New York's Alice Tully Hall, and Brazil's Sala Cecilia Mercedes, Sala Sao Paulo and Tetro Alfa. Among his prizes

and awards are the Koussevitzky Cello Competition in New York, Stadt, Artist International, Premio della Critica in Trieste and Russian National Competition in Moscow.

As a regular performer with the Jupiter Chamber Players in New York and at the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., Tchekmazov "impressed his audiences with a big, warm tone and Russian brand of virtuosity" (*Strad Magazine*) by introducing them to rarely-performed jewels of classical music alongside the works of great masters. He also premiered works by contemporary composers George Warren, Ira Cremer and Ralf Ytrehus and participated in ambitious, first-time-ever projects such as a performance of Dmitri Shostakovich's entire chamber music repertoire for cello.

Born in Moscow into a family of professional pianists, Tchekmazov studied piano and later cello at the Gnessin Academy. He continued his studies at the Moscow State Conservatory and Nataliya Shakhovskaya and, after coming to the U.S., at the Juilliard School as

a Leonard Rose full scholarship student of Harvey Shapiro. At Juilliard, he was also coached by members of the Juilliard and Guarneri String Quartets.

The Allegro Project is the brainchild of Spassov, who said, "There is an enormous opportunity to introduce exceptional talent early in their career. It is my intention that people will be able to say they heard them here first."

Added Jane Rockman, rector of All Saints', "Many of the great composers wrote specifically for the church. A concert series of beautiful music is a natural for a sacred space."

Future performances from the Allegro Project will include Tibi Cziger, clarinetist, who will share the stage with harpist Sivan Magen on Jan. 28. Eric Nowlin, a viola virtuoso, will conclude the season on April 22 with a performance.

Tickets for all performances are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. A subscription to the next three performances is \$40. Tickets are available online at www.allsaints-spnj.org or by calling (866) 811-4111.

Poetry reading features Renée Ashley, Peter Murphy

Carriage House event is scheduled for Dec. 7

FANWOOD — The Carriage House Poetry Series will host a free reading by the distinguished poets Renée Ashley and Peter Murphy at 8 p.m. Dec. 7 in the Kuran Arts Center on Watson Road, off North Martine Avenue and adjacent to Borough Hall.

Ashley is the author of four volumes of poetry: "Salt," which won the Brittingham Prize in Poetry, "The Various Reasons of Light," "The Revisionist's Dream," and a chapbook, "The Museum of Lost Wings," plus a novel, "Someplace Like This."

She has received fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. A contributing editor to *The Literary Review*, Ashley is on the faculty of Fairleigh Dickinson University's MFA program in creative writing.

Murphy was born in Wales and grew up in New York City, where he operated heavy equipment, managed a night club and drove a cab. "Stubborn Child," his first book, was a finalist for the 2006 Paterson Poetry Prize.

He has received awards and fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Corporation of Yaddo, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. He is the founder of the Winter Poetry & Prose Getaway, held annually in Cape May.

The Carriage House Poetry Series was established in 1998 and has featured some of the finest poets writing today, including Gerald Stern, Alicia Ostriker, BJ Ward, Stephen Dunn, Catherine Doty, Maria Gillan, Laura Boss, Diane Lockward and Robert Carnevale. The series is currently a satellite project of the Fanwood Arts Council.

Readings are held in the Patricia M. Kuran Cultural Arts Center, a historic Gothic Revival structure that was once a 19th-century carriage house — hence the name of the series. The Ashley/Murphy reading will mark the eighth anniversary of the series.

An open mic session will follow the featured performance, so bring a poem of your own and join in the reading. For information, call (908) 889-7223 or (908) 889-5298.

A festive time at the Osborn House



The Osborn Cannonball House, located at 1840 Front St. in Scotch Plains, will be open to visitors from 2-4 p.m. during the town-wide holiday celebration and tree-lighting. Festive decorations will adorn the circa 1750 farmhouse, which is maintained by the Historical Society of Scotch Plains and Fanwood. There is no admission charge. The event is the museum's final activity of the year; the Osborn House will reopen on March 4, 2007. Above, docent Elizabeth Cerna demonstrates life in colonial days during the recent "Four Centuries in a Weekend" event.

Reservation will host tree-lighting, craft show

MOUNTAINSIDE — Union County's annual Nature Craft Show and Holiday Lights Celebration will be held in the Watchung Reservation this Sunday.

"The entire family will enjoy this seasonal afternoon filled with fun," said Freeholder Vice Chairwoman Bette Jane Kowalski, liaison to the county's Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. "Trailside's new Visitors Center will be stocked with handmade crafts and gift items. The nearby Loop Playground Area will feature rides in a 15-passenger carriage, and Watchung Stable will host a petting zoo, holiday singers, horseback riders, and the lighting of a tree and a menorah."

The activities will be held rain or shine. There is no admission fee; however, it is suggested that participants bring an item of dry or canned food or a new, unwrapped toy to the Holiday Lights Celebration. All items collected at the event will be distributed to the needy through local charities.

Shuttle buses will connect all three locations beginning at 2 p.m.

The Nature Craft Show will take place from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Trailside Nature and Science Center, located at 452 New Providence Rd. Vendors will offer for sale a variety of gift items with natural themes and handmade crafts fashioned from natural materials, including jewelry, herbal soaps, wreaths, gift baskets, pottery, carvings and country home décor. For more information, call Trailside at (908) 789-3670.

The Holiday Lights Celebration and Charity Drive will take place from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at Watchung Stable, located at 1160 Summit Lane. A mounted drill team will demonstrate its horseback riding abilities, Santa and Mrs. Claus will talk with children and holiday singers will have the whole family singing along.

There also will be lead-line horse rides, a petting zoo, children's crafts and refreshments for all. Union County Police officers will be on hand for voluntary fingerprinting of school-age children, and officers will demonstrate how the bomb squad robot works.

The lighting of the holiday tree and a menorah will take place at 5 p.m. For more information, call the stable at (908) 789-3665.

Carriage rides in a 15-passenger carriage will be available in the Loop Playground Area of the Watchung Reservation, weather permitting, from 1 to 4 p.m.

For additional information or directions, call the county's Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities at (908) 527-4900.

Visit with Santa, shop for poinsettias at garden center

SCOTCH PLAINS — This time of year brings with it many traditions — among them, the annual Holiday Open House at Parker Gardens on Terrill Road.

"Every year our customers and their families are invited to enjoy the beautiful sights and scents of the holidays during this special weekend," said owner Steve Parker. This year's open house is scheduled for this Saturday and Sunday.

Among the activities on the program are a scavenger hunt, refreshments, and of course, a visit from Santa himself. St. Nicholas will be at Parker Gardens both days from noon-3 p.m., eager for children to visit with him.

Families are encouraged to bring cameras to take pictures with Santa or surrounded by poinsettias and greenery in front of a beautifully designed background, perfect for holiday cards.

As always, the 14-acre garden center will feature premium cut greens and wreaths, many of which can be customized for your holiday décor with bows, berries and ornaments. The Parker Gardens design staff will help shoppers choose the greens, accessories and container to create a holiday setting, hostess gift or centerpiece.

"We carry traditional reds, whites and pinks in poinsettias, as well as unusual varieties like Strawberries and Cream, Silver Star and Cortez Burgundy," said Parker. "Last year we were one of the first to carry Fantasy Poinsettias, which are back again this year, adding to the array of colors in our poinsettia house."

For more information, call (908) 322-5555 or visit www.parkergardens.com.

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December 2006 Events at the Westfield Memorial Library

Library Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:30 AM to 9:00 PM
Friday and Saturday 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM
Sunday 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

ADULT PROGRAMS

Dec 1 1:30 PM TGIF: Irving Berlin
Dec 6 7:00 PM Performance: Phillip Lester
Dec 8 1:30 PM TGIF: Banjo Rascals
Dec 12 2 & 7 PM Film: The Closet
Dec 15 1:30 PM TGIF: Walt Disney

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Dec 7 3:45 PM Art History Adventures
Dec 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 10:00 AM Chess

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SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD

Boro plans tree-lighting, holiday concert

FANWOOD — The borough's annual holiday celebration, sponsored by the Recreation Department, will be held 3-5 p.m. Sunday at the North Avenue train station. Families are invited to come and enjoy an afternoon of music, holiday crafts and refreshments, all for free.

The celebration kicks off at 3 p.m. with the arrival of Santa Claus. Children can visit Santa and have their picture taken with him. The event will conclude with the lighting of the borough's holiday tree on the train station lawn.

Earlier Sunday, at 2 p.m. the Fanwood Arts Council will host a free performance of holiday singing by The SomerTones in the Patricia Kuran Cultural Arts Center on Watson Road, adjacent to Borough Hall.

The program, which will include a selection of winter holiday songs, is suitable for the whole family. The SomerTones sing four-part a cappella music in barbershop style.

For more information about the concert, call (908) 889-7223 or (908) 889-5298.

Lions Club will sell trees in LaGrande Park

FANWOOD — The local Lions Club will hold its annual Christmas tree sale at LaGrande Park, beginning this Saturday.

Hours will be 6:30-9 p.m. weeknights and 9 a.m.-9 p.m. weekends. Douglas firs, fraziers, balsams, roping and wreaths (decorated & undecorated) will be for sale.

Unwrapped toys will be collected for the Family and Children's Services of Plainfield at the lot.

Proceeds from the sale are donated to various local organizations, the visually impaired, and to local high school students in the form of college scholarships.

WG Church hosts a holiday celebration

SCOTCH PLAINS — From 4-7 p.m. this Saturday, Willow Grove Presbyterian Church offers a chance to slow down from the holiday rush and catch the Christmas spirit.

The family celebration will offer an array of activities including crafting ornaments and Advent wreaths, decorating gingerbread houses and singing Christmas carols. There will be a teen movie/game room, and a pizza dinner with salad and dessert will be provided.

The cost is \$5 per person, with a maximum of \$15 per family.

Reservations by Friday are appreciated but not required. To make reservations or for more information, call the church office at (908) 232-5678 or e-mail info@willowgrovechurch.org. Willow Grove is located at 1961 Raritan Rd., across the street from the south side firehouse.

Moms group to meet with local pediatrician

FANWOOD — At its Wednesday meeting the Union County Chapter of Mothers and More will host Dr. Kristen Shapren, M.D., who has a private practice in Springfield with the Paramount Medical Group.

As another cold and flu season approaches, Shapren will field questions and concerns and share her first-hand experiences with caring for babies, toddlers and children.

The meeting will be held at 8 p.m. at the Fanwood Recreation Center in Forest Road Park. The meeting will also be an opportunity to find out more about the chapter's other activities, which include playgroups, mom's nights out, mom and tots' outings and a book club.

For more information about this meeting or Mothers & More, call Micheal at (908) 620-3202 or Vicki at (908) 259-1161, or log on to mother-sandmore.org.

Concert will feature spiritual, secular tunes

FANWOOD — In the spirit of Advent, Fanwood Presbyterian Church will present a holiday concert of spiritual and secular Christmas music at 7 p.m. Wednesday.

Robert H. Gangewere Jr., the church's minister of music, will play organ pieces including "White Christmas" and "Silver Bells." He will also direct the youth handbell choir, the Westminster Ringers, as they perform "The Angels' Song" and "Yuletide Medley," among other selections.

Refreshments will be served, and a freewill offering will be received.

For further information, call the church office at (908) 889-8891. Fanwood Presbyterian Church is located at the corner of Martine and

La Grande Avenues and is wheelchair accessible.

'Chick lit' author will read her latest at the JCC

SCOTCH PLAINS — Rachel Kadish, author of several acclaimed books, will sign copies of and read from her latest novel, "Tolstoy Lied: A Love Story," in a Dec. 11 program at the JCC of Central NJ.

"Tolstoy Lied" has received praise as an exemplary example of the popular "chick lit" genre. Kadish will be the first of a number of prominent authors presenting their work as part of the JCC's 2006-07 Jewish Book Festival.

There is no charge to attend this special event, which begins at 7:30 p.m. and is open to both JCC members and the community at large. For more details, contact Susan Lerner at slerner@jccnj.org or (908) 889-8800, ext. 205.

The JCC is located at 1391 Martine Ave.

Overlook staffers offer stroke screening and more

SCOTCH PLAINS — From 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Dec. 12, staff from the Overlook Hospital Community Health Department will be at the JCC of Central NJ to perform free stroke screening and individual counseling.

Blood pressure, pulse, carotid artery, cholesterol and glucose levels will all be checked. Participants will have the opportunity to talk one on one with health counselors. There is no charge for this program, which is open to all. The program is funded by a grant from the F.M. Kirby Foundation.

Advanced registration is required and space is limited. To schedule an appointment or for more information, contact Nan Statton at nstatton@jccnj.org or (908) 889-8800, ext. 207.

The JCC is located at 1391 Martine Ave.

Students selected to join state symphony

SCOTCH PLAINS — Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School students Michelle Carroll and Laura Ruesch have been selected as members of New Jersey Youth Symphony (NJYS) ensembles for the 2006-07 season. The students were selected to join the prestigious organization after competitive auditions held in the spring.

The Youth Symphony is designed for superior high school students in grades nine-12. It provides talented young musicians with orchestral and related music education experiences that enable them to reach their highest potential as performers and listeners.

The student musicians meet weekly for rehearsals throughout the school year and perform at least twice yearly in distinguished concert halls such as the Prudential Hall of NJPAC and Carnegie Hall.

Gousman will lead NJ office of law firm

FANWOOD — Borough resident Rosemary Gousman has been named the new managing partner at the New Jersey office of the law firm Fisher & Phillips, located in Somerset. Gousman has practiced labor and employment law for over 25 years, providing advice to clients and litigating a variety of cases.

Gousman has trial experience in bench and jury trials as well as arbitration proceedings. She has litigated cases involving such matters as disability, race, sex and age discrimination; wrongful discharge; wage and hour laws; traditional labor law involving union-management relations, and employee benefits disputes. She also practices before state and federal administrative agencies, handling labor and employment matters.

"Rosemary's credentials, personal demeanor and her contributions to the firm make her an excellent choice to manage the New Jersey office," said Roger Quillen, managing partner of the firm. "On behalf of Fisher & Phillips, we are enthusiastic about Rosemary's leadership and look forward to her contributions in this new endeavor."

Fisher & Phillips is one of the largest national law firms in the field of labor and employment law, with more than 200 attorneys in 16 offices



Barbara Anilo (right), president of the Scotch Plains Lions Club and Tina Tim Fund, and Lorraine Chaillet (left) of the Tiny Tim Fund watch as Jaclyn Petrow demonstrates the CCTV system.

Vision-impaired student finds support from neighbors

SCOTCH PLAINS — At an early age, Jaclyn Petrow became ill and as a result lost most of her eyesight.

Vision impairment created academic challenges for Petrow, now a student in Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School. But she's receiving some help from other members of her community.

One of her neighbors, Adam Rothenberg, is a member of the Scotch Plains Lions Club, and he thought the organization might be able to help. Barbara Anilo, president of the Scotch Plains Lions Club, is also the president of the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Tiny Tim Fund. The two organizations began working together to buy Jaclyn a portable CCTV system.

The system features a camera with a zoom lens that enlarges items on the blackboard, slide projectors and textbooks and displays them directly on a laptop computer. Lecture notes and texts can also be stored in an enlarged readable format for studying and preparing for exams.

At a recent joint dinner meeting of the Lions Club and the Tiny Tim Fund, Petrow demonstrated how the CCTV works. Everyone who attended felt a strong sense of pride in how the groups had been to help someone in the community.

For more information on the Scotch Plains Lions Club, which directs most of its charitable efforts to serving the blind or visually impaired, call Anilo at (908) 322-4472.

The Tiny Tim Fund is a non-profit corporation organized and operated exclusively for the purpose of providing financial assistance for medically needy children. One of the group's biggest fundraisers is the caroling at the holiday season. For more information on the Tiny Tim Fund, contact Anilo at the number listed above.

Fanwood library hosts DDR, video games for teens

FANWOOD — The Fanwood Memorial Library Teen Group is hosting an afternoon of Dance Dance Revolution and video gaming from 3:30-5 p.m. Dec. 13. The event will take place in the Fanwood Room of the library and is open to all teens in grades six-12.

In addition to the DDR system, a Playstation 2 will be set up and ready to go for participating teens. Refreshments and prizes will be available. For more information, call the library at (908) 322-6400 or visit the Web site at fanwoodlibrary.org.

SP-F High alum receives NJEA award

David Rodriguez, a graduate of Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, recently received the New Jersey Education Association's Award for Excellence at the association's annual convention in Atlantic City.

NJEA members annually present the Award for Excellence to New Jersey public school graduates who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in their fields of expertise.

Rodriguez, son of Fanwood resident and retired teacher Johanna Rodriguez, is a nationally regarded producer and presenter of both live and televised events. He has produced six seasons of NBC-TV's "Showtime at the Apollo," AOL's "Rod Stewart Live at the Apollo," and MTV's "James Brown at 70."

Rodriguez served as executive director for Harlem's landmark Apollo Theater from 2001 to 2006. During his tenure, theater usage increased from two to nearly 10 performances per week, including important initiatives such as Latin Nites at the Apollo and Dance Theater of Harlem's first Apollo season.

In addition, Rodriguez oversaw the creation of education and outreach programs that serve more than 40,000 young people each year. These education programs included the Apollo Academy; Healthtime, which is responsible for AIDS and diabetes testing for over 20,000 Harlem residents, and the Apollo/Cable in the Classrooms partnership, which brings Apollo-based education programs to more than 1,000 classrooms nationally.

Rodriguez, who remains an independent concert producer and the producer of the "Showtime at the Apollo" television show, is currently serving as the executive director of the Bergen Performing Arts Center in Englewood.

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The Law Firm of Dughi & Hewit, P.C. is pleased to announce that Mario C. Gurrieri chair of its Family Law Department, Richard A. Outhwaite and Lisa Stein-Browning, will present to the public a Free Seminar entitled "Everything You Need To Know About Divorce" in Garwood, New Jersey on Thursday, November 30, 2006 and Saturday, December 2, 2006. Mr. Gurrieri, who has specialized in matrimonial law for thirty-four years, Mr. Outhwaite, for sixteen years and Ms. Stein-Browning, will review the law, explain the legal process and answer your questions concerning separation, divorce, custody, visitation, alimony, division of assets and post-divorce Court review of alimony and child support as well as the law governing Domestic Partnerships.

Information will also be provided on Divorce Mediation, an alternative to the traditional contested proceeding. Divorce Mediation offers the potential for significant savings while assuring that your rights are fully protected by avoiding the expense, stress and delay involved in Court proceedings.

If you are experiencing marital difficulties, contemplating divorce, or simply curious about your rights in a separation or divorce, this Seminar will be of value to you. If you are already divorced, the Seminar may be of value in explaining post-divorce rights and obligations of former spouses.

Where: The Westwood
438 North Avenue
Garwood, New Jersey 07027
(908) 789-0808 (www.westwood.com)

When: Thurs., November 30, 2006 from 7-9pm
Sat., December 2, 2006 from 1:30-3:30pm

Reservations required (No names needed)
Call (908) 272-0200
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THE SOURCE FOR SENIORS

'Folk-pop' star Dar Williams will perform in Westfield

Acappella group The Bobs also joins 'Conscience' series

The acclaimed folk musician Dar Williams comes to the area this December to join the Coffee with Conscience concert series.

Williams will perform at 8 p.m. Dec. 16 at the Presbyterian Church of Westfield, 140 Mountain Ave.; doors will open at 7:15. Tickets are \$30 and must be purchased in advance online at www.coffee-withconscience.org.

All net proceeds from the concert will be donated to the Keith Knost Special Needs Trust. Canadian born singer/songwriter Jessica Owen will open the show.

Williams, a favorite at folk festivals across the nation, is a practitioner of a genre that can best be described as "folk-pop." She has toured with the likes of Mary Chapin Carpenter, Patty Griffin, Ani DiFranco, The Nields, Shawn Colvin, Girlyman, Joan Baez and Catie Curtis.

Williams was born in Mount Kisco, N.Y., and grew up in Chappaqua. She began playing the guitar at age 9 and wrote her first song at age 11. However, she was far more interested in drama through her teen years and majored in theater at Wesleyan University. Upon graduating college in 1990, she moved to Boston, where she began to write songs, record demo tapes and take voice lessons. She soon began performing at coffeehouses, but things got off to a slow start.

Things turned around for Williams when she got a gig opening for Joan Baez. Their meeting led to Baez recording some of Williams's songs, which created a buzz about her in the folk world. In 1998, Williams teamed up with Richard Shindell and Lucy Kaplansky to form the group Cry Cry Cry and pay homage to some of their favorite folk artists. The trio released an album of covers and toured from 1998 to 2000.

Since 2000, Williams's solo career has continued to thrive. She has released three more studio albums, the newest of which is "My Better Self" (2005). She has also lent her talents in support various causes, founding the Snowden Environmental Trust and taking part in many benefit concerts along the way.

Her performance in Westfield was specially added to the "Conscience" series to



Dar Williams got a career boost when folk icon Joan Baez recorded a few of her songs.

benefit the Keith Knost Special Needs Trust. Knost is a former Summit resident who was seriously injured in an automobile accident and remains paralyzed from the chest down.

Even before Williams comes to town, the series will host another performance, by the zany, San Francisco-based a cappella group The Bobs. That concert will take place at 8 p.m. Dec. 9 at the First United Methodist Church of Westfield, 1 East Broad St.

The Bobs began subverting the pop music world with their offbeat vocal arrangements over 20 years ago. Their concerts offer a blend of an endearing

quirkiness and stunning proficiency.

Admission to The Bobs' performance is \$20; all net proceeds will be donated to the Community FoodBank of NJ.

Concerts in the series are recorded for broadcast by Westfield's TV-36. Residents of Westfield, Scotch Plains, Fanwood and Mountainside can catch each month's concert on Saturday and Sunday at 7 a.m.

The series is made possible in part by a generous grant from the Westfield Service League and other private donations. For more information about the concert series, visit www.coffee-withconscience.org, call (908) 412-9105 or e-mail concerts4causes@aol.com.

Local theater announces auditions for 'The Lion in Winter'

Director Linda Correll of Westfield Community Players will hold open auditions for the James Goldman drama "The Lion in Winter" from 1-5 p.m. Dec. 9 and 10

in the WCP theater, 1000 North Ave. West in Westfield.

Rehearsals will begin in early January for performances at 8 p.m. March 3, 9,

10, 16, 17, 23 and 24. All roles are open.

In the play, King Henry of England and his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, meet in a French castle with their three sons to determine the fate of the British monarchy. While Henry favors the youngest son and Eleanor the eldest, the middle son hopes to play both ends against each other and end up as king.

The *New York Times* called the play "a work of intelligence, astringent wit and much theatrical skill."

The cast requirements are:

— Henry Plantagenet, 45-60, the King, a man with a

large presence, sure of himself, about to decide which of his sons to make king;

— Eleanor of Aquitaine, 60-65, older than Henry and in every way his match;

— Richard, eldest son of Henry, 20-30, brash, sure of himself and a born leader;

— John, youngest son of Henry, 17-20, young for his age, spoiled and pampered;

— Geoff, middle son of Henry, 20-30, always looking out for himself, will find a way to be on top no matter what;

— Alais Capet, 17-20, a pawn in Henry's plans but a woman in her own right; and

— Phillip Capet, 20-30, a young king, brother of Alais.

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Highlights and hot spots

— THE CHORAL ART SOCIETY OF NJ will host its annual "Messiah" Community Sing at 8 p.m. Friday at St. Helen's Roman Catholic Church, 1600 Rahway Ave., Westfield.

The Community Sing has become a local tradition and is an ideal way to kick off the holiday season. Admission is \$10 at the door, where scores may be borrowed for the evening.

On Jan. 20, the Choral Art Society will be performing Mendelsohn's "Elijah." Also, rehearsals will start Jan. 23 for a May 12 performance of Franz Josef Haydn's "Theresienmesse" and Ralph Vaughn Williams's "Dona Nobis Pacem." Both the January and May concerts will be held at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, 140 Mountain Ave.

In addition, another "Messiah" Sing will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday at Rahway High School. The performance will be led by the New Jersey Concert Opera. Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased by calling (732) 499-8226.

— THE WESTFIELD GLEE CLUB'S 82nd annual winter concert will be presented at 8 p.m. Saturday at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, 140 Mountain Ave. Director Thomas Booth and accompanist George Lachenauer will lead the choral performances of classic, spiritual, novelty and popular Christmas songs. The concert will also feature operatic selections sung by soprano Meredith Hoffman-Thomson, accompanied by Barbara Thomson.

Tickets are available from Glee Club members and at the door for a donation of \$15 for adults and \$12 for students and seniors. For questions, call Dale Juntilla (908) 232-0673.

— PAUL ALEXANDER, an artist whose music has been inspired by his work in hospice and as a bereavement specialist, will perform a free spiritual concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at the First Presbyterian Church of Cranford, North Union and Springfield Avenue.

Alexander's warm contemporary style melds music, storytelling, humor and insight. He has performed for such national groups as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (M.A.D.D.). His concerts are designed for people of all faiths. For more information, contact Patti Williams at (908) 709-1341.

— PHOTOGRAPHER ROBERT PARKER will present "Three Visions: New Jersey, The World and Cyberspace," a slide show of his professional photographs, to the Westfield Art Association. The meeting will be held 2-4 p.m. Sunday at the Springfield Free Public Library, 66 Mountain Ave. (908) 687-2945.

— "IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE: THE RADIO PLAY," The Theater Project's annual holiday production, returns to Union County College. Cast members recreate the 1947 Lux Radio Theater broadcast of the story made famous in the Frank Capra film. 3 p.m. Sunday, 1033 Springfield Ave., Cranford. \$10 for adults, kids get in free. Reserve a seat at (908) 659-5189.

— THE CRANFORD/MILLBURN CAMERA CLUB will host its first Terry Boyer Award Competition at 7:30 p.m. Monday at the Bauer Community Center in Taylor Park, Millburn. Each club member may enter up to four slides in an open category. Everyone may view the works, but only club members may compete.

The award honors the memory of Terry Boyer, one of the state's top nature photographers who passed away on Jan. 14. For directions, visit www.cmccameraclub.org.

— THE CHANSONNETTES OF WESTFIELD will begin their upcoming holiday tour, "A December to Remember," on Tuesday at St. Paul's Church in Garwood. The program will feature including "Ode to Peace," "Shalom," "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" and "Santa Baby."

The tour will continue Dec. 7 at Runnells Specialized Hospital in Berkeley Heights, Dec. 12 at The Chelsea in Warren and Dec. 13 at Sunrise Assisted Living in Westfield.

The Chansonettes is an all-women's choral group under the direction of Jean Schork and accompanied by Mel Freda. The group is always looking for new members who enjoy singing and gathering with friends. Rehearsals are held once a week at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, 140 Mountain Ave. For more, call Nancy Vickers at (908)654-8675 or Claudia Osborne at (908) 232-0477.

— THE MID-DAY MUSICALES concert series continues with a performance by the Enchantment Duo at noon Wednesday at the First Congregational Church of Westfield, 125 Elmer St. Flutist Laura Karel George and harpist Beth Robinson have performed together nationally for over 25 years. Their program in Westfield will include works by Handel, Karel, Molnar and others.

The free, half-hour concert will be followed by a soup and sandwich luncheon available in the church social hall for \$5. For further information, contact the church office at (908) 233-2494.

— "HUMBUG," a version of "A Christmas Carol" with a modern twist, comes to Wilkins Theatre at Kean University next month. The upbeat, moving family-friendly take on the Dickens holiday classic is an original, never-before-seen adaptation that was created especially for Kean University.

Performances are scheduled 7 p.m. Dec. 14, 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Dec. 15, 7 p.m. Dec. 16 and 3 p.m. Dec. 17. Tickets are \$25 for the general public, \$15 for seniors and children and \$8 for school performances. Kean University is located at 1000 Morris Ave. in Union. For tickets, call (908) 737-SHOW or visit www.keanstage.com.

— "COUNTER BALANCE," a solo show by sculptor Elaine Lorenz, is now open at Union County College's Tomasulo Gallery, located in the Kenneth MacKay Library, 1033 Springfield Ave., Cranford. The stoneware clay sculpture reflects Lorenz's interest in nature's generative forces and seeks a connection with the earth and renewed life.

Hours are 1-4 p.m. Monday to Thursday, 6-9 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday. The show runs through Dec. 21. (908) 709-7155.

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The SP-F girls tennis team made a late season surge and finished its fall season strong. For more on the team, and for a recap of SP-F's and Westfield's girls cross country seasons, see the stories on Page C-2.

SERZAN'S SIDE

Giant swings

By JOE SERZAN
SPORTS EDITOR

Following his team's thrilling 24-21 come from behind home victory over the New York Giants, Tennessee Titans head coach Jeff Fisher stepped up to address the press, smiled, and said, "Wow, did that just happen?"

Yes, Jeff, it did. And as I was watching that fourth quarter unfold Sunday afternoon, I knew it was going to.

As a Giants fan you get accustomed to these things. If there are two things I have consistently learned as a fan of this team it's that no lead is safe and no deficit is too big. It's why the Giants are truly one of the most aggravatingly up-and-down teams I have ever been a fan of.

Since the 2002 season, the Giants have averaged at least two overtime games per season. Averaged two. That might not seem like a large number, but when the games are normally three hours long, it really is. It means more of that John Mellencamp "This Is Our Country" song (do we have to hear it on every single break), more camera pans to players yelling at coaches and teammates on the sidelines, and, eventually, exalted jubilation or crushing defeat.

Exalted jubilation already happened this season with their comeback victory over the Philadelphia Eagles on Sept. 21. So Sunday it had to be crushing defeat. Had to be. They would not be the Giants if it wasn't.

The Giants are the team that when a player breaks off a big run or makes an enormous catch, fans must hold their breath and look for penalty flags that will bring the play back because of a holding penalty or personal foul - there are always flags.

This season is a perfect example: they win five in a row, improve to 6-2, and look poised to become the team to beat in the NFC with a showdown with the one-loss Chicago Bears in their home stadium on Sunday Night Football. But injuries promptly decimate the team and the Bears embarrass them. Two weeks later, they are one loss away from losing four in a row.

This is something that has been going on for a long time though. In my lifetime alone the Giants have gone from Bill Parcells and Superbowls to Dave Brown and no playoffs to back to the Superbowl with Jim Fassel.

In the past five years, they have gone from a playoff meltdown in San Francisco (I can still see the final field goal being botched and the football being thrown toward the lone Giants lineman near the end zone - which in hindsight should have been called pass interference because the lineman was indeed eligible) to struggling mediocrity during '03 and '04 to back to another playoff disaster, this time against a former Giants defensive coordinator (John Fox) and the Carolina Panthers.

Will the trend ever end? Can't the Giants just form a team that wins fairly consistently, just for a couple of seasons in a row - like the Indianapolis Colts or the New England Patriots?

Probably not anytime soon, unfortunately, with the NFL's salary cap rules.

So in the meantime, if the past is anything like the future, I will brace myself for a huge swing forward for the Giants at home this weekend when they play the Dallas Cowboys. Following this past weekend's monumental collapse, they should be due for a classic huge effort and victory.

And if the Giants play anything like the Titans did against them in the fourth quarter Sunday, they should be able to win. But regardless of whether they win or lose, Giants fans know that it is sure to be a close game filled with emotional highs and lows. After all, the Giants are always that way.

SP-F football falls in Thanksgiving finale

By JOE SERZAN
SPORTS EDITOR

Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School's football team, took the field for one final game on Nov. 22 looking to end its roller coaster 2006 season on a good note. Unfortunately for the Raiders and their fans, the ride continued to be a bumpy one, as SP-F fell, 34-14, to Elizabeth in windy and rainy weather Wednesday night at Williams Field.

For the SP-F senior players, the loss may have ended their high school careers, but it did not end their love for the game and for their teammates.

"All of the seniors are really sad that it is over," said SP-F senior Greg Brand following the loss. "We've been playing together for nine years and we are like a family and we are all going to miss playing in the games and each other."

"This was our last game so we wanted to come out and play well. We gave it our best shot but Elizabeth is really good."

The 10-1 Minutemen certainly lived up to their number six ranking in the state, according to *The Star-Ledger*. And they definitely wanted to win Wednesday, playing most of their starters throughout the game with a state championship game on the horizon.

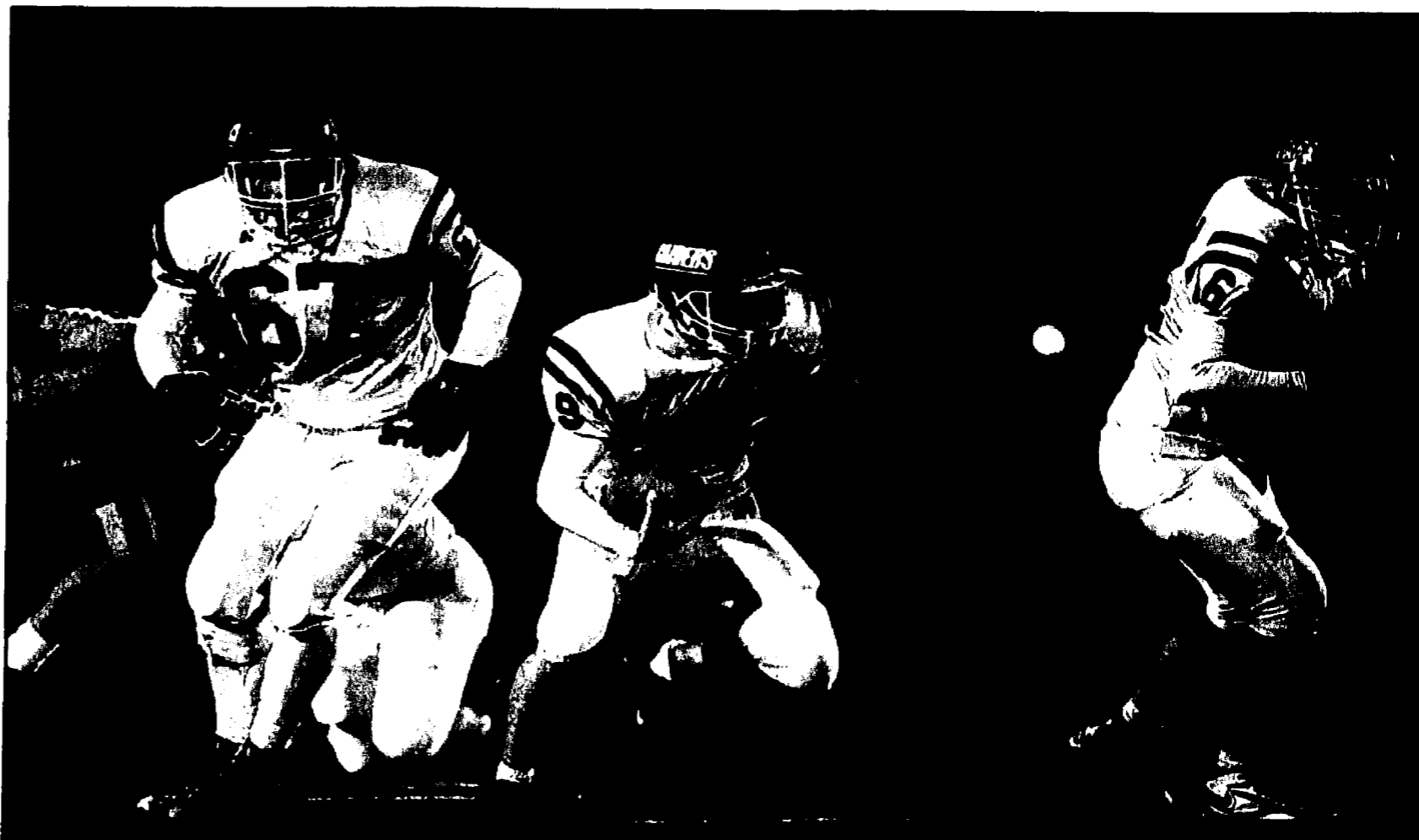
One of those starters, sophomore running back Raymond Graham, was a menace for the Raiders all Wednesday evening. Graham used his speed to run by the Raiders' defense in many key situations throughout the game.

On the Minutemen's first drive of the game, Graham ran for two first downs and set Elizabeth up on the eight yard line after a three-yard run. Senior quarterback Michael Eargle took care of the rest, option-running for a touchdown from eight yards out. After the score and subsequent extra point, the Minutemen led 7-0 with 7:22 remaining in the first quarter.

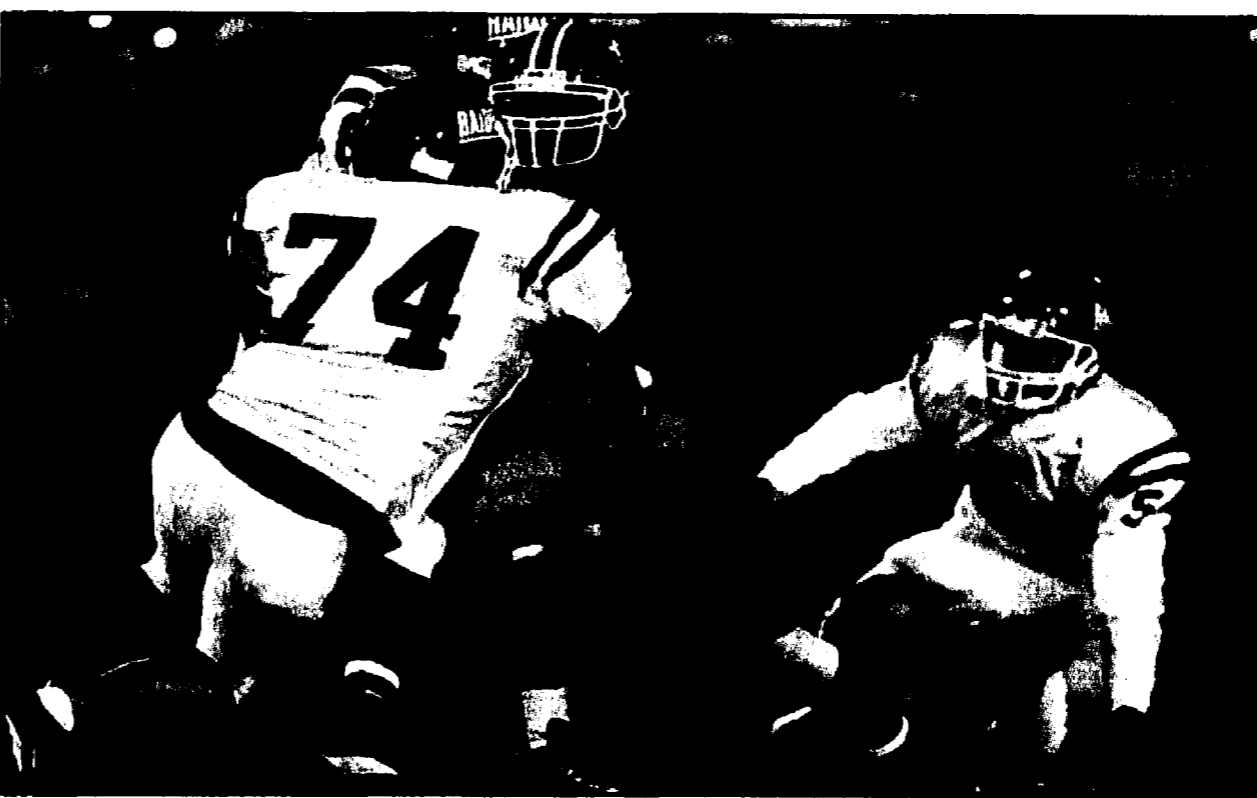
Graham put Elizabeth further out in front three minutes later, when he scampered into the end zone on an 11-yard run. After the extra point snap was botched and failed, Elizabeth led 13-0 with 4:22 remaining.

The lead would grow for the Minutemen on its next drive, as they again got another touchdown run from Graham at the beginning of the second quarter. After the third score, SP-F found itself in a 20-0 hole.

The Raiders were not going down without a fight, however, and they put together an eight play, 60-yard drive on their next possession



ALAN MAGLAQUE/MAGLAQUE.COM



Above: SP-F senior linemen Colin Campbell (67) and John Badala (64) look to block for junior quarterback Mike Chervenyak (9) during the Raiders' 34-14 loss to Elizabeth on Nov. 22. Left: Raider junior Kyle Mihansky (5) looks on as fellow junior Mike Alleman brings down an Elizabeth player. SP-F fell to 4-6 on the season following the defeat.

to cut into the Elizabeth lead.

The Raiders went to the ground virtually the entire drive, using senior running backs Brand and Tom Pennella to cut through the Elizabeth defense. Brand ran for 41 yards during the drive, including a 26-yard run off of a pitch from junior quarterback Mike Chervenyak. But Brand's most important run on the drive came when he drove into the end zone from one yard out to pull the Raiders to within two scores of the Minutemen. After the extra point by senior Kyle Rowbotham was good, SP-F trailed 20-7 with 6:26 remaining in the second quarter.

The SP-F defense held

Elizabeth off the scoreboard for the rest of the first half, using penetration from its linemen and effective tackling from its linebackers and secondary to halt the Elizabeth attack. At halftime, Elizabeth led 20-7.

Unfortunately for the Raiders and their fans, the defense could not hold the Minutemen in the second half, as Elizabeth eventually ran the lead to 34-7 with 6:19 remaining in the fourth quarter.

But SP-F continued to fight, showing glimpses of that early season success that had gained them four wins during the 2006 season.

The Raiders put together one last drive late in the

fourth quarter and became only the second team all season to score twice against the Minutemen. Chervenyak capped the scoring drive with a nine-yard touchdown pass to Rowbotham. After Rowbotham's extra point was good, SP-F had cut the lead for good, 34-14.

The Elizabeth game was also the last for seniors Rowbotham, Brand, Pennella, Mike Katz, Matt Huether, David Belford, Matt Wolff, Rob Seibek, James Sensor, Stephen Wenson, John Birnbaum, Colin Campbell, John Badala, Zach Silk, Pat McGuinness, Grant Darwin, Ryan Sharkey, John Stamler, and Jason Zelesnik.

"We have grown up play-

ing together," Brand said of his fellow classmates. "Football has been a connector for most of us. That's how most of us met. We are all best friends and we hang out all of the time."

The seniors' leadership this season has been important to the team's underclassmen.

"This year's seniors were great," said SP-F junior tight end Keith Baker. "Everyone did their part and they are all my friends and a great group of guys."

With the defeat, SP-F fell to 4-6 for the season, an improvement over last year's 3-7 record but a tough year to endure, considering a 4-1

(Continued on page C-2)

Wf Jaguars win championship



The Westfield girls U-12 Jaguars won the ICYSL soccer championship and finished their season undefeated (11-0). Pictured above are the members of the team; First Row: Lindsay Ripberger, Casey Gillespie, Betsy Crossland, Sarah Murphy. Second Row: Chandler Robertson, Lauren Oberlander. Third row: Elizabeth Griesmer, Christina Gulla, Aditi Jain, Kristen Cotter, Elizabeth Cusick, Molly Jennings, Lilly Sisto, Emily Hutchinson. Absent: Lauren Koenigsberg. Coaches: Steve Griesmer, John Ripberger, George Cusick, and Bob Oberlander. For more on the Jaguars, see SportsScene on Page C-5.

WHS football team finishes season 6-4

By JOE SERZAN
SPORTS EDITOR

Westfield High School's football team had put the past behind all season leading up to its 102nd Thanksgiving rivalry game with Plainfield. Coming off back-to-back 1-9 seasons, the Blue Devils, led by first year head coach Jim DeSarno and a talented and determined senior class, turned their fortunes around in 2006, winning five of their nine possible games during the year.

So it was only fitting that Blue Devils also put an end to a three-year losing streak against rival Plainfield last Saturday. Westfield defeated the Cardinals, 17-7, in a rescheduled Thanksgiving game at Hub Stine Field in Plainfield.

The Blue Devils trailed 7-3 at halftime but scored 14 unanswered points during the second half to gain the victory over the Cardinals (1-9).

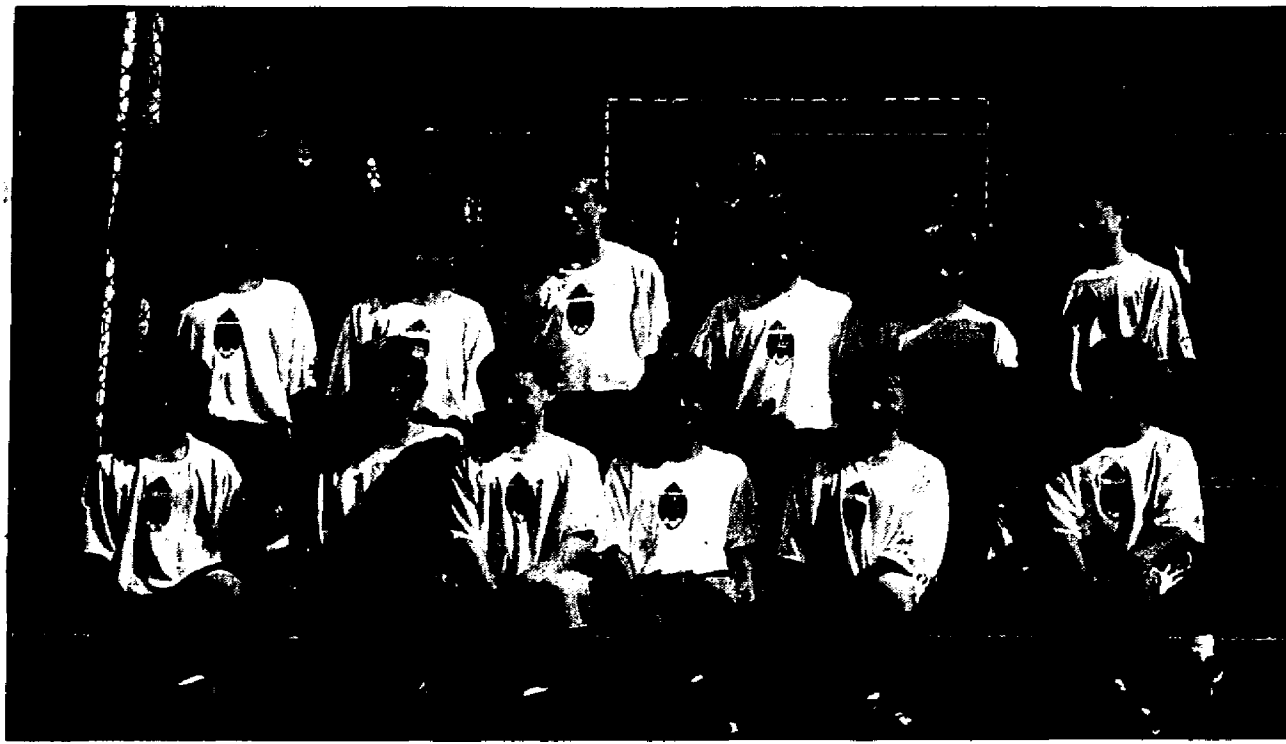
And, like they had done throughout the season, the Westfield seniors were right in the mix; leading the team to a second half comeback.

Senior running back George Cornell led the offense with 116 yards of rushing off of 19 carries and he scored the final touchdown of the season for the Blue Devils. Cornell's touchdown came off of a one-yard run with 47 seconds remaining in the game.

Senior quarterback Tom Bonard and senior wide receiver Sean Ferro connected for a 10-yard touchdown in the third quarter which eventually proved to be the game-winner. The winning touchdown came during the Blue Devils' second possession of the quarter.

Westfield had driven 33 yards during the drive and was in the Plainfield red zone. After getting stuffed on its first three

(Continued on page C-2)



The SP-FSA U-9 Broncos boys soccer team poses for a team photograph. The Broncos, playing in their first travel soccer league, finished the fall season with a 14-1-1 overall record.

Broncos enjoy successful season

The SP-FSA U-9 Broncos boys travel soccer team recently completed its fall 2006 season. The Broncos, playing in their first travel soccer league this past fall, competed in the Mid New Jersey Youth Soccer Association.

The team finished with an overall record of 14-1-1. The

Broncos were 8-1-1 in the MNJYSA regular season, 4-0 in the Bridgewater Tournament, and 2-0 in the Brunswick Spookarama Tournament. The Broncos return to action in April during the spring 2007 MNJYSA season.

The U-9 Broncos players, listed alphabetically, are:

Noah Bernstein, Matthew Heath, Kyle Kelly, Jake Longo, Brian McManus, Connor McSherry, Sean Meisch, Tyler O'Brien, Ari Rozenzweig, Matthew Scariati, Stav Shadmi, and James Tenzer. The team is coached by Brian Kelly and David Bernstein. The team manager is Denise McManus.

WHS football team finishes 6-4

(Continued from page C-1) downs, Bonard escaped the rush and found Ferro wide open for the touchdown on fourth down. After the extra point by Bonard was also good, Westfield led 10-7.

The Blue Devils' defense would make the lead hold, keeping Plainfield's speedy offense off of the scoreboard for the entire second half.

The Westfield special teams also had a hand in gaining the victory, as Plainfield's potential game-tying field goal try during the third quarter was botched thanks to pressure from senior linebacker Will Harbaugh. Westfield's Jack

Meagher recovered the subsequent fumble and ran it out to the Blue Devils' 31 yard line. Cornell's touchdown run minutes later during the fourth quarter iced the game.

The win gave Westfield its sixth win of the season, tripling the win totals of the previous two seasons combined. The football year was filled with great memories for the Blue Devils, defeating three rivals (Cranford, SP-F, and Plainfield) all in the same season.

The Plainfield win was the final one for seniors Meagher, Ferro, Bonard, Cornell, JT Sheehan, Santo Nardi, Joe

Schurig, Will Harbaugh, CJ Patella, Peter Antonelli, Ryan Yarusi, Tyrell Simmons, Michael Henry, Joe Simone, Mark Boyd, Dan Johnson, Matt Ince, Davon Wise, and Sam Crawford.

"This season has been real special for the seniors," DeSarno said. "To come back is a real tribute to those guys and to how hard they've worked to get ready for their senior year."

"Coming off those two seasons, you get a new head coach ... and they didn't have to play for me. They could have just bagged it, but they worked real hard and they played with a lot of passion. And it showed."

Raider girls tennis finishes strong

By DAVID LAZARUS
CORRESPONDENT

Second year Scotch Plains-Fanwood tennis head coach Sandra Miller does not consider herself any kind of clairvoyant, but her preseason prediction of a slow start with a strong finish perfectly handicapped her team's season.

The Raiders bounced back from a 1-4 start to finish with a 10-7 mark as many of their young and inexperienced players continued to improve as the season transpired.

Seniors Kiara Thomas and Jaclyn Jaci were the only players to enter the season with significant varsity experience and, although broken up from playing doubles, they each had competitive seasons on second and third singles, respectively.

Thomas finished 4-7 and Lopez was 6-7, but that does not tell the whole story of both of their seasons. As the only two seniors on the team, Miller appreciated all the little extra attributes the pair brought to the team.

"They showed our team how to find food and eat before every match," Miller said. "They attended almost all of our matches and Jaci ordered the best tennis uniform the Scotch Plains-Fanwood girls tennis team has ever worn."

"Kiara and Jaci also made sure that the end of the sea-

son tradition of toilet papering my house was accomplished, despite many projects, papers and assorted school work. They all left their signatures and many thank yous for a great tennis season on my driveway with chalk."

Lopez said, "Playing tennis here the last four years was very enjoyable. I think that all our talented young players will make this team very tough the next few years."

The Raiders ended the season with a night victory over Kearny under the lights at Kramer Manor tennis courts on Oct. 30. Six of their seven losses were to teams that spent some or all of the season among the state's top twenty, including two to arch rival Westfield.

"We started the season with some very tough matches," Miller said. "For some reason the start of the season was not smooth. However, by our fifth match we were beginning to feel like a team and we were winning most of our late season matches."

An influx of new players caused Miller to repeatedly change her lineup. Junior Kathleen Yan emerged from playing few matches as a sophomore to rising to first singles and finishing with a 3-8 record.

"She took her lumps this year," Miller said. "Moving up to first singles isn't easy, even if you played second

singles a year ago but Kathy learned many things this year that should help her next season."

Sophomore Sahrula Kubie and freshman Alex Szczuka were the regular duo at first doubles and posted a 5-5 record, while Juniors Courtney Bifani and Rachel Kreyer at second doubles compiled a 6-3 record.

"I hope to see Courtney and Rachel improve over the next months and come to varsity tennis with another winning attitude," Miller said.

In a late season match at Cranford, Szczuka showed her potential with a 6-1, 6-1 victory at third singles and Miller expects her and Kubie to take over the second and third singles slots next season.

Junior Maya Robinson, sophomore Emily Katz, and freshman Neha Pannuri also filled in successfully wherever needed. Robinson was undefeated in four singles matches and Katz and Pannuri won all three of their singles matches.

While enthusiastic about the future, Miller realizes that her players must understand that proficiency at high school tennis is a full-year endeavor.

"I have suggested that those who are serious about improving their tennis game should play in USTA tournaments through out the year," Miller said.

Wf, SP-F girls XC trade streaks

By DAVID LAZARUS
CORRESPONDENT

It was a topsy turvy season for the two top local girls cross country teams as Westfield High School first gained the upper hand, only to be surpassed by Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School and its 1-2 punch of sophomore Britney Veeck and junior Cassy Valdes, but as the season ended, it was the Blue Devils and their star senior Nicole DiBenedetto that appeared to be peaking.

The first key meeting was in a dual meet when the Blue Devils withstood a powerful winning performance from Veeck to pack seven runners in the first ten and edge the Raiders 27-32 on Sept. 26 at Tamaques Park. It would be the only loss for the Raiders who fin-

ished 8-1, while Westfield was 9-0.

The Raiders waited three weeks to get revenge and executed head coach Jeff Koegel's plan of breaking up the tight Westfield pack at the Watchung Conference Championships. Just like the dual meet, the Raiders took the top two places and Westfield girls were third and fourth. But unlike the previous contest when Westfield was fifth, seventh, and eighth, the Raiders' third, fourth, and fifth runners all finished before Westfield's last two runners. Overall, the schools took eight of the top ten places with Scotch Plains on top 25-38.

"This counts for more than the dual meet. We knew what we had to that day and came through."

Koegel said. "Scotch Plains did a great job and they deserved that championship," said Westfield head coach Thom Hornish.

The following week at the Union County Championships, the Raiders finished third and the Blue Devils were fifth. The big news that day was Valdes, a junior, who had run second to Veeck all season, exploded past her team mate and set a school record with a 19:35 to finish third. Veeck finished fourth in 19:46.

The other big story that day was DiBenedetto, who broke twenty minutes for the first time with a 19:58 performance for fifth. The time smashed her previous best by over a minute.

At the Group 4 Section 2 meet the following week, the Blue Devils rode another fabulous performance by DiBenedetto to just miss defeating Bridgewater Raritan, losing 67-69.

DiBenedetto continued her late season surge with another personal best 19:46.87 for third and senior Kim Legones was sixth in 20:28.36, also a personal best. It was also the first time that DiBenedetto had run the fastest time of any local runner.

The Raiders also qualified for the states, finishing fourth, led by Veeck and Valdes in 11th and 12th, respectively, but only had four finishers in the state meet the following week and did not have a team score.

Westfield finished all seven of its runners in the final state meet and wound up 15th in Group 4. After using twelve different runners in an injury filled season, the Blue Devils had their healthiest squad of the season at the time of year many other teams are breaking down.

But perhaps the best number in a sport that lives off them was the Westfield team which finished the season with 68 girls: 11 freshmen, 21 sophomores, 16 juniors, and 20 seniors.

SP-F football

(Continued from page C-1) start. And while the team's hard work has not yielded winning results lately, the team has always brought it this season, and that has pleased SP-F head coach Steve Ciccotelli.

"Our effort is always there," Ciccotelli said. "This group plays really hard. They are great kids ... they show up, they are coachable, and they are fun to be around and that is all you can ask for."

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Real Estate

Conditions remain favorable for buyers

NAR head expects 'balancing' to begin in early spring

Conditions for home buyers improved during the third quarter as existing single-family home prices in many metropolitan areas experienced corrections, and most states saw sales activity below a year ago which helped to build housing inventories, according to the latest quarterly surveys by the National Association of Realtors (NAR).

Total state existing-home sales, including single-family and condo, were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 6.27 million units in the third quarter, down 12.7 percent from a 7.18 million-unit pace in the third quarter of 2005. Even with the overall decline, 10 states showed increases in sales activity from a year ago, according to the NAR.

Third-quarter metro area single-family home prices, examining changes in 148 metropolitan statistical areas, show 102 areas had price gains — including 21 metros with double-digit annual increases — and 45 areas experienced price declines; one was unchanged.

David Lereah, NAR's chief economist, said market conditions are nearly the opposite of a year ago. "Last year we had a record sales market and historically tight supplies of homes with buyers bidding over the asking price," Lereah said. "With the market in full transition, buyers now have choices and sellers are more willing to negotiate. Under these circumstances it's no surprise that overall home prices are slightly below a year ago. We expect this trend to continue in the months ahead, but we'll see modest appreciation in most of the country in 2007."

The national median existing single-family home price was \$224,900 in the third quarter, down 1.2 percent from a year earlier when the median price was \$227,600. The median is a typical market price where half of the homes sold for more and half sold for less.

"With the market in full transition, buyers now have choices and sellers are more willing to negotiate. Under these circumstances it's no surprise that overall home prices are slightly below a year ago."

— David Lereah
NAR economist

NAR President Pat Vredevogd Combs said the market transition is good news for home buyers. "With the supply of homes at the highest level in over a decade and historically low mortgage interest rates, it's become a great time to buy a home," said Combs. "This window of opportunity will continue into the new year, but inventories are starting to decline and sellers will be less willing to negotiate when conditions begin to balance in most areas around early spring."

According to Freddie Mac, the national average commitment rate on a 30-year conventional fixed-rate mortgage was 6.56 percent in the third quarter, down from 6.60

percent in the second quarter; the rate was 5.76 percent in the third quarter of 2005. Last week, Freddie Mac reported the 30-year fixed rate was down to 6.24 percent.

The largest single-family home price increase was in the Salem, Ore., area, where the third quarter price of \$228,000 was 24.7 percent higher than a year ago. Next was Elmira, N.Y., at \$93,600, up 21.4 percent from the third quarter of 2005. The Salt Lake City area, with a third quarter median price of \$216,300, increased 19.2 percent in the last year.

Median third-quarter metro area single-family prices ranged from a very affordable \$86,000 in both Decatur, Ill., and the Youngstown-Warren-Boardman area of Ohio and Pennsylvania, to nearly nine times that amount in the San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont area, where the median price was \$749,400. The second most expensive area was the San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara area of California, at \$747,400, followed by the Anaheim-Santa Ana-Irvine area (Orange Co., Calif.), at \$705,000.

The Northeast saw an existing-home sales pace of 1.05 million units in the third quarter, which was 12.5 percent below a year ago. The median Northeastern resale single-family home price was \$276,000 in the third quarter, which is 4.8 percent below the same period in 2005.

After Elmira, N.Y., the strongest price increase in the Northeast was in Atlantic City, with a median price of \$277,200, up 12 percent from the third quarter of last year, followed by Binghamton, N.Y., with a median price of \$107,400, up 10 percent.



Donations to the toy drive at Coldwell Banker can help make sure every family has presents under the tree this year.

Coldwell Banker collects toys for Family & Children's Services

WESTFIELD — Every December for the past 70 years or so, Family and Children's Services has collected and distributed new toys, gifts and food for hundreds of needy children throughout Union County.

Today, the agency serves up to 2,000 individuals a year, half of whom are children. The great majority of these youths are living in foster homes or city shelters, have been neglected or abused, or live in families with total incomes at or below the federal poverty line.

In keeping with the spirit of the holiday season, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage's Westfield office is working to collect new toys and books to be distributed to those in need. "We want every child to experience happiness especially during the holidays," said Michael Scott, manager of the Westfield office.

All gifts collected at the Westfield

office of Coldwell Banker will be distributed to the Family and Children's Counseling and Testing Center of Elizabeth. The center is a private, non-profit social service agency.

Kathy Shea and Faith Maricic are serving as co-chairwomen for the Westfield office of Coldwell Banker and ask that all types of new, unwrapped toys (puzzles, games, coloring books, stuffed animals, etc.) be brought to Coldwell Banker at 209 Central Ave.

Individuals who are unable to come in with their toys may call (908) 233-5555 to arrange for them to be picked up. The final date for toy collection is Dec. 15.

The members of Coldwell Banker and Family and Children's Services thank everyone in the community for past participation and hope for continuing support and generosity this year, which is greatly appreciated.

Murphy is named sales associate of the month

Honor is her fifth of 2006

WESTFIELD — Prudential New Jersey Properties' Westfield office has named Ellen Murphy its Sales Associate of the Month for September. This is the fifth time in 2006 she has received the honor.

"Ellen is an invaluable member of our team because of her deep commitment to exceeding her clients' expectations," said Marge Cuccaro, manager of the Prudential New Jersey Properties Westfield office. "She has remarkable attention to detail and a tremendous knowledge of her local market. Ellen's record of success speaks for itself."

Specializing in new and re-sale residential real estate, Murphy is a member of the National, New Jersey, and Greater Union County Associations of Realtors, as well as the Garden State and



ELLEN MURPHY

Middlesex Multiple Listing Services. In 2005, Murphy earned the Sales Associate of the Month award five times and achieved the Seniors Real Estate Specialist (SRES) designation.

She was also awarded Bronze Level membership in the New Jersey Association of Realtors' 2005 Circle of Excellence Sales Club and was inducted into Prudential Real Estate's 2005 Leading Edge Society.

A lifetime Union County resident, Murphy's market area includes the residential neighborhoods of Westfield, Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Mountainside, Cranford and surrounding communities. Before entering the real estate field, she spent 20 years in retail and education sales.

Murphy can be reached at the Westfield office, 215 North Avenue West, at (908) 232-5664, ext. 102.

Proper home inspection can smooth negotiations

There's no denying the tide is turning in the real estate market; multiple offers and double-digit appreciation are a thing of the past in most markets throughout North America. However, that doesn't mean home prices are tumbling or that sellers will be willing to accommodate a buyer's every demand.

Kathleen Kuhn, president and CEO of HouseMaster, one of the largest national home inspection firms, says, "When HouseMaster opened its doors nearly 30 years ago, interest rates soared to 17 percent and in some areas home sales dropped 50 percent. While there's little chance the housing market will mimic those dramatic statistics, today's buyers are in a better position to negotiate conditions found during their home inspection if they do it right."

Kuhn suggests keeping the following tips in mind when negotiating the price of a home:

1. **Choose your inspector carefully.** Today's sellers are slowly acknowledging their home may be worth less today than it was six months ago. This does not make for a happy, flexible or open-minded seller. While a buyer may think they have the upper hand, it will be easier to negotiate defects found if a qualified home inspector is hired. Verify the training the inspector has had, whether or not they have access to ongoing education, any additional certifications they may carry and if they have all the necessary local licenses. Ask to see a sample copy of their report. A poorly written or unprofessionally prepared report will make it harder for the seller to take the inspection report seriously.

2. **Go on the inspection.** A good home inspector will encourage the buyer to go along on the inspection. Being there will make the written report much more meaningful and a qualified inspector will demonstrate how to operate many of the systems of the home, show the buyer where important shut-off valves are, and point out any areas obstructed by furnishings or storage. It will also make it easier to verify that repairs have been made and check any areas that were obstructed at the time of the home inspection during a final walk-through (when the

home is vacant).

3. **Focus on the major elements.** Every home has minor or cosmetic flaws. Peeling wallpaper or cracked sidewalks are not the things an inspector is paid to report on, although he may document them. A general rule of thumb is that anything that would cost less than \$500 to fix should be considered normal maintenance. Repairs that exceed that amount are more likely to be negotiable.

4. **Be realistic.** Buyers often try and negotiate \$2 for every \$1 of actual repair expense. Nothing will sour a deal faster than trying to take advantage of a situation during negotiations. Get several estimates for needed repairs so that negotiations are realistic and financial requests can be substantiated.

5. **Consider a home warranty.** If many of the major systems in the home are working but are older, ask about a home warranty. The seller may even consider paying for this coverage, which will reduce the risks of expensive replacement costs in the first year. Most warranty programs are renewable so a buyer can opt to continue the coverage after the warranty period expires.

"A professional inspection report and estimates for repairs arm a buyer with the right documentation to engage in realistic negotiations," concludes Kuhn. "Hiring a qualified, professional home inspector with solid credentials and a well-written report will go a long way in making negotiations go smoothly."

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SPORTSCENE

Wf Jaguars win ICYSL Championship

The Westfield Jaguars won the U-12 girls Intercounty Youth Soccer League Championship on Saturday with a convincing 4-0 victory over the New Providence Eagles at Finalsfest in Rahway. The Jaguars completed their undefeated and untied season 11-0-0 behind the strength of their goalkeepers Aditi Jain and Kristen Cotter. Jain and Cotter combined for six straight shutouts to end the regular season and playoffs.

The defense, which held opponents to only four goals all season, was led by Emily Hutchinson, Allison Harth, Sarah Murphy, and Lauren Koenigsberg. They all did a tremendous job in keeping the ball out of their zone.

The midfielders were led by Elizabeth Cusick, Elizabeth Griesmer, Molly Jennings, Betsy Crossland and Lilly Sisto. Throughout the season, this group consistently pressured the ball and pushed the ball in transition to the offense. When available, several midfielders converted goals during the season.

The offense, led by Lauren Oberlander, Casey Gillespie, Christina Gulia, Chandler Robertson and Lindsay Ripperger, scored 55 goals in 11 games, averaging five goals per game. The offense was explosive and benefited from brilliant assist passes each game.

Another highlight of the season was the acknowledgement of Jain as the team's representative of this year's Sportsmanship Award. Jain led the team in displaying good sportsmanship in every game and practice.

Ryan Daniel breaks Wf YMCA swim records

The Westfield Area Y is happy to announce that Ryan Daniel, 8, broke three long-standing Westfield Area Y swim records for ages 8 and

under at the Fall Festival at Princeton University on Oct. 28.

Daniel swam 1:13:89 in the 100 freestyle, breaking a record that was set in 1993 by R. Larson. Daniel also broke the second oldest record, the 100 breaststroke, set by Sam Blum in 1997. Daniel shattered the record by more than six seconds. The new breaststroke record is now 1:35:30.

Ryan also set the record for the individual medley, erasing Matt Meserole's 2001 individual medley mark with a new record time of 1:24:08.

For more information on the Westfield Area Y's Devilfish Swim Team, call Paul Casazza at (908) 233-2700 x253.

Wf YMCA B Devilfish win again

The Westfield Area Y's Devilfish boys B swim team defeated the West Morris YMCA, 106-93, on Saturday, Nov. 18.

In the 100 IM, Westfield swept 1-2-3 with Dan Myers, Nicandro Donadio and Conner Moore, respectively, for 11-12 age group. Alec Penn, 10U for 100IM, placed second while Mike Rizzo (ages 13-14) and Brian Carr (ages 15-18) both placed second in their heats for 200IM.

Westfield racked up some points in the freestyle event by taking first, second and third in the 9-10 division with Brandon Luthold, Griffin Whitmer and Jordan Livolsi. Jack Naughton took second for the 8 and under group; Robert Locketell beat all for first for the 11-12 age group while Mike Pesin won his heat for 13-14 age group and Sean Clark placed second. Justin Lo capped the event by taking first for the 15-18-year-olds.

Another sweep for the breaststroke event happened for the 13-14-year-olds with Mike Rizzo placing first, Tim York second and Chris Morrissey placing third. Andre Benz, Jack Naughton and Brian Carr also placed sec-

ond in their respective races for breaststroke.

Robert Locketell came in first for the backstroke event for 11-12 age group while Mike Pesin slaughtered the competition in the 13-14-year-old group. Griffin Whitmer, Dan Myers, Sean Clark and Justin Lo clocked in for second places in their backstroke events.

The boys looked really strong in the butterfly event taking first with Alex Penn for the 9-10 age group, Nicandro Donadio for the 11-12 age group and Yixiao Wang for the 13-14 age group. James Kazazis placed second for the 15-18-year-olds.

The final freestyle relays caused the most deafening cheering for both sides as the races were close with each team winning half the races. The most exciting race was turned in by the 15-18-year-old boys with Justin Lo breaking his freestyle record.

Wf YMCA A falls to Wyckoff

The Westfield Area Y boys A swim team lost against the Wyckoff Y on Saturday, Nov. 18.

After 28 events, the outcome of the meet was still yet to be determined. The meet would be decided by the final event - the free relay (ages 15-18). When the relay race was over, the Westfield team had lost the event and the meet by a fraction of a second. The final score was in Wyckoff's favor, 109-99.

In the individual medley, Matt Meserole (ages 13-14) captured first while Aidan Donadio (ages 9-10), Anthony Gurrieri (ages 11-12), and Matt Morgan (ages 15-18) placed second. Luke McGrory (ages 9-10) and Max Shin (ages 11-12) took third.

In freestyle, Ryan Daniel (8 and under), Mike Oster (ages 13-14), and Luke Baran (ages 15-18) swam to victory. Stephen Husch (ages 9-10), and Jonathan Drori (ages 11-12) finished second; Griff



Westfield YMCA swimmers Matt Meserole (left) and Ryan Daniel (right) pose for a picture. Daniel recently broke Meserole's 2001 IM mark.

Morgan (8 and under), Matt Daniel (ages 11-12) and Andrew Corderio (ages 13-14) took third.

In breaststroke, Aidan Donadio, Larry Zhang (ages 13-14), and Matt Morgan won their races. Adding to Westfield's point total was Jonathan Drori's second place finish as well as Stephen Husch and Brian Pesin's (ages 15-18) third place finishes. The meet was tied at 54 points after the breaststroke.

In backstroke, Colin Daniel (8 and under) and Matt Meserole touched first. Second place finishes were garnered by Luke McGrory, Kevin Oster (ages 11-12) and Matt Miller (ages 15-18). Griff Morgan and Ryan Hobson (ages 11-12) took third.

In butterfly, Colin Daniel, Jake Lessner (ages 9-10), and Matt Daniel won their events. Larry Zhang placed second, while Brendan Haley (ages 11-12) and Mike Oster had third

place showings. After the 8 and under relay team captured victory, Westfield Area Y needed to win three of the four remaining relays. The 9-10 boys won their race but the 11-12 boys were touched out in a very competitive race. The 13-14 boys relay team extended its undefeated streak. One relay race remained - the winner of the race would win the meet. It was so close - a fraction of a second.

Advertisement for Home Improvement featuring logos for Independent Press, Suburban News, and Cranford Chronicle Record Press. It includes contact information for Rebecca (908-894-1082) and a deadline of noon on Wednesday prior to publication.

A grid of 40 small advertisements for various home improvement services including painting, plumbing, roofing, pest control, and tree removal. Each ad includes a company name, services offered, and contact information.

PLACE YOUR AD 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK AT: 800.472.0119

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Auto Classification 1385 | Employment Classification 201 | Merchandise Classification 550 | Classified in-column deadline: Friday at 5 p.m.

Announcements 110

Disclaimer: The Suburban News, Cranford Chronicle & The Record Press reserves the right to edit, reclassify or reject any classified advertisement...

THE ONE PROPHECIED by the Major World Religions will soon be seen and heard by everyone!

Lost & Found 125

MISSING CAT: Lost on South Union Avenue. Mostly black with white markings. Mint green eyes. Friendly, but probably scared.

Personals 140

PSYCHIC & TAROT: Know your future? If you are lost or in the dark about tomorrow, give answers today.

Education 201

CRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION SEEKS SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS (District-wide).

NANNY: Every other weekend \$500. Must have degree in education. 908-317-3100.

Child Care 202

CHILD CARE: The YMCA Learning Circle seeks FT teacher for infants and toddlers. M-F, 8:30-11:30.

Child Care 202

MOTHER'S HELPER: Needed for 2 year old toddler & infant, to assist stay at home mom weekday mornings.

Drivers 230

DELIVERY VAN DRIVER: F/T Roselle Park location. Clean Driving record. Will train.

DRIVERS: Combo CDL Driving/Dock Jobs Available. Central Transport/JVA have local P&D and combo road/dock positions out of South Plainfield.

General Help 240

ANNOUNCEMENT: 2006 POSTAL JOBS! \$14,80-\$59.00 hour. PLUS Full Federal Benefits. NOW HIRING!

General Help 240

ASSEMBLE MAGNETS & CRAFTS FROM HOME! Year-round Work! Excellent Pay!

Career Opportunities

Arthur Murray Dance Studio needs Dance teachers. NO experience necessary!

CHILD CARE: Work at home caring for one or more children. Somerset or Northern Middlesex County.

General Help 240

CRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION SEEKS A 12 MONTH SECRETARY to work in the Facilities Management Office at Lincoln School.

General Help 240

DATA ENTRY: FT in Clark, Alpha & numerics a must. Data entry experience required.

General Help 240

MOVIE EXTRAS: Make up to \$250/day All looks and ages 1-800-741-7341

EXECUTIVE ASST/MGR: Landscape constr. and tree serv. firm in Watchung. Seeks min 5yrs. of exp.

General Help 240

SECRETARY: Temporary position avail. in chiropractic office. Secretary on maternity leave.

General Help 240

TEACHERS: The Learning Circle of the Summit Area YMCA seeks the following: After School Staff.

General Help 240

RECEPTIONIST: For busy doctors office. Phone work primarily. Please fax resume to: 908-684-4044

RN/LPN: Thursday evening nurse needed for physician's office in Westfield.

General Help 240

SECRET SHOPPERS NEEDED: For Store Evaluations. Get paid to shop. Local Stores, Restaurants & Theaters.

Part-Time Help 255

PT FILE CLERK: For busy doctors office. Please fax resume to: 908-684-4044

General Help 240

RECEPTIONIST: For busy doctors office. Phone work primarily. Please fax resume to: 908-684-4044

Part-Time Help 255: Part-Time Counter Help for retail bakery in Mountainside, NJ.

General Help 240

OFFICE ASST: PT days, 2025 hours weekly. Phones, A/P, cust serv, data entry.

Sales Help 265

Sales Counselor: Multiple locations in NJ. Exciting Sales Opportunity in fast growing fitness & wellness company!

General Help 240

TAX PRO: For Westfield CPA, very flex hours. PT/FT. cpa@helpcomcast.net

REBATES.COM: Earn One THOUSAND DOLLARS each day with tested, proven, easily duplicatable 'Three Step Success System'.

General Help 240

REAL ESTATE SALES: Active office seeks licensed full time salesperson. Extensive agent support programs.

Situations Wanted 280

CAREGIVER: Live-in/Live-out for elderly. Exp. w/exc. refs & English speaking.

General Help 240

RECEPTIONIST: For busy doctors office. Phone work primarily. Please fax resume to: 908-684-4044

EMPLOYMENT TRADER 275: CARPENTER: Experienced in remodeling. Valid driver's license. Call John @ 908-208-2222

Situations Wanted 280

TOOL MAKER MACHINIST MECHANIC: Ft. Mon-Fri, 1 shift. Exp. machinist with strong mechanical aptitude.

Situations Wanted 280

CAREGIVER: Live-in/Live-out for elderly. Exp. w/exc. refs & English speaking.

General Help 240

RECEPTIONIST: For busy doctors office. Phone work primarily. Please fax resume to: 908-684-4044

EMPLOYMENT TRADER 275: CARPENTER: Experienced in remodeling. Valid driver's license. Call John @ 908-208-2222

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Automotive/Classified

Ford unveils new fuel cell-powered Explorer

Ford Motor Company set a new standard in the hydrogen fuel cell race Monday at the 2006 Los Angeles Auto Show, where it unveiled an all-new fuel cell-powered Explorer that can travel 350 miles on a single fill-up, more than any fuel cell vehicle on the road.

The six-passenger Explorer is one of several vehicles with green technology that Ford presented at the show, including the new 2008 Ford Escape Hybrid, the PZEV emissions-compliant Ford Fusion and Ford Focus and the 2008 Ford F-Series Super Duty with Ford Clean Diesel Technology.

The fuel cell Explorer prototype is part of a series of vehicles partially funded by a contract with the United States Department of Energy. The goal of the Technology Demonstration Vehicle program is to find a pathway for a fuel alternative to petroleum that has less environmental impact than current powertrain technology.

"We believe hydrogen may become a viable motor fuel in the long-term," said Gerhard Schmidt, the company's vice president of research and advanced engineering. "With these technology demonstration vehicles, Ford continues to lead the way in the development of hydrogen technology."

Research into hydrogen, including the hydrogen fuel-cell-powered Explorer, is part of Ford's overall effort to address the challenges of climate change and energy independence. Ford is moving ahead with a range of technology solutions simultaneously, including vehicles such as the Ford Escape Hybrid and Mercury Mariner Hybrid, hydrogen fuel cells, hydrogen internal combustion engines, ethanol, clean diesel and refinements to gasoline fueled engines and advanced transmissions. Some of the technology, such as that seen in Ford's lineup of hybrid vehicles, represents near-term approaches. Other technology, including hydrogen cell, must be viewed as a long-term option, said the company.

While the fuel cell-powered Explorer comes equipped with electric all-wheel-drive like the production model from which it is based, a center-mounted hydrogen storage tank now occupies the space typically used for the 6-speed automatic transmission found in production Explorer models. Locating the hydrogen storage tank in this area allowed engineers to design a larger tank and deliver the 350-mile driving



The new fuel cell-powered Ford Explorer can travel 350 miles on a single fill-up, thanks to engineering modifications that allow for a larger hydrogen storage tank.

"We believe hydrogen may become a viable motor fuel in the long term."
— Gerhard Schmidt
Ford Motor Company

range for a fuel cell vehicle. This design maintains Explorer's six-passenger seating arrangement and the cargo capacity found in the production Ford Explorer.

In less than one year, the fuel cell Explorer has accumulated more than 17,000 miles, including a world-record drive of 1,556 miles in a single 24-hour period, the most of any fuel cell vehicle to date. The record was set by Ford engineers at the new Dearborn Development Center test facility in Dearborn, Mich.

In January, at the 2007 North American International Auto Show, Ford will unveil the next vehicle in this series of demonstration vehicles.

Ford first began working on hydrogen

technology in the early 1990s. The company's first hydrogen fuel cell vehicle, released in 2001, was based on a lightweight aluminum sedan body, which also was used in the development of the company's first hydrogen-powered internal combustion engine.

The company currently has a fleet of 30 hydrogen-powered Focus fuel cell vehicles on the road as part of a worldwide, seven-city program to conduct real-world testing of fuel cell technology. The fleet has accumulated more than 300,000 miles since its inception. With this fleet on the ground, information that can be integrated into future fuel cell vehicle propulsion systems is being generated in different environmental conditions.

Having the fleet outside the confines of Ford Motor Company also has allowed the team to gain feedback on servicing vehicles in the field. As a hydrogen infrastructure is developed and implemented for the fleet at each location, lessons learned are being generated to insure that the customer and hydrogen fueling interface is customer-friendly.

AAA offers holiday parking lot survival tips

As area residents cope with the busiest shopping time of the year, AAA offers tips to help mall-bound shoppers avoid parking lot fender benders and possible injuries.

"People know to be concerned about safety on roadways, but they forget to be on alert in parking lots," said Pam Fischer, the Club's vice president of public affairs. "Crashes happen frequently in parking lots and have the potential to be dangerous, particularly for pedestrians."

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that 20 percent of all collisions resulting in damage claims occur in parking lots. According to an AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety study, one in every 25 incidents of "road rage" or aggressive driving takes place in a parking lot. On a per mile basis, you'll probably face more conflicts in a parking lot than anywhere else.

AAA offers the following tips to help motorists navigate parking lots and make better, safer decisions to protect their cars and themselves.

Head for the side door. At the mall everyone wants to park near the stores, especially near the main entrance. But most malls have back or secondary entrances with less traffic and more convenient spaces.

Learn to play the outfield. Outlying areas have more spaces, lighter traffic and a lower collision risk. Be aware, however, that some outlying spaces are a foot narrower than their more convenient counterparts, so using them could result in a dinged door or present difficulty pulling in and out.

Dock alongside an island. Besides helping control traffic flow, islands can provide protection to the front and sides of your car. For that reason, parking spots alongside an island are prime real estate.

Put yourself in the pole position. Park in front of a light pole. This can help protect your car from inattentive drivers who pull too far into their spot and hit your vehicle's front end. Light poles also offer better security and the parking lot section numbers are posted on them, making it easier to locate your car.

Seen and be seen. Use your headlights when scouring parking garages for spaces, even during the day. Headlights help other cars see you coming around turns, and research shows that, even in the daytime, keeping your headlights on reduces your crash risk.

Don't put yourself in a tight spot. Avoid parking between a pair of SUVs or minivans where it might be hard for you to back out of the space. If you can't see well enough to back out safely, get help from one of your passengers.

Look out for pedestrians, especially children. When behind the wheel, always look out for pedestrians, especially hard-to-see children. When walking to and from the car, hold young ones' hands to keep them safe from traffic.

Stay "on track" and alert on foot. Pedestrians should use walkways and crosswalks, if available. If you must walk in the traffic lanes, be alert for subtle cues, such as car exhaust or reverse lights, that signal a car is about to pull out.

Buckle up! Even a low-speed collision can result in injuries. Make sure everyone is strapped in a seat belt or appropriate child safety seat while the car is in motion, even if it's just a short trip to another part of the parking lot.

Real Estate Sales

Condos & Townhomes \$20

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Amendments Act and the New Jersey Civil Rights Law, which make it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, familial status, creed, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. To report discrimination, call the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at 1-800-669-9777. The HUD TTY telephone number for the hearing impaired is 212-708-1455.

NEW ON THE MARKET

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Homes For Sale

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GARWOOD 1BR, ht, hw & water incl. \$925/mo. Walk to train/bus. Studio \$850 + utls. **908-518-0605**

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Apartments 405

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GARWOOD 2" fir, 2 BR, LR, DR, incl. ht/hwtr. Near all. No Pets. No Smoking. \$1200/mo + 1.5 sec. Avail 12/1 **732-485-3083**

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N. PLAINFIELD 3 & 4 room apts \$745/\$845 + utls, pkg, NO PETS. **908-561-5085** after 6pm

LOOK!

ROSELLE 2nd flr, 3 BR., 2 fam, lg LR, EIK, BA, Gar, Hdwg flrs. New fir, \$1200 + utls. Avail 12/15. No Pets. Hank - days **973-560-4000 x 7016**, eves **908-276-7782**

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LOOK!

UNION Battle Hill Section 2" flr of two fam. 1 BR, EIK, ht incl, \$900 + 1.5 mo sec. **908-688-7144**

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WESTFIELD 3BR, 1.5BA, lr w/tp, DR, EIK, full bsmt, yd & pkg, 3 bks to train, \$2200 mo. Call **908-377-6761**

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- 2006 DODGE STRATUS SXT Stk#6N134042, VIN#6N134042, 15,340 mi, auto, 4cyl, p/s/b, a/c, airbags, p/w/l, cd, cloth, alloys, \$12,988
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- 2004 FORD F-150SC LARIAT Stk#4KB44168, VIN#4KB44168, 71,745 mi, auto, 8cyl, p/s/b, a/c, p/w/l, lthr, airbags, cd, slgd rear wndw, \$14,988
- 2004 CHRYSLER PACIFICA Stk#4R291197, VIN#4R291197, 22,447 mi, auto, 6cyl, p/s/b, a/c, p/w/l, am/fm/cd, nav sys, lthr, \$17,988
- 2005 FORD MUSTANG GT Stk#55190454, VIN#55190454, 27,452 mi, man 1 5spd, 8cyl, p/s/b, a/c, p/w/l, am/fm/cd, More! \$21,988
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- '01 DODGE DURANGO 4X4.....\$12,478 Stk #16092A, VIN #1F12271, 4DR, 6 cyl, auto, a/c, ABS, tilt, cruise, r defrost, alloys, 50,667 mi.
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