

METUCHEN-EDISON THE REVIEW and the HIGHLAND PARK HERALD

Friday, January 4, 2002

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50 cents



NICOLE DIMELLA/
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
South Plainfield High School
boys basketball team sweep
the championships in holiday
tournaments. See the story on
page B-1.

Briefs

Anger management

METUCHEN — Registration is underway for an anger management workshop sponsored by Women Helping Women. The workshop runs Tuesday nights for four weeks beginning Jan. 8. Fee is \$25 per session. Reduced rates are available. For more information and registration, phone (732) 549-6000.

Lifeguard training

METUCHEN — A lifeguard certification course is scheduled this weekend at the Metuchen-Edison YMCA on High Street. A preliminary test is 1 p.m. tomorrow. Those who pass the preliminary test can begin the course Sunday. Participants must be 15 or older. Cost is \$175 for members and \$185 for non-members. Registration is required; phone Marie at (732) 548-2044.

Hypnosis workshop

EDISON — Two hypnosis-related workshops are scheduled Wednesday at the Jewish Community Center of Middlesex County, 1775 Oak Tree Road.

A stop-smoking workshop runs 6:30-7:30 p.m. and a weight-loss workshop follows 7:30-8:30 p.m. Barry Wolfson of the Flemington-based Hypnosis Counseling Center is the presenter.

Fee for each workshop is \$40. For registration, phone (908) 996-3311.

Pallone holds forum

HIGHLAND PARK — Rep. Frank Pallone Jr. has scheduled two community forums for the public to discuss health-care and retirement issues. The forums are Monday night at the Highland Park Public Library, 31 N. Fifth Ave. Pallone plans to speak about what Congress is doing to strengthen patients' rights. He also wants to hear from people about Social Security and Medicare, as well as ideas for what Congress should do to improve hospitals.

For more information, phone (732) 249-8892.

Author to speak

HIGHLAND PARK — Judy Freeman, author and expert on children's literature, visits Irving School on South 11th Avenue this week.

She will conduct two assemblies Monday: the first 9-10 a.m. for preschool and kindergarten, the second 10:15-11:15 a.m. for Grades 1-2. Freeman will hold a workshop for Irving teachers after class that day. For more information, phone Cindy Williams at (732) 572-1205, Ext. 1307.

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Chamber honors those who served 9/11

By GARY GOVELITZ

STAFF WRITER

METUCHEN — Those who stepped forward and rushed to the aid of New York City on Sept. 11 will be honored as the Citizens of the Year by the Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce at the 49th Annual Installation Dinner Dance on Jan. 19.

The Citizen of the Year honor will be shared by the members of the Metuchen Volunteer Fire Departments, the Metuchen Police Department and P.B.A. Local #60 and the Metuchen Rescue Squad who came forward to volunteer their services after the

call for help following the World Trade Center attack on Sept. 11, 2001.

Metuchen sent eight firemen and a truck to the disaster. They were on Staten Island, the next crew to go in to fight the fire, when they were sent back. Two officers, Sgt. Robin Rentenberg and Ptl. Arthur Flaherty, were on the scene. Sgt. Rentenberg, who is an EMT, helped with triage while Flaherty helped search for victims in the rubble.

The entire First Aid Squad mobilized with 10 going with two rigs and the first response unit to Liberty State Park where triage was performed on the wounded coming in from the city and the rest remaining

on alert in town.

"The chamber, and the rest of the community, appreciate our volunteers coming together at a time of crisis," said Brian McGowan, past chamber president and member of the nominating committee.

The Organization of the Year is the John F. Kennedy Medical Center, which is managed by Solaris Health Care Systems. A constant contributor to the community, this year Solaris sponsored the Holiday Parade.

"We in Metuchen and in the surrounding area are very fortunate to have a hospital of the caliber of J.F.K. Medical Center," McGowan said. "We appreciate everything

they have done for us over the years."

Two former chamber presidents have been chosen for the chamber's Distinguished Service Award.

Marcia and Al Salton moved to Metuchen as newlyweds in 1956. Al has been a member of the Kiwanis and was president of the Metuchen Board of Health. Marcia has been on the Board of Education and with the League of Women Voters. She is also the host of "The Business of Business" for METV.

"Marcia and Al Salton have put in countless hours for the good of the chamber and for the Borough of Metuchen," said McGowan.

Officials sworn in

By GARY GOVELITZ

STAFF WRITER

EDISON — Two new councilmen joined Mayor George Spadaro and Councilman Anthony Massaro as the victors of November's general election took their place at the dais.

Robert Diehl and Parag Patel became the newest members of the council taking the places of William Stephens and Antonia Ricigliano both of whom were defeated in the June primary. Stephens had challenged Mayor Spadaro for the mayor's seat. After being denied, by a close vote, the regular party line on the ballot by the Democratic committee, Stephens ran against Mayor Spadaro in the primary. Ricigliano had joined with Stephens in his revolt and both were defeated in June.

In a low key campaign, Mayor Spadaro was elected for his third four-year term. Councilman Massaro is beginning his second four-year term and Diehl and Patel are beginning their first terms.

"I can't think of a better group of people to help lead our township," Mayor Spadaro said. "Edison's future is wonderful."

Patel is the first member of the Asian Indian community to be elected to the council.

"I am very proud and happy for my husband," said Sonal Patel. "We are very excited."

Councilman Massaro was unanimously elected to a second term as council president. Councilman Charles Tomaro was elected as vice president of the council. Councilman Tomaro has been on the council for seven



Robert Diehl takes his oath of office, administered by Mayor George Spadaro. With the newly sworn council member are his wife Ann, son Robert and daughter Diana.

years.

"Charlie and I started together as green as peas," said Councilwoman Joan Kapitan. "He has grown to do a wonderful job."

"This is what makes this a great council. We are not only colleagues but we are friends," said Massaro who then addressed the council and gathered guests.

"I am looking forward to a year

where, together, we can approach our job of doing the business of the people in a professional, efficient and courteous manner," Council President Massaro said.

In addressing the council, he singled out a number of goals for Edison's future including: open space, public safety, communications upgrade, length of service awards for volunteers, services

for senior citizens, parking around the Clara Barton section and traffic lights around town. He also addressed taxes, flood control, property maintenance and sewer infrastructure.

"The future is ours if we set aside our differences. We need to act as if we all live in one Edison. If we can do that, the possibilities are limitless."

Students sing for senior residents

John Marshall School kids entertain Edison Estates Nursing Home

By GARY GOVELITZ

STAFF WRITER

EDISON — Someone is going to have to remind the students and faculty at the John Marshall School that Christmas is the time to be good and nice and not the time to put Santa out of business.

The school's "Make A Difference" program is working year round to make sure that the students can focus their energy on the community throughout the year.

On Thursday, Dec. 20 the student council members sang their favorite holiday songs to senior citizens at the Edison Estates Nursing Home.

"We have adopted the Edison Estates Nursing Home," said Principal Gerald Young. "We will be going there on St. Valentine's Day. We also went to the veteran's home in November."

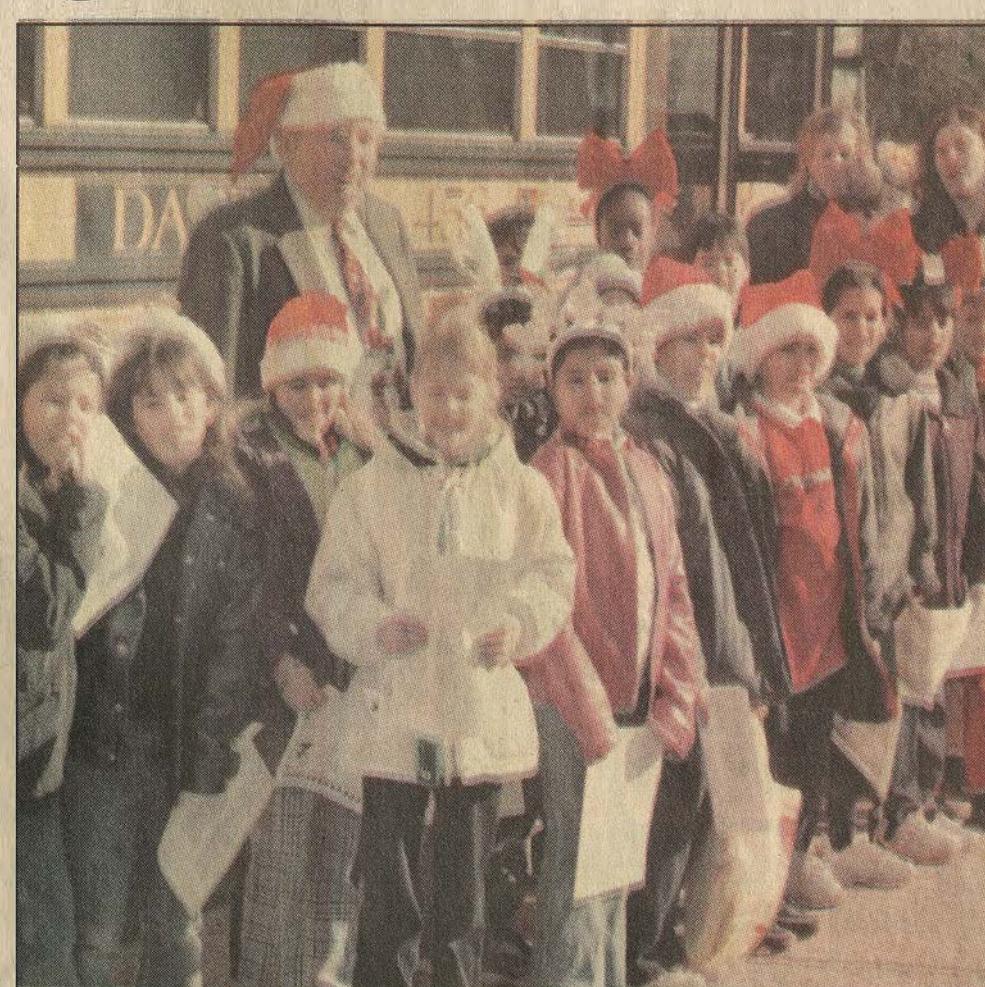
The school also collects coats and toys for the needy and puts together food baskets.

Not only will the school choir be there to sing with the senior citizens, but the entire school created hand-made cards to distribute to the residents. The tradition unites students with the elderly. The school encourages students to find ways to make a difference in other's lives.

"It's a lot of fun to go and see people in the nursing home," said Brittany Bobik, 9.

As they boarded the bus, the children put on their coats and special holiday hats: halos, which made them look like angles, or antlers or bows or snowflakes.

The children brought with them songbooks of their favorite holiday sing-a-long songs. With Principal Young wearing his Santa hat



With Principal Young wearing his Santa hat and leading the way, the children boarded the bus and were off to spread holiday cheer at the Edison Estates Nursing Home.

and leading the way, the children boarded the bus and were off to spread holiday cheer.

"The children love to sing. This is a very diverse group and we work on all different kinds of songs," said Rosemary Kimowski, the

school's music teacher. "We just finished the Nutcracker in which the children learned to tell a story with dance. Going to sing for the seniors is something special for them. It is

something they love to do."

Buck is clear for building

By IRENE RIEGNER

CORRESPONDENT

HIGHLAND PARK — Buck Woods is, once again, available for development.

A consent order will allow JSM at Highland Park, LLC, (a.k.a. developer Jack Morris) to submit a new plan for the development of the six-acre property, announced Howard Geneslaw, attorney for the Planning Board at its Dec. 27 meeting. According to Robert Kluger, board chairman, any new plan which JSM files must conform to zoning and land use requirements. Neither Geneslaw nor Kluger said they were aware of plans to develop the property.

When asked if JSM expects to submit a new development plan, Karen MacDonald, Director of Land Acquisition for JSM, said, "I can't answer this now."

The approval process must start from scratch without carryovers from previous proposals, officials said. In August, 1999, JSM had applied for permission to construct 24 single-family homes on the Buck Woods property. On Nov. 16, 2000, JSM's application was denied and JSM appealed to Middlesex County Court. By signing the consent agreement, JSM agreed to relinquish the right to use plans and testimony previously submitted to the planning board. Middlesex County Superior Court Judge Douglas Wolfson agreed to the consent order last October, ending the litigation between the planning board and JSM.

On Dec. 18, the borough council rezoned Buck Woods to give a builder two options: either cluster housing or the traditional single home development. According to Geneslaw, the zoning change should not adversely affect the consent order. The applicable zoning is the zoning in effect at the time a planning decision is rendered. Should JSM submit a new application, the updated zoning would apply. Recent decisions by the Supreme Court of New Jersey, continued Geneslaw, upheld a municipality's right to decide land use.

The cluster housing option requires open space but increases housing density. The traditional design option reduces housing density but does not allocate open space.

Under cluster housing, 40 percent of the property must remain undeveloped. The remainder is available for single-family, detached, houses at a density of 4.5 units per acre. Minimum lot size is 5,000 square feet. Applied to the six-acre Buck Woods site, 2.4 acres (40 percent) would remain undeveloped. Up to 27 houses (4.5 units per acre) could be constructed.

Under the traditional option, no acreage is set aside for open space. Three single-family, detached homes can be built per acre. Minimum lot size is 12,000 square feet. On the Buck Woods property, 18 houses could be built (three houses per acre).

Ms. Merry Christmas, now and then

By GARY GOVILTZ
STAFF WRITER

METUCHEN — When Christine McGee was crowned Miss Merry Christmas, 2001 she took her place in list of winners that stretches back to the Golden Age of High School Spirit in the 1950s.

Every since the first Miss Merry Christmas, Janet Anderson, was crowned in 1958, the crowning has made special memories for anyone lucky enough to wear the tiara.

The contest was originally sponsored by Morris Stores which was a clothing store on Main Street for many years.

Bobbi Keers Flood, listed as Barbara Keers in the official list of winners, can recall every detail of her crowning in 1979 and the parade that followed.

"Back then the parade was before Thanksgiving Day and was on Monday nights," she recalled from her office in the YMCA where she works as assistant facilities manager. "The crowning was at the front steps of borough hall. We would line up and a member of the Chamber of Commerce would walk behind us and put the crown on the head of the winner. I was thrilled when she crowned me. The parade was the nicest thing in the world."

Although the robe was a loaner, she still has the crown and



Oh-My-Gawd! Look at all that hair! Things sure have changed since Kristen Turk was crowned Miss Merry Christmas in 1988, seen here with her court. Below is Sharon Hallman, Miss Merry Christmas 1960, riding a float in the annual parade.

still recalls her court: her sister Beth, Erika Brinza, Nancy Finden and Debbie Pastras.

"It seems like so long ago."

It was a very good year for her and her sister. Not only was she Miss Merry Christmas, but Beth

was the Homecoming Queen. Still close, they both work at the YMCA having chosen not to follow in their parents footsteps as school principals. Mr. Keers was the vice-principal of the now defunct Franklin School before becoming an elementary school principal in Marlboro. Their mother, Sue Keers, was an elementary school teacher in Edgar School and went on to be a principal in Edison.

Married with four children ages 5 through 10, it was at this year's crowning of Miss Merry Christmas that Flood's children, seeing picture of former winners, learned of her honored past. She will not, however, put any pressure on them to live up to her accomplishments but said she just wants them to be good, well behaved students.

"I hope I have enough spies in the school when they get to high school," Flood said. Summing up her high school days she concluded, "That was a wonderful time of my life, but now is the best."

The full roster of Miss Merry Christmas, past and present, is: Janet Anderson 1958, Patricia Nielson in 1959, Sharon

Hallman 1960, Lorraine Engeland 1961, Joanne Stumpf 1962, Nancy Bailey 1963, Judy Reeder 1964, Nanci Pico 1965, Ann Cologna 1966, Donna Jean Housman 1967, Judy Kenyon 1968, Barbara Hourihan 1969, Beatrice Moore 1970, Mary Jane Hecht 1971, Joanne Potts 1972, Valarie Lee Whitehill 1973, Karen J. Schwin 1974, Margaret Greco 1975, Ellen Goldfarb 1976, Joyce Padilla 1977, Peggy Hoover 1978, Barbara Keers 1979, Sue Peterson 1980, Susan Yaros 1981, Lorraine White 1982, Gayle Jeney 1983, Patricia Gaffney 1984, Mary Matas 1985, Lisa Marquis 1986, Veronica Ruth 1987, Kristen Turk 1988, Suzanne Angus 1989, Christine Wojtowicz 1990, Lora Fanelli 1991, Jennifer Angus 1992, Elizabeth Clark 1993, Josie Hecht, 1994, Lauren Lombardo 1995, Jennifer Kubiak 1996, Michelle Poyle 1997, Jessica Locke 1998, Vanessa Picone 1999, Laura Nemer 2000, Christine Magee 2001.



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Diegnan will be sworn in

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Patrick Diegnan Jr. officially becomes the first South Plainfield citizen in a statewide elected office this week.

He will be sworn in as an assemblyman from the 18th District at noon Tuesday at the War Memorial in Trenton.

Diegnan will join colleagues Barbara Buono of Metuchen, elected to the Senate after four terms in the Assembly, and Assemblyman Peter Barnes Jr. of Edison, who will begin his fourth term in the lower house of the Legislature.

The 18th District was redrawn after the 2000 census to include Metuchen, Edison, East Brunswick, Helmetta, South River and Spotswood as well as South Plainfield.

Primary goals for the new assemblyman are boosting education and targeting the state's "open space" purchases toward environmentally sensitive lands, especially watersheds.

"We are committed to tackling problems such as traffic congestion and overcrowded classrooms at four-year universities," he said in a release

issued by the Assembly Democratic Party office.

A former municipal attorney in South Plainfield and Milltown, Diegnan has been a practicing attorney with an office in South Plainfield since 1974. He is a former chairman of the South Plainfield Senior Citizens

"We are committed to tackling problems such as traffic congestion and overcrowded classrooms at four-year universities"

— Patrick Diegnan Jr.

Advisory Commission as well as a former member of the borough's Zoning Board of Adjustment and Environmental Commission.

He also is a past president of the parish council at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church.

Diegnan holds a bachelor's degree in political science and government from Seton Hall University plus a law degree from the Seton Hall Law School. He and his wife of 25 years, Anita, have two daughters, Heather and Tara.

Commentary

What to do in '02

Here are some of suggestions of what we would like to see happen in 2002:

Property tax reform. This has been on our wish list for years and chances are it will be for many more years. What is needed is a radical overhaul of the way public education is funded in the state, not a patchwork of rebates and deductions that no one understands. The property tax burden falls unfairly on the shoulders of the middle-class and senior citizens on fixed incomes. Unfortunately, because it is an election year, reform is not likely to be even considered this again. We will hear talk of more gimmicks, such as rebates but the inequitable system will remain in place.

More teeth for the state master plan. Development in New Jersey needs to be regulated on a larger scale than just municipalities and counties. A large scale commercial development in one county, for example, often affects life in other counties. That's why we need some regional or state process to oversee the impact of development. A good way to start is to put more teeth into the state's master plan which defines a sensible approach to future growth in the state. Of course, if property tax reform was enacted, individual municipalities would not have an incentive to bend over backwards to attract large-scale development.

Reform of state and local government and schools. The talk of regionalization that sprung up in the last recession of the early 1990s disappeared with the economic good times as land values increased and revenue rolled into the state treasury. Now, with the state's economy feeling a bit sick and the state facing a budget gap, talk of regionalization is again bound to be heard. Do we really need more than 600 school superintendents in New Jersey? It's time for a fresh look at an old problem.

Auto insurance reform. This is another issue a new administration and Legislature should tackle in 2002. New Jersey residents are unfortunately accustomed to being gouged by auto insurance companies. Premiums keep on rising while the number of options available to drivers keeps on diminishing. What's going to happen to all those motorists who now have policies with State Farm? It's another chance for Jim McGreevey to create a legacy while he's governor.

Higher voter turnout. A democracy is only as strong as the people who participate in it. Turnout has continued to decline in both the school and general elections. Let's hope the renewed sense of patriotism and service created in the wake of Sept. 11 results in better participation in the democratic process.

Your hometown newspapers

We invite readers to get involved with your local newspaper by calling or writing to let us know what you think is newsworthy. Our staff is always eager to hear your opinions, suggestions and comments.

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Any other questions or concerns can be directed to Vincent A. De Muro Jr., editor, at (908) 575-6687.

Corrections

Our goal is to provide accurate and fair reporting. To comment on coverage or report errors, call the editor. Corrections will run in the space provided below.

In a recent issue of the *South Plainfield Reporter*, it was incorrectly reported that Ptl. Michael Piro of the South Plainfield Police Department had left the department. Piro is on sick leave from his position which he continues to hold.

In a recent issue of the *Piscataway Review* on a holiday house decoration, the home owner's name should have been published as Carl Pinal. We apologize for the inconvenience.

THE REVIEW

METUCHEN · EDISON
and the HIGHLAND PARK HERALD

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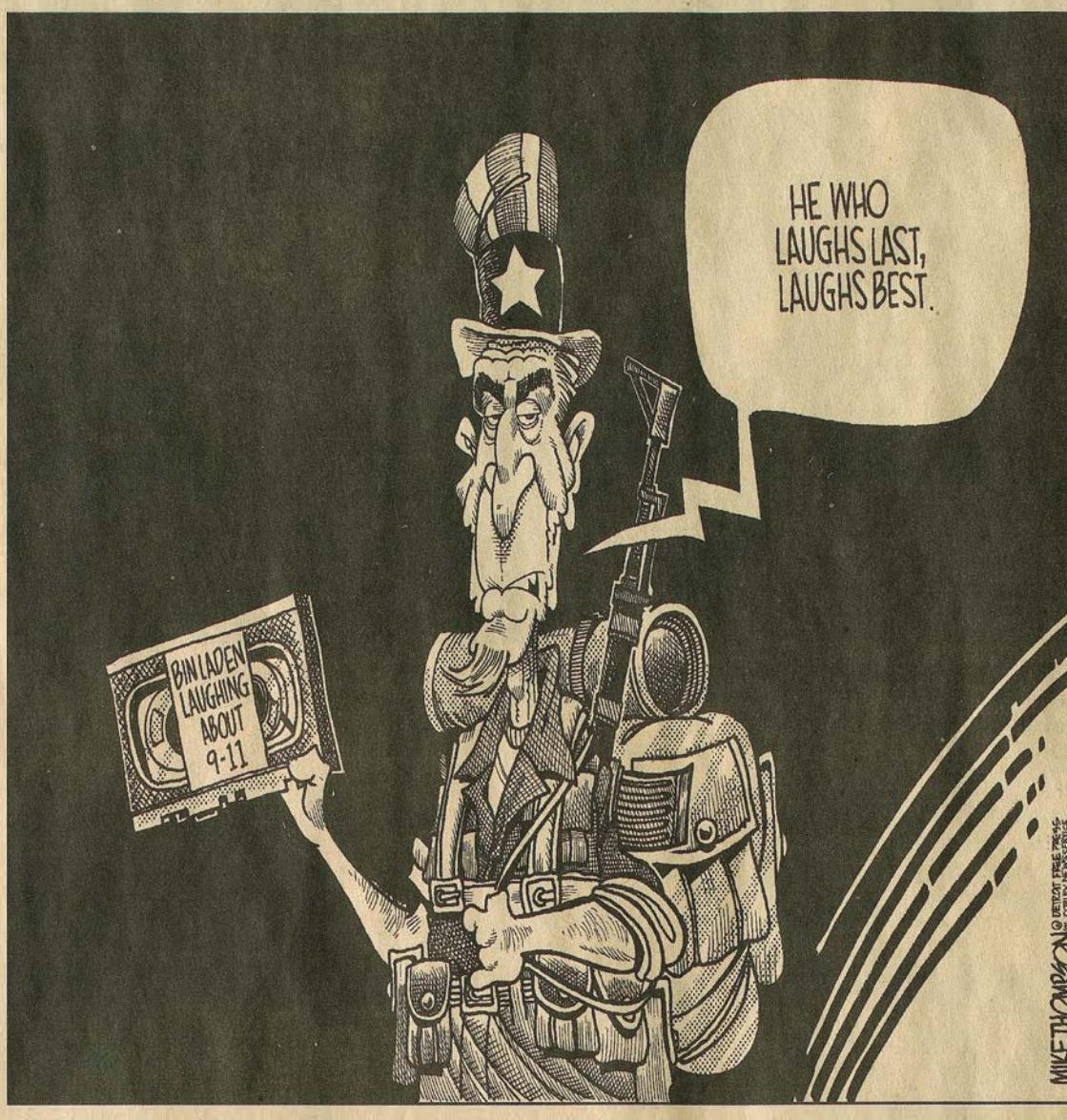
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Letters to the editor

About time on smoke-free restaurants

To The Editor:

A new trend is emerging among restaurants and bars — going smoke-free. This move is due to increased customer and employee demands for smoke-free dining and workplaces, new information on the health hazards from secondhand smoke, and ultimately, because it is good for business.

In addition to the 400,000 Americans who die each year due to tobacco-related illnesses, 53,000 Americans die each year as a result of secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States, behind only active smoking and alcohol, and ahead of major motor vehicle accidents, AIDS, homicide, and illicit drugs. Tobacco smoke is one of eight substances classified as a group A carcinogen. All seven of the others (including asbestos, benzene, arsenic and radon) are illegal in the workplace. Secondhand smoke also causes asthma. Workers exposed to secondhand smoke on the job are 34 percent more likely to get lung cancer. Ventilation and filtration of secondhand smoke are ineffective.

A recent survey by the Eagleton Institute found that two out of three New Jerseyans (67 percent) say that there should be no smoking in restaurants. A sizable minority of cigarette smokers (36 percent) agrees with this statement. These statements are confirmed by other studies

(National Restaurant Association, Gallup Poll, and Zagat Surveys) that also found that customers want smoke-free dining.

Some express concern that going smoke-free will mean losing out on business. Economic studies, however, have repeatedly found that this is not the case. Indeed, more than 85 percent of New Jerseyans are nonsmokers, and many of them would eat out more often if more restaurants were smoke-free. Going smoke-free can offer an economic boost to bars and restaurants due to free publicity and improved reputations. Additionally, it cuts costs for cleaning, repainting, and replacement of damaged items from cigarette burns, and possibly lowers fire, life, and health insurance premiums.

In addition to the benefits listed above, smoke-free restaurants and bars protect public health, decrease the incidence of smoking (which also supports smokers trying to quit), and decrease smoking initiation by changing social norms that model smoking as an acceptable behavior.

The Highland Park Board of Health applauds the restaurants and bars in town that have voluntarily agreed to ban smoking in all areas of their businesses. Please find a way to show them your support for this important action.

LEWIS FISHBERG
Highland Park Board of Health Chairman

Skateboarding is not a crime. Is it?

To The Editor:

When people think of skateboarders they think of kids who are getting into trouble. That couldn't be further from the truth. I am a good kid and obey the law. I have never been in trouble and I don't have any plans of getting into trouble. I am a 16-year-old sophomore at St. Joseph's High School in Metuchen. I skateboard all the time around my neighborhood. Every time I find a good place to skate and start having a good time, someone has to come out and yell at my friends and I and tell us to move on. We do move on, and the pattern begins again.

Edison needs a skate park that could be used by kids of all ages. I asked my father, who is an attorney, if waxing a curb was illegal. He answered, "Yes, that would be considered 'destruction of property'." So now, if I put wax on a curb so that I can skate on it I am committing a crime. I don't want to get in trouble for doing something that I love. What are my options?

If Edison created a skate park, my friends and I would have a safe and fun place to hang out. We would not be causing any trouble for the local

residents. The park could have set hours and even employ local residents. If it were well located the local merchants might even benefit. While the cost of putting in a skate park is not cheap, it will be worth the money and give the kids something to do.

Every Friday night my two best friends and I have to bug our parents to drive us out of the community to go to a skate park. The cost for this park is \$14 per person. If Edison had a skate park, my friends and I would be able to get there without inconveniencing our parents. This would also encourage more kids to try a new sport and have a safe place to keep out of trouble.

Skateboarding is a sport that needs certain types of ramps and rails to ride on. Kids like me make do with curbs instead. We don't want to get into trouble but we really don't have many choices. I hope the people of Edison see the need for this park and ask the local politicians to consider putting one in town very soon.

BRIAN McCUTCHEON
Edison

Tolerance, respect a two way street

To The Editor:

Sympathizers say in order to understand the mindset of foreigners who despise us we must reach out and learn everything we can about their culture and religion and make a genuine effort to accept them for who they are.

After serving in the U.S. Army, I returned to college and started dating a woman three years my senior. She was a beautiful Hindu woman from London; I was a 25-year-old American man from New Jersey. Initially I didn't want to go out with her because of our obvious cultural differences, but my friends chided me for being so close-minded, so I decided to give it a try and asked her to lunch. To my surprise she said "yes" and we immediately hit it off.

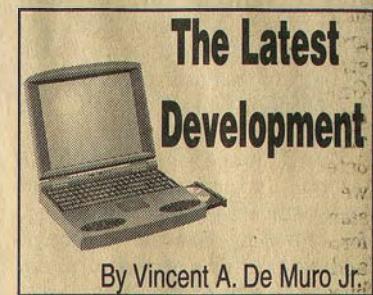
We dated for six months. I familiarized myself with her culture, ate her food, learned to speak a little Hindustani and I fell in love with her. I

wanted to make a commitment, but when I spoke to her about marriage and our future together she balked. She said she couldn't have a serious relationship with me because I was not from India, and her parents and family would only approve of a Hindu to be her husband. Despite my objections she broke off our relationship and several months later flew to India, selected a man from the group her father had arranged for her to interview and married him.

Sometimes the differences between people of different cultures are so vast there is little hope in ever bridging the gap. The only thing we can do is try to accept them for who they are, and hope they understand that tolerance is a two-way street and that respect and acceptance are gifts in life that have to be earned.

LAWRENCE J. IMBODEN

Piscataway



New clothes pitfalls

It happens every year, dear reader. I get new clothes for the holidays and they are just chock-full of hazards waiting to happen, such as the hidden pins missed in the folded dress shirt, the remaining plastic staple used to affix brand labels, or the adhesive price tag stickers on the inside pant leg of new slacks, which do a number on the hair of your inner thigh. And there are always four of them, two on each side, so as not to miss a leg.

Is it my obligation to examine every square-inch of a new clothing item to make sure that there is nothing attached to it which will cause me, at the least, irritation, or at the worst, a pin prick in my throat? And if I take on this burden, is it not my obligation to pass along whatever safeguards I may to the rest of society? I guess it is.

So dear reader, if you care to save yourself the "unpleasanties" of new gift clothing, follow these few examples:

Upon receiving any new article of clothing, it is advised that one check for any tags, labels, stickers or patches on both the exterior and interior of the item before wearing. For those who insist on trying on items in front of the gift giver, such as sweaters or over shirts, it is not improper protocol to turn the garment inside out before doing so. Other unmentionables should be checked in the privacy of one's bedroom, unless so expressed by the gift giver themselves. Then it's a whole new ball game.

A common mistake made by certain individuals who writes this column is overlooking the long adhesive sticker displaying the size of a garment, often found on denim jeans and cotton crew-neck shirts. Unless you have a spouse that pays attention to such things, overlooking this item could lead to your walking around in public completely clueless of your oversight.

For those individuals who choose to leave the tags on the clothing items which display their brand name and/or price tag and wear them as a status statement, the advisory is offered that you look just plain silly. Kind of like Minnie Pearl from "Hee Haw."

Search all pockets, even the elusive fifth pocket of Levi's jeans, for the notorious "Inspector 12" tag. These paper tags resemble fortune cookie notes and bear only the work identification number of the employee who examined the clothing before it left the factory. Innocuous enough left unattended, these little pieces of paper will cause endless grief if they are left in the pockets when the item is washed the first time and will grind themselves into the corner of the pocket material, creating the beginnings of that lint ball which seems to grow and grow with each use.

Aside: it is imperative that these slips of paper be removed from undergarments before wearing, especially men's briefs, otherwise known as "tighty-whities."

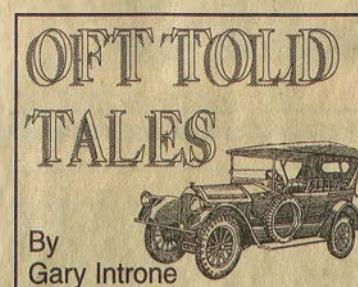
While removing tags, labels, plastic staples and the like, be sure of the structural integrity of the clothing item. Using brute force to remove a tag may result in damaging the material, especially if the label is placed at a seam. This is usually the case with clothing items purchased from "Karget" or "T-mart," as their clothing lines are allegedly made in third-world country sweatshops by underpaid, malnourished children. Remember to look for the "Made in the USA" label to ensure quality. (shameless plug)

Following these simple steps can save individuals from needless pain and fashion embarrassment while sampling their new wardrobe of holiday gift items.

Children learning to navigate in Smalltown, USA

It sometimes amazes me to think of the changes witnessed in the course of a lifetime spent pretty much in the same place. I can recall great blocks of meadow and woods, streams and fields, now gone. Growing up here, leaving, and then returning in the mid-70s at least allowed my wife and I to selectively determine the type of town in which we wished to live. Repeating the same doings, over and over locally, forced us to notice both the changes and the differences in the places we lived. We were happy to select this borough, with a 'sense of place,' a focal identity.

I've seen, like many of you, the Woodbridge/Edison area grow by leaps and bounds over the years. I always keep a small, compartmentalized picture of this area in my mind — even as I go about, with much more interest, my "urban" life of Manhattan and all its streetscapes and history. The distant locales, all-right as they may be, seem pale by comparison. Berlin being done over for the 2000's is but a distant flame,



By Gary Introne

Les Halles in Paris has disappeared, and the recurring yet fumbling internationalization of London has drained it of its eccentricities as a place. The big picture has changed. I often hope (and wish) the little picture had not.

In the current issue of "Riverbank Review," there is a wonderful article by Jennifer Armstrong, entitled "Navigating the Neighborhood." It's about how only the "fictional" storybook children seem to be able to get around by themselves these days. I was totally taken with the concept of the article in light of our current urban and suburban predicaments,

here on the cusp of 2002. How we approach and solve some of these issues will go a long way towards directing our common futures.

Some of us can easily walk from home to office, bank, post office, arts center, food store, town hall, parks, etc. Many of us, especially those in newer homes strung out along highways and new cuttings in "virgin" areas, cannot. Oddly enough, since the 1940s, many of these small-town communities, those with a sense of place, have pretty much been bypassed or overlooked, except as quaint locales for, maybe, antique stores and nice restaurants. These sorts of places are, however, still the locale for many children's books.

A child's mobility and independence, in these stories, is essential to development of plot and character. Kids ride around on bicycles, walk, or take local buses to get to their adventures and/or solve their mysteries. In today's reality, "this cannot happen convincingly in the suburban sprawl that now covers so much of our country, where single-use zoning and

gated communities have segregated children from most civic functions; where transportation to and from almost everything depends on Mom's willingness and availability to be the family chauffeur, and where walking along the side of a six-lane commercial highway strip can be a life-threatening excursion."

It wasn't always this way, of course. The 1950s offered me bicycle freedom, unencumbered! I can recall well and easy traveling north to Elizabeth, Linden, and the surrounding areas, thanks to St. George Ave. The same went for the southerly direction; Fords, the Victory Bridge, Perth Amboy. All free places and other towns to which we all went, long Saturdays of riding and frolic. That was, of course, before the cementing of the alliance between thruway, superhighway, mall and suburban sprawl. "Unencumbered" by parents, mobile kids learn how to comport themselves as citizens, not as aliens beamed in from the housing subdivisions. They are able to develop naturally: they are not

stunted or confined. A traditional, navigable community serves as a training ground for adult life."

Today's weird world of electronic access and greatly staged entertainment media have carried kids so far afield of the older, more traditional knowledges that a semblance of geography, place and access is often lost and never even established. It's really too bad that we have unplanted town and farm, borders and wooded lanes, with keystroke enlightenment and at-home computer training. Most kids would gain a lot simply by traipsing through the woods and digging holes. The numbing tedium of car and highway and home has stolen precious moments

of learning and knowledge from our kids — things they can only now find in storybooks depicting ideal places. I will close with this further quote:

"Children's literature is telling us that young people — and adults too, for that matter — need real communities. Not the supposedly safe enclaves of suburban developments, but communities where kids can walk from school to the public library, to the movies, to their friends' houses, or to shops where they can spend their allowance on comic books without maternal surveillance."

We all should work to reclaim the cities and towns that allow this.

What does citizenship mean to you?

By HOPE BLECHER-SASS

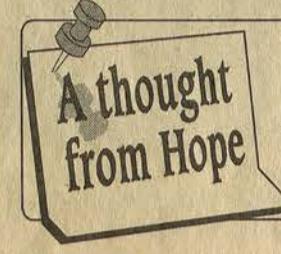
CORRESPONDENT

Happy 2002 to all of you! Now that we know who the Person of the Year is we can tackle other issues such as a new governor for our state, a new mayor for our neighboring metropolis and various other new items such as resolutions, getting ready for tax filings and what to do with the kids when school is closed to commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.

What do many of the issues have in common? Just to relieve you of any test anxiety, I'll provide an answer — citizenship in America. Take a few minutes to think about what America means to you and what does citizenship mean to you. Even those who are not U.S. citizens can have a sense of citizenship. After all, we must accept that many of the world's residents are not U.S. citizens and that is okay.

When a class of kindergarteners was asked the question, "What is citizenship?" the responses varied from shrugs, to blank looks, to furrowed eyebrows reflecting some thoughts. One brave lad raised his hand and was chosen to respond. This five-year-old said, "Citizenship is a boat you take to a nice island." Do you get it? How simple, yet how deep the meaning could be.

During the recent winter recess I visited Liberty State Park. Yes, I could see the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island and Lower Manhattan. Yes, I could see the sculpture of the Armed Personnel carrying a Holocaust survivor and I could see



one American flag waving in the breeze alone on a flag pole. How many of us have family members who arrived at the USA on a boat

that stopped at an island? How many of us have friends or family members who have taken the oath of citizenship?

As we prepare to become part of the events of 2002, we will be making decisions. Between the celebration of Dr. King's birthday and President's Day, take a few moments to reflect upon your tolerance and respect of other people. Take a few moments to think about and to talk about citizenship, a boat you take to a nice island. That child spoke some profound words, food

for thought.

I look forward to meeting you, the readers of this column. During January and February, I will be involved with storytimes at Barnes and Noble Booksellers in Clark, NJ. You are welcome to attend these evening events. Teachers, you might be eligible for professional development credit towards the 100 hours requirement. Check the store's monthly calendar for details.

Good luck sticking to your resolutions!

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of learning and knowledge from our kids — things they can only now find in storybooks depicting ideal places. I will close with this further quote:

"Children's literature is telling us that young people — and adults too, for that matter — need real communities. Not the supposedly safe enclaves of suburban developments, but communities where kids can walk from school to the public library, to the movies, to their friends' houses, or to shops where they can spend their allowance on comic books without maternal surveillance."

We all should work to reclaim the cities and towns that allow this.

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ON-LINE COURSE: • 05:300:483 Resources for Individuals With Disabilities (3) Zucker

MORRISTOWN HIGH SCHOOL, MORRISTOWN

- 15:310:500 Curriculum and Instruction (3)
- M 6:00-8:40pm Fanelli
- 05:300:316 Assessment for Instructional Planning (3)
- Th 6:00-8:40pm Barudin
- 15:297:505 Group Psychology: Theory and Practice (3)
- Th 6:00-8:40pm Katz

MORRIS HILLS HIGH SCHOOL, ROCKAWAY

- □ 05:300:483 Resources for Individuals With Disabilities (3)
- Th 5:00-7:40pm Brennan
- 15:230:521 Supervision of Instruction (3)
- Th 6:00-8:40pm Hannum

WAYNE HILLS HIGH SCHOOL, WAYNE

- 15:251:572 Curriculum Development in the Middle & 2ndary Schools (3)
- M 4:30-7:10pm Bozza
- 15:230:500 Foundations of Educational Administration & Supervision (3)
- T 4:50-7:30pm Montesano

HASBROUCK HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL, HASBROUCK HEIGHTS

- 15:230:521 Supervision of Instruction (3)
- Th 4:30-7:10pm Khoury
- 15:310:505 Curriculum Development in the Middle & 2ndary Schools (3)
- Th 5:00-7:40pm Weiss

WATCHUNG HILLS HIGH SCHOOL, WATCHUNG

- 15:230:500 Foundations of Educational Administration & Supervision (3)
- W 5:00-7:40pm Rock

EDISON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, WESTFIELD

- 15:254:547 Seminar in Elementary School Mathematics Education (3)
- T 4:30-7:10pm O'Brien

BRIDGEWATER-RARITAN HIGH SCHOOL, BRIDGEWATER

- 15:230:608 Case Studies in Educational Administration & Supervision (3)
- M 5:00-7:40pm Rock
- 05:300:480 Materials & Methods in Special Education (3)
- Th 4:50-7:30pm Frawley
- 15:310:500 Curriculum and Instruction (3)
- Th 6:00-8:40pm O'Neill
- 15:293:525 Psychology of the Exceptional Child (3)
- T 5:30-8:10pm Regan

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Community Life

Schor 1st period honor roll

PISCATAWAY — Schor Middle School has issued its honor roll for the first marking period of the 2001-02 school year.

Named to the principal's honor roll:

Grade 8 — Alan Howard Chen, Jaclyn Elise Dagnall, Lilian "Khaing" Lwin, Samantha L. Mathews, Bhavita Patel, Puja Amrish Patel, Roshini C. Patel, Hang Thuy Pham, Nicole M. Robinson, Laura J. Scoda, Felicia Tan, Sharon A. Vaz, Ashley M. White and Maggie Yau.

Grade 7 — Gina Ferretti, Lauren Fisher, Janell Harris, Therese Parker, Meshva Patel, Sahil Patel and Victoria Polito.

Grade 6 — Larry Cheng, Shreya Atul Fadia, Danielle Gray, Michael Harris, Keith Hopkins, Colin Hu, Chrissa Martin, Anvi Patel, Dipen J. Patel, Ronald Ivanbriz Rosario, Jillian L. Roth, Jennifer Sanchez and Brian Yu.

Named to the honor roll:

Grade 8 — Megan Alyssa Arico, Victoria Rose Barletta, Ashley Nicole Bozzo, Thomas John Cavanagh, Samaria Mone Cooper, Belinda Parveen Durgana, Jonathan Francois, Tara Granger, Kristie Marie Grimm, Kieran Richard Hunt, Hau Van Le, Chen Lin Lian,

Ginaya Shadai Littlejohn, Susan Elaine Maisack, Rushayne Mitchell, Ace Ochoa, Chinyere Kelechi Ojini, Bryan Orjuela, Leonilo P. Pablo, Kiory L. Parker, Charmi Ashok Patel, Nischal Rameshbal Patel, Roshni S. Patel, Vanessa Lynn Petite, Alison L. Reeve, Caitlin Reiss, Mark J. Riccardi, Sara Rivas, Eric Scherlacher, Krizzia Sera Josef, Olivia Anna Sokolowska, Janae J. Solomon, Megan L. Tomei, Anthony A. Toth, Jessica Venturella, Kanaba Yedua Wallace, Pamela N. Wiley, Latisha M. Williams and Amy Lynn Zimmerman.

Grade 7 — Aelen Arbiol, Sara Baba, Shannon E. Brown, Natasha Sandid Chokshi, Dottie Kris David-Wilson, Nicole Delmar, Jennifer Alicia Gerald, Brandon Harris, Tiffany D. Harris, Andrew King, Albert Thein Lwin (Htoo), Tanya Marie Manifold, Dana Leigh Nehez, Colleen O'Brien, Hua Pan, Hiral R. Patel, Mrugesh G. Patel, Jill Portaro, Katie Roussey, Margaret Siegrist, Melissa Sumallo, Christopher Robin Valent, Sai Yashaswy Veruva, Tierra D. White and Kevin Wong.

Grade 6 — Rebecca Adam, Teresa Alberto, Kayla Alexander,

St. Francis 1st period honors

METUCHEN — St. Francis Cathedral School has issued its honor roll for the first marking period of the 2001-02 school year.

Earning first honors with A's in all subjects:

Grade 8A — Kyle DePew and Alexandra Slomko.

Grade 8B — Kimberly Ciocon, Anthony Corrente and Catherine Lagrada.

Grade 7A — Michele Burlak, Marie Sharlow, Matthew Shatynski, Shane Ulbrich and Eva Wash.

Grade 7B — Katherine Bernet, James Brand, Kaitlin Butler, Nicholas Ciardiello, Mary Mocula, Regina Nicoll and Michalina Zemel.

Grade 6A — Stephen Brandenburg, Ian Brooks, Kerry Dougan, Jonathan Hernandez and Agata Rybalkiewicz.

Grade 6B — Rae Celine Felismino, Gabrielle Geller, Isabel Kierencew, Sarah Ludwig, Edward Rossiter, Elisabeth Scherer and Maureen Sharlow.

Grade 5B — Ryan Carr,

Mairead Lawyer, Jenna Meoni, John Szilagyi and Christopher Wolff.

Earning second honors with A's and B's in all subjects:

Grade 8A — Amanda Arciero, Anna Cushing, Martine LaPorta, Mary Megan McGuire, Ramon Negron, Victor Otero, Phillip Pleva, Keri Schrader, Matthew Scott, Christina Torres, Francis Varrichio and Sarah Woodhouse.

Grade 8B — Michael Bennett, Paul Brandenburg, Keith Hernandez, Angela Homs, Elizabeth Lombardi, Katie Medaglia, Christina Pena, Sterling Reese and Logan Stagnito.

Grade 7A — Veronica Alfonso, Anthony Cassell, Gavin Dizon-Roosa, Amanda Huggins, Jason Pasierski, Christina Pateman, Jack Pepkowski, Kelly Rossiter, Stephen Vitabile and Kristina Russo.

Grade 7B — Nicole Bruder, Briette Buquiran, Gina Capriglione, Joseph Costello, Daniel Fitzpatrick, Roxanne

Guarino, Brian Major, Laura Pittman, Emily Pondl, Caitlin Seamster, Nicholas Stoms and Joelle Vitale.

Grade 6A — Amanda Bonaventure, Leslie Cardello, Sara Jane Davidson, Olivia Do, Theresa Hoang, Margaret Lowenberg, Megan Nashed and Christine Wooding.

Grade 6B — Paul Dellano, Timothy Lange, Brandon Reese and Emily Zaniewski.

Grade 5A — Daniel Baran, Peter Birri, Kathleen De La Cruz, Kevin Freis, Sean Freis, Rebecca Ghilino, Salvatore Guzzardi, Donald LaPorta, Christopher Lewandowski, Jenna McDonald, Bridget McManus, Jenna McMenamin, Daniel Misdea, Angela Nittoli and Caitlin Scherer.

Grade 5B — Robert Bruder, Spencer Davis, Alyssa D'Errico, Connor Dick, Richard Fuchs, Giang Hoang, Lucia Hoang, Patrick Hunter, Gabriella Mozo, Joseph Roberts, Dani Scarmozzino, Laura Sharlow and Kevin Van Buskirk.



Accepting the Distinguished Service award for her husband Alphonse J. Pisaniello is his wife Connie, seen here with Gen. Robert Paeshon and Hela Young, a former Miss NJ who attends all veterans affairs in the state. For more information, see last brief below.

Military notes

Metuchen, Edison and Highland Park

Army National Guard Pfc. **Ryan J. Jimenez** has graduated from basic training at Fort Knox, Ky. The son of Neida Jimenez of 53 Homer Place, Metuchen, graduated from Metuchen High School in June.

Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. **Adolfo A. Aiello** has completed the basic metal worker course at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Aberdeen, Md. A 1998 graduate of St. Joseph's High School in Metuchen, he is the son of Gregorio and Elba N. Aiello of Colonia.

Marine Corps Maj. **Joseph T. Allen Jr.** has reported for duty with the 2nd Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, N.C. He graduated from John P. Stevens High School in 1987.

Army Reserve Pvt. **Kevin C. Thyne** has graduated from basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C. The son of Charles and Heather Thyne of 89 Overbrook Ave., Edison, graduated in June from the Timothy Christian School in Piscataway.

Piscataway and South Plainfield

Air Force Airman 1st Class **Faiza N. Agha** has graduated from basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. The 2000 alumna of

Piscataway High School is the daughter of Najma and Naveed Agha of 533 Shirley Parkway, Piscataway.

Marine Corps Pvt. **George F. Kimball III** has graduated from basic training at Parris Island, S.C. He is the son of Joyce M. Drew of 283 Adams St., Piscataway, and George F. Kimball Jr. of Carteret.

Air Force Airman **Randy A. Hall** has graduated from basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. The son of Tonya Hall-Stevenson of 217 Central Ave., Piscataway, graduated from Piscataway High School in June.

Army Reserve Pvt. **Kevin C. Thyne** has graduated from basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C. A June graduate of the Timothy Christian School in Piscataway, he is the son of Charles and Heather Thyne of Edison.

On Nov. 27, the state gave out 252 Distinguished Service Medals. Receiving a medal posthumously was **Alphonse J. Pisaniello** of South Plainfield, for distinguished meritorious service in ground combat during World War II in Europe. Pisaniello was a combat medic, with many service awards. Accepting the award from Gen. Robert Paeshon was Pisaniello's wife, Connie Pisaniello.

This prominent award served as a reminder that freedom sometimes rests in the hands of those who have placed themselves in harm's way for the sake of their country.

Area library news and releases

Edison's new year library line up

EDISON — A Creative Writing Club meets 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 5 at the main branch of the Edison Free Public Library, 340 Plainfield Ave.

Those who enjoy writing and want to share their writings with others are welcome. For more information, phone Roberta Schechter at (732) 287-2298, Ext. 227.

Can kids "Say It with Signs"? They can if they come to the North Edison branch of the Edison Free Public Library, 777 Grove Ave.

Classes run 4:30 p.m.

Thursday for four weeks beginning Jan. 10. Any child in kindergarten-Grade 6 can learn the basics of American Sign Language with supervising children's librarian Carolyn Cullum. Parents are also welcome; brothers and sisters are not.

Registration begins Wednesday; visit the North Edison branch or phone (732) 548-4759, Ext. 228.

Falun Dafa is a meditation system that relieves stress while improving the body and mind.

The Edison Free Public

Library is offering this system in two courses. At the main branch on Plainfield Avenue, instruction is 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12. At the North Edison branch on Grove Avenue, instruction is 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 5.

Registration is required; phone (732) 287-2298, Ext. 1 for the main branch or (732) 548-3045, Ext. 1 for North Edison.

"Gardens Change Lives" of those who come to the Edison Free Public Library.

Any Edison child in kindergarten-Grade 6 can put together a special bulb garden of his

own to take home. Program times are 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22 at the North Edison branch, 777 Grove Ave., and 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 24 at the Clara Barton branch, 141 Hoover Ave.

Registration begins Monday, Jan. 14; visit the appropriate library or phone (732) 548-4759, Ext. 228 for North Edison or (732) 738-0748 for Clara Barton.

John J. Keane of Metuchen displays his oil and acrylic abstract paintings throughout January at the main branch of the Edison Free Public Library, 340 Plainfield Ave.

Happy New Year from SP Library

By **KENNETH MORGAN**

CORRESPONDENT

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Belated Happy New Year! Let's get started with the premiere Library column for 2002:

We'll be back to our usual schedule of children's Storytime programs next week. The programs are held on Tuesday morning at 10:30 a.m., Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. and Thursday afternoon at 1:15 p.m. They're for children age 3 and over; no pre-registration is required. There's also this month's Kidcraft program on Friday, Dec. 18, at 4 p.m. It's for children age 6 and over; we ask that you sign up your kids in advance for this program. If you have any questions, please call us at (908) 754-7885 and ask for Miss Linda.

Also on Tuesday morning, we'll be holding another computer class, this time on "Internet Basics." The class is set for 10:30 a.m.; space is limited, so you must pre-register. For further details about this class or upcoming computer classes, please call.

As if Tuesday wasn't busy enough, two meetings are scheduled. At 1 p.m., the Friends of the Library will meet; members and non-members are welcome to attend. Then, at 7:30 p.m., there will be a meeting of the Library Board of Trustees. The public is invited to attend what promises to be an informative meeting.

The latest class from our job information center, "Job Searching 101" is set for Thursday morning at 10:30 a.m. Space is limited for the class, so you must reserve a spot. Our job information program is made possible by the Special Populations Grant from the NJ State Library.

The new group of Circuit videos is now available. This month's titles include "The 6th Day," "187," "The Next Best Thing," "Honey, I Blew Up the Kid," "The Secret Garden" and, on DVD, "Unbreakable." Videos and DVDs may be borrowed, four at a time, for two days. We also have a new group of books from the Large Print Circuit. Those titles include "The Smoke Jumper" by Nicholas Evans, "The 1st to Die" by James Patterson, "The Crossroad" by Beverly Lewis and "The Bonesetter's Daughter" by Amy Tan. Circuit Large Print books may be borrowed for two weeks. Meanwhile, we're between groups on the Audiobook Circuit. A new batch of titles will be available later in the month.

The New Year just wouldn't be complete without one thing: tax forms. Yes, we've just received a new bunch of Federal tax forms and booklets. The NJ State forms should be here very soon. Try to contain your enthusiasm.

Finally, as noted in previous columns, we don't allow people to bring food and drink into the Library. There is an exception to that rule, though. Throughout the Holiday season, many people brought in a variety of goodies for the Library staff. We'd like to thank those generous patrons; we really appreciate it.

That's about all for now. See you next week.

A new year for Piscataway Library

PISCATAWAY — The Piscataway Public Library has scheduled these programs open to children from the township:

"Book Babies," 10:30 a.m. Thursday at Kennedy Library on Hoes Lane. Rhymes, fingerplays, peek-a-book games and a story are designed for babies 6-17 months old, accompanied by a parent or caregiver. No registration is necessary. Arrive

early to play in the children's room.

"Friday Filmstrip Festival," 10:30 a.m. Jan. 11 at Kennedy Library. This half-hour program has filmstrips specially chosen for those ages 3-5 years old.

No registration is necessary except for school groups.

"Twilight Tales," 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 14-Feb. 11 at

Westergard Library off Stelton Road. Stories and activities are covered after dark for boys and girls 3-5 years old, accompanied by a parent. No registration is necessary.

"Once Upon a Story," 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 15-Feb. 19 at Kennedy Library. Stories and songs are selected for those ages 3-5 years old. No registration is necessary.

For more information, phone (732) 463-1633, Ext. 1 for Kennedy Library and (732) 752-1166 for Westergard Library.

"Nursery Rhyme Time," 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 23 at Kennedy Library. Rhymes are featured for toddlers 18-36 months old, accompanied by a parent or caregiver. No registration is necessary.

For more information, phone (732) 463-1633, Ext. 1 for Kennedy Library and (732) 752-1166 for Westergard Library.

modems, printers and cables are accepted. Irons, fluorescent lamps, thermostats and thermometers containing mercury also are welcome.

For directions, visit www.mcauth.com or phone (732) 745-4170.

Electronics recycling at Raritan Center

Did you get a cell phone, computer, TV or compact disc player for the holidays?

If you did, don't throw the old one in the garbage. Most electronics contain toxic

materials and should be recycled.

The Middlesex County Improvement

Authority sponsors an electronics recycling program open to all in the county. Drop off your old consumer electronics 9 a.m.-1 p.m. tomorrow at Hesstech in Raritan Center in Edison.

CPUs, monitors, keyboards, scanners,

modems, printers and cables are accepted. Irons, fluorescent lamps, thermostats and thermometers containing mercury also are welcome.

For directions, visit www.mcauth.com or phone (732) 745-4170.

Middlesex County news briefs

Anger management classes at WHW

METUCHEN — Registration is underway for an anger management workshop sponsored by Women Helping Women.

The workshop runs Tuesday nights for four weeks beginning Jan. 8. Fee is \$25 per session. Reduced rates are available.

For more information and registration, phone (732) 549-6000.

Women's group offers counseling

METUCHEN — In response to the events of Sept. 11, Women Helping Women is offering short-term counseling and group therapy at no cost.

Men as well as women are welcome. For more information, phone (732) 549-6000.

Metuchen Library holds special clearance sale

METUCHEN — The Metuchen Public Library is running a clearance sale on the special books published to mark the 100th anniversary of the borough.

All titles are at half the original price. They are the "Metuchen Centennial Chronicle 1900-2000," at \$12.50; "An Historical Walking Tour of Metuchen, New Jersey," at \$3; and "Old Colonial Cemetery of Metuchen," at \$3.

Copies are limited to those on hand while supplies last. To purchase any of these books, visit the library at 480 Middlesex Ave. during library hours.

Mail orders also will be accepted to Metuchen Public Library, Director, 480 Middlesex Ave., Metuchen, NJ 08840. All mail orders must be payable to "Borough of Metuchen" and include an additional \$2 per book

for shipping and handling.

Scrabble anyone? Meet at Minnie B.

EDISON — The Edison Recreation Department sponsors a Scrabble Club for those who like to play the word game. At the Minnie B. Veal Community Center, 1070 Grove Ave., sessions are 7-10 p.m. the first and third Tuesday of the month. At the Dorothy K. Drwal Stelton Community Center, 328 Plainfield Ave., sessions are 7-10 p.m. the second and fourth Tuesday of the month.

Beginners are welcome. Free instruction is offered 8-9 p.m.

For more information, phone Walt at (732) 721-9218 or Lois at (732) 906-5496.

Hey! 'Picture this!' at Edison Library

EDISON — The Edison Free Public Library wants toddlers to "Picture This!"

This puppet show with the Clamshell Theatre is for children 2 years old through kindergarten, accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Siblings are not wanted.

Showtimes are 10 a.m. Tuesday at the main branch on Plainfield Avenue and 1:30 p.m. Tuesday at the North Edison branch on Grove Avenue. For registration, visit the appropriate library or phone (732) 287-2351, Ext. 3 for the main branch and (732) 548-4759, Ext. 228 for North Edison.

Chamber of Commerce seeking town history

EDISON — The Edison Chamber of Commerce celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2002.

Photographs, stories, letters and related memorabilia are

being sought. In addition, the chamber is looking for information on companies that were established in Edison over 50 years ago. For more information, phone (732) 738-9482.

Visit Middle Earth at HP Library

HIGHLAND PARK — The Laurano family of Highland Park has built three dimensional renderings of their favorite scenes from "The Hobbit." Gandalf, Bilbo Baggins, the Hobbit, and the Gollum are all visiting the Highland Park Public Library, 31 North Fifth Avenue, throughout November. Borrowing their mother's edition of "The Hobbit," Zachary, Rosey and Mary built miniature sets complete with figures. "Riddles In The Dark," "Bag End, Under Hill," and "Smaug On His Dragon Hoard," are the chapters brought to life in the children's room display case. Working together as an assembly team, Elizabeth Laurano and her three children found items from their household and recreated sections of Middle Earth from Bilbo's great odyssey. Come see their visions before you see the new film.

For more information call the library at (732) 572-2750.

Piscataway Recreation theater trips for '02

PISCATAWAY — Tickets are available for these theater trips sponsored by the Recreation

Department: Jan. 13 — "42nd Street" on Broadway. Cost is \$90. The bus leaves the Municipal Complex 12:15 p.m.

Feb. 10 — "Aida" on Broadway. Cost is \$100. The bus leaves the Municipal Complex 12:15 p.m.

March 30 — "Big Bird's Sunny Camp-Out" at the State Theatre in New Brunswick. Cost is \$22. Transportation is on your own.

For more information, phone (732) 562-2382.

SP Elks are selling Entertainment books

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Elks Lodge 2298 is selling Entertainment 2002 coupon books to raise funds for lodge activities.

Cost is \$30 each. For orders, phone Lou Peralta at (908) 756-6406.

Recreation Center, located behind the rescue squad building off Mountain Avenue.

Historical Society wants your pictures

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — The South Plainfield Historical Society is searching for old photographs and postcards of the borough to go into a book.

Bring any photos you may have of South Plainfield and its citizens to the Historical Society meeting 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 16 at South Plainfield High School. Each photo should include a written description along with the owner's name and address.

All photos will be returned.

Guest speaker for the Jan. 16 meeting is Richard Veit Jr., director of the Center for New Jersey History and an assistant professor of anthropology at Monmouth University. He is the editor of the forthcoming book on South Plainfield in the "Images of America" series.

The Jerseyans, history students from SPHS, will provide assistance and serve refreshments.

For more information, phone Dorothy Miele at (908) 754-3073. Alternate arrangements can be made if you cannot attend on Jan. 16.

Computer class offered at SP Adult School

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Personalized computer classes are now available for those who live in the borough.

The classes are offered by the Computer Academy through the South Plainfield Adult School. These courses provide an intro-

duction to the Internet, Windows, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Outlook and PowerPoint.

Instructor is Sharon Weber Hunt, a partner in the South Plainfield-based Computer Academy.

Fee is \$69 or \$99 depending on the course. For a complete schedule and registration, phone (908) 754-4620, Ext. 213.

Officers wanted in South Plainfield

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — The South Plainfield Department is accepting applications for the examination for the position of Police Officer.

The application is published and must be returned to the New Jersey Department of Personnel. The New Jersey Department of Personnel is the state agency responsible for administering the written examination. Specific instructions regarding application fees, eligibility requirements

(Continued on page A-10)

Middlesex County Vocational and Technical ADULT EVENING SCHOOLS WINTER COURSE OFFERINGS FOR 2002

Registration Dates: Jan. 7, 8, 9, 10, 2002 • 7 - 9 P.M.

Registration in school where course is offered. Materials fee: A nominal fee in some courses.

Joseph C. Colombo - Superintendent
Loretta M. Keimel, Supervisor - (732) 257-3300 - 8:30 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY COURSES

COURSE TITLE	LOCATION	COURSE TITLE	LOCATION
Adobe Photoshop (Basic) & (ADV)	PA	Home Woodworking (Advanced)	EB
Adult Basic Skills	EB	Industrial Electronic Controls (PLCs)	EB
Reading & Writing	EB	Machine Shop IV (Elementary BPR)	EB
Mathematics	EB	Manicuring** (Fee \$570.00) (300 Hrs.) EB-PI	
Automotive	PI	Motorcycle Maintenance and Repair	PI
Auto Body & Fender Repair	ALL	Oil Painting (BEG)	EB
Auto Mechanics (Basic)	EB	Oil Painting (ADV)	EB
Automotive Brakes	PA	OSHA 30 Hour Outreach Program for General Industry (30 Hrs.)	PI
Steering and Suspension	PI	Photography	EB
Know Your Car	EB, PI	Master Plumbing Renewal (6 Hrs.)	PI
Building Trades Blueprint Reading	PA, EB	Continuing Education Course	
Cake Decorating	EB	Plumbing Code	PI
Catering-Cooking	EB	SilkScreen Printing	EB
Cooking -Italian Culinary	EB	Small Engine Repair	PI
Electricity II-B (Math)	EB	Welding	EB-PI
Home Woodworking	EB		

TECHNICAL COURSES

COURSE TITLE	LOCATION	COURSE TITLE	LOCATION
Cooling and Cooling Controls	PI	Heating and Heat Controls	PI
Computer Assisted Drafting (CAD)	EB-PI	Refrigerant Handling (Cert.) (5wks)	\$150.00 PI
Computer Repair Technology	PA	Stationary Engineering I	EB, PI
First Aid/CPR	PI	(Low Pressure)	

OFFICE OCCUPATIONS/COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

COURSE TITLE	LOCATION	COURSE TITLE	LOCATION
Accounting II	EB	Microsoft Word For Windows (Advanced)	ALL
Excel	EB	P.C. Fundamentals	ALL
Excel Advanced	EB, PI	Powerpoint	EB
Microsoft Office 2000	PI	Typing (Basic)	PI
Microsoft Word For Windows	EB, PI	Typing (Advanced)	PI

CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING COURSES

COURSE TITLE	LOCATION	COURSE TITLE	LOCATION
Baking	EB	Quilting	EB
Cooking	EB	Dressmaking	EB
Flower Arrangement (Basic & Advanced)	EB	Interior Decorating	EB
		Slipcovers & Draperies	EB

HEALTH OCCUPATION AND SAFETY COURSES

COURSE TITLE	LOCATION	COURSE TITLE	LOCATION
Dietetic Assistant **	EB	Motorcycle Rider Safety	PI

(Fee: \$260.00) (108 hrs)

Winter Semester Classes begin January 14, 2002

Semester: Winter 2002

Social Security Number: Sex: Male Female

Half - Price for Senior Citizens of Middlesex County (See: General Information) Check Here

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Street Address _____ Phone _____

City, State, Zip Code _____ County _____

Employer _____ Local Union _____

Employer Address _____ Work Phone _____

Course Title _____ School Location _____ Start Date _____ Room # _____ Fee In-City _____ Fee Out-of-City _____ Materials Fee _____ TOTAL _____

TOTAL _____

2 WAYS TO REGISTER

MAIL Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools Adult Education 112 Rues Lane, East Brunswick, NJ 08816

IN PERSON Make Checks payable to: Middlesex County Vocational Schools Registration by mail must be postmarked by January 4, 2002. "Apprentices register separately."

Fees: In-County - As stated • Out-Of-County - Fee Plus \$30.00 • FEES ARE REFUNDABLE

Courses are 9 weeks unless noted

LOCATION: EB - East Brunswick
PA - Perth Amboy
PI - Piscataway
ALL - All 3 Locations

SCHOOL LOCATIONS 112 Rues Lane, East Brunswick
618 New Brunswick Avenue, Perth Amboy
21 Suttons Lane, Piscataway

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

435303

Review/Herald/Reporter

Registration Dates & Times

January 7, 8, 9, 10, 2002 7 PM - 9 PM

Mary Coldenhoff

HIGHLAND PARK — Mary Coldenhoff, 43, died Dec. 18, 2001 at her home. A native of Newark, she lived in Cliffwood Beach and Laurence Harbor before moving to Highland Park three months ago.

Michael Kislan

EDISON — Michael J. Kislan, 84, died Dec. 23, 2001 at the JFK Hartwyck at Edison Estates Nursing, Convalescent and Rehabilitation Center. He had been a factory worker with General Cable Corp. in Perth Amboy for 25 years prior to his retirement.

Mr. Kislan was born in Perth Amboy and had lived in Edison since 1948. He served in the Army during World War II.

His first wife, Ethel

Miss Coldenhoff is survived by her parents, Michael and Vilma of Laurence Harbor; and a brother, Tim of Peoria, Ariz.

Private arrangements were by the Whiteley Funeral Home in South Amboy.

Robert W. Noll; chemical engineer

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Robert W. Noll, 81, a chemical engineer who spent most of his career with Foster Wheeler Energy Corp., died Dec. 27 at Reading Hospital and Medical Center in West Reading, Pa.

He joined Foster Wheeler in 1946 as a project engineer in its contract engineering department. Mr. Noll transferred to the project management department as a project manager in 1965; he became a systems analyst in 1966, manager of engineering administration in 1977 and manager of divisional procedures in 1978.

He retired in 1983 as a staff consultant for contract engi-

neering, a post he held four years. Mr. Noll worked for the former Tidewater Associated Oil Co. joining Foster Wheeler.

A licensed professional engineer in New York, Mr. Noll earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Pennsylvania State University in 1942. He was a member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers.

His hobbies included golf, bowling, gardening, photography, Bible reading, tape recording, singing and Penn State football. An assistant scoutmaster with a Boy Scout troop in South Plainfield, Mr. Noll was a former secretary-treasurer of St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church and sang in its choir.

More recently he was a member of Kissinger Lutheran Church in Wyomissing, Pa.

Mr. Noll was born in Bowmanstown, Pa., and lived in South Plainfield before moving to Wyomissing in 1990.

His parents, Roy A. Noll and Dora E. Brobst Noll, are deceased.

Surviving are his wife, Eunice M. Bush Noll; a daughter, Sandra S. Noll Kavka and husband Michael of South Plainfield; three sons, Robert W. Jr. of Lyndhurst, Roger M. and wife Laura of Carmel, Ind., and Ronald D. and wife Janice of Monmouth Junction; a brother, Willard J. of Bowmanstown; eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Private arrangements were by the Henninger Funeral Home in Reading, Pa. Donations may be sent to The Highlands Endowment Fund, 2000 Cambridge Ave., Wyomissing, PA 19610.

More
obituaries
on page A-9

Obituaries

Mary DeSantis

PISCATAWAY — Mary A. DeSantis, 100, died Dec. 27, 2001 at Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield. A homemaker and seamstress, she loved horses and playing the piano.

Mrs. DeSantis was born Feb. 4, 1901 in Raritan and had lived in Piscataway since 1951. She was a parishioner of Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church.

Her husband, Alfred, died in 1982. Her parents, Ralph Curcio and Sadie Gaita Curcio, and a son, Rudolph Sansone, also are deceased.

Surviving are two daughters, Gloria Browner of Tuckerton and Ann Hamrah of Troutman, N.C.; two granddaughters, Isabelle "Bunnie" Camporeale, with whom Mrs. DeSantis lived, and Laura Sansone of Green Brook; a grandson, Greg Browner of Bridgewater; seven other grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Services were held Saturday at the Sheenan Funeral Home, Dunellen, followed by a funeral Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Church. Burial was in Resurrection Burial Park.

Mary Bori Leiss

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Mary Bori Leiss, 92, died Dec. 24, 2001 at the JFK Hartwyck at Oak Tree Nursing, Convalescent and Rehabilitation Center in Edison. She retired in 1967 after 40 years as a clerk with the former New Jersey Bell Telephone Co.

Mrs. Leiss was born in South Plainfield and lived in the borough before moving to Scotch Plains in 1976. She was a member of the Telephone Pioneers of America.

Her husband, Bernard, died in 1973.

Surviving are a niece, Joanne Zelek and husband Anthony of South Plainfield; other nieces and nephews; a great-niece and a great-nephew.

A funeral Mass was celebrated Saturday at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, of which Mrs. Leiss was a parishioner. Burial was in Holy Redeemer Cemetery. Arrangements were by the Higgins Home for Funerals, in Plainfield.

Rose Michaelson

EDISON — Rose Field Michaelson, 96, died Dec. 27, 2001 at Aventura Hospital and Medical Center in Aventura, Fla. She retired in 1988 after 20 years as a clerk with the former Franklin State Bank in Somerset.

Mrs. Michaelson was born in London, England. She lived in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, before coming to the United States in 1928. She also lived in Highland Park, North Brunswick and Edison before moving in 2001 to Boca Raton, Fla.

A member of Hadassah, Mrs.

Michaelson was a former member of the Highland Park Conservative Temple and Center.

Her husband, David S., died in 1990.

Surviving are a son, Stanley T. and wife Lorna of Aventura; a daughter, Bunny Gordon and husband Robert P. of Boca Raton; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and her granddaughter's pets, Jazz and Lexie.

Services were held Sunday at the Crabiell Parkwest Funeral Chapel in New Brunswick. Burial was in Mount Lebanon Cemetery, Iselin.

Charles Redding Jr.

PISCATAWAY — Charles "Chuck" Redding Jr., 54, died Dec. 25, 2001 at his home in Flemington. He had been with the Middlesex Borough Parks Department for 18 years, most recently as a supervisor.

Mr. Redding was born in Newark and lived in Piscataway before moving to Flemington in 1985. He graduated from Piscataway High School in 1966.

A sister, Candice, died in 1987. Surviving are his wife, Joanne; a brother-in-law, Bruce Arner and wife Suzan of Flemington; and his maternal grandmother, Rose Mulcahey of Bradley Beach.

A funeral Mass was celebrated Saturday at St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, Dunellen, following services at the Piscataway Funeral Home.

Margaret Simko; dietitian, professor

EDISON — Margaret D. Simko, 80, a registered dietitian and university professor who served on the township Board of Education, died Dec. 26 at her home.

She was the editor of Topics in Clinical Nutrition, a professional journal, and a clinical professor in family medicine at the UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Dr. Simko also was chairwoman of the Home Economics and Nutrition Department at New York University, where she was a professor emeritus of nutrition and dietetics. She held a master's degree and doctorate from NYU.

After earning her bachelor's degree and teaching certificate from North Dakota State University she held an internship at Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio. North Dakota State honored her in 1990 with its University Alumni Achievement Award and the Outstanding Home Economics Alumni Centennial Award.

Dr. Simko once was a nutrition consultant to UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The former U.S. Public Health Service officer

received the ADA Medallion from the American Dietetic Association in 1986 and was listed in "Who's Who in American Women."

She was a member of the New Jersey Dietetic Association; the Mid-Jersey Branch, American Association of University Women; Omicron Nu, Kappa Delta Pi and Pi Lambda Theta honor societies.

Dr. Simko was born in St. Paul, Minn., and had lived in Edison since 1953. She was a parishioner of Our Lady of Peace Roman Catholic Church for 48 years.

Surviving are her husband of 55 years, Michael; three daughters, Kathleen A. Babich and husband Charles of Edison, Maureen S. Hreha and husband Michael of Edison and Eileen S. Mintz and husband Geoffrey of Yarmouth, Maine; and eight grandchildren.

Services were held Saturday at the Flynn & Son Funeral Home, Fords, followed by a funeral Mass at Our Lady of Peace Church. Burial was in St. Nicholas Cemetery, Perth Amboy.

Donations may be sent to Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, 45 Springfield Ave., Springfield, NJ 07081.

Beauty

Hillside Cemetery's gentle slopes are dotted with stately trees and evergreens. Flowering trees and bushes accent the grounds. All lots, graves, cremorial graves and bronze cremorial niches are in fully developed areas and include perpetual care. Located on Woodland Avenue in Scotch Plains, a non-profit, non-sectarian organization.

908.756.1729

Hillside Cemetery

Established 1886

www.hillsidecemetary.com

Samuel E. Goff

EDISON — Samuel E. Goff, 90, died Dec. 23, 2001 at Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield. He served in the Army during World War II and for 40 years was a butcher at the Falls Market in Plainfield.

Mr. Goff, who was born in Bound Brook, lived in North Plainfield and Dunellen before moving to Edison in 1996.

His wife, Myrtle Lynn Goff, died in 1993. A brother, John J., died in 1997.

Surviving are a sister, Audrey

John J. Kostecki

Dunellen and Piscataway Post 7504 on Sidney Road. Mr. Kostecki also was a member of the Board of Advisory Commissioners and American Legion Post 261 in the township.

Surviving are his wife, MaryLou; his mother, Helen of Toms River; two daughters, Kimberly M. of Somerset and Tammy Gubbage and husband Michael of Highlands; a stepson, Nicholas Russo, and two stepdaughters, Lisa Russo and Melissa Russo, all of Piscataway; and a brother, Willard and wife Amelia of Florida.

Services were held Saturday at the Piscataway Funeral Home. Burial was in Lake Nelson Memorial Park.

M. Patricia Peters

PISCATAWAY — M. Patricia Peters, 64, died Dec. 22, 2001 at her home. She once was a service representative with the former New Jersey Bell Telephone Co.

She was born in Brooklyn and had lived in Piscataway since 1960.

Mrs. Peters worked for New Jersey Bell for 40 years before retiring in 1994 from its New Brunswick offices. She was a member of the Mothers Club at the former St. Pius X Regional High School in Piscataway.

In addition, Mrs. Peters was a Right to Life volunteer at St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church in Edison.

Elizabeth Schwickrath

PISCATAWAY — Elizabeth "Betty" Schwickrath, 74, died suddenly Dec. 24, 2001 at her home. She was born in Waynesboro, Va., and had lived in Piscataway since 1962.

Mrs. Schwickrath is survived by three sons, Ronald Benson and Robert Benson, both of Waynesboro, and Peter of Piscataway; two daughters, Mary Buscema of Tempe, Ariz., and Patricia Rivera of South

Plainfield; two sisters, Frances Bayne of Waynesboro and Lula Belle Sprouse of Crozet, Va.; 19 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Her husband, Anthony, died in 1996.

Two other sisters, Anna Skinner and Nellie Floyd, and a brother, Floyd Carter Jr., also are deceased.

Private arrangements were by the Costello-Runyon Funeral Home in Metuchen.

Helen Takacs

EDISON — Helen Grega Takacs, 78, died Dec. 26, 2001 at Overlook Hospital in Summit. She retired in 1989 as an administrative assistant with MAN-Roland Inc. in Piscataway.

Mrs. Takacs was born in Fords and had lived in Edison since 1966.

Her husband, Nicholas P., died in 1992.

Surviving are two daughters, Dorothy A. of Summit and Elizabeth A. Simpson of San Diego, Calif.; two sons, William S.

Charles Tannenbaum

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Charles Maurice "Charlie" Tannenbaum, 89, died Dec. 21, 2001 at the Cedar Oaks Care Center. An electrical engineer, he also owned Speed Electronics in Newark for 30 years prior to his retirement.

Mr. Tannenbaum, who was born in New York City, lived in Hillside and Edison before moving to South Plainfield in 1997.

He earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Florida and a master's degree in chemistry from Harvard

Hazel Watson

EDISON — Hazel M. Watson, 54, died Dec. 25, 2001 at her home. She had been with Oxford Healthcare for five years, most recently as a senior administra-

tive assistant.

Mrs. Watson was born in Rahway and lived in Woodbridge before moving to Edison in 1997.

Surviving are a son, Christopher of Littleton, Colo.; a daughter, Darlene Gutman and husband Neil of Austin, Texas; and a grandchild.

Private arrangements were by the Zylka Funeral Home in Perth Amboy. Donations may be sent to the American Diabetes Association.

Fax us
your news
(908) 575-6683

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
45 Hampton St., Metuchen
732-549-8941
Rev. Ronald Owens, Sr. Pastor

WORSHIP
Sunday, 8am & 11am
1st & 5th Sunday, 9:30am

EDUCATION
Church School: Sun. 10:30am
Bible Study: Wed. Noon & 7:00pm

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Evenings by Appt. 732-968-2543

Edison

On Dec. 27 police arrested Melton R. Moreno, 32, of Elizabeth on charges of allegedly shoplifting \$1,225 from Macy's in Menlo Park Mall. According to police, Moreno attempted to leave the store with three jackets.

A 1995 Ford Escort parked in the parking lot of Menlo Park Mall on Dec. 27 sustained \$200 in damage when unknown suspects smashed the rear window.

Police are investigating the theft of \$1,550 in tools from A&B Construction on Raritan Center Parkway which took place sometime between Dec. 21 and Dec. 26.

Police are investigating two thefts which took place between Dec. 22 and Dec. 26 both of which involved Newfield Avenue businesses being robbed of shipping materials.

Zax Trucking Inc. was robbed of \$4,000 in shipping containers and chassis.

Nantin Shipping was robbed of \$8,000 in chassis and containers.

Sometime during the night of Dec. 23 unknown suspects gained entry to a storage trailer parked in the rear of Gladys Court. According to police, \$1,800 worth of merchandise, including electronic equipment, was stolen.

Sometime between Dec. 21 and Dec. 25 a 1993 GMC truck was stolen while it was parked in front of a Northfield Avenue residence.

A 1998 Pontiac sustained \$300 in damage when unknown suspects smashed the rear window while the vehicle was parked in the parking lot of Menlo Park Mall.

Sometime during the night of Dec. 23 unknown suspects broke the vent of a 1994 Dodge van, gained entry and stole \$300 in power tools. Damage to the car was put at \$100.

Highland Park

An orange was pelted Friday at two cars parked on Valentine Street. Police were told it was not

the first time the vehicles had been pelted.

A Trek mountain bike, black and green in color, was reported stolen Dec. 17 from an unlocked garage on Cleveland Avenue. According to police, the mountain bike was hanging from the rafters and held in place by a cable that was cut to remove the bicycle. A girl's 10-speed purple bicycle was stolen from the same garage two weeks earlier but was not discovered missing until after the mountain bike was stolen, police said.

Piscataway

On Dec. 18 at Thrif-o-Matic laundry on Washington Avenue a cash box with over \$800 was stolen. A man described as a black male wearing a gray sweatshirt and blue jacket is being sought for questioning.

On Dec. 24 a case labeled "investigations" was found in the woods near Lackland Avenue containing camcorders, tape recorders, cassettes, chords and other recording devices. The owner is being sought.

On Dec. 24 three black males on bicycles were seen acting suspiciously near Quibbletown School. Police were unable to find the suspects.

On Dec. 24 a Motorola star-tac cell phone was found near Shop-Rite at 1306 Centennial Ave. with Cingular service. The owner is being sought.

On Dec. 25 a dog running at large on Riverview Avenue was transported to the Edison Animal Shelter. The owner is being sought.

On Dec. 24 Tishannia Thompson, 24, of Washington Avenue in the Bronx was arrested and charged with theft and fraud. Undrea Bowens, 28, of St. Nicholas Place in Manhattan was arrested and charged with conspiracy and theft. Bobby Friedman, 25, of East 161st St. in the Bronx was arrested and charged with criminal attempt, credit card fraud and conspiracy. The three were seen at Wal-Mart at 1303 Centennial Ave.

Police Log

attempting to get instant credit using other peoples' names.

On Dec. 26 Catina Lemel Plummer, 29, of Main Street in Somerville was arrested and charged with shoplifting White Diamonds perfume and household items from Wal-Mart at 1303 Centennial Ave.

On Dec. 26 Frank Toth was arrested and charged with shoplifting a \$150 leather jacket from Wal-Mart at 1303 Centennial Ave.

On Dec. 26 a water main break occurred at Stelton Road and Jessie Way. Elizabethtown Water Co. responded.

On Dec. 27 Mary Brown-Pugh of Lincoln Avenue in Piscataway was issued summons for driving while suspended and going through a stop sign.

On Dec. 27 a 1999 Buick on England Avenue caught fire. New Market Fire Department extinguished the fire. No injuries were reported. The cause of the fire was unknown.

On Dec. 27 Margaret Stewart-Molnar was issued a summons for not wearing a seat belt in the Centennial Avenue/River Road jug handle.

On Dec. 30 a 1992 Honda Civic registered to a Metuchen resident was found abandoned on Route

287. It was towed.

On Dec. 27 police made an official report stating it's "very difficult" to locate exact addresses at the Maple Grove Condo Complex as building numbers don't run consecutively, nor are the apartments actually on their designated streets. The report specifically warns "the complex is confusing and creates a delay in responding effectively." A complex supervisor agreed stating the situation would be rectified with signs on buildings noting building numbers, street names and unit numbers.

On Dec. 28 four shots from a 22 caliber rifle were fired at a Quincy residence damaging the siding and garage. There are no suspects.

On Dec. 28 a Roosevelt Street mother-daughter residence was burglarized. An elderly woman was in the two-floor residence at the time but unharmed. An upstairs apartment was ransacked and jewelry and money stolen.

On Dec. 30 attempted entry into a Rutgers Road apartment occurred via a crawl space. Sneaker prints were found at the scene.

On Dec. 28 Kimberly Brown of Highland Avenue was arrested and charged with aggravated assault with a weapon, specifically a screw driver, related to a domestic dispute. She was transported to Middlesex County Correctional

Center in lieu of \$2,500 bail. Police report alcohol use was also involved.

South Plainfield

On Dec. 27 William Pisack, 38, of Rt. 22 in Branchburg was arrested and charged with contempt of court and theft in connection with allegedly being seen at Cesco Elevator at 4401 South Clinton Avenue loading a snowblower, weed trimmer and toaster oven in his vehicle. Bail was set at \$450.

On Dec. 27 a robbery occurred at Drug Fair at 140 South Plainfield Ave. A black female described as 6-foot tall, heavy-set, wearing an American flag sweatshirt attempted to shoplift items and assaulted an employee. The suspect left in a 1987 brown four-door Oldsmobile and then fled on foot down South Plainfield Avenue. The suspect left a jacket at the scene with discharge papers from Muhlenberg Hospital.

On Dec. 27 a black leather wallet with a \$10 bill was found in the Clinton Corners parking lot. The owner is being sought.

On Dec. 27 a building on Synder Avenue was hit with blue and orange paint from paint ball guns. Calderone apartment residents are suspected.

On Dec. 26, 12 trailers at Consolidated Freight at 102 New Era Drive were entered and items stolen. There are no suspects.

On Dec. 22 a 1988 Ford on Maple Avenue had its window smashed. There are no suspects.

Recreation Department is now taking registration for an adult yoga class. Registrants must be borough residents, 18 years of age and post-high school. Classes begin in January and will run for eight weeks. The cost is \$50 per person.

Classes are limited to 15 people. Participants will need their own mat, notepad and pen. Registration forms can be picked up at the Recreation Department. For more information, call (732) 356-7966.

Mitten Tree gathers warm donations

MIDDLESEX — Winter can be one of the hardest times for disadvantaged families. In response, Middlesex Girl Scout Troop 566 has setup a Mitten Tree at their local library to help.

The scouts are asking for donations of hats, mittens and scarves. The tree will be set up in the children's library. People can visit the library and hang their donations on the tree.

The collection of donations continues until today. For more information, call Lisa Marotto at (732) 868-9297.

Winter Pre-K Art classes

MIDDLESEX — The Middlesex Recreation Department is accepting registration for the Winter Pre-K Art session. Each session is 10 weeks long. Classes are for 4-year-old children and are held on Thursdays. Registration forms can be picked up at the Recreation Center. Cost is \$35 for residents and \$40 for non-residents. For more information, call (732) 356-7966.

Donate to the WTC Middlesex Hero Fund

MIDDLESEX — Middlesex resident Tom Gorman was a Port Authority Police Officer who went missing during the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center. A fund has been established to support his family in this time of need. To make a donation, make the check payable to WTC Middlesex Hero Fund and mail it to Geri Sadowski, 109 Lee

Drive, Middlesex, NJ 08846. All donations go to the Gorman family. For more information, call Sadowski at (732) 752-2048 or Tracy Abate at (732) 563-2258.

Knights are selling entertainment books

DUNELLEN — The Dunellen Knights of Columbus are selling entertainment books for 2002. \$30 per book. Call Jeff Marren at (732) 752-3838 or stop by the Dollar Planet, 105 Bound Brook Rd., Middlesex.

Adventure story telling at library

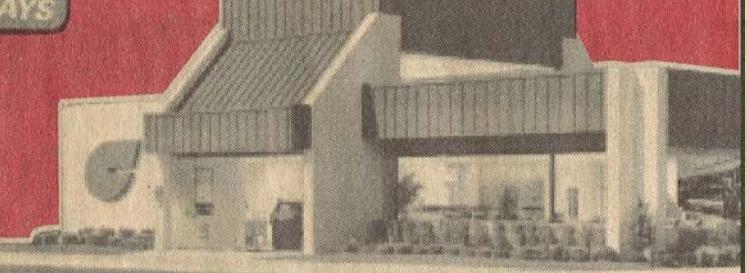
DUNELLEN — The Dunellen Public Library will host popular storyteller Judi Schleppenbach at the library 7 p.m. Jan. 7. She will lead children in an hour of "You Can Too" storytelling adventures. This creative and interactive approach to storytelling is known to be a crowd pleaser, so call (732) 968-4585 to register for this free program. Registration can also be done at the circulation desk.

Winter craft time Jan. 10

DUNELLEN — The Dunellen Public Library is inviting children ages four and up to come to the library for a winter craft program 3:30 p.m. Jan. 10. The craft will be led by Eileen Grimes. Space is limited and registration is required. Call (732) 968-4585 for more information.

Entertainment books available

DUNELLEN — The Dunellen United Methodist Church has Entertainment 2002 books now available. It features savings for dining and entertainment. Six different regions are available to choose from. Call Shirley at (732) 752-7437, Brenda at (908) 535-9016 or the Church at (732) 968-4347 for more information. The books are available through December.

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480 Middlesex Ave.
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Sports

Happy holidays for Tigers' hoops squads

SPHS girls
win close final
in tournament

By ALEX LOWE
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BOUND BROOK — South Plainfield High's girls basketball team showed it had the winning touch at just the right time.

"We made the most of our free throws down the stretch," said Tigers Head Coach Bill Schulte following Saturday night's 50-48 triumph over Somerville in the championship game of the Crusader Classic Holiday Tournament. "I think that was important in holding them off."

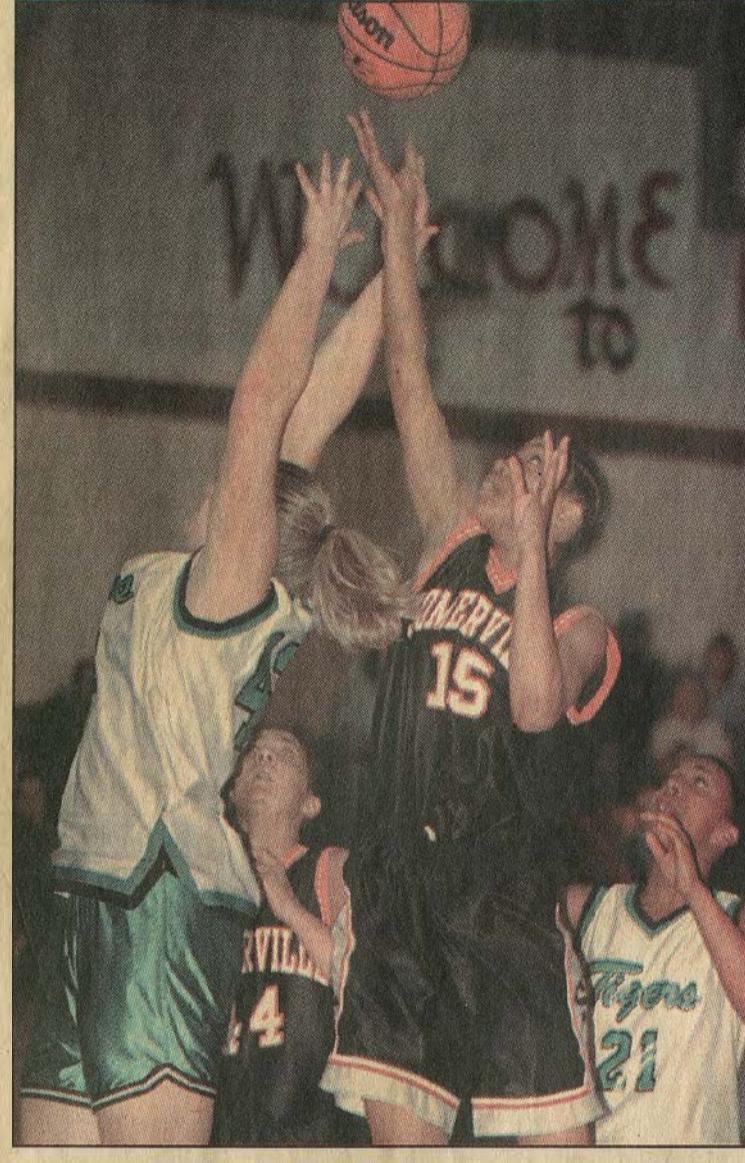
South Plainfield broke open a tight battle by outscoring Somerville 17-7 in the second quarter. The Tigers (4-1) were paced by Ngozi Okparaekwe, who scored 13 of her team's points during that session.

Okparaekwe seemed to be everywhere in the second period, converting a trio of three-point plays inside, blocking shots, stealing in-bounds passes and hitting fast-break shots. The 5-foot-8 sophomore's efforts helped SPHS build a 31-20 advantage by halftime.

"We were pressing them a lot in the first half and being very effective at it," said Okparaekwe, who finished the night with 19 points. "Our defense set me up for scoring opportunities and I was able to take advantage of them."

Somerville (2-2) didn't go down without a fight, however. The Pioneers made halftime adjustments that had South Plainfield on the run for the rest of the contest.

"We changed our defensive approach at halftime and put more pressure on the ball," said Pioneers Head Coach Jessica Beck. "We didn't allow ourselves to get beat down the court in the second half and our confidence as



NICOLE DIMELLA/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

South Plainfield High's Kristina Cwiekalo, left, and Somerville's Toni Darby battle for a rebound during Saturday's finale of the Crusader Holiday Classic, which the Tigers won 50-48.

a team began to rise."

The Pioneers, way out of sync offensively in the second quarter, began to find success down low with 5-9 sophomore Courtney Hilts, who scored 17 points for the game. Hilts hit a pair of free throws and followed them up with a putback moments later to pull SHS within 40-36 with 5:55 to go in the game. The stage was

set for a fantastic final five minutes.

Without Okparaekwe, who missed much of the third period because of a cut lip, and struggling against the Pioneers' defensive pressure, South Plainfield was forced to depend on its poise and guile to get through the closing minutes.

(Continued on page B-2)

Parks, Francis lead boys to Crusader tourney title

By ALEX LOWE
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BOUND BROOK — The South Plainfield High boys basketball team completed a sweep of the Crusader Classic Holiday Tournament with a convincing 52-42 decision over Somerville Saturday night. The SPHS girls earlier topped Somerville in their tourney final.

The Tiger boys (3-2) gained an early lead and were in control throughout as they handed Somerville its first loss in four outings.

"We're a young team, so this is a big win for us just because Somerville is a quality opponent," said South Plainfield Head Coach Jeff Lubreski, whose team knocked off host Bound Brook the previous night. "We've been struggling a bit with our consistency so maybe this will make us a little more consistent the rest of the year."

It was a workmanlike performance from South Plainfield, which had an edge in almost every aspect of play during the game and never let Somerville establish a rhythm on offense.

"Defense and patience on offense, those were the keys tonight," said South Plainfield sophomore guard Gary Houston. "We held the ball and played smart."

Somerville struggled considerably on offense during the first half and faced a 25-13 deficit at the break. Foul trouble to key Pioneers Isaiah Davenport and Kerry Foderingham did nothing to help their cause.

"Thirteen points at the half and you know you're in trouble," said Somerville center Doug Beck. "We were shooting very poorly as a team and the guys who usually bail us out — Kerry and Isaiah — just couldn't get out of the blocks, either."

It was an opinion echoed by Pioneers Head Coach Joe D'Alessandro.

"We got off to a very slow start offensively," he said. "Too much freelancing. We're not very big, so it's very important that we execute well and tonight we didn't. But give South Plainfield all the credit. They were the better team tonight."

While Somerville's offense was having problems, the Tigers were getting big efforts from David Francis and Aaron Parks. Francis scored 14 points while Parks, named the tourney's Most Valuable Player, added 15.

"Aaron's got a nice jump shot and when it's on, we ride him," said

Lubreski. "Tonight it was, and we did."

Somerville pulled within eight points a couple of times in the third period but SPHS responded each time. So complete was the Tigers' control that Somerville never got closer than 11 in the final quarter.

SOUTH PLAINFIELD (52)

Francis 3-2-2-14, Parks 6-3-15, Gilmore 3-2-8,

Russell 0-3-3, Robinson 1-1-3, Jones 2-2-6,

Veinott 0-1-0-3. Totals 15-3-13-52.

SOMERVILLE (42)

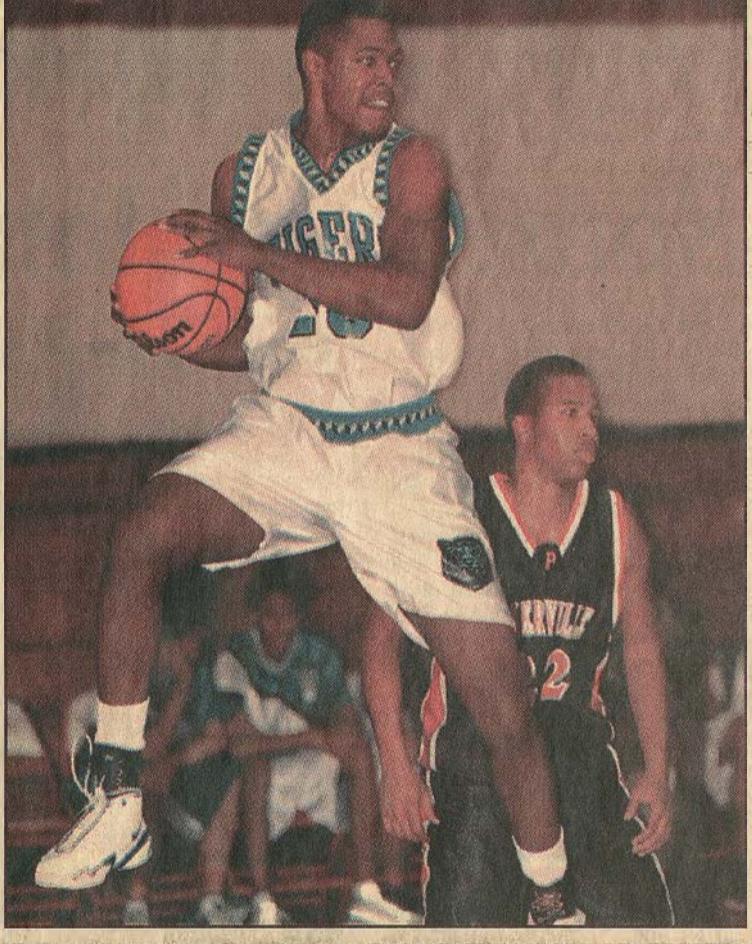
Foderingham 4-5-13, Beck 3-5-11, Davenport

2-0-4, C. Barton 2-1-5, K. Barton 2-0-4, Porcaro 0-

1-0-3, Calvo 1-0-2. Totals 14-1-11-42.

South Plainfield 9 16 12 15 — 52

Somerville 5 8 14 15 — 42



NICOLE DIMELLA/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Travis Hollis snags a rebound for South Plainfield High during the Tigers' 52-42 triumph over Somerville in the Crusader Holiday Classic championship game in Bound Brook.

Zannetti helps Stevens claim wrestling honors

By AL WAGNER
STAFF WRITER

There was no surprise party at the Rahway Tournament — not as far as the J.P. Stevens High wrestling team was concerned, at least.

"There were no surprises tonight — no surprises at all," said Hawks Head Coach Steve Giordano after his grapplers captured top honors during the Dec. 27 competition.

Stevens came out of nowhere to win with 139 points, 20 better than the host team, which had been generally regarded as the favorite. But Rahway fell far behind in the early going, while New Providence finished third with 110 points.

"Everyone did well," said Giordano. "We pulled together as a team and focused on our main goal in winning this tournament and doing well in our individual classes. We put together a great winning effort for this win and for this program. Our hard work paid off."

Stevens 140-pounder Gene Zannetti, one of three Hawks who won in their weight classes, was named the tourney's Outstanding Wrestler. He secured a 20-4 technical fall over Colonia's Kendrick Randall in the finals.

"It was a great win for us," said Zannetti. "This should go far for us this season."

All except two JPS wrestlers qualified for the semifinals or better.

"Placing those 12 in the top four really helped us," said Giordano. "That's something we really

worked on coming into this tournament."

Giordano won his first tournament since taking over the Stevens program last year.

"Coach helped us all," said Zannetti. "He's going to turn around this program, and this win is the first huge step in going in that direction for all of us."

"Coach Giordano is the reason I'm at the point where I am today," he added. "I wrestled in this tournament all four years in my career. It's a nice feeling to win both my class and the OW. Plus, I hope the OW award is my first step in becoming a state champ this year."

Not only did Giordano help Zannetti win, he helped his brother, Jeff, win at 103 and Tim Karmazin win at 215 for the Hawks.

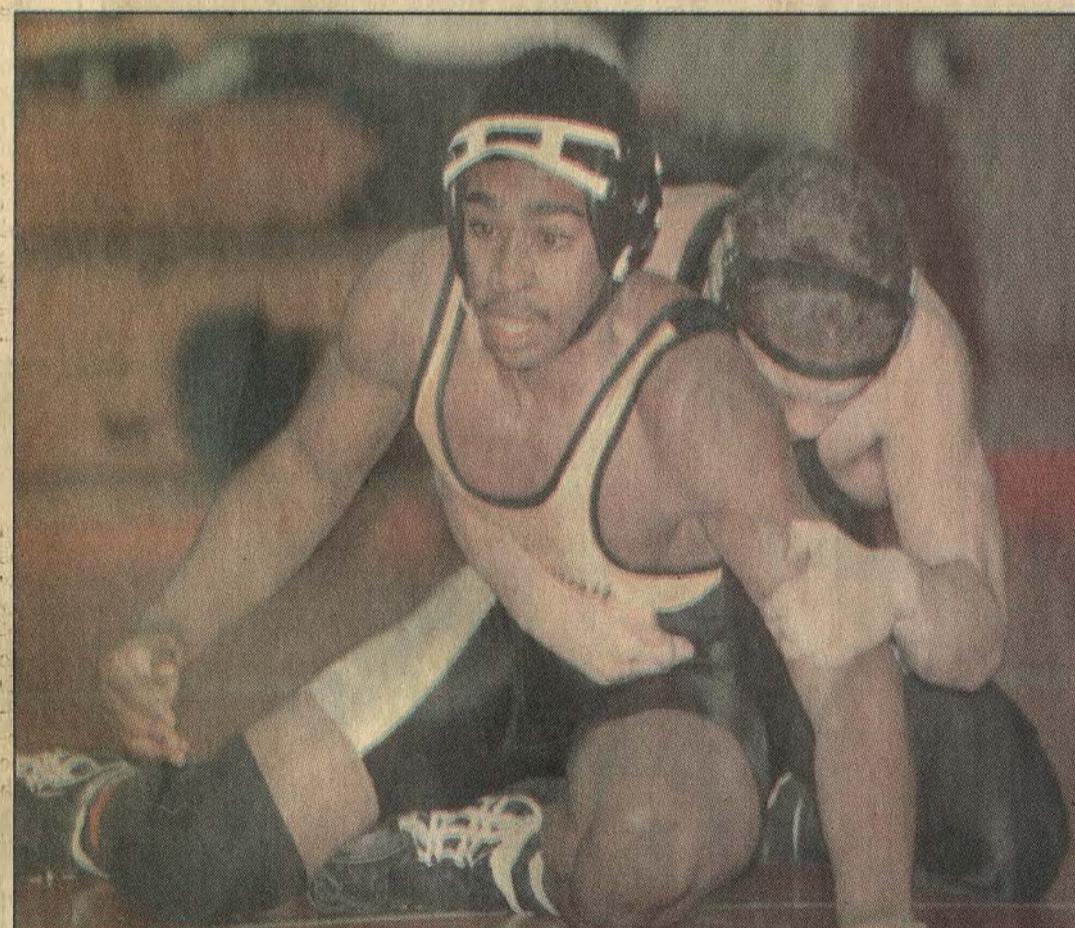
"Jeff is coming along great — he's a great competitor like his brother," said Giordano. "And Tim gave a huge boost to his confidence in coming back from last year's performance."

The Hawks' Matt Stanzione (145) and Adam Rosen (152) both finished second. Stanzione dropped a 5-3 overtime battle to Colonia's Roberto Cerbone.

"Matt's match was very close," said Giordano. "He almost had (Cerbone) but just fell short. Matt's a great competitor. He's tough and strong. In close matches, though, he must learn to open up more offensively against his man."

Rosen lost his match by major decision, 10-0.

(Continued on page B-2)



GEORGE PACCIELLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The next move?

Piscataway High senior Quesly Mitchell, left, and Chris Gillen duel at 189 pounds Friday during the Blue Devil Tournament in Westfield. Neither wrestler was a top-four finisher. Piscataway roundup, page B-3.

Torrid young Hawks continue on winning pace

By AL WAGNER
STAFF WRITER

NORTH ARLINGTON — History tells us people, places, and teams come back from the abyss and return to glory — even in high school sports.

However, J.P. Stevens girls basketball Head Coach Andy Eng and his troops probably didn't quite expect this fast of a comeback. The Hawks trounced Ridgefield 67-38 Sunday in the Queen of Peace Holiday Tournament championship game for their fifth consecutive victory.

"It was a total dominating team effort," said Eng. "It's a great victory for us against a tough team like Ridgefield, and a

great tournament. We're happy."

The Hawks' 5-2 start to the season is a huge contrast to last year, when they finished with a 3-18 record.

"It's a great start — a five-game winning streak," said Eng. "It's unexpected but as long as we don't get ahead of ourselves we'll be OK. We just need to maintain our focus and prove we can beat our GMC division rivals without losing our confidence in our abilities."

The Hawks — comprised largely of freshmen and sophomores — dominated the Royals from the opening tip-off in cruising to a 20-5 first-period lead behind tournament Most Valuable Player Stephanie

J.P. STEVENS GIRLS BASKETBALL

Marciano's 11 points (three treys and a baseline jumper). She finished with a game-high 24 points.

"That start built up our confidence and our confidence in our talent," Eng said. "It was a real confidence-builder for our players."

Marciano, a sophomore guard, agreed.

"It's a great honor in winning both the title and MVP trophy," she said. "The tournament was a great experience for me. In fact, it was great for all of us. When we won the first two games, I knew we had a chance of winning the

title. This will go a long way in building our confidence.

"Everyone contributed something. Tania Kennedy, Anaya Way, and the rest all contributed, whether it was a key rebound or steal. All but one or two girls scored. It would've been nice if everyone had a point in the championship."

Among the JPS standouts was sophomore guard Way, who triggered the Hawks' opening 13-0 run by hitting her first points en route to a seven-point first period. She totaled 16 points in the final.

"Everyone chipped in tonight

— it's a credit to themselves," said Eng. "However, we couldn't do it without Way's quick start."

"We needed that opening (run) to help us generate an outstanding offensive performance," said Eng. "It was the best way for us to take control of the tempo and play our style especially since we're a young team."

In the second period, Marciano continued the Hawks' attack by adding a pair of treys and knocking down a pair of foul shots in opening a 20-5 lead into a 36-15 halftime lead. That surge included a three-pointer by Kennedy, a freshman who was in foul trouble most of the night and finished with 10 points.

"We used the clock in that

period as they (the Royals) tried to climb back," said Eng. "Our defense stopped them in key moments especially in the last three minutes when we put a full-court pressure on them and started to use our delay offense. It was a great one-two punch."

Way again started the next Hawk spurt in the third period by hitting a pair of jumpers while playing solid defense, coming up with two steals.

"Way just had one of those types of games every coach wants to see in his players," said Eng. "She was just awesome, as was Marciano."

The Hawks outscored Ridgefield 14-8 in the third quarter.

(Continued on page B-2)

Bulldog girls nab tourney title

By AL WAGNER

STAFF WRITER

Metuchen High's young girls basketball team took a major step forward last week.

The Bulldogs knocked off host Brearley 36-32 Saturday to claim the championship in the Brearley Bears Holiday Tournament in Kenilworth.

"This win is a huge confidence-booster for us," said Metuchen Head Coach Tom Vahalla. "Our team is filled with youth since we don't have any seniors. It's a nice win for us."

Metuchen, filled with a talented mixture of juniors, sophomores and freshmen, used a 14-8 run in the closing quarter in taking the championship and improving its record to 2-3.

With Metuchen trailing 26-24 after three periods, freshman point guard Kristen Edmonds went to work in the final eight minutes, scoring 12 of her game-high 17 points. She also totaled four assists, two steals and two blocks.

"Kristen had a great game," said Vahalla. "She's very quick and athletic. We put her on their best player (Nicole DeMaio) and Kristen just took over her and our team. She's going to be special in the coming years. We expect big things

Metuchen

High School Roundup



in the future from her.

"Plus, Chris Mulligan had two key blocks in that last period which triggered our offense. Mulligan is also going to be a good player in the future."

In their 33-24 tourney-opening victory over Henry Hudson of Monmouth County, the Bulldogs were led by the balanced scoring of Edmonds (seven points), Alison Konick (10) and Katie Matieka (eight) along with Brittany Herits (nine) rebounds.

"The Hudson game helped us going into the finals," Vahalla said. "It made us understand what it takes to win."

"All I want to see is progress each time we go onto the floor. By mid-season, who knows where we could be? As long as we play hard and build our confidence heading into the mid-season and beyond."

METUCHEN SCORING:

Edmonds 3 (3)-2-17, Ruddy 3-0-6, Matieka 0-1, O'Neil 2-0-4, Mulligan 1-0-2, Herits 1-0-2, Konick 2-0-4, Totals 12 (3)-3-36

Metuchen (2-3) 7 7 8 14 — 36

Brearley (3-2) 6 9 9 8 — 32

WRESTLING

The Bulldogs finished fifth in the North Brunswick Tournament Dec. 27, with Matt McManmon and Charles Bowles coming away with individual titles.

McManmon, at 130 pounds, defeated Rodney Thomas of South River 5-4 in the final and at 215, Bowles took an 11-1 major decision from Randy Donati of West Windsor-Plainsboro South.

Finishing second at 152 was Dan Loureco, who lost to Greg Mongello of South River, 5-2.

"I'm pleased with our results," said Metuchen Head Coach Bob Ulmer. "If things developed differently in a couple of different weights, we could've placed more of our guys in the semis or better. We just have to work hard and improve."

McManmon's performance throughout the tourney earned him co-Outstanding Wrestler honors with Spotwood's Jason Mar (160). McManmon was named the top wrestler in the lower classes.

"McManmon looked awesome," said Ulmer. "He defeated the top two seeds with pins in the opening rounds. He's focused and driven for his goals — it's a great attribute he has."

"Bowles did a good job, too. He

didn't make many mistakes, but one thing he must improve on is his pinning. He has to work on that as the season moves forward."

BOYS BASKETBALL

The Bulldogs notched their first success of the season Saturday in the consolation game of the Brearley Bears Holiday Tournament, knocking off the winless host school 62-53 in Kenilworth.

Chris Carr led the way for Metuchen with 23 points and six assists, Mike Sellers had 15 points and 14 rebounds and Mike Muldoon added 10 points.

After falling behind in the opening period, Metuchen used a 20-8 second-period run in gaining a 28-22 halftime lead.

METUCHEN SCORING:

O'Connell 1-0-2, Kinney 2-0-4, M. Sellers 7-0-15, O'Brien 4-0-8, Carr 6 (2)-5-23, Muldoon 2-6-10, Totals 22 (2)-12-62

Metuchen (1-4) 8 20 17 17 — 62

Brearley (0-4) 14 8 18 13 — 53

Pingry 53, Metuchen 36

The Pingry School of Bernards Township defeated Metuchen in the Brearley tourney opener Friday. Mike Sellers had 16 points and Carr 12.

METUCHEN SCORING:

O'Brien 1-0-2, Muldoon 0-0-0, M. Sellers 8-0-16, Carr 1 (2)-4-12, Kinney 1-2-4, O'Connell 0-0-10, J. Sellers 1-0-2, Ruddy 0-0-0, Moten 0-0-0, Totals 12 (2) 6-36

Pingry 53, Metuchen 36

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METUCHEN SCORING:

O'Brien 1-0-2, Muldoon 0-0-0, M. Sellers 8-0-16, Carr 1 (2)-4-12, Kinney 1-2-4, O'Connell 0-0-10, J. Sellers 1-0-2, Ruddy 0-0-0, Moten 0-0-0, Totals 12 (2) 6-36

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Four Tigers tame the field in tough tourney

By AL WAGNER

STAFF WRITER

South Plainfield High's wrestlers headed into the Red Devils' den Friday, competing in the Hunterdon Central Tournament in Flemington.

With schools like Old Bridge, Toms River East, Manalapan and Lenape Valley involved in the event, the Tigers faced some intense competition among some of New Jersey's best programs.

"I'm very satisfied of our results," said Tigers Head Coach Bill Pavlak. "The Hunterdon Central Tournament always has great competition and gives us some real, quality experience."

The Tigers placed six wrestlers in the HCT finals, with 112-pounder Ricky Ringel, Matt Anderson (135), Scott Doerr (145) and Mike Buteas (160) bringing

home championship medals.

Danny DeAndrea (119) and Glenn Gross (152) earned second-place honors.

"Our qualifiers did a great job in getting to the finals, especially facing great wrestlers," said Pavlak.

Ringel defeated Manalapan's Dan Hilt 4-3 in the 112 final while Buteas had a 5-1 decision over Sal Burbato of Moorestown at 160 to notch his first-ever tourney title.

"Rick did a great job since he was only a fill-in starter last season," said Pavlak. "Now as a full-time starter, he's improving with every match. Simply put, he faced a previous HCT winner and defeated him in a well-fought match."

"Mike's performance was great in that he kept (Burbato) under control. It was an emotional win for him."

In their matches, both of last year's state qualifiers performed as

expected. Anderson posted a 13-2 major decision over Mike Gaeta of Manalapan and Doerr came through with a technical fall over Moorestown's Bill Pounds, 19-0.

Both Anderson and Doerr performed well — it was as if you expected it from them," said Pavlak. "They're our team leaders."

Anderson, a state champion two seasons ago, was second at 119 last winter while Doerr finished second in the state last year.

DeAndrea and Gross also had a strong tourney, according to Pavlak. DeAndrea fell 4-1 to Matt Heberlig of Lenape Valley and Toms River East's Devon Messanko pinned Gross at the 3:01

mark.

"DeAndrea lost in a tough match," said Pavlak. "Dan tried his best but it just wasn't supposed to be for him today."

And Messanko is one of the best in the state."

In the opening round, Tigers 171-pounder Steve Johnston fell by a 2-1 margin but came back to finish fifth in the tournament.

Johnston had a great tourney despite finishing where he did," said Pavlak. "He did a great job and shouldn't let that loss affect his confidence for his upcoming matches."

"This tournament helps us see some different teams and wrestling styles. It truly helps us as individuals to see where you can improve. We're more of a tournament team

than dual-match team, especially when it comes down to our pinning."

"Tournaments like this help us correct our pinning and other wrestling mistakes. In a dual meet, pinning errors kill you but not in a tournament where it's more individual than team. That's why going to tournaments like the HCT helps our program — to improve ourselves, especially our pins."

The Tigers resume their regular-season schedule this weekend, going against East Brunswick tonight and South Brunswick tomorrow in Greater Middlesex Conference action.

"We have our work cut out for us," said Pavlak. "This is the start of a long, tough road ahead of us, and we have to face the challenge. The HCT was our starting point and now, it's for real."

SPHS WINNERS

112-Rick Ringel d. Dan Hilt of Manalapan, 4-

135-Matt Anderson m. d. Mike Gaeta of Manalapan, 3-2
145-Scott Doerr ft. Bill Pounds of Moorestown, 19-0
160-Mike Buteas d. Sal Burbato of Moorestown, 5-1
SPHS SECOND-PLACES
119-Matt Heberlig of Lenape d. Dan DeAndrea, 4-1
152-Devon Messanko of Toms River East p. Glenn Gross, 3:01

WINTER TRACK

South Plainfield's Tim Morgan won the 3200-meter run in 10:02 during the 24th annual Pearl River Holiday Track and Field Festival at the Rockland County Community College Fieldhouse in Suffern, N.Y. last week. Morgan also was sixth in the 1600 in 4:43.

The Tigers' Jeff Williams placed second in the 600 in 1:17.4 and Chris Grevious finished fourth in the 55 dash. Crystal McCullum was seventh in the shot put at 31 feet, 10 inches.

Piscataway



Teams fall in tourney finals

There were those who thought the Bridgewater-Raritan High boys basketball team's days had passed. Turns out the Panthers may be just getting warmed up.

The young B-R squad proved it could still be a contender this year, winning the Vaughn Stapleton Holiday Tournament for the third straight year. After three close quarters, the unbeaten Panthers broke the final wide-open in the fourth Friday, beating Piscataway 65-56 at the Bridgewater-Raritan Middle School.

Struggling with ball control early on, the Panthers led most of the way but had trouble pulling away from the more experienced Piscataway squad. After committing 11 turnovers in the first half, however, the Panthers committed just five the rest of the way as they outscored the Chiefs 22-16 in the fourth quarter to secure their fourth straight victory.

"Piscataway is a very athletic team," said B-R Head Coach Tim Ortelli, who lost his top six players to graduation from a squad which won the Central Jersey Group 4 playoff title last winter. "I knew they might be a problem. We just tried to do things to slow them down."

B-R sophomore guard T.J. Serra, named the tourney's Most Valuable Player, dropped in 22 points. Coleman Miller paced Piscataway (4-2) with 19 points and Martin Maxwell and Jarrett Meyers added 12 apiece.

PISCATAWAY (56)

Miller 6-7-19, Maxwell 5-2-12, Meyers 6-0-12, Isopla 1-1-0-5, Keller 1-3-5, Davis 0-1-1, Perotte 0-2-2, Totals 20-1-13-56.

BRIDGEWATER-RARITAN (65)

Sierra 3-4-22, Hamby 6-5-17, Goodwin 6-2-2, Katz 4-1-9, DiOrio 0-1-0-3, Totals 19-4-12-65. Piscataway 11 15 14 16 — 56. Bridgewater-Raritan 14 15 12 — 65.

PHS 56, Union 42 — Miller scored 21 points and Brian Keller 17 to lead the Chiefs past Union (1-3) in the opening round of the Stapleton tourney Dec. 27. PHS broke open a tight battle in the third period, outscoring Union 16-5 for a 47-31 cushion.

PISCATAWAY SCORING

Miller 8-5-21, Keller 4-2-17, Goodwin 4-0-8, Isopla 1-0-2, Meyers 1-0-2, Davis 1-0-1, Perotte 0-2-2, Renkert 1-0-2, Totals 20-2-10-56.

Piscataway 14 17 16 9 — 56

Union 13 15 11 12 — 42

PHS GIRLS FALL

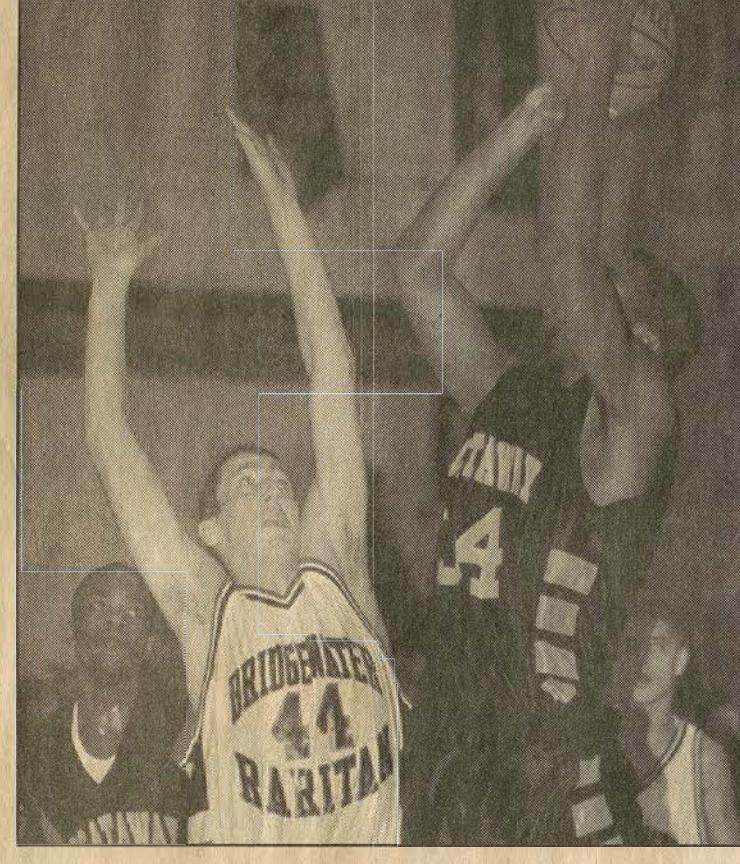
Reeling off the game's first 16 points Friday, the unbeaten Immaculata girls cruised to their fifth straight triumph by a 61-39 margin over Piscataway in the championship game of the Vaughn Stapleton Holiday Tournament.

Forward Liz Geiger, selected as the tourney's Most Valuable Player, scored 10 points and grabbed eight rebounds for Immaculata. Dannah Winfrey, the Chiefs' senior point guard, totaled 15 points after averaging 22.5 during her team's first four outings.

Piscataway (2-3) played the Spartans even during the second stanza and scored the first five points of the second half (a Danielle Harris baseline shot and Winfrey's three-pointer) to pull within 30-20 with 7:23 left in the third period. But the Chiefs could get no closer.

IMMACULATA (61)

Geiger 5-0-10, Piscataway 4-2-10, Zahalan 3-6-2, Geiger 3-0-6, DeFalco 3-1-7, Van Doren 1-2-1-9, Sanderson 2-0-4, Clarke 1-1-3, Totals 22-2-2.



NICOLE DIMELLA/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Piscataway High's Jarrett Meyers launches a jumper over Bridgewater-Raritan's B.J. Hamby during Friday's Stapleton Holiday Tournament final in Bridgewater. B-R posted a 65-56 triumph.

11-61.

PISCATAWAY (39)

Winfrey 5-1-2-15, Harris 3-1-7, Costabile 1-1-3, Walker 0-1-0-3, Greenmeier 0-1-1, Aquila 0-1-0-3, Hackett 1-0-2, Totals 10-4-7-39.

Immaculata 18 12 16 15 — 56

Piscataway 3 12 10 14 — 39

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Immaculata 18 12 16 15 — 56

Piscataway 3 12 10 14 — 39

11-61.

PISCATAWAY SCORING

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Winfrey 7-3-7-30, Harris 5-1-11, DeFalco 2-1-1, Costabile 0-1-2-5, Greenmeier 2-4-8, Guameri 1-2-0-8, Walker 2-0-4, Aquila 0-2-2, Totals 18-6-16-60.

WRESTLING

The Chiefs had two individual champions — Kyle Paulson and Brian Butler — during Friday's Westfield Blue Devil Tournament.

Paulson took a 5-3 decision over Hanover Park's Greg Politi in the 140-pound final and Butler won by injury default at 215.

The Chiefs, who were fourth in the team standings among 10 squads, also had two grapplers win consolation-round bouts — Derek Tranchina at 160 (a 4-0 decision) and Fabian Thompson at 171.

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However, it was a different story for Edison's Mike Bell, who hit three treys in the first half and finished with 16 points.

"Kennedy did a great job against Mike all night," said Meagher. "He

Eagles feel they're ready for upcoming challenges

By AL WAGNER

STAFF WRITER

EDISON — The Edison High boys basketball team didn't quite accomplish what it wanted, but the Eagles were still satisfied with their third-place showing in their own Gene Haley Holiday Tournament last week.

"I thought we did a great job despite not finishing where we wanted to be (in the finals)," said Edison Head Coach Matt Meagher. "Even though we finished third, it was a great tournament in preparing us for January."

The Eagles fell to J.F. Kennedy 51-46 in the opening round before wrapping up third place with Friday's 61-45 victory over Cardinal McCarrick of South Amboy.

"It simply came down to making the right decisions in that Kennedy game," said Meagher. "We had foul trouble, untimely turnovers, and a lot of unforced errors mentally. Kennedy played a great full-court trapping defense and mixed some standard zone and man-to-man defenses. They were simply great and we just couldn't answer their defense."

Despite the trouble offensively for the Eagles (3-2), Damion Normant came through with a team-high 18 points against the aggressive JFK defense. Normant's performance included hitting a three-pointer and playing strong defense against the Mustangs' front line.

However, it was a different story for Edison's Mike Bell, who hit three treys in the first half and finished with 16 points.

"Kennedy did a great job against Mike all night," said Meagher. "He

had early foul trouble and couldn't overcome it despite his offensive performance. Kennedy capitalized off it by putting pressure on our offense for the rest of the game.

"When Bell and Normant have solid performances, we have a good chance of winning. When you throw in an additional player, our chances just improve. Bell and Normant have given us chances, especially in the Kennedy game."

Entering the final stanza, Edison had a chance to sneak out another close victory. Trailing 33-31 after three periods, JFK used a 10-0 run early in the fourth period to take charge.

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Meagher felt much better following the consolation victory over McCarrick.

"We had a great game," he said. "It was a similar balanced attack we had against St. Joe's last week. It was a great way for us to end this tournament."

In the consolation game, Edison extended its one-point second-period lead to a 27-14 half-time lead, helped by a 12-0 tear.

Edison held McCarrick's two main threats to a total of 29 points.

Jose Rosario had 18 points, the game-high, while teammate John Towson added 11.

"Our defense kept their main guys under control," said Meagher. "Even though Rosario had a great game, we still had a solid game defensively."

When McCarrick answered the Eagles with a third-period rally to pull back into the game, Edison defenders stepped up to produce an 8-0 run, sealing the victory.

Bell had 13 points, including a pair of treys, while Normant had 14 points (two treys).

"They had a great night together," said Meagher. "Bell bounced back from the Kennedy game and Normant just continued his excellent play."

Now it's on to the Greater Middlesex Conference schedule for the Eagles, who took on East Brunswick Wednesday and will be at South Brunswick tomorrow.

"We need to learn from our mistake in this tournament and move on to improve ourselves," said Meagher. "I know our record is 3-2, but all I ask of my players is to improve themselves each week and see what happens. Our record reflects we're in a lot of tough, close games. We need to improve and execute our plays and we'll win. There are no gummies in the GMC. No one is a push-over."

EDISON SCORING vs. McCARRICK:

Eckert 1-8-10, Bell 3 (2)-1-13, Normant 3 (2)-2-14, Ferrell 2-0-4, Brockington 3-6-11, Ellis 3-3-9, Lithgow 0-0-0, Siegle 0-0-0, Lagrasse 0-0-0, James 0-0-0; Totals 15 (3)-19-61

weekend plus!

B-4

January 4, 2002

BEST BETS THIS WEEK

Philomusica is holding auditions

EAST BRUNSWICK — Philomusica, the region's premiere chamber choir, is holding auditions for competent singers in all voice parts.

Auditions are Monday, Jan. 7 and 14 by appointment only at the Unitarian Society of New Brunswick, 176 Tices Lane, East Brunswick. Philomusica sings works from the Baroque through the modern eras with an emphasis on authenticity and performance quality.

For an appointment, visit www.philomusic.org or phone Elizabeth Dixon at (732) 545-8434.

'Music of America' at dinner theatre

PERRYVILLE — Hunterdon Hills Playhouse Dinner Theater will present "The Music of America", an original country-western musical revue written and directed by Ken Schwarz, Jan. 9- Feb. 9.

Presented in a fun, lively production, the revue will showcase classic, historic and popular songs by artists from Jimmy Rodgers to Roy Rogers to Kenny Rogers, among many others, in unique format.

Initially, the production had been announced in June of this year, as a week-long special addition to Hunterdon Hills' regular "mainstage" schedule. However, after apparently underestimating the area's appetite for the country sound, as well as the renewed patriotic fervor created after Sept. 11, the show has been extended three times in order to make room for ticket demand.

Monday through Saturday luncheon matinees at 11:30 a.m., Saturday evening dinner shows at 6:30 p.m. and Sunday afternoon dinner shows at 2:30 p.m., have been scheduled. Prices range from \$39.50-\$50 per person, with group rates available. Reservations are required though, as many dates are already sold out. Prices include a full-course, served meal, an all-you-can-eat dessert buffet, the show and all tops and taxes.

The theater is located at 88 Route 173 W., between Exits 11 and 12, off Interstate 78, in Perryville. For more information and reservations call their toll free number: 1-(800)HHP-7313 or, visit them online at: www.hhplayhouse.com

'Jerry's Girls' seeking cast

WESTFIELD — Director Drude Roessler of Westfield Community Players (WCP), is holding open auditions for "Jerry's Girls", a revue featuring the Broadway music and lyrics of Jerry Herman on Sunday, Jan. 6 at 1 p.m. in the WCP theater at 1000 North Avenue West, Westfield, (908)232-9568.

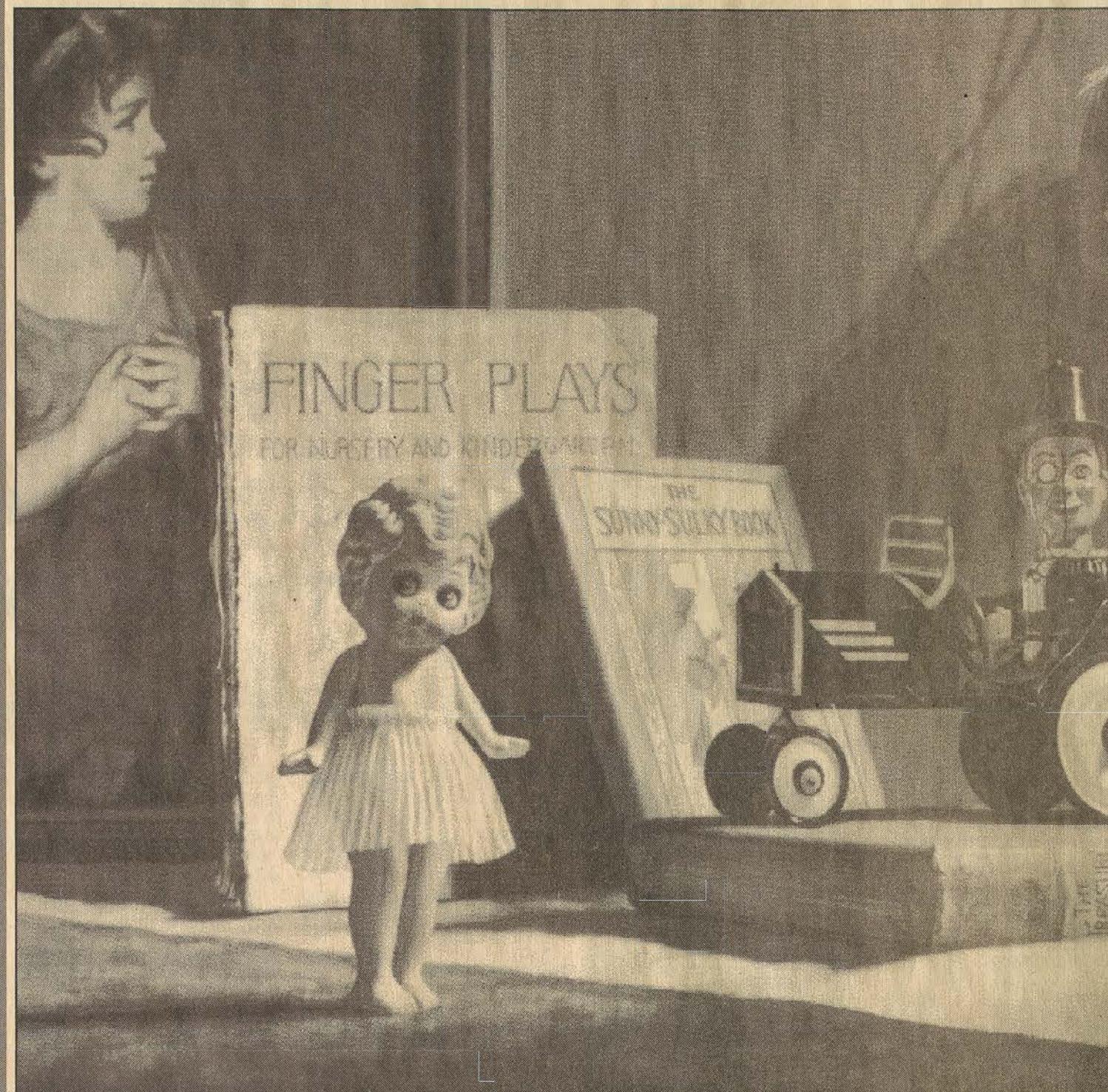
Jerry Herman's Broadway lyrics have become standards on the great white way. His credits feature powerful songs for women from such outstanding musicals as "Hello Dolly!", "Mame", "Mack and Mabel", "La Cage Aux Folles", "Milk and Honey" and others.

Assisted by Musical Director Mark Barron, who has directed the show at Plays in the Park in Middlesex County, the show opens March 2, and continues March 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 and 23 with all tickets \$15.

The cast requirements for the three leading roles call for strong singers, with one having a comedic flair, one being a strong dancer and one having a powerful voice.

For the chorus roles (6 to 8 ladies), strong singers who move well are needed. For the audition, bring music in your own key and dance clothes.

Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Department of State, through a grant administered by the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.



Charles Nelson's "Finger Plays," will be one of the paintings on display to mark the fifth year of galleryONemain.

Gallery celebrates with retrospective

HIGH BRIDGE — Taking a look back over the last 20 art exhibitions it has presented, galleryONemain, High Bridge, has chosen its most popular artists to be featured in "Retro 2002."

Gallery Director Dennis Murphy said the show would bring together 17 artists who are presenting new, original art work for this exhibition.

"We're beginning our fifth cal-

endar year of presenting fine art from very talented artists," he said. "To celebrate we are bringing back our gallery visitors' choices for the most popular artists."

"Retro 2002" opens with a reception featuring the artists 1-5 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 6. The show runs through the end of February.

Watercolors will be displayed by Joan McKinney of

Bridgewater, Carl Burger, Elsa Herrmann, Grace Bracegirdle, Walter Bill, Jenny Chiu, Judi Gliden, Kathleen Groom, Francis McIlvain and Joan McKinney.

Oil paintings on canvas will come from Charles Nelson and Sonia Grineva. Animal artist Jerilyn Weber will offer new works on pastel. Special collages by Lorna Farmer will be fea-

tured, along with ink drawings

on paper by Renata Szuryga.

"Retro 2002" also includes custom functional ceramics by Maya Bohler, abstract ceramic sculpture of the female form by Mia Fetterman and new pottery by Phil Homes.

galleryONemain is located at 1 Main St. Gallery hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. For more information, visit www.galleryonemain.com or phone (908) 638-3838.

Washington trio will bring harmony to Watchung

WATCHUNG — Hot Soup, the D.C.-area vocal trio whose wholesome, whimsical themes and tight harmonies have been compared to those of the Andrews Sisters and the Roches, will appear at the Watchung Arts Center, 18 Stirling Road, (on the Watchung Circle) on Saturday, Jan. 26 at 8 p.m.

Hot Soup consists of singer/songwriters Sue Trainor, Christina Muir, and Jennifer Agner.

Their stage performance is marked by their lighthearted approach and warm, soaring harmony vocals. Their material is just as warm and lighthearted, including

good-natured novelties, soft-spun harmonies, topical ballads, romantic musings and nostalgic swing tunes. Lou (of Lou and Peter) Berryman sums it up: "What vocals! What harmonies! Youse guys is great."

The three performers come from very different backgrounds. Sue Trainor has been noted as a writer and performer of parodies ("Golfing With Hares"); Jennifer Agner comes from a more pop-music background with the band The Dilettantes; and Christina Muir is the daughter of Ann Mayo Muir (of Bok, Trickett and Muir fame).

Critics have been kind to Hot Soup. Sing Out! said, "This is how a vocal album is supposed to sound." The Washington Post praised their "wholesome songs....to feed the heart and spirit."

Opening for Hot Soup is Dave Goldman of Croton, New York, a true "world musician" who combines jazz and blues themes with influences from around the world. He collects songs from many countries, many of which he performs in their original languages, and is also a skilled songwriter who draws on world music traditions. A 1998 New Jersey Folk Festival showcase winner,

Goldman has lived and studied in Mexico, Japan, India, Portugal, Italy...and now in Croton, N.Y. He will appear with his three-piece ensemble.

The intimacy and remarkable natural acoustics of the Watchung Arts Center's upstairs art gallery will create a perfect setting for these remarkable performers. The 150-seat room should be filled with their many fans.

Reservations are advised, and may be made by calling (908)753-0190. The admission price is \$12, which includes home-baked desserts and coffee at intermission.

'Annie Get Your Gun' will be presented at State Theatre

NEW BRUNSWICK — A barrel full of Wild West fun will come to the State Theatre when a fresh new production of "Annie Get Your Gun," an American musical comedy classic is presented Sunday, Jan. 13 at 3 and 7 p.m.

Songwriter Irving Berlin, along with authors Herbert and Dorothy Fields, fashioned the lively show business life of expert riflewoman Annie Oakley into a romantic comedy for the entire family. The late Irving Berlin, whose prolific hand penned more than a thousand hit songs during his long career, contributes a legendary score of musical favorites including "There's No Business Like Show Business," "Doin' What Comes Naturally," "Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better," "The Girl I Marry" and "I Got the Sun in the Morning."

This production offers a revised script by Peter Stone, who won a 1997 Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical for "Titanic: A New Musical". His writing for the musicals "1776" and "The Will Rogers Follies" won both the Tony and New York Drama Critics Circle Awards. Director and choreographer Joey McKeeley will lead Buffalo Bill and the entire cast of "Annie Get Your Gun." McKeeley has appeared in many Broadway venues and productions including "Smokey Joe's Cafe" and Cy Coleman's "The Life and Wild Party." He most recently directed and choreographed "Radiant Baby", a workshop on the life of visual artist Keith Haring.

The story revolves around the stormy and highly competitive relationship between Annie Oakley and Frank Butler. When the dueling lovers are first introduced, Frank Butler is the champion sharpshooter and star of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. In a contest with Frank, conceived as a publicity stunt

for his act, Annie beats him in a sharp shooting competition that leaves Frank humiliated and Annie hopelessly in love. In her quest to win the heart of her fellow marksman, the brazen and brassy, outspoken Annie eventually grows to realize that she "Can't Get a Man With a Gun".

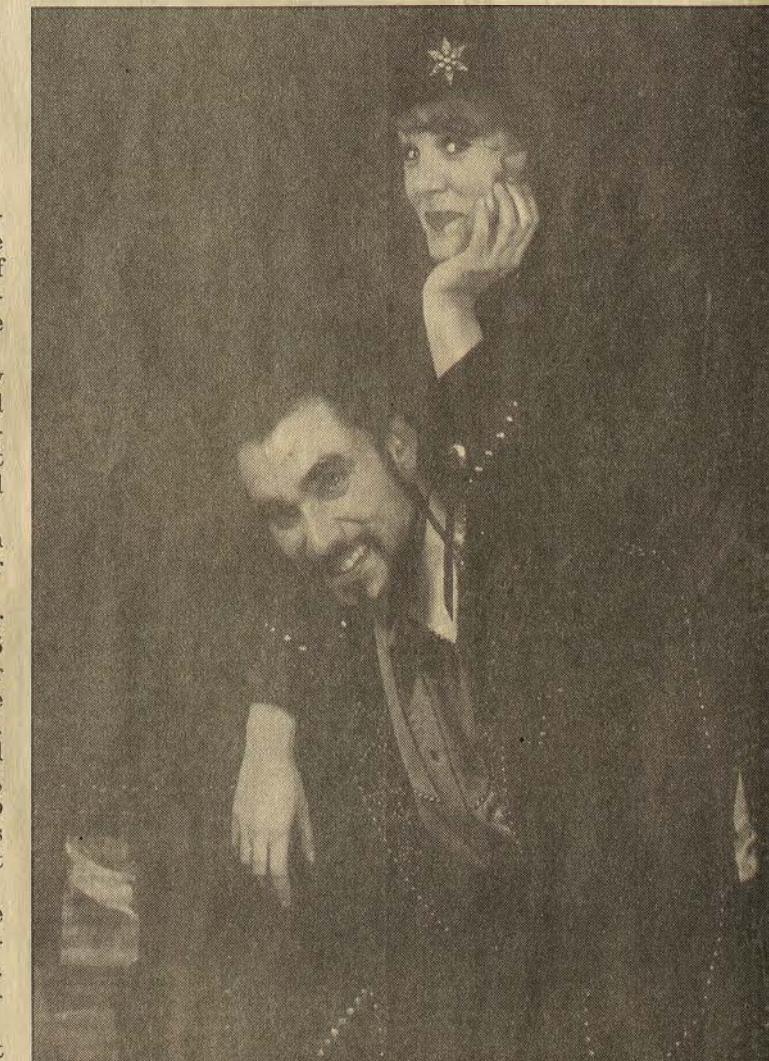
Bonnie Estes will play the part of Annie Oakley that was originated in 1946 by the legendary Ethel Merman. Stephen Valahovic will portray the dashing Frank Butler who will be remembered from last year's portrayal of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in "Jekyll & Hyde".

"Annie Get Your Gun" originally opened on Broadway May 6, 1946 to rave reviews and ran for 1,147 shows.

Tickets for both performances are on sale now for \$50 (Premium Orchestra/Loge), \$45 (Orchestra/Front Balcony), \$38 (Rear Orchestra/Balcony), and \$22 (Gallery). The State Theatre Box Office is located at 15 Livingston Ave. For telephone ticket orders or information call (732)246-7469 or toll free (877)STATE-11 Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Wednesday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Patrons may order tickets online at www.StateTheatreNJ.org.

The State Theatre is equipped with an assistive listening system for patrons who are hard of hearing and the main floor is wheelchair accessible. Program notes are available in large print or audio tape format for this event.

This program has been made possible in part through a grant by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



Bonnie Estes and Stephen Valahovic will bring "Annie Get Your Gun" to the State Theatre this month.

Legendary guitarist is returning on Jan. 11

WATCHUNG — Bucky Pizzarelli has drawn some of the largest audiences ever seen at the Watchung Arts Center. The jazz guitarist is a living legend, and his fans never tire of his creativity with seven strings.

The hardest part of running a Pizzarelli concert is dealing with those who arrive without tickets and find the event sold out. For his return visit on Friday evening, Jan. 11, The Arts Center will reward early buyers with a discount: \$12 for tickets paid for in advance. Whatever tickets remain at the door will be \$15.

There are two sets, starting at 8 p.m., with complimentary snacks served at intermission.

Check-in should be mailed to the Watchung Arts Center, 18 Stirling Road, Watchung, NJ 07069. Tickets will be sent by return mail.

On this return visit to the Watchung Arts Center's Jazz Series, Pizzarelli will be joined by bassist Jerry Bruno. Bruno's upright string bass playing was greatly admired at a previous sellout performance at Watchung, as well as at appearances in Morristown and Bridgewater. He's paid his dues as a bassist with Big Bands during the latter part of the swing era.

Pizzarelli's enormous appeal stems from his unusual chording, rapid fingering and imaginative solos built around familiar melodies. His fingerwork seems effortless, never failing to bring an admiring audience to its feet.

His range of material spans jazz history, from the blues era through swing to contemporary numbers. Few active jazz performers have developed the name recognition and enthusiasm following that Pizzarelli has.

The much-recorded master guitarist has dozens of albums to his credit, often sharing the limelight with the top names in jazz. He has toured the world with Benny Goodman, Zoot Sims, Benny Carter and others. Bucky has also brought his seven string magic to Carnegie Hall, Town Hall and even the White House.

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REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

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211 Cabot Ave. from James & Jean Franza to Ashfaq Soomar for \$175,500.

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19 Williams Road from Meiling L. Kravik to Arturo & Sandra Yanez for \$237,000.

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Stylish Xterra has flair for practicality

BY MARK MAYNARD

COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

Sport utility vehicles are the vehicles we love to hate — and love to buy.

In November, consumers drove home 913,000 trucks vs. 814,000 cars, the most vehicles ever sold in a month. And of those sales, 46 percent were SUVs.

Even with pricey gasoline, 56 percent of new-vehicle shoppers say they are considering an SUV, says AutoPacific, an automotive marketing firm.

Nissan has enjoyed a truck-fueled rebound and is ready for more this year with stylish upgrades to Xterra.

Inside, there is a new dashboard treatment of industro-tech design and common-sense function: large dials and knobs, contrasting colors and textures and metallic-looking plastics.

Xterra takes a bigger step forward with 16-inch tires, a new front end with round headlights and a raised hood to cover the 2.10 hp supercharged V-6 option pack that also adds 17-inch tires and alloy wheels.

Inside, there is a larger glove box, power points in the back seat area, map pockets and a foot-operated parking brake instead of the old pull-style handle. Next step, I hope, will be a brake lever between the seats.

I just finished a week in a two-wheel drive Xterra SE-SC (supercharged) that had a base price of \$25,039. With only one option for an in-cabin microfilter for \$49, the sticker price of \$25,088 isn't outrageous.

Standard equipment on the SE includes remote locking, 6 disc in-dash CD changer with 8 speakers, cruise control, roof rack with cross bars and gear basket, tubular step plate, fog lights, first-aid kit and power windows/locks/mirrors.

Xterra pricing ranges from

\$19,739 for a base non-supercharged, 170 hp V-6 model to \$28,039 for a top-line supercharged V-6 with four-wheel drive. For the sake of advertising, a 143 hp 4-cylinder model is offered for \$18,539. (Prices include the \$540 destination charge.)

For the SUV who tows or appreciates acceleration more than fuel economy, the 3.3 liter supercharged V-6 isn't likely to disappoint. But horsepower is provided at the expense of fuel mileage — 15 mpg around town and 19 on the highway for the supercharged engine, which isn't that much worse than the non-supercharged engine's ratings of 17/19.

Xterra is a truck and makes no apologies for being one. It's uncomplicated but comfortable and it looks just fine unwashed and gritty.

You can't order it with leather seats or side air bags, but it does come with dual-stage front air bags and pretensioners and force-limiters for front belts.

The driver has open sightlines, it doesn't require physical agility to climb in and out and the turning circle is compact for mall maneuverability.

The steering and brakes are responsive and give a free-wheeling drivability. The ride is soft not sloppy, and the 5-speed is limber but not loose.

There were few annoyances with the test truck, but for \$25,000 I expect a vanity mirror for the driver's visor, and that totally tubular roof rack kicks up wind noise at highway speeds.

Nissan was criticized last year for building more \$24,000 Xterras than the more basic trucks for \$21,000 to \$22,000. But, surprise, last month was a record breaker for Xterra — 8,481 sold without the 0 percent financing — and most of the sales were for the high-end models.



Nissan has given the Xterra many stylish upgrades.

Be safe in winter weather

(NAPSI)-Safety is a number one concern for those traveling to spend time with friends and family in the coming months. As more people are hitting the roadways instead of airways this year, maintaining and winterproofing cars, as well as buying the safest, most reliable cars has become even more critical.

Drivers, young and old, hitting the road this winter, must take precautions to ensure safe road travel. Inclement weather and slippery roads can make travel tricky, so it is important to learn and practice proper auto maintenance. To prepare for an upcoming trip, drivers should always carefully plan their route in advance to avoid wrong turns and lost hours. It's also wise to check online sources, television reports and the radio to gain information on weather and road conditions. In case of inclement weather, drivers need to make sure to have all the emergency equipment available, such as snow chains, cell phones, flairs and flashlights.

Being prepared also requires regular upkeep, on-schedule maintenance and servicing that augment safety and durability. Many automotive Web sites like Yahoo! Autos (<http://autos.yahoo.com>) offer personalized services to help drivers flag and solve mechanical problems. Before packing up the family for a holiday road trip, it is important to conduct the six-step maintenance check: oil change, tire pressure, brakes, windshield wipers, headlights and defrosters. Drivers who may find themselves caught in the snow this winter should be sure to get snow tires put on their car well in advance so they aren't left in a blizzard.

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