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Chamber probes downtown redevelopment options

by Pat DiMaggio
Rahway's Chamber of Commerce has undertaken a study of the downtown area to develop a plan for the best use of the City's commercial land.

"The chamber recognizes the need to undertake a major downtown survey and redevelopment plan," said James Kennedy, Chamber president.

The Chamber of Commerce prepared a request for a study for the N.J. State Planners Association said Kennedy. Requests were mailed out to 20 top planners in the state, and eight proposals to under-

take the downtown development plan were received.

A subcommittee composed of Chamber members, City officials and representatives from Merck & Co. selected the consulting firm of Harvey Moskowitz. Merck has given a corporate gift of \$20,000 to provide a cornerstone for the redevelopment plan, said Kennedy.

The nine month plan will cost \$40,000, according to Kennedy. "Studies have come and gone," he said. "We will look at past studies concerning the Parking Authority and business retentions and formulate an

Consultant selected to undertake 40G plan

overall look at the area to determine what the best use for this land is in the present and future market."

The study will serve as a tool, said Kennedy, and in order to implement it there must be a plan. "The plan becomes a tool either for

the appointment of a redevelopment agency or the City council as an agency," noted Kennedy.

The study will consist of two categories. Moskowitz will work in conjunction with Planners Diversified, Summit, a firm known for

acquiring grants and funding.

Banking institutions, utility companies and commercial land owners will be solicited for funds for the study which will begin on March 15.



IT'S A START ... Alan M. Gardiner (left), Director of Local Government & Community Affairs for Merck & Co. hands a \$20,000 check to James Kennedy (right), President of the Rahway Chamber of Commerce. Merck is donating the 20Gs as a corporate gift toward the

cost of a 9-month study the chamber will undertake through a consulting firm concerning redevelopment of the city's downtown area. Looking on is Chamber member Russ Taylor, V.P. of the Rahway Savings Institution.

G. Cleveland K-4ers 'take pledge' in drug awareness program

by Pat DiMaggio
Third and 4th graders at Grover Cleveland School "took the pledge" last Thursday when they were enlisted into the ranks of "Defenders Against Drugs."

All 22 police chiefs in Union County and the school superintendents from every district have joined the club as part of the continuing countywide consciousness-raising program for students from kindergarten through 4th grade to teach them about the dangers of drug abuse.

Lt. Leo Uebelein, of the Union County Prosecutor's Office, accompanied by Rahway Police Detective Marc Schwartzbach, put on an assembly program for Grover Cleveland students to ask them to become Defenders Against Drugs.

"We've been working on the problem of drugs year after year," Uebelein told the students. "And we've been doing a good job. We go out and find those people

who sell and push drugs, put handcuffs on them, and bring them to jail. But we still have a problem. We, as police officers, started to think we could do more. We decided to go out and find the smartest, the strongest and the best people to join with us to help us in the fight against drugs. We want you kids to join with your teachers and parents to work together to become Defenders Against Drugs."

The program began in 1985 when Uebelein, who was then president of the statewide N.J. Narcotic Enforcement Officers Association, developed a 25-minute presentation using cartoon characters, badges, a pledge and book covers.

Each one of the students agreed to become a Defender Against Drugs and was asked to recite, with Lt. Uebelein, the following pledge:

"I promise to be a Defender Against Drugs at home, at school and at play.

I promise, as a Defender Against Drugs, to respect my parents. I promise, as a Defender Against Drugs, to respect my teachers and the police. I promise, as a Defender Against Drugs, to always keep my body healthy and not to take any drug. I promise to tell all my friends and schoolmates not to touch drugs. I promise to

love my country and our flag. I promise, as a Defender Against Drugs, to be the best person I can be."

Similar programs will be held at Roosevelt School on March 8, and Madison School on March 22. Franklin School students have already agreed to become "Defenders."

Rahway has voice in glee club concert

When the Dartmouth Glee Club of Dartmouth College in New Hampshire appears in concert at Kent Place School in Summit on March 22, one of the voices audiences will be hearing will be that of Michael Garcia of Rahway.

The glee club is making just this one stop in New Jersey on its 1989 Spring tour.

General admission is \$6 a ticket. Sponsors and Patrons paying \$70 and

\$35, respectively, per pair of tickets get their names in the printed concert program.

Anyone interested in hosting a student for a night (there are 50 coming during the stopover in Summit) should call Tom Swartz at 1-212-244-4500 (days), or (201) 635-5483 (evenings).

The Kent Place School parking lot is on Kent Place Blvd., west of Morris Ave. in Summit. The concert starts at 8 p.m.

Opera at RHS

The June Opera Festival of N.J. will present "The Ring of the Fetuccines" to students in the Rahway School District through a generous grant from the Merck & Company Foundation. Students in grades three through six in the Rahway School District will see the opera on March 14 at the Rahway High School.

One of The June Opera Festival's goals is to develop future audiences by educating today's youth about opera. Integrating the arts into education stimulates the creativity of children and develops in them a love of the art. Michael Pratt, The June Opera Festival's Artistic Director, comments, "It's really crucial now that we start exciting children. You've got to get them while they are young."

Bernard Holland, of the New York Times, wrote about The Ring of the Fetuccines, "...this crash course in opera history compresses every memorable tune and every improbability of plot into an amalgam of tongue-in-cheek entertainment."

The Ring of the Fetuccines mixes some of the most famous arias and music from Mozart, Verdi, Bizet, Offenbach and others. All music is performed in English by six professional artists who sing roles that are identified on their T-shirts.

After introducing the audience to the ingredients of opera, the cast dons professional costumes as they stage the story surrounded by professionally created scenery. The performers pose, posture, swagger, swoon, plot and perform daring deeds as they poke fun at the stereotypical characters of grand opera.

Battered Women's support groups

Women Aware, Inc. offers Battered Women's Support Groups in our area. Weekly day and evening groups provide supportive counseling to women who are experiencing physical and/or emotional abuse. Groups are free and confidential. Call 937-9525 for time and place.



DEFENDERS ... Third and 4th graders of Rahway's Grover Cleveland School proudly display the certificates acknowledging their participation in the fight against drugs. Pictured with them are (back row, l-r) Rahway Police Detective Marc

Schwartzbach, Lt. Leo Uebelein of the Union County Prosecutor's Office, and teachers Elaine Ross and Lucille Lukaszewicz.



OCTOGENARIAN ... Rahway Golden K. Kiwanis members recently visited Cass Begier at the Geriatric Center to help him celebrate his 85th birthday. Begier (center foreground) is a lifetime member of the Golden K.



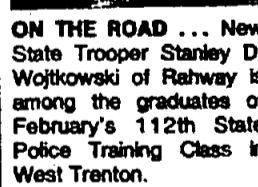
KRISTEN RICKES — of Rahway, daughter of Eric and Judy Rickes and sister of Jennifer and Scott, has been selected to participate in the Miss New Jersey Teen USA Pageant being held at the Somerset Hilton Hotel, Somerset, the weekend of March 17-19. Each contestant will be judged in swimsuit, evening gown and personal interviews. The winner will represent the Garden state at the nationally televised MISS TEEN USA Pageant in July 1989. Kristen is a student at Union Catholic Regional High. She has been sponsored by: Judy, Eric, Jennifer and Scott Rickes, Mrs. Edward Rickes, Mr. Robert Rickes, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Timari, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Carboy, Mr. and Mrs. Edward O'Donnell, Mrs. Mary London, Mr. and Mrs. David Woolley, Dr. and Mrs. Walter Schwartz, Dr. and Mrs. Norman Schwartz, and The Forum.



Waverly Kent Johnson re-elected to AAMH Board

Waverly Kent Johnson of Rahway was recently elected to a second one-year term on the Board of Trustees of the NJ Association for Advancement of the Mentally Handicapped. The AAMH is a non-profit agency dedicated to helping handicapped teens and adults live productive, independent lives.

Johnson, the Senior Vice President of Medical Resources in Piscataway, is involved with many community organizations, including the Rahway Concerned Citizens Action Organization, the New Brunswick Civic Association and New Horizon, a boys home in Newark.



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