

Welcome to the
THE OBSERVER

How to reach us:
The Observer is published every Thursday by Worrall Community Newspapers, an independent, family owned newspaper company. Our offices are located at 1291 Stuyvesant Avenue, Union, N.J. 07083. We are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every weekday. Call us at one of the telephone numbers listed below:

Voice Mail:
Our main phone number, 908-686-7700 is equipped with a voice mail system to better serve our customers. During regular business hours, a receptionist will answer your call. During the evening or when the office is closed, your call will be answered by an automated receptionist.

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The Observer provides an open forum for opinions and welcome letters to the editor. Letters should be typed, double spaced, must be signed, and should be accompanied by an address and daytime phone number for verification. Letters and columns must be in our office by 9 a.m. Monday to be considered for publication that week. They are subject to editing for length and clarity.

e-mail:
The Observer accepts news releases and opinion pieces by e-mail. Our e-mail address is Editorial@thelocalsource.com. E-mail must be received by 9 a.m. Monday to be considered for publication that week. Advertising is also accepted by email under certain guidelines at ads@thelocalsource.com

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Group seeking fair taxes to meet

Americans for Fair Taxation, a non-partisan grassroots organization to promote HR25, the Fair Tax Act, held its first meeting Nov. 11 to explore the formation of a Summit chapter.

The Fair Tax Act, if adopted, would repeal all federal income, payroll and estate and gift taxes — and the Internal Revenue Service — and replace these with a national sales tax on all

goods and services once, at final sale to the consumer.

It would include a provision to make it fair to low-income individuals and give the federal government the same revenue stream it gets today.

Some of the attendees included Councilmen Tom Getzendanner and Andy Lark, Summit Democratic Committee Chairman James Baxley, Libertarian Party supporter Roger Knox,

Republican activist Dorothy Burger, Summit Taxpayers Association President Edgar Vant and AFFT state co-chair Jim Bennett. The consensus was to continue to explore the formation of a local Fair Tax group.

The group's next meeting will be Saturday at 2 p.m. at 38 Fairview Ave., Summit.

For more information, call Jim Bennett at 908-578-4975.

Firefighters help install holiday lights

Mountainside

On Sunday at 10 a.m., firefighters spent six hours assisting members of the Mountainside Lion Club install Christmas lights on the 60-foot spruce tree at the intersection of New Providence Road and Route 22 east.

On Sunday at 8:07 a.m., firefighters responded to an activated fire alarm in a residence on Route 22 west. An investigation determined that the homeowner accidentally activated the fire alarm.

On Friday at 5:10 p.m., firefighters responded to an activated fire alarm in a residence on Partridge Run. An investigation determined that smoke coming from the kitchen stove activated the fire alarm.

On Friday at 5:16 p.m., firefighters responded to a report of a brush fire in the back yard of a residence on Creek Bed Road. Firefighters used two pressurized water extinguishers to quickly put it out. Fire officers informed the homeowners that open burning of brush was not permitted in Mountainside.

On Nov. 23 at 6:55 a.m., firefighters responded to a report of a motor vehicle accident on Route 22 west near New Providence Road.

On Nov. 23 at 2:58 p.m., firefighters responded to an activated fire alarm in a residence on Birch Hill Road. An investigation determined that smoke coming from unattended cooking activated the fire alarm.

On Nov. 23 at 3:59 p.m., firefighters responded to an activated fire alarm in a residence on Summit Road. An investigation determined that smoke coming from unattended cooking activated the fire alarm.

On Nov. 21 at 6:22 a.m., firefighters responded to an activated fire alarm in a health care facility on New Providence Road. An investigation determined that a malfunctioning smoke detector activated the fire alarm.

On Nov. 21 at 7:54 p.m., firefighters responded to an activated Central Station fire alarm in an elder-care facility on Route 22 west. An investigation determined that a malfunctioning smoke detector activated the fire alarm.

On Nov. 21 at 8:58 p.m., firefighters responded to a Union County Mutual Aid request to provide cover at Clark's fire headquarters.

Springfield

On Friday at 12:48 a.m., firefighters responded to Henshaw Avenue and Baltusrol Way for a utility pole on fire.

On Friday at 6:57 a.m., firefighters responded to a Morris Avenue apartment complex for a medical service call.

On Friday at 11:06 a.m., firefighters responded to a Riverside Drive residence for a medical service call.

FIRE BLOTTER

On Friday at 1:42 p.m., firefighters responded to a Morris Turnpike business for a medical service call.

On Friday at 3:47 p.m., firefighters responded to a South Springfield Avenue residence for a lock-out.

On Friday at 8:31 p.m., firefighters responded to a Hawthorne Avenue residence for an activated carbon monoxide detector.

On Nov. 23 at 12:05 a.m., firefighters responded to a Highpoint Drive residence for an activated fire alarm.

On Nov. 22 at 9:27 a.m., firefighters responded to an Irwin Street residence for a medical service call.

On Nov. 22 at 11:52 a.m., firefighters responded to a Morris Turnpike business for a child locked in a car.

On Nov. 22 at 1:08 p.m., firefighters responded to a Mountain Avenue business for a medical service call.

On Nov. 22 at 1:11 p.m., firefighters responded to a Route 22 east business for an activated fire alarm.

On Nov. 22 at 4:31 p.m., firefighters responded to a Stone Hill Road apartment complex for a medical service call.

On Nov. 22 at 5:26 p.m., firefighters responded to a Troy Drive apartment complex for a medical service call.

On Nov. 22 at 9:52 p.m., firefighters responded to Mountview Road for a report of a car off the road.

On Nov. 21 at 12:17 a.m., firefighters responded to a South Springfield Avenue apartment complex for an activated carbon monoxide detector.

On Nov. 21 at 12:18 p.m., firefighters responded to a Mountain Avenue residence for a medical service call.

On Nov. 21 at 4:42 p.m., firefighters responded to a Stone Hill Road apartment complex for a medical service call.

On Nov. 21 at 7:17 p.m., firefighters responded to the Florence Gaudineer School for an activated fire alarm.

On Nov. 20 at 7:18 a.m., firefighters responded to Route 24 west at

mile post 49.6 for a medical service call.

On Nov. 20 at 4:35 p.m., firefighters responded to a Mountain Avenue business for a medical service call.

Summit

On Monday, firefighters responded to a Central Station alarm for a private residence on Colt Road. An investigation determined dust from contractors who were working in an upstairs bathroom had activated the smoke detector. The homeowner was not available to provide the proper code to reset the system. The housekeeper was contacted and she provided the code. The smoke detector head was cleaned and the system reset.

On Monday, firefighters responded to a report of a burning odor in the kitchen area of a home on Manor Hill Drive. The entire area was checked with no cause found.

On Sunday, firefighters responded to a carbon monoxide activation at a home on Gloucester Road. An investigation found high levels of carbon monoxide in the basement, which was traced to a motor vehicle being operated. The homeowner had started a vehicle in the attached garage and left. Upon his return, the alarm was sounding. The door to the furnace room off the garage had been left open so the carbon monoxide had spread throughout the structure via the hot air ducts.

On Sunday, firefighters responded to a restaurant on Union Place for the FAST team to a home on Ridgewood Road in Millburn. They provided aid until released by the Millburn department when the incident was under control.

On Saturday, all units responded to a restaurant on Union Place for a report of an activated fire alarm. When they arrived, the building was being evacuated. An investigation found the area of activation to be the third floor in an apartment. Occupants of the apartment were unable to hear the alarm. The restaurant manager notified the alarm company to make repairs to the system.

On Nov. 23, firefighters responded to a building on Morris Avenue for a reported electrical problem. The occupant advised that the microwave shut down while in use. Firefighters advised her that she was overloading the outlet and that one of her appliances would have to be moved.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

The Community Calendar is prepared by The Observer to inform residents of various community activities and government meetings. To mail a schedule, send it to The Observer, Attn: Managing Editor, P.O. Box 3109, Union, NJ 07083, or submit them at www.localsource.com/calendar.

Today

The Garden Shop, operated by volunteers at the Reeves-Reed Arboretum in Summit, will host a holiday night from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Complimentary gift wrapping is available. For more information, call The Garden Shop's direct line at 908-277-1190.

Friday

The Summit Municipal Alliance, in collaboration with SAGE Elder-care, will present its annual "Music for All Seasons" holiday concert at 11:30 a.m. at the Summit Recreation Center, 100 Morris Ave. This free program is open to everyone. For more information, call Suzanne Lyon at 908-598-5514.

Saturday

The Mountainside Board of Education and Borough Council will have a joint meeting at 8 a.m. in the Deerfield School Media Center, 302 Central Ave.

This year, the Summit Volunteer First Aid Squad will resume selling Christmas trees for three weekends — Saturdays and Sundays only — from 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. at its squad building, located on Elm Street across from the Summit Middle School. For more information, call the squad at 908-277-9479, or visit www.summitvolunteers.org/treesale.

The ceremony to light Mountainside's Christmas tree will be at dusk — around 4:30 p.m. The popular landmark is located next to the Volunteer Rescue Squad building at the corner of New Providence Road and Route 22 east. For more information, call the Mountainside Recreation Department at 908-232-0015.

Sunday

The Sisterhood of Congregation Israel will sponsor a Holiday Boutique from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Everyone is welcome. The temple is located at 339 Mountain Ave.

The Summit Symphony Orchestra will present a free children's concert at 2 p.m. at Summit High School, located on Kent Place Boulevard. For more information, visit www.summitsymphony.org.

Monday

The Springfield Board of Education will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Instructional Media Center at Jonathan Dayton High School, 139 Mountain Ave.

Tuesday

There will be a free rabies clinic from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Roselle Park First Aid Squad Building on Laurel Avenue. No appointments are required. This clinic is being offered by the Westfield Regional Health Department, which serves Mountainside, Springfield and Summit, along with other local municipalities.

The Summit Common Council will meet at 8 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 512 Springfield Ave.

Wednesday

There will be a Holiday Gift Shop at the Sarah Bailey Civic Center, 30 Church Mall, Springfield, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call the Springfield Recreation Department at 973-912-2226.

Upcoming

Dec. 7

The December meeting of the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee will take place at 9:30 a.m. in the library at Summit High School. Pat Walsh, transition coordinator, will discuss the transition services provided to special education students in the Summit public school system. For more information, call Amy Larson at 908-608-1977.

The Foothill Club luncheon will take place at noon at B.G. Fields Restaurant, 560 Springfield Ave., Westfield. The club's annual fund-raiser, "A Christmas Boutique," will feature new and nearly new items. For reservations, call Genevieve at 908-232-3626.

The Summit Free Public Library will host the last of four public policy discussions led by Jon Plaut at 7:30 p.m. "Global Trade & Science" will look at historical trends and the interconnections between trade, science and technology. The program is free, and no registration is required. The Summit Free Public Library is located at 75 Maple St. For more information, call 908-273-0350.

Dec. 8

The fourth annual Moms' Night Out will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. in the gym at Florence M. Gaudineer School. Admission is free. The school is located at 75 South Springfield Ave.

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Saturday, December 2 at 8AM - WSOU 89.5 FM
or at www.TheUniversityHospital.com
HealthLink Radio with Bob Mann
Sophisticated Technology Reveals Problems Inside the Heart!
Dr. Mohammed Saric describes how Electrocardiography Scans are used.

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

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

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Localsource unveils new look

Redesigned site will be updated daily with community news

As part of its ongoing commitment to bring community news to the people of Union and Essex counties, Worrall Community Newspapers is launching a redesigned Web site today.

The site, www.localsource.com, will be updated every day of the work week with many of the news and feature stories that appear in our weekly newspapers, and with breaking news as it happens.

"The new site is more than an online newspaper," said David Worrall, president and publisher of Worrall Community Newspapers. "Localsource.com is your best source for community information, with an easy-to-use yellow page listing, local weather on the front page, links to municipal and county offices and, most importantly, news as it happens."

The front page of the site includes a selection of the latest news from across Union and Essex counties. In addition, Localsource.com offers a separate page for each municipality.

Users can access those pages from the top right corner of the page under "jump to."

Those individual sites can then be bookmarked for easier access to local news. For example, residents of the

township of Springfield who only want Springfield news can bookmark www.localsource.com/springfield and check back throughout the week to see what's happening in their town. Users can also sign up for e-mails notifying them when new news is posted online.

One of localsource.com's new features — accessible on the left side of the page — is an online yellow pages. Users can look up business listings by name or by the type of business and location.

For example, a Summit resident looking for a local pizza joint can type "pizza" and "Summit" and get a long list of local establishments.

Under "post your news," Localsource.com also allows users to post their own information, publicizing school, scouting or youth sports events, or any other non-commercial news.

The new, more graphically appealing site, retains many of the features from the previous site, including photo galleries of local events; the ability to view and place online classified ads; and an online community calendar. Wedding and engagement announcements can still be submitted online, and readers can still post comments to stories online.

Those boots were made for stealing — right out of the store

Springfield

On Saturday, there was a report of the theft of a pair of black Timberland boots, valued at \$100, from a store on Route 22 west.

On Monday at 12:07 a.m., Alexander A. Stefanyak, 19, and Christopher R. Bogda, 19, both of Union, were arrested at Morris Avenue and Keeler Street for possession of a controlled dangerous substance and possession of roll paper. Stefanyak was also arrested for possession of drugs in a motor vehicle.

On Sunday at 2:10 a.m., there was a report of a burglary at a location on Route 22 east on Saturday. The rear door and its frame were damaged when the door was pulled from its frame. The wall in a rear office and built-in bookcase were destroyed. A two-way mirror in the rear office was broken and removed from its housing. An unknown amount of jewelry was stolen.

On Saturday at 7 a.m., there was a report of a theft to a 1995 Eagle Talon parked at a location on Hillside Avenue. The driver's side window was damaged. Items missing included a cell-phone and subwoofer-box. The total value of the damage and missing items was estimated at \$580.

On Friday, there was a report of a theft from a locker at a fitness center on Route 22 east. Items missing included a black leather wallet, \$37 cash, New Jersey driver's license, various credit cards and house keys.

On Nov. 23 at 1:28 a.m., Mary A. Tyler, 26, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was arrested at a restaurant on Morris Avenue for simple assault.

On Nov. 23 at 10:46 p.m., Hoberth Palacios, 26, of Irvington, was arrested on Mountain Avenue for driving while intoxicated, unlicensed driver, unregistered vehicle, uninsured vehicle and fictitious plates.

Mountainside

On Sunday at 2:22 a.m., Patrick T. Lilly, 27, of Scotch Plains, was arrested on Route 22 west near Lawrence Avenue for driving under the influ-

POLICE BLOTTER

ence. He had been stopped for failure to maintain a lane.

On Sunday at 10:18 a.m., Jorge Abreu, 48, of Hillside, was arrested at a location on Route 22 for driving while suspended. He had been stopped for an unregistered motor vehicle.

On Saturday at 3:02 a.m., Francis M. Ondash Jr., 34, of West Orange, was arrested on Route 22 west near Summit Road for driving under the influence.

On Saturday at 9 p.m., there was a report of damage to a black 2003 Infiniti parked in the lot of a Route 22 west restaurant sometime between 6 and 7 p.m. this date. When the owner returned to his car, he noticed his driver's side door lock was damaged and that window down. The glove box was open and clothing in the back seat had been ransacked. Nothing appeared to be missing.

On Saturday at 10:51 a.m., police responded to a home on Meeting House Lane for a report of criminal mischief.

The homeowner said after she woke up that morning, she noticed her outdoor light post was knocked down. Its estimated value was \$200.

A neighbor soon reported similar damage to her light post, valued at \$300. Other acts of criminal mischief in the area included damage to a sign at a church and pumpkins smashed in the street.

On Friday at 4:43 p.m., police responded to a report of a burglary to a motor vehicle at an elder care facility on Route 22 west. Its passenger's side window was smashed and that side's door lock was broken. The suspect stole a GPS holder and adapter, valued at \$65. The cost of the damage was estimated at \$225.

On Friday at 6:57 p.m., there was a report of a burglary from a green 2002 Volkswagen Passat parked in the lot of a Route 22 east business sometime between 4 and 4:20 p.m. this date. Upon the owners' return to the

locked vehicle, they noticed its driver's side window was broken. There was no evidence as to what caused the break. A handbag containing the following items was stolen: \$60 cash, a New Jersey driver's license, two Palm Pilots, Motorola RAZR cell phone, house keys and various credit cards. The estimated value of the stolen items is \$660.

The owner was advised to notify their credit card companies and cellular phone carrier of the theft.

At 10:30 p.m. the same day, police were notified by the owner that the suspect had attempted use their ATM card at a debit machine at 4:21 p.m. One of their credit cards had been successfully used for a purchase.

Summit

On Sunday at 11:25 a.m., there was a report of a burglary and theft from a Portland Road residence sometime between Nov. 23 and this date. Items missing include two Panasonic DVD players, a Panasonic camcorder, two Dell computer monitors, an Xbox entertainment system with six games and approximately 10 DVD movies, three bracelets, two pocket watches, a satellite clock, a PlayStation 2 with games, prescription drugs, seven passports and a diamond necklace. The value of these items was unknown as of press time.

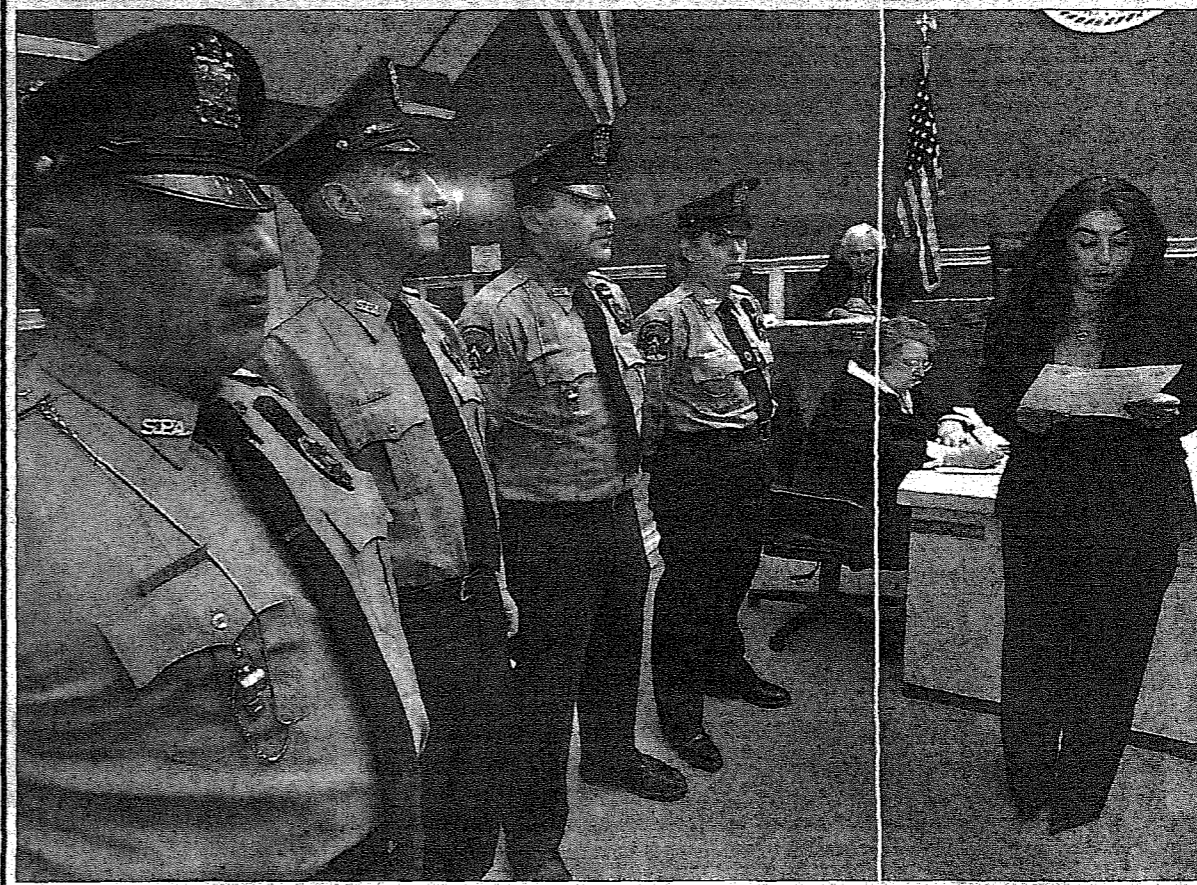
On Friday at 8:36 a.m., Sandra P. Rojas, 35, of Elizabeth, was arrested at River Road and Plain Street for driving while suspended.

On Friday at 1:59 p.m., Leala M. McMickle, 22, of Summit, was arrested at River Road and Morris Avenue for driving while suspended and failure to exhibit.

On Friday at 4:36 p.m., Robert Emmitt Waldron, 31, of East Orange, was arrested at Union Place and Beechwood Road for contempt of court.

On Friday at 6:21 p.m., James E. Simmons, 41, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was arrested at Springfield Avenue for driving while suspended and maintenance of lamps.

Officers honored



Springfield Mayor Clara Hareluk honors auxiliary police officers Tony Sidar, Howard Apsan, Charles Gleason and Cathy Matthews at the Nov. 14 Township Committee meeting. The officers recently completed almost 80 hours of firearms training, which was in addition to the instruction they received over a three-month period. These volunteers have full police authority while on duty and are subject to the same dangers as paid officers.

Visual Arts Center names new outreach education coordinator

The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey announced that Noelle Tate has joined its staff as outreach education coordinator. Tate will coordinate the many facets of the art center's outreach programming, as it fulfills its mission of bringing art and people together.

Tate, a Mountainside resident, received her undergraduate degree in mathematics and theater from Muhlenberg College, where she graduated cum laude in 2005.

She is also a graduate of Governor Livingston Regional High School in Berkeley Heights.

Tate is a core member of the Deuce Theatre Company in Highlands. She has acted in many produc-

tions in high school, college and in various community theaters. Professionally, she has performed in opera productions in Italy, and has sung and performed in New Jersey.


"I would like to bring performance arts to the art center by intertwining them with the visual arts. I hope to offer a class that combines both artistic forms. What I wish to achieve with Outreach at the art center is to establish firm goals for each program, see how the program can grow and be enhanced and making sure that we are reaching diverse audiences so that we are involved in all parts of our communities," Tate said.

She will bring her love and knowledge of theater to the Visual Arts Cen-

ter in February when she will direct and perform in a production of "The Vagina Monologues."

As the official organizer for V-Day Summit 2007, Tate's goal with this project is to intertwine various aspects of artistic expression, including the visual arts, to enhance creation. V-Day is a global movement to stop violence against women and girls, and is a catalyst to promote creative events to increase awareness, raise money and revitalize the spirit of existing anti-violence organizations through benefit productions of playwright/founder Eve Ensler's award-winning play.

For more information, call Tate at 908-273-9121, ext. 13.



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COMMUNITY FORUM

EDITORIALS

Now or never

Although we have heard grumblings and cheers regarding efforts by the governor and Legislature to reform the property-tax system, we may finally be right on track.

We now have an alignment of forces not seen in recent memory: a governor with proven business acumen throwing his weight behind the effort and a Legislature which, so far, has supported the project. The public is fed up with paying the highest property taxes in the nation and screaming for reform. And 98 proposals are now on the table, including many worthwhile ideas and a few sacred cows.

The next few months will determine if we are going to achieve serious, long-term property-tax reform, or simply slip back into business as usual.

The 98 proposals come from four governor-created committees that have spent the last three months studying the issue of tax reform. Right now, the Office of Legislative Services is busy converting the 98 proposals into bills that the Senate and Assembly will consider in the coming months.

Looking through the data, we see good, bad and a few things that have been overlooked.

The proposal to give a 20 percent tax credit to a portion of the taxpayers is out of place in this endeavor. We are trying to save money, not give it away. There is no revenue plan to pay for this proposal. It is an election year ploy that would only produce a one-time, instant gratification for some property owners and divert attention from the real problems.

The pension committee has many good ideas: eliminate dual pensions by eliminating dual office holding; deny pensions to professional contractors; require annual earnings of at least \$5,000 to earn a year's pension credit; and provide realistic but fair modifications for future workers in accordance with what is being done in the private sector.

On the question of consolidation, the proposed expansion of the state purchasing system is promising, as are several shared-services suggestions. The legislators might consider having a statewide office to help municipalities put their shared-service ideas into practice.

For school funding, the effort to control spending appears, at this point, limited to a countywide superintendent to provide oversight and review, which seems promising, but we await the final proposal. Having a watchdog on school purchases, salaries and benefits is smart, but adding another layer of administration is not.

What we did not see in the suggestions is a plan to reduce the state payroll. A plan based on attrition seems reasonable and we have seen it work at the municipal level.

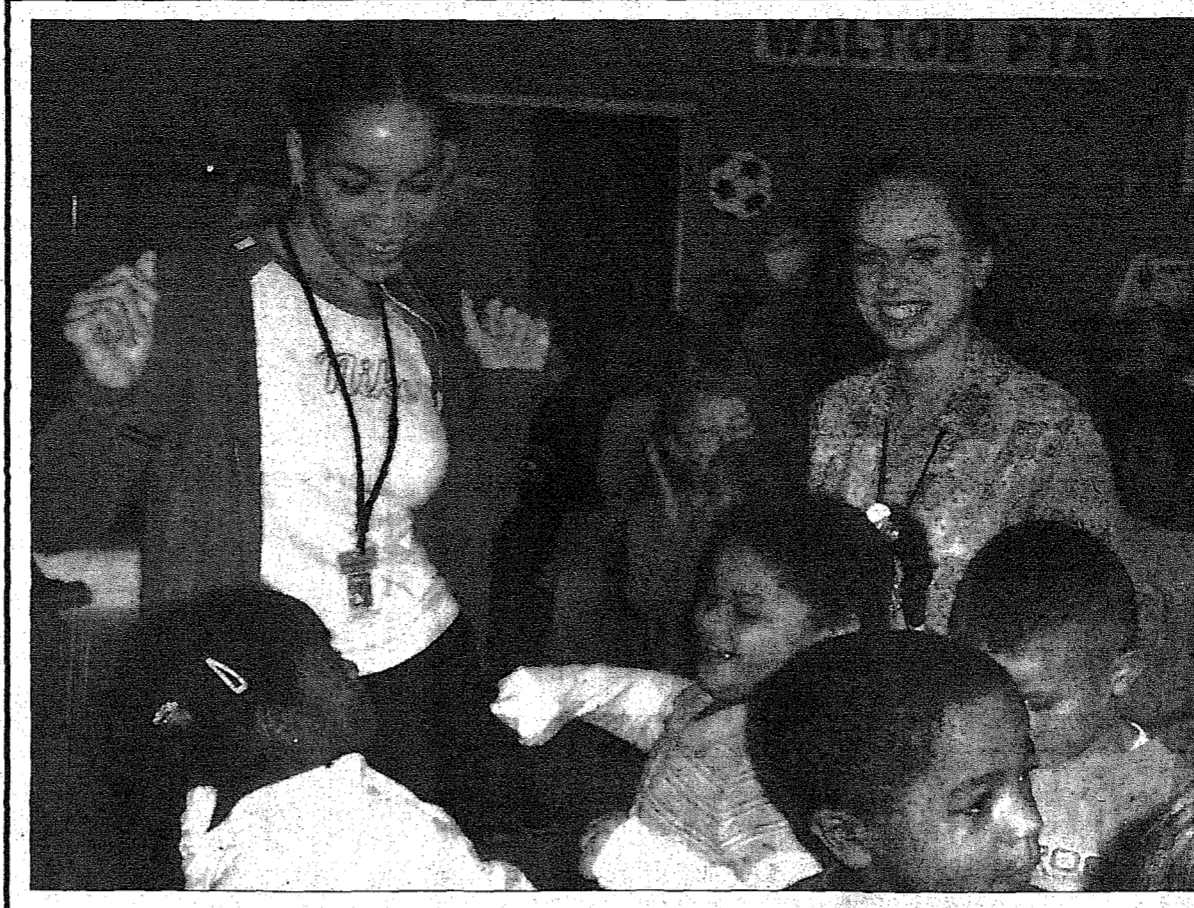
Legislators must now step into the debate. Never have we seen such an opportune time to provide sweeping change to a broken system, and, if we fail, that opportunity may not present itself again. Legislators must shut the door on special interests and compile a realistic blueprint for genuine reform that benefits the taxpayers and maintains services.

Leaves still around

County and municipal departments of public works generally set Dec. 1 at their deadline to have all fall leaves removed from roads. With that deadline now just one day away, it looks like local officials are not going to meet it, as piles of leaves still sit and blow around county and local roads.

We have had several rains and wind storms in the last few weeks. If the weather were just a few degrees colder, these storms could have dumped several inches of snow and covered these leaves for days, weeks, or even much of the winter.

We hope to see our public works departments out on the streets in the next several days, making our roads safe and clean.



DANCE, DANCE, DANCE — Teachers and students at the Edward V. Walton School in Springfield dance at a music assembly Nov. 16. Pictured are Donie Carter and Susan Webster, with Emily Carr, Arianna Griffith, Isaiah Gorham and Dante Deel.

One should be able to read English to vote

This year's Election Day really angered me.

Not because I was disappointed when the candidates I was rooting for didn't win. Not because I had to work until 2 a.m. Wednesday morning to finalize that week's edition after waiting for election results. But because, for the first time, I realized that signs that instruct people where to vote are written in Spanish as well as in English.

The signs read "Vote here today" and "Vota aqui hoy."

In Spanish? That seems absurd. In order to vote, one must be a U.S. citizen. Wouldn't a U.S. citizen be required to know English?

According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Web site, "applicants for naturalization must be able to read, write, speak and understand words in ordinary usage in the English language." This doesn't mean the applicant has to be able to read "War and Peace," but the applicant should be able to comprehend text a bit more difficult than that in a book about Dick, Jane and Spot.

Not necessarily so. Some of the sample sentences for written English testing include such rocket science as "He has a very big dog," "You drink too much coffee," and, oddly, "I count the cars as they pass by the office."

My Two Cents

By Tracy A. Politowicz

I can't resist pointing out that two other sample sentences are "Martha Washington was the first first lady" — guaranteed to confuse most anyone at first glance — and "The colors of the flag (sic) are red, white and blue." Really.

Now, I am not only angry, I am shocked — shocked that all that is required of applicants as far as English skills are the abilities to critique someone's beverage consumption and monitor vehicular traffic.

With standards that low, it's no wonder that bilingual options are creeping into every facet of society — on the ATM at the bank, during the message of the automated phone service used by the gas utility company and even on the labels of products at the grocery store.

It may not be politically correct to say so, but, quite frankly, I find this trend annoying, at the very least, and somewhat puzzling. Almost 215 mil-

lion, or 82 percent, of the population aged 5 years and older spoke only English at home in 2003, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006, Section 1, Population.

So why isn't English our official language? It's our de facto national language — it is used in practice. In schools, in court, in the movies, in government, etc.

So, earlier this year, when a bill was proposed in the House of Representatives to make English our official language, an Hispanic lawmaker, Rep. Ruben Hinojosa of Texas, called it a "code for official discrimination," according to published reports.

I don't believe the intention of the proposal is to discriminate against anyone. It just seems common sense that one would learn the language of the country in which they live. Wouldn't that make life easier?

Before I travelled to Paris many years ago, I brushed up on my limited French skills from high school. It wouldn't have prepared me to speak before the French Parliament, but I was able to chat with a cafe worker at Versailles, for example. I was also able to figure out that a clerk at the gift shop at Notre Dame was gossiping about my friend!

If I were planning to move to a for-

ign country, I would learn the language. I would want to be able to read traffic signs, order in a restaurant and talk to my neighbors.

Of course, there will also be a few people who come to the United States and who, for whatever reason, don't learn English. That is their prerogative, although I don't understand it.

Nobody is suggesting that the United States become an English-only country. Certainly, other languages should continue to be spoken — I am a strong believer in families maintaining their heritage, and passing their traditions on to their children.

But we must honor the United States' traditions, too. We began this country with the English-language Declaration of Independence. We rely on the Constitution — in English — to determine the law of the land. Every four years the incoming president gives the inaugural address in English. We the people must support efforts to make English our official language and require the government to increase the English requirements for the naturalization process.

If you can't read "Vote here today," then you shouldn't be voting.

Tracy A. Politowicz is the managing editor of *The Observer*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for supporting my candidacy

To the Editor:

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported my candidacy for Summit's Common Council in any way. Over the last six months, countless supporters have walked with me, made phone calls, helped develop strategies and communications, planted lawn signs and helped in many other ways too numerous to mention. Although it did not turn out quite the way we had hoped, it was a very gratifying experience.

I especially want to thank my fellow candidates, Melody Irvin and Jill LaZare, and our incredible campaign team. It was a pleasure working with you.

I am proud of the campaign we ran, and I truly believe it elevated the discussion on issues that are important to all of us. I want to congratulate Andy Lark, Diane Klaf and Dave Bomgaars and wish them all the best as they serve their terms on Common Council.

Terri Tauber
Summit

Township needs more active role

To the Editor:

So, how about a little more action regarding the completion of Meisel Field? As most local residents know, this park is under the ownership and jurisdiction of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders. On Oct. 15, a ceremony was held to herald its "reopening" since the repair work has been going on for more than six years. However, only the new running track and a walkway around the pond can be used. When will the bleachers be installed? When will the football field and other playing areas be useable? When will the renovation of the field house be completed? When will the planned playground for youngsters be available? The work on this Union County park property was supposed to be finished long ago with the latest of many deadlines being September 2006 so that the football field, soccer field and other facilities could be utilized.

The lack of persistence for this important part of local residents' lives is abominable. Both the Springfield Township Committee and the Springfield Board of Education have disappointed the people of Springfield. Meisel Field is an important part of the sports program of the high school and for the enjoyment of others. Its facilities are used for Fourth of July Celebrations as well as for other events.

At public meetings before and around the time of the field's reopening, I asked for the latest news about the work on Meisel Field at both of these municipal governing entities. The usual answer alluded to the fact that the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders were taking care of it. I also asked if all nine members of the Board of Education had gone to a public meeting or a private meeting with the county government and if the Township Committee had ever jointly attended such a meeting in Elizabeth. The answers were both "no."

In 2000, the freeholders hired a Florham Park firm to determine the types of chemicals that were buried in Meisel Field for more than 40 years. The report took two years to complete, or at least until it was publicized. Then the freeholders, probably without any prodding from the Township Committee or the Board of Education, put a very low priority on the rehabilitation of this property. Instead of all five Township Committee members meeting with the freeholders, they sent the business manager who is not an elected official and who could not exert any real political pressure.

In the meantime, the Board of Education made arrangements for Springfield athletes to use the facilities of Millburn High School and David Brearley High School in Kenilworth, incurring big costs, wasting time and causing inconveniences.

It is about time that the five members of the Springfield Township Committee and the nine members of the Springfield Board of Education joined together

and attended one or more of the public meetings and/or have private conferences in Elizabeth with the Union County Chosen Board of Freeholders to request and discuss an all-inclusive timetable for the completion of the work at Meisel Field with a definite date for its full usage.

Hazel Hardgrove
Springfield

Thank you, coaches, for life lessons

Editor's note: The following letter was originally addressed to Summit High School football coaches George and Frank DiGrande.

We, the seniors of the class of 2007, want to thank you for four great years of football.

Since joining your Hilltopper football team, we have learned much about football, toughness, character and perspective. You taught us to prepare. You taught us that hard work in the off-season is key to strength in-season. The early morning hours spent each year in the weight room were a great time to build individually, and keep the camaraderie of the team strong in the winter months. We will not forget weight-lifting in our sleep — it's a great memory to take with us as we study into the early morning hours at college.

As the summer double- and triple-sessions started each year, you rewarded preparation and all-out, focused effort. We knew that while the needs of the team came first, as must always be the case, you always offered hard workers opportunity. Even more, your door was always open for questions or concerns, and we knew we would each be treated with fairness and respect.

When the season finally started each year, there was no player, fan or spectator with more drive and determination to prevail on the field than yourselves, and no player, fan or spectator with more perspective, wisdom and resilience to work through whatever the outcome — be it win or loss. You sought to maximize our strengths and minimize our weaknesses, as individuals and as a team. As we have begun to look into the future, you have done much behind the scenes to move us forward in the eyes of the colleges we seek to attend, and we appreciate the many phone calls, contacts and films made on our behalf to help get us onto a college team.

While none of us, players or coaches, would choose the win/loss stats of the past, we seniors know that we are privileged to have played under great coaches. We will not forget the fighting spirit and class you demonstrate always in the heat of competition on the field, and the long hours of thoughtful preparation and guidance for us off the field. You have given us great memories and a huge step forward in life. We will be back to cheer on your Hilltopper 2007 team.

Senior members of Summit High School's football team

Our policy on letters and columns

The *Observer* welcomes submissions from its readers. Letters to the editor or opinion pieces on any subject will be considered for publication on the opinion pages.

This opportunity is open to all residents, officials and employees of Mountaintop, Springfield, Summit and the County of Union.

The *Observer* reserves the right to edit all submissions for length, content and style. Writers must include their name, address and daytime telephone number for verification.

Letters must be no more than 500 words long; longer pieces must be arranged in advance with the editor.

The *Observer* accepts letters to the editor and guest columns via e-mail. The address is TheObserver@thelocalsource.com. They may also be sent via U.S. mail to 1291 Stuyvesant Ave., Union 07083.

For publication, all letters and guest columns must be received by 9 a.m. on Monday to be considered for publication in Thursday's edition.

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AT THE LIBRARY

Last of public policy discussions next month

The Summit Free Public Library will host the last of four public policy discussions led by Jon Plaut on Dec. 7 at 7:30 p.m.

"Global Trade & Science" will look at historical trends and the interconnections between trade, science and technology. Jacob Bronowski's "The Ascent of Man" and Thomas Friedman's "The World Is Flat," among other works, will fuel a far-ranging discussion of global and local issues.

Plaut will focus on specific cases of cooperation between trade and ecological priorities through state-of-the-art technology.

Plaut teaches American studies at Ramapo College, and science, technology and society at Penn State. He is also a teaching consultant at Rutgers University. Plaut is a former presidential appointee to NAFTA and a former senior advisor to the United Nations Environmental Program.

The program is free and no registration is required. Seating is limited and on a first come, first seated basis. Doors will open 15 minutes before the start of the program.

The Summit Free Public Library is located at 75 Maple St.

For more information, call 908-273-0350.

Book fair scheduled to benefit township library

The Springfield Free Public Library will offer a book fair from Dec. 7 through 11 at the Springfield Barnes & Noble, 240 Route 22 west. The book fair will take place during the store's regular business hours — 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

Come to the Springfield Free Public Library, pick up a voucher and present the voucher to the cashier at Barnes & Noble when you purchase books, CDs, bookmarks, café gift items or any non-consumable item. The Springfield library will receive 15 to 20 percent of your purchase, at no cost to you. Every purchase counts to benefit the library, except for gift cards, memberships and café consumables.

Kick off the holiday season with two special events to support this book fair. On Dec. 7 at 4:30 p.m. and on Dec. 9 at 2 p.m., Deborah Sandford, the library's children's librarian, will

be reading holiday stories at Barnes & Noble.

Books discussion group to meet

The Springfield Free Public Library's (Really Good) Books Discussion Group will meet Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. in the library's Palmer Museum to discuss Adriana Trigiani's "Lucia, Lucia."

The 25-year-old daughter of a prosperous Greenwich Village grocer of Italian descent, Lucia Sartori is an apprentice to an up-and-coming designer at B. Altman's in 1950s New York. Engaged to her childhood sweetheart, Lucia meets a handsome stranger who promises her a life of uptown luxury, and she is eventually forced to choose between duty to her family and her own dreams. A scandal causes secrets to be revealed and Lucia's career is jeopardized.

Trigiani is the author of the well-received "Big Stone Gap" trilogy and is known for creating strong female characters. The Springfield Free Public Library is located at 66 Mountain Ave. To reserve a copy of the book, call 973-376-4930, ext. 228.

Internet class to be offered next month

The Summit Free Public Library will offer a hands-on Internet class called "Searching Beyond Google" on Dec. 8 from 10:30 a.m. to noon. The class will cover four databases that are available to library patrons remotely at home as well as in the library.

The featured databases are ProQuest New York Times, RefUSA, EBSCO and NovelList. The class will consist of a brief discussion and hands-on exercises for each database. Participants should familiarize themselves enough with each so that they can begin to use them to explore further and perform effective searches.

ProQuest New York Times makes a facsimile version of the paper available for online searching back to the start of publication in 1851.

RefUSA offers phone, address and contact information on millions of people and businesses in the United States and Canada. It also offers nationwide search capability of physicians with information on specialties and educational background.

EBSCO contains hundreds of periodicals, journals and newspapers from around the country and some interna-

tional titles. Many articles are available in full text.

NovelList offers a tool for fiction readers to choose what to read next. Features include author read-alikes, selection of books by characteristics such as genre and plot details, and suggestions for book groups.

The class will be limited to 12 participants and be taught by a reference librarian. It will be held in the Manley-Winsor computer lab in the library.

The program is free, but pre-registration is required. Participants must have prior computer experience as they will be working directly with the databases. Prior experience requires a familiarity with e-mail, Windows and using a mouse. Some Internet search experience would be helpful.

To register, stop by the reference desk, or call 908-273-0350, ext. 3.

French film to be shown

The Summit Free Public Library will conclude the fall/winter session of its International Film Festival on Dec. 11 with the French farce, "The Closet."

This delightful film sends up the corporate world while blasting hypocrisy, political correctness and the notion that perception trumps reality. Nobody takes notice of bland accountant Francois. His wife has left him, women don't give him a second look, his son brands him uncool and he's about to be fired from his job in a condom factory.

When he seizes on the idea to pose as gay — knowing that the company could be sued for discrimination if he gets the boot — he is suddenly viewed as exotic and exciting.

Women pursue him and the company's top homophobe, played by Gerard Depardieu, now fearing for his own job, feverishly pursues a friendship. The breezy, laugh-out-loud comedy was one of France's biggest hits of the year.

There will be two showings at 2 and 6:45 p.m. The film is in French with English subtitles.

The films are shown in the Ernest S. Hickok Meeting Room. Admission is free, but seating is limited and on a first come, first seated basis. Doors will open 15 minutes before the start of the film.

The Summit Free Public Library is located at 75 Maple St.

For more information, call 908-273-0350.

Alumni honored



Elaine and Anthony Grillo, second and third from left, receive a plaque naming them as Honorary Alumni of the Year at Oratory Prep School in Summit from the school's director of development/alumni, Ed McDonnell, '60, and Headmaster Tim Lynch. They received the honor for their many years of service and loyalty to the ideals of Oratory.

Three doctors named to 'top' list

Three doctors of the Summit Medical Group were recently named to New Jersey Monthly magazine's 2006 "Top Doctors" list. They are Kerry S. LeBenger, William Indruk, and Michael B. Wax.

LeBenger, allergist and immunologist, joined Summit Medical Group in 1985. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Johns Hopkins University, Md., in 1976 and his medical degree from New York Medical College, N.Y. in 1980. He did his residency at Lenox Hill Hospital and his fellowship at New York Hospital/Cornell Medical Center, both in New York. LeBenger is board certified in internal medicine, allergy and immunology.

Indruk, emergency medicine specialist, has been a physician in Summit Medical Group's Urgent Care Center since 2003. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Bucknell University, Penn. in 1970 and his medical degree from Georgetown University School of Medicine, District of Columbia in 1974. He is board certified in emergency medicine.

Wax, hematologist and oncologist, joined Summit Medical Group in 1983. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1970 and

his medical degree from The Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1977. Wax did his residency at Hahnemann University Hospital, Pa., and Hospital of the Medical College of Pennsylvania, as well as a fellowship at University of Washington/Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Wash. He is board certified in internal medicine and medical oncology. He was recently the recipient of an Overlook Hospital Clinical Excellence Award for Physician Excellence in medicine and patient care.

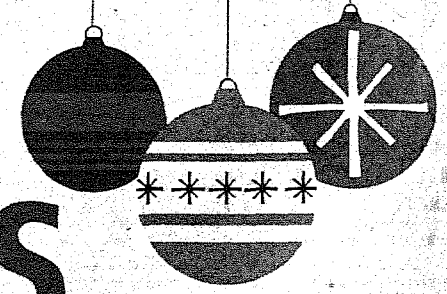
LeBenger, Indruk and Wax were selected from a field of nearly 7,000 New Jersey licensed physicians in practice for at least five years. The list of the 325 top doctors represent 48 medical specialties. LeBenger and Wax have attained this honor several times.

Summit Medical Group is a multi-specialty group practice in New Jersey with more than 120 high quality physicians.

It has a main campus in Berkeley Heights, and four satellite offices in Summit, Short Hills, Warren and Westfield. As one of the premier multi-specialty medical groups on the East Coast, Summit Medical Group has provided exceptional primary and specialty care since 1929.

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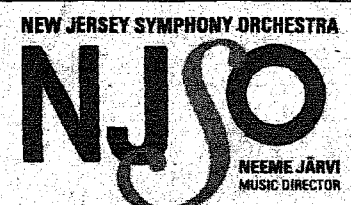
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EDUCATION

Pamper yourself during Moms' Night Out

The fourth annual Moms' Night Out will take place Dec. 8 from 6 to 9 p.m. in the gym at Florence M. Gaudineer School.

The event will include skin products, sweatwear, toys, crafts, handmade scarves, a massage therapist, cosmetics, hair accessories and more. Also participants will be able to sample delicious free food from local restaurants.

Admission is free. The school is located at 75 South Springfield Ave.

Oak Knoll School to host open houses

Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child in Summit will host open house

information sessions on Wednesday and Jan. 17, 2007, for families interested in kindergarten through sixth-grade, and Feb. 7, 2007, for families interested in first- through sixth-grades.

Each information session will begin at 9 a.m. with an overview of the school and its curriculum. Guests will meet faculty, coaches and students, and tour the nine-acre campus.

Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child is an independent Catholic day school enrolling boys and girls in grades kindergarten through six and girls only in grades seven through 12.

The school stresses the significance of educating "the whole child."

To schedule a visit, get directions, inquire about alternative dates, or for more information, call Associate Director of Admissions Amanda Walsh at 908-522-8129.

Learn about financial aid for college costs

The Guidance Department of Jonathan Dayton High School will sponsor a Financial Aid Night for parents of juniors and seniors on Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the high school.

The program will review the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and provide suggestions for maximizing the student's eligibility for assistance. Attendance at this program will assist parents of seniors as they deal with the financial aid process in the coming months and provide important background information for parents of juniors as they make financial plans for college.

The featured speaker will be Kimber Decker, senior vice president of Nelnet Campus Solutions. Decker has

worked in the financial aid field for 19 years in colleges and commercial institutions. He has presented financial aid workshops at area high schools for 13 years and his presentations have been well-received by local audiences.

Jonathan Dayton High School is located at 139 Mountain Ave.

Parent advisory meeting next month

The December meeting of the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee will take place Dec. 7 at 9:30 a.m. in the library at Summit High School.

Pat Walsh, transition coordinator, will discuss the transition services provided to special education students in the Summit public school system.

All parents are welcome to attend. For more information, call Amy Larson at 908-608-1977.

WORSHIP CALENDAR

BAPTIST
EVANGEL BAPTIST CHURCH - "SERVING CHRIST IN THE 21st CENTURY." - 242 Shunpike Rd., Springfield, Sundays: 9:30 AM Bible School for all ages - Nursery through Seniors; Spanish Sunday School 9:30 am. 10:30 AM Worship Service and Nursery care - 5:30-7:00 PM AWANA Club Program for Children ages 4-11; 6:00 PM Evening Service & Nursery care. Wednesdays: 7:00 PM Prayer, Praise and Bible Study; Junior/Senior High Ministry. Active Youth Ministry; Wide-Range Music Program. Ample Parking. Chair Lift provided with assistance. All are invited and welcomed to participate in worship with us. For further information, contact church office (973) 379-4351.

JEWISH-CONSERVATIVE
TEMPLE BETH AHM 60 Temple Drive, Springfield, 973-376-0539. Mark Mallach, Rabbi. Richard Nadel, Cantor. Richard B. Falkin, President. Beth Ahm is an egalitarian, Conservative temple, with programming for all ages. Weekly services Mon.-Fri. 7:00 AM Sun.-Thurs. 7:45 PM Shabbat (Friday) 6:00 PM & 8:30 PM Shabbat day 9:30 AM & sunset; Sundays, 8:30 AM. Festival & Holiday mornings 9:00 AM. Family and children services are conducted regularly. Our Religious School (third-seventh grade) meets on Sunday and Tuesday. There are formal classes for both High School and pre-Religious School aged children. The synagogue also sponsors a Pre-School Women's League, Men's Club, youth groups for sixth through twelfth graders, and a busy Adult Education program. For more information, please contact our office during office hours.

JEWISH-ORTHODOX
CONGREGATION ISRAEL OF SPRINGFIELD 339 Mountain Avenue, Springfield, 973-367-0666. Chaim Marcus, Rabbi; Alan J. Yuter, Rabbi Emeritus; Solomon Greenfield, President. Congregation Israel is a Modern Orthodox synagogue. There are two daily weekday morning Minyan at 6:15 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. Daily weekday Mincha/Maariv services are also held. Call the shul office for times. There are two Shabbat morning services at 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. as well as Junior Congregation at 9:30 a.m. The Nursery School conducts classes for children aged 2 1/2 to 4. A summer camp is also available to children of this

age. Adult classes are held three nights a week with two weekly Teen classes. We have an active Senior Set and very active Jr. NCSY and Sr. NCSY chapters for pre-teens. Our Sisterhood, Adult Education and Youth groups provide a wide array of communal programming. For further information call the synagogue office at 973-467-9666.

JEWISH - REFORM
TEMPLE SHALOM 78 S. Springfield Avenue, Springfield, (973) 379-5387. Joshua Goldstein, Rabbi; Amy Daniels, Cantor; Education Director; Nina Greenman, Pre-School Director; Mindy Schreff, Family Life Educator; Edward Fink and Hank Rotenberg, Co-Presidents. Temple Shalom is a Reform congregation affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism. Shabbat worship, enhanced by volunteer choir, begins on Friday evenings at 8:00 PM, with monthly Family and Alternative Worship. Saturday morning Torah study class begins at 9:15 AM followed by worship at 10:30 AM. Religious school classes meet on Saturday mornings for grades K-3; on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons for 4-7; and Tuesday evenings for post bar/bat mitzvah students. Pre-school, classes are available for children ages 2 1/2 through 4. The Temple has the support of an active Sisterhood, Brotherhood, Renaissance Group and Youth Group. A wide range of programs include Adult Education, Social Action, Interfaith Outreach, Singles and Seniors. For more information, call the Temple office, (973) 379-5387.

LUTHERAN
HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH 639 Mountain Avenue, Springfield, 07081, 973-379-4525, Fax 973-379-8887. Our Sunday Worship Service takes place at 10 a.m. For information about our midweek children, teen, and adult programs, contact the Church Office Monday through Thursday, 8:30-4:00 p.m.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL, 229 Cowpenhwaite Pl., Westfield, Rev. Paul E. Kritsch, Pastor. (908) 232-1517. Beginning Sunday, July 6, Summer Worship Times are as follows: Sunday Worship Services, 8:30 and 10:00 a.m. Sunday morning Nursery available. Wednesday Evening Worship Service, 7:30 p.m. Holy Communion is celebrated at all worship services. The church and all rooms are handicapped accessible

METHODIST
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of Summit is located in the heart of town on the corner of Kent Place Boulevard and DeForest Avenue. Church School and Bible Study is held at 9:30 a.m. Sunday morning Worship is at 10:30 a.m.; the emphasis of which is to always have a "good week" because of Paul's reminder to us in his letter to the Romans "that ALL things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to his purpose". The sermons are uplifting, Biblically sound and guaranteed to keep you awake. The music and weekly children's message are memorable. All are welcome to hear the Good News of God's love and salvation through Jesus Christ. Our church also offers nursery care, after worship refreshments and fellowship, and many lively programs for everyone. Come worship with us and find out how you too can have a "good week". Call the church office or Pastors Gina or Rich Hendrickson, Senior Co-Pastors for more information at 908 277-1700.

PRESBYTERIAN
COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1459 Deer Path, Mountainside, New Jersey 07092. You are invited to join us in Worship Services on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. This is a place for you to enjoy uplifting music and relevant messages that will energize and inspire you. We offer a warm and friendly environment with Bible study, Sunday school and active adult and youth groups. For further information, please contact Dr. Christopher Belden, Pastor at 908-232-9490.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 210 Morris Ave. at Church Mall, Springfield, 973-379-4320. Sunday School Classes for ages 3yrs.-Senior High 9:00 a.m. in our Parish House. Sunday morning worship service 10:15 a.m. Nursery care and facilities are provided. Opportunities for personal growth through worship, Christian Education, Choir, ongoing church activities, and Fellowship. Holy Communion is held the 1st Sunday of every month; The Ladies Evening Group-3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.; Kaffeeklatsch-1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m.; Men's Fellowship-2nd Sunday of each month at 8:30 a.m.; Choir-every Thursday

at 8:00 p.m. in the Chapel. We also host various Outside group meetings: Springfield Garden Club, Children's Community Choir, Learning Disabled Group, and Alanon. All meetings held in the Parish House unless otherwise noted. For information about any of our programs or services, call the Church Office: 973-379-4320, Mon. through Fri., 9:00 a.m.-12 noon; 1:00pm-4:00pm

ROMAN CATHOLIC
THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES, 300 Central Avenue, Mountainside, 908-232-1162. Celebrate the Lord's Day: Anticipated Mass 5:00pm, Sunday at 7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am. Weekdays: Monday-Friday 7:30am, Saturday 8:00am, Sacrament of Reconciliation, Saturday at 1pm. Perpetual Adoration Chapel for personal prayer and devotion. www.ollmountainside.org, office@ollmountainside.org.

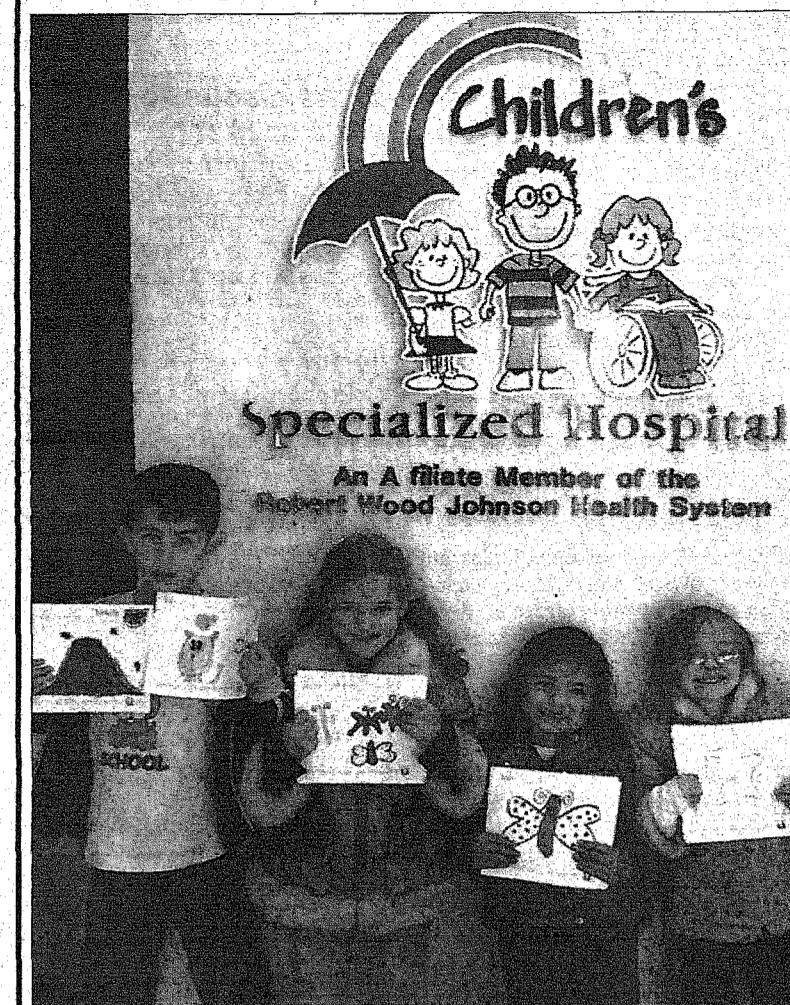
THE PARISH COMMUNITY OF ST. JAMES, 45 South Springfield Avenue, Springfield, New Jersey 07081, 973-376-3044. SUNDAY EUCHARIST: Sat. 5:30 p.m. Sun. 7:30, 9:00, 10:30 a.m., 12 Noon. Reconciliation: Sat. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Weekday Masses: 7:00 & 8:00 a.m.

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST
UNITARIAN CHURCH IN SUMMIT, 4 Waldron Avenue, Summit, NJ 07901. 908-273-3245. www.uusummit.org. Rev. Vanessa Rush Southern, Minister, Emille Boggis, Assistant Minister, Tuli Patel, Director, Children's Religious Education, Mitchell Vines, Music and Choir Director. Sunday Services at 9:00 AM and 10:30 AM. Adult Education and other programs.

NOTE: All copy changes must be made in writing and received by Worrall Community Newspapers No later than 12:00 Noon, Fridays prior to the following week's publication.

Please address changes to: Connie Sloan, Worrall Community Newspapers, 1291 Stuyvesant Ave., P.O. Box 3109, Union, N.J. 07083 U/W

Making a difference



Children from the Summit and Springfield YMCAs after school programs deliver handmade postcards for patients at the Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside. Their project helped celebrate 'Make a Difference Day' on Oct. 26. Pictured are Steven Rodriguez, Kristine Rodriguez, Kareena Kullar and Annie Kouhne.

Special education screenings available

Mountainside recognizes the importance of providing services to children with special needs through its Project Child Find efforts.

The Mountainside School District can provide screening and evaluation for children ages 3 to 21, who appear to have problems in communication, motor, social-emotional or learning areas.

The screening and evaluation are available to pre-schoolers, to highly mobile students with disabilities, such as migrant and homeless students, and to students who may be disabled even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

Children found to be eligible for special education and related services are entitled to free and appropriate special education programming and related services.

If anyone knows of children who appear to have one or more of the following signs, ask their parents to call the Mountainside School District's Office of Special Services at 908-232-8828.

- significant delays in acquiring language or significant speech problems;
• significant difficulty walking, running or manipulating small objects;
• frequent health problems or birth handicaps;
• consistent trouble seeing or hearing;
• tendency toward temper tantrums or excessive anxiety or shyness;
• significant difficulty playing appropriately with other children; and/or
• significant problems paying attention and listening.

All information about such requests will be kept confidential.

BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY

Table with multiple columns for various services: ADDITIONS, AIR CONDITIONING, CLEANING SERVICE, CONTRACTOR, DRIVEWAYS, ELECTRICIAN, FLOORS, GUTTERS/LEADERS, HANDYMAN, HOME IMPROVEMENT, HOME IMPROVEMENT, LANDSCAPING, MOVING, PAINTING, PAINTING, PAINT/PAPER HANGING, ROOFING, TREE SERVICE, WANTED TO BUY, GUTTER CLEANING, SPACE AVAILABLE, etc.

GET YOUR SHARE OF BUSINESS!! Call Classifieds 908-686-7850. Includes image of a pie chart.

Annual Nature Craft Show and holiday celebration on Sunday

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders announced that Union County's annual Nature Craft Show and Holiday Lights Celebration will take place Sunday in the Watchung Reservation.

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

The activities will be held rain or shine. There is no admission fee; however, it is suggested that participants bring an item of dry or canned food or

a new, unwrapped toy to the Holiday Lights Celebration. All items collected at the event will be distributed to the needy through local charities.

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

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

The Holiday Lights Celebration and Charity Drive will take place from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at Watchung Stable, 1160 Summit Lane, Mountainside. A mounted drill team will demonstrate

its horseback riding abilities, Santa and Mrs. Claus will talk with children and holiday singers will have the whole family singing along. There also will be lead-line horse rides, a petting zoo, children's crafts and refreshments. Union County police officers will be performing voluntary fingerprinting of school-age children, and officers will demonstrate how the bomb squad robot works. The lighting of the holiday tree and a Menorah will take place at 5 p.m. For more information, call the stable at 908-789-3665.

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

For more information or directions, call the Union County Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities at 908-527-4900.

Smooth as silk



New business owner Amy Wang shows Springfield Mayor Clara Harelik silk children's clothing at her Moon Silk store. Moon Silk, which is located at 695 Morris Turnpike, specializes in pure silk bedding, stained glass items, jewelry and gifts.

RELIGION

Concert series to resume with new name
Central Presbyterian Church of Summit has renamed its 33-year-old

lunchtime concert series to give it a fresh, more descriptive label. Formerly known as "Brown Bag Concerts," the series is now called "FridayMusic."

Attendees are invited to bring a lunch, or buy a sandwich and drink in the church kitchen before the concert. The Advent series will kick off Friday at 12:15 p.m. with Diva Musica, a violin and piano duo from Canada.

FridayMusic will continue on Dec. 8 with the Aeros Quintet, an all-female woodwind and brass ensemble, and Dec. 15 with a "Pipes of Christmas" preview concert created specially for the FridayMusic audience.

PUBLIC NOTICE

**BOROUGH OF MOUNTAINSIDE
NOTICE OF BID**

TAKE NOTICE that sealed bids will be received by the Borough Clerk of the Borough of Mountainside for:

**SALE OF: 1993 FORD RANGER PICKUP
VIN#1FTCR10X7P856799
Mileage: 71,432**

**1995 CHEVY CAPRICE 4 Dr
VIN#1G1BL22Y5R143683
Mileage: 93,023**

Bids will be opened and read in public at the Municipal Building, 1385 Route 22, Mountainside, New Jersey on December 11, 2006 at 10:30 AM, prevailing time. All bids shall be in accordance with the following plans and specifications. Proposal blanks, specifications and instructions to bidders may be obtained at the office of the Borough Clerk, Mountainside Municipal Building, 1385 Route 22, Mountainside, New Jersey.

Bids must be made on the Borough's form of bid and must be enclosed in a sealed envelope addressed to the Borough Clerk, Borough of Mountainside, 1385 Route 22, Mountainside, New Jersey 07092 and delivered at the place and hour named. Bids shall be endorsed on the outside of the envelope with the name and address of bidder and:

BID FOR: SURPLUS VEHICLES
Each proposal must be accompanied by certified check, cashier's check or bid bond equal to ten percent (10%) of the full amount bid, not to exceed \$20,000.00, and made payable to the Borough of Mountainside as "Proposal Surety". Bidders are required to comply with the requirements of P.L. 1975, c. 127 (NJAC 17:27). The Borough of Mountainside hereby reserves the right to reject any and all bids to award a contract to any bidder who, in the Borough's judgment, best serves its interest. Prospective Bidders are to make arrangements for appointment to inspect the vehicles with Chief James J. Deble, Jr., Mountainside Police Dept. 908-232-8100. By order of the Mayor and Council Martha De Jesus, Borough Clerk U164580 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$23.25)

TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

Take notice that on the 19th day of December, 2006, at 8:00 p.m., a hearing will be held before the Springfield Board of Adjustment at the Municipal Building, 100 Mountain Avenue, Springfield, New Jersey, on Application No. 2006-28 on behalf of Yeshiva Tiferes Boruch, who shall seek a variance to establish residential quarters for no more than 28 students of the Yeshiva Tiferes Boruch whose principal teaching location is 36 Evergreen Avenue and for the use of the premises for religious instructional purposes. The applicant shall also seek any other variances that may be necessary as evidenced by the plans now on file or as may be modified at the request of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Township of Springfield.

This application is made for premises located at Block 3602, Lot 17, more commonly known as 810 South Springfield Avenue, on the Springfield, New Jersey, tax map. The application, plans and survey are on file in the Annex Building, 20 North Trivett Street and are available for inspection 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Any interested party may appear at said hearing and participate therein in accordance with the rules of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Township of Springfield.

By: Bruce M. Pitman, Esq. Attorney for the Applicant U164404 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$15.56)

TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

Take notice that on the 19th day of December, 2006, at 8:00 p.m., a hearing will be held before the Springfield Board of Adjustment at the Municipal Building, 100 Mountain Avenue, Springfield, New Jersey, on Application No. 2006-27 on behalf of Yeshiva Tiferes Boruch, who shall seek a variance to expand the residential quarters for no more than 17 students of the Yeshiva Tiferes Boruch whose principal teaching location is 36 Evergreen Avenue. The applicant shall also seek any other variances that may be necessary as evidenced by the plans now on file or as may be modified at the request of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Township of Springfield.

This application is made for premises located at Block 3004, Lot 15.01, more commonly known as 44 Evergreen Avenue, on the Springfield, New Jersey, tax map. The application, plans and survey are on file in the Annex Building, 20 North Trivett Street and are available for inspection 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Any interested party may appear at said hearing and participate therein in accordance with the rules of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Township of Springfield.

By: Bruce M. Pitman, Esq. Attorney for the Applicant U164405 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$14.63)

TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

Take notice that the following decision was made at the regular meeting of the Board of Adjustment held on Tuesday, November 21, 2006:

Application # 2006-22
Applicant: Adel and Jocelyn Lapena
Site Location: 63 Briar Hills Circle
Block: 3502 Lot(s): 14

For: A variance to permit the erection of a six-foot high fence in the front yard of a corner lot having two front yards.

Was: Granted by Resolution
Said application is on file in the Office of the Secretary of the Board of Adjustment, Annex Building, 20 North Trivett Avenue, Township of Springfield, New Jersey and is available for public inspection.
Robert C. Kirkpatrick Board Secretary U164603 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$12.00)

PUBLIC NOTICE

TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

Public Notice

Take notice that the following decision was made at the regular meeting of the Board of Adjustment held on Tuesday, November 21, 2006:

Application # 1998-4-1
Applicant: Ahold Corp./ARC Springfield LI/Hold Real Estate Corporation/Stop & Shop

Site Location: 92 Millburn Avenue
Block: 101 Lot(s): 1, 34, 45 and 46

For: Remand From The Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division, A-3985-03T1, and A-4038-03T1 for consideration of the twenty-five conditions set forth in the memorializing Resolution of the Board dated September 17, 2002

Was: Granted with conditions Nos. 2, 4 and 15 being amended.

Said application is on file in the Office of the Secretary of the Board of Adjustment, Annex Building, 20 North Trivett Avenue, Township of Springfield, New Jersey and is available for public inspection.
Robert C. Kirkpatrick Board Secretary U164601 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$14.25)

TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

Take notice that on the 19th day of December, 2006, at 8:00 p.m., a hearing will be held before the Springfield Board of Adjustment at the Municipal Building, 100 Mountain Avenue, Springfield, New Jersey, on Application No. 2006-26 on behalf of Yeshiva Tiferes Boruch, who shall seek a variance to expand the residential quarters for no more than 16 students of the Yeshiva Tiferes Boruch. The applicant shall also seek any other variances that may be necessary as evidenced by the plans now on file or as may be modified at the request of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Township of Springfield.

This application is made for premises located at Block 3004, Lot 14, more commonly known as 36 Evergreen Avenue, on the Springfield, New Jersey, tax map. The application, plans and survey are on file in the Annex Building, 20 North Trivett Street and are available for inspection 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Any interested party may appear at said hearing and participate therein in accordance with the rules of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Township of Springfield.

By: Bruce M. Pitman, Esq. Attorney for the Applicant U164403 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$13.88)

TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that applications will be heard at a public meeting of the Mountainside Planning Board on December 14, 2006 at 8:00 p.m. in the Mountainside Municipal Building, 1385 Route 22, Mountainside, NJ 07092.

Primavera Parkview, 532 Woodland Avenue and Little Court, Block 22 A, Lots 8.07 and 21 - Minor three-lot subdivision.
KnostrMcCarthy, 317 Central Avenue, Block 16 J, Lot 25 - Multiple additions, contrary to Sections 1009(c)(5) existing lot width under 100 feet, 1009(c)(6) foundation area over 15%, 1009(c)(7) lot coverage over 30%, 1009(c)(5) existing lot area within 150 feet, 1009(c)(5) existing driveway in side yard.

Logiudice, 1142 Wyoming Drive, Block 5.3, Lot 12 Rear addition, contrary to Sections 1009(c)(2) front yard under 30 ft., 1009(c)(5) existing lot under 100 feet, 1009(c)(5) foundation area over 15%, 1009(c)(5) lot area within 150 ft.

All applications are subject to the Land Use Ordinance and subject to all bulk variances, if required. Other issues may be discussed and formal action may be taken.
Ruth M. Rese, Secretary U164581 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$13.50)

TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

Public Notice

Take notice that the following decision was made at the regular meeting of the Board of Adjustment held on Tuesday, November 21, 2006:

Application # 2006-19
Applicant: Parvin Remolina for Loving Hands Academy

Site Location: 675 South Springfield Avenue
Block: 3003 Lot(s): 66

For: A use variance to permit the property to be used for a child care center.

Was: Granted by Resolution with conditions.
Said application is on file in the Office of the Secretary of the Board of Adjustment, Annex Building, 20 North Trivett Avenue, Township of Springfield, New Jersey and is available for public inspection.
Robert C. Kirkpatrick Board Secretary U164602 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$12.75)

TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

Public Notice

Take notice that the following decision was made at the regular meeting of the Board of Adjustment held on Tuesday, November 21, 2006:

Application # 2006-23
Applicant: Lawrence and Maria Freeman

Site Location: 70 Shunpike Road
Block: 1304 Lot(s): 10

For: A variance to permit the erection of a six-foot high fence in the front yard on a corner lot having two front yards.

Was: Granted by Resolution
Said application is on file in the Office of the Secretary of the Board of Adjustment, Annex Building, 20 North Trivett Avenue, Township of Springfield, New Jersey and is available for public inspection.
Robert C. Kirkpatrick Board Secretary U164604 OBS Nov. 30, 2006 (\$12.00)

Springfield resident to be honored

Rona Waldorf Zandell will be honored as Springfield Hadassah's Woman of the Year at Hadassah's Northern New Jersey Region's Annual Myrtle Wreath Awards Brunch. The event will take place Dec. 10 at 9:30 a.m. at the Short Hills Caterers, Short Hills. She will be joined by other regional honorees.

A longtime Springfield resident, Zandell has been a member of Springfield Hadassah for nearly 40 years, 34 of which as a life member. Presently, she is serving her second term as both treasurer and hospitality chairperson.

Three generations of her family are

life members, including her daughters, Melissa and Debra, and her granddaughters, Hannah and Rachel. Her son-in-law, David, is an associate.

Zandell has been a member of Temple Beth Ahm in Springfield for 38 years and served on the Beth Ahm school board. She is a founding member of THE Book Club, which has been meeting

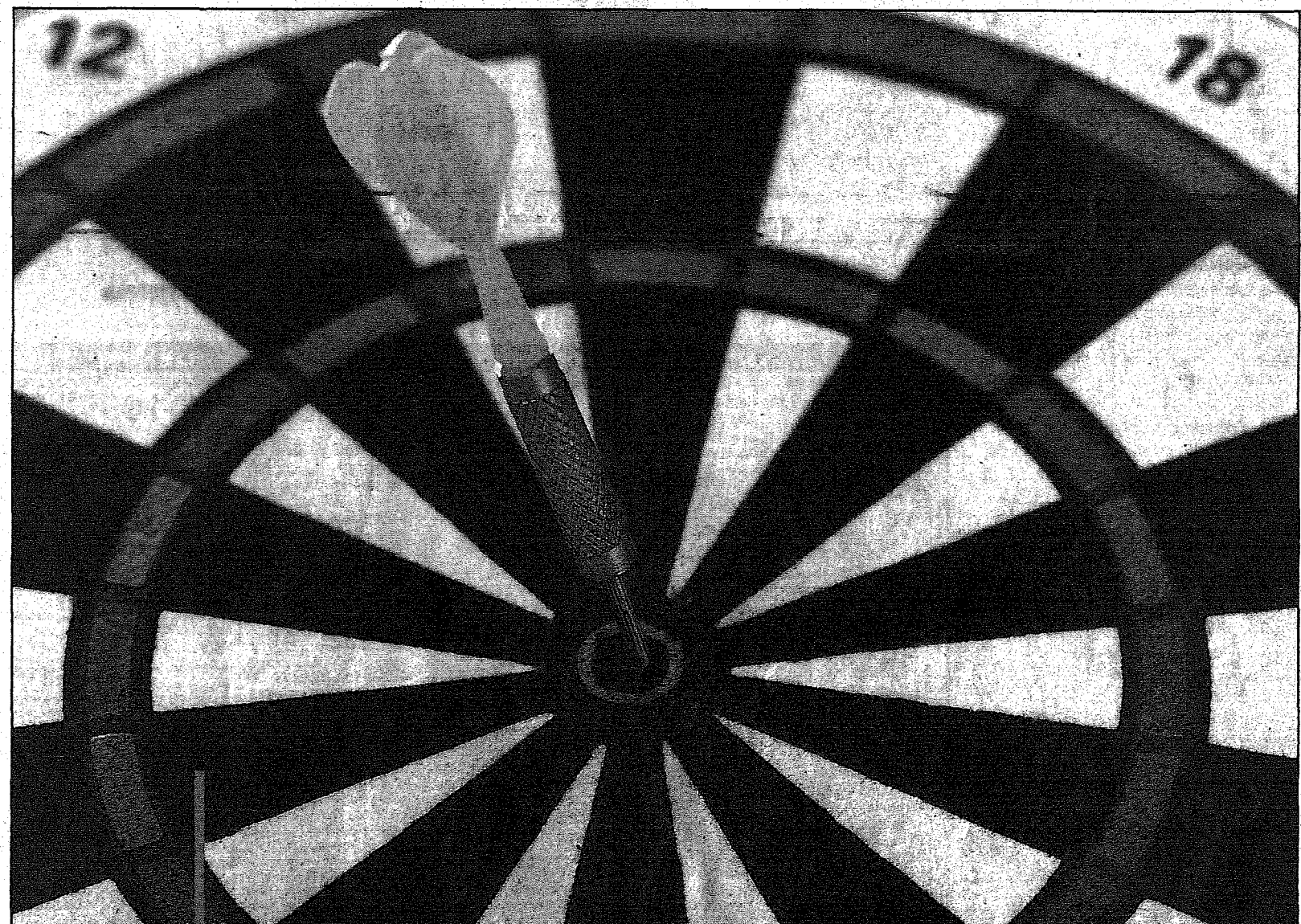
for 38 years. She is active in JWI, Senior Set and Springfield Hazak.

Rona Zandell retired after 43 years of teaching, 33 of them in Madison. Among the highlights of her long, illustrious career are receiving the Governor's Teachers' Recognition Award in 1989 and having children in Madison's grades four through six make tiles for the Holocaust Museum that was being built in Washington, D.C.

She felt that this helped children, whose families did not have ties to the Holocaust, better understand the catastrophe.

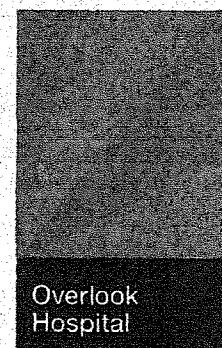


Zandell



This is how we see inoperable tumors.

The CyberKnife. Painless, non-invasive, highly accurate. The CyberKnife has revolutionized the way we treat tumors in patients. Using advanced robotics and sophisticated image guidance, we can more accurately target inoperable tumors with higher doses of radiation. For many, it offers a hopeful option without the incisions or pain of surgery. As the first hospital in the northeast to have the CyberKnife, Overlook adds the benefit of experience to a technology that's truly remarkable. Faster recoveries, fewer complications and better quality of life mean getting you back on target.



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UNION COUNTY

WORRALL NEWSPAPERS

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2006

Risk-based

There is one more round of elections in this cycle that has the special interest of Freeholder Daniel Sullivan and Mayor Chris Bollwage of Elizabeth. Come January when the 110th Congress convenes, it's expected that Frank Lautenberg, the state's senior senator, will chair the subcommittee on Transportation, Safety, Infrastructure and Water Quality of the Senate Committee on Environmental and Public Works.

Left Out

By Frank Capece

A pretty fancy title, but honestly how many of us citizens back home know what the committee does? It's a cinch Sullivan and Bollwage understand the committee has jurisdiction over security, chemical security and offshore drilling. They know this includes the critical subject of port security.

Sullivan has long been an advocate of so-called risk-based homeland security funding. It's a view also held by Lautenberg. "I know it was Sen. Lautenberg who tried last year to get the Congress to mandate that all chemical plants use the safest technology available," Sullivan said. "The senator did succeed in beating back an effort in Washington to dilute the tough chemical plant security in effect in New Jersey."

Bollwage said last week, "I believe the new Congress will now move forward and pay attention to having funding based on real risk as opposed to political pork."

Sullivan pointed to Union County's homeland security and domestic preparedness plan.

"One of the key elements is the continuous review and upgrading of potential security and geographically based targets." The risks actually include not only the danger of a potential terrorist but also man-made and natural disasters.

In his announcement, Lautenberg said of his appointment, "I plan to pick up where I left off, securing federal dollars for important projects like roads, rail, hospitals and first responders throughout New Jersey."

Sullivan has been a vocal critic in recent years of homeland security funding formula that saw the state of Wyoming get more funds per capita for security than Union County.

Sullivan also pointed to the benefits of a Lautenberg chairmanship in terms of the proposal to permit offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean in the Northeast.

"This impact is more than the Jersey shore. I am concerned that even the most minimal spill could affect the state's fishing industry and the marine ecosystems."

Even members of the state's Republican congressional delegation sent a letter in opposition to the drilling cautioning the Bush Administration from continued "ideological sparring" on the issue.

Maybe there is some irony that upset elections of Democrats in Montana and Virginia resulted in the Democratic control of the Senate, and the Lautenberg appointments as chairman. Something about the results of a risk-based election comes to mind.

An attorney, Frank Capece is a resident of Cranford.

Locals react as hunger deleted from vocabulary

By Lauren DeFilippo
Staff Writer

According to a recent report released by the United States Department of Agriculture, there are no more "hungry" people.

Instead, the 35 million Americans we once called hungry are now considered people with "food insecurity." Meara Nigro, spokesperson for the Hillside-based Community Foodbank of New Jersey said the changing of the bureaucratic jargon, "diminishes the severity of the problem, making it sound less serious than it is."

According to the report, a minority of American households experience food insecurity throughout the year, meaning their access to enough food is limited by lack of money and other reasons. About one-third of food insecure households have very low food security, meaning that at times, the food intake of some household members is reduced and their normal eating pattern is disturbed.

Nigro also said that the terminology is not new. The USDA has used it for a while, classifying individuals as "food insecure with hunger."

"It's another way of putting a screen between those of us who have enough and those who don't," she said. Nigro's statements on behalf of the local food bank echoed those made by national food assistance organizations. "Words have meaning, and meaning matters. Referring to the state in which individuals and families do not have access to adequate food as anything other than hunger is simply demeaning," Vicki Escarra, president and CEO of America's Second Harvest, said in a statement released Nov. 17.

The Rev. David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World agreed. "We should not hide the word hunger in our discussion of this problem because we cannot hide the reality of hunger among our citizens," the Rev. Beckmann said, calling the removal of the word, "a huge disservice to the millions of American who struggle daily to feed themselves and their families."

Jim Weill, president of the Food Research and Action Committee said, "The technical terms have been revised, but it doesn't change the reality of stagnant wages, rising costs for housing, health and energy, and the resulting squeeze on food. Millions of people don't have enough to feed themselves, their families or their children."

FRAC posited several solutions to the issue. Among those proposed solutions were: strengthening the Food Stamp Program in the upcoming Farm Bill; connecting more children to nutrition programs, like school breakfast, summer meals, child care food and afterschool snacks and meals; and boosting family incomes through strategies like an increased minimum wage and refundable tax credits for low-income workers.

Rep. Michael Ferguson, a Republican whose district covers parts of Union County, said, "You can't help but wonder how many hungry families weren't fed because the Agriculture Department wasted taxpayer dollars adopting these ridiculous recommendations."

Rep. Frank Pallone, who also represents part of Union County, called the terminology change a "public relations stunt."

"Since President Bush took office six years ago, the number of Americans going to bed hungry has

increased by 7 million people. Rather than properly address this growing concern, the Bush administration has chosen instead to totally delete hunger from its vocabulary," Pallone said.

Nigro proposed compassion and using information about the reality of hunger as a way to increase understanding of the problem.

According to the USDA report, which evaluates food security in three-year blocks, New Jersey's rate of food insecurity is 8.1 percent between 2003 and 2005.

That rate is down 0.4 percent from the survey done between 2000 and 2002.

Nationwide, food insecurity declined from 11.9 percent of households in 2004, to 11 percent of households in 2005.

The rate of very low food security, however, remained at 3.9 percent.

Approximately 22 percent of food

insecure households — or 3.5 percent of all US households — obtain emergency food from food pantries at some time during the year, the report said.

The Community Foodbank of New Jersey serves 91 agencies that assist low-income residents of Union County.

Among them, 43 are emergency food pantries that primarily assist the working poor, families and senior citizens on limited incomes.

An additional 11 agencies are soup kitchens, that have seen an increase in the number of families utilizing their services, Nigro said.

According to data from the United State Census Bureau, Nigro said that approximately 9.9 percent of the Union County's 531,457 people are living below the poverty line.

The poverty line, established by the federal government is set at \$20,000 per year for a family of four for 2006.

Nigro estimated that to meet the basic needs of rent, transportation to and from work and food, families need at least twice the federally established sum.

"Most social programs are based on poverty level figures," she said, noting that because the figure does not account for regional differences in the cost of living, a family could be making double the federal poverty rate, but still have trouble making ends meet.

"We don't see starvation," Nigro said, "(we see) chronic under nutrition."

When it comes to making rent or cutting back on food, some families opt to cut back on portions rather than face eviction.

"They can make the decision," she said, noting that the scenario has many forms, from eating just cereal for dinner, or parents abstaining from eating in order to give children a larger portion.

United States Hunger Facts

- In 2005, 37 million people — 12.6 percent — lived in poverty
- Regardless of income level, food is the second-largest average expense for families, accounting for 15 to 20 percent of child-rearing expenses
- In 2004, 38.2 million people — including 13.9 million children — lived in food-insecure households
- In 2004, 11.9 percent of households — 13.5 million — were food insecure compared to 11.2 percent — 12.6 million households — in 2003.

Source: America's Second Harvest

New Jersey Hunger Facts

- Because of the high cost of living in New Jersey, 1.7 million people, a fifth of the state's population, are considered poor.

Source: Community FoodBank of New Jersey

- There are 1.6 million state residents eligible to receive food assistance through the state's emergency food distribution system
- In New Jersey, 8.5 percent of the state's population and 11.8 percent of children live in poverty, according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey in 2004.

Source: State of New Jersey

- Approximately 40 percent of the households in New Jersey receiving emergency food assistance reported having to choose between paying for food or paying for their utilities, rents and mortgage bills

Source: America's Second Harvest

'Illuminated' author speaks at library

By Lauren DeFilippo
Staff Writer

KENILWORTH — After months of planning, author Jonathan Safran Foer walked into the basement meeting room of the Kenilworth Public Library.

Seated at a long conference table, being plied with vegan Chinese food, and gifts, Foer met with his fans, 30 members of the library's book club.

It took Library Director Dale Spindel 15 months exchanging e-mails with Foer's agent to make the event happen.

She told Foer, seated to her right, that his writing has a "Motzartian quality."

"The joy and sadness get combined to articulate things about life that some of us can't," she said.

Foer, 29, has written two novels. "Everything is Illuminated," which was released in 2002, and was turned into a movie starring Elijah Wood in 2005, is an intertwined story of a young man's search to find the woman who helped his Jewish grandfather escape the Nazis in World War II Ukraine.

"Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close," which hit bookshelves in 2005, centers around a 9-year-old boy whose father is on the upper floors of the World Trade Center when it is hit by jets on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I wanted to read something like that," Vera Tehayel said, "I just didn't know that."

Foer took the compliment. "I don't remember choosing to write about it," Foer said of Sept. 11, "I just did."



Jonathan Safran Foer

"There is nothing elegant about the process at all," he said, noting that he let ideas flow organically rather than outlining or researching, noting some of his ideas are true only in the universe of the novel.

"Connections (are) made that I never would have thought of," he said of his method.

Over the next hour, the author talked about his work, and answered everything from how he writes to what his first kiss was like.

The kiss, it was in fourth grade, her name was Margo, and his cousin and his girlfriend at the time, were also in on the fun.

The plan was to go someplace at recess and kiss, he said. The kissing was not the goal, it was telling everyone else about it afterward.

Lauren DeFilippo can be reached at 908-686-7700, ext. 119, or unioncounty@thelocalsource.com.

Cedar Brook work continues

By Lauren DeFilippo
Staff Writer

A project to dredge and restore Cedar Brook Lake in Plainfield is still under way, county officials said.

The project, which began last fall, will continue into the Spring of 2007. In October, officials said the project was expected to be complete by the end of the year.

Unlike the county's recently announced waterway restoration project that will make improvements to five lakes over a four-year period, the Cedar Brook Lake project was funded with county capital money, not a \$2.4 million loan from the Department of Environmental Protection the county received this fall.

The four-year restoration plan is expected to cost \$7.5 million, funded in part by the grant from DEP and money from the county's Open Space, Kids' Recreation, Historic Preservation Trust Fund.

The restoration of the Cedar Brook Lake will include a total draining of the lake, which began last year, and the removal of sediment. The removal of the sediment will restore the lake to its original depth. The pond's clay liner will be completely replaced in order to correct a water loss problem, a statement released by the county said.

Dredging will also take place along the shoreline to help prevent further silting, which, according to the National Land and Water Information Service, refers to the depositing of sediments in bodies of water resulting from a decrease in the velocity of the water.

Silting, which also restricts plant life and limits the available oxygen for fish, had been a problem at the waterway in the past, according to a statement released by the county.

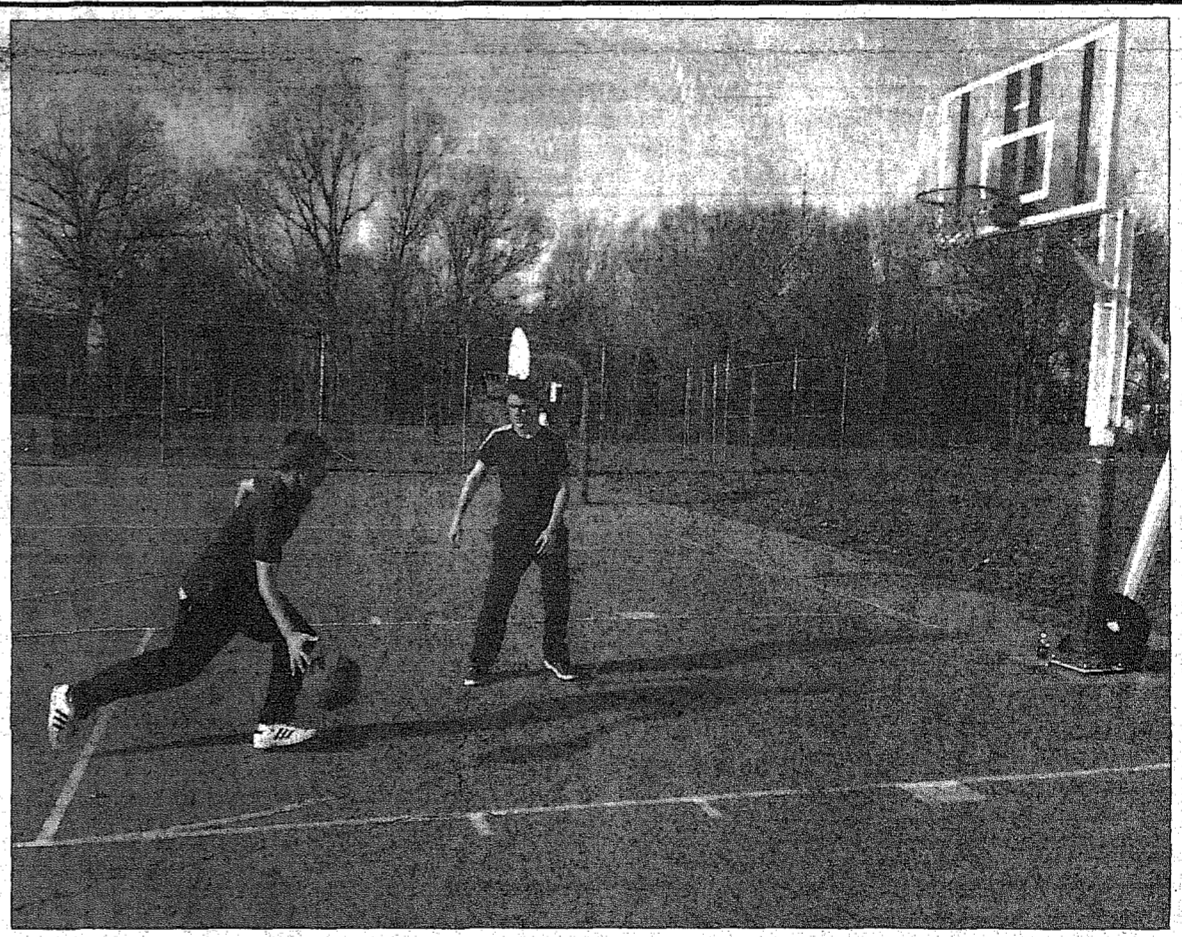
An aeration system, to circulate the water and increase oxygen levels is also planned for the waterway.

Also, plants are being added and a section of the shoreline is being relined with boulders, while other sections are being fortified for easy access by fishermen, a statement released by the county in October said.

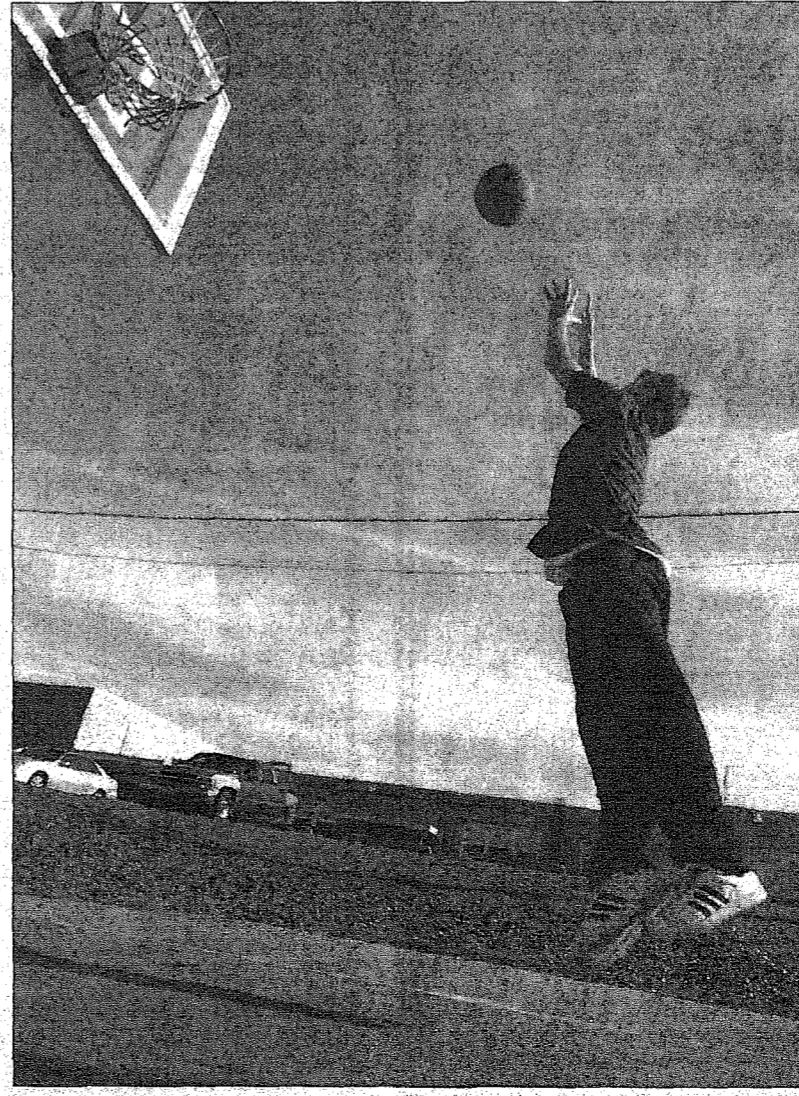
When it was announced, the restoration project was slated to cost \$797,630. Belleville-based J.A. Alexander Inc. is completing the work.

Officials said that the final cost of the project had changed since it began, but exact figures were not available at press time.

Lauren DeFilippo can be reached at 908-686-7700, ext. 119, or unioncounty@thelocalsource.com.

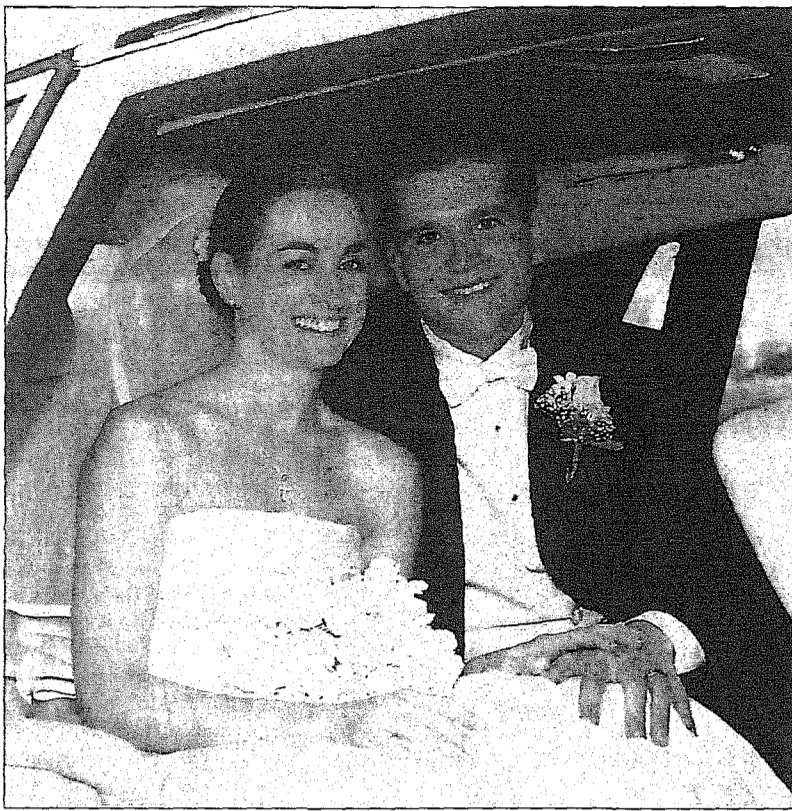


Photos By Sean Havey



HE SHOOTS — Numan Dut of Brooklyn, above, dribbles to the basket against Clark resident Andrew Kirilychev at the courts by Clark's municipal building. At left, Dut goes for a rebound on a warm Saturday afternoon. This month ranked as one of the 10 warmest Novembers on record for New York City.

LIFESTYLE



Kathryn Whalen and Charles Nisch

Whalen and Nisch are wed

Dr. Kathryn Whalen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Whalen of Robinsville, was married May 6 to Dr. Kenneth Charles Nisch, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Frank Nisch of Union.

Bridesmaids were Sara Dieffenbacher, cousin of the bride; Stacey Nisch, sister of the groom; and Dr. Danielle Grandman, Dr. Tina Cocuzza, Dr. Mei Doshim, Jennifer McNamara and Aishling Stevens, friends of the bride.

Best men were Dr. Michael Nazmy and Jason Schweitzer. Ushers were Dr. Michael Lateiner, Dr. Joseph Vella, Michael Hulme, John Rutledge, Justin Schweitzer and Ygor Carvalho, friends of the groom.

The bride is a graduate of The Peddie School, The College of the Holy Cross and New Jersey Medical School. She is doing her residency in anesthesiology at UMDNJ, Newark.

The groom is a graduate of Union High School, The College of New Jersey and New Jersey Medical School. He is doing his residency in anesthesiology at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, New York.

The ceremony, officiated by Msgr. Edmund Whalen, uncle of the bride, was held at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart, Newark. A reception followed at The Estate at Florentine Gardens, River Vale.

The newlyweds, who took a honeymoon trip to St. Lucia and the Florida Keys, reside in Hoboken.

Policy regarding announcements

Couples are encouraged to send their engagement and wedding announcements to the lifestyle editor. Forms can be found and submitted online at www.localsource.com, under the tab marked "info." Digital photos can also be submitted online.

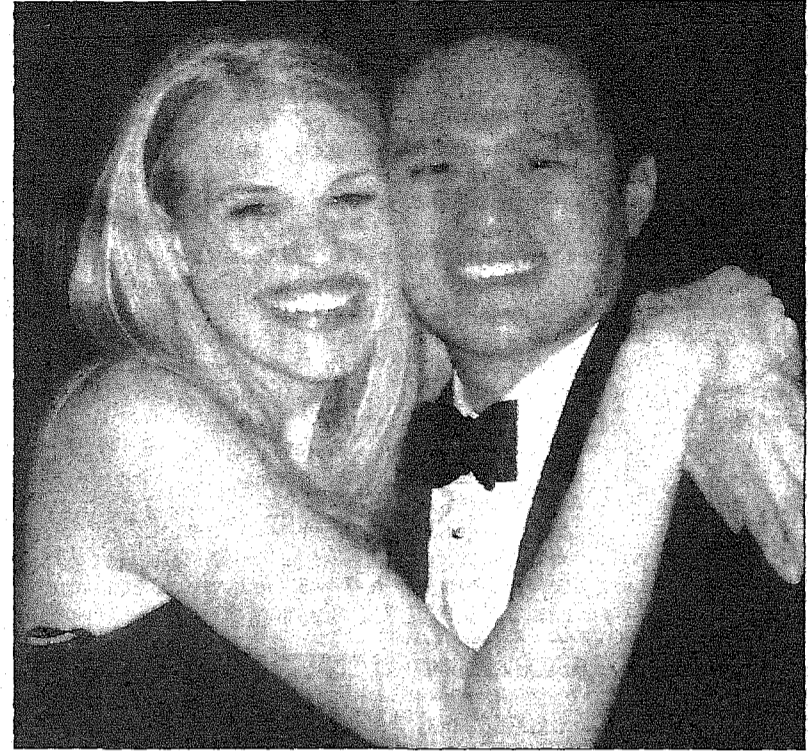
Brady and Hsiang to marry

Mary and Bernard Brady of Cranford announce the engagement of their daughter, Caroline Margaret, to Oliver B. Hsiang, son of Gladys and Henry Hsiang of Princeton Junction.

The future bride is a product manager at Medtronic, a medical device company in Santa Rosa, Calif. She earned her bachelor's degree cum laude in politics from Princeton University. Caroline is a graduate of Cranford High School.

Her fiancé, Oliver, is a strategic partner development manager at Google in Mountain View, Calif. He earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Harvard College. Oliver is a graduate of West Windsor-Plainsboro High School.

Both Caroline and Oliver earned Master of Business Administration degrees from the Kellogg School of Management, where they met. An August 2007 wedding is planned.



Caroline Brady and Oliver Hsiang



Peter Witulski and Holly Keehn

Keehn to marry Witulski

Harriet Keehn of Springfield and Roger Keehn of Littleton, Colo., have announced the engagement of their daughter, Holly Elizabeth, to Peter Witulski, son of Patricia Norton and Roger Witulski of Denver.

Miss Keehn is a graduate of Jonathan Dayton High School and attended Fairleigh Dickinson and Metropolitan State College in Denver. She is currently attending Community College of Denver, pursuing an associate of applied science degree. She is employed at Echostar Satellite Co., Denver, as a business analyst.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Colorado State University and is employed by Medical Specialists as a territory manager. A 2007 summer wedding is planned.

Advertisement for Eastern Refinishing Co. offering bathtub reglazing for \$299. Includes details about services like sink, tile, and tub surrounds, and a coupon expiration date of 12/8/06.

Advertisement for Welman Plumbing, Heating & Air. Features the slogan 'Right & Right Away' and contact information: 908-686-8485.

Advertisement for Top Line Glove Co. located at 633 Jackson Ave. in Elizabeth. Offers N-95 Respiratory Masks and contact info for Gary Berman, President.

Advertisement for Schneider National. Promotes freedom and independence for over-the-road drivers. Includes contact info: 800-44-TRUCK.

Advertisement for New Jersey 2x2 Display Network. Offers business-card-size ads in 134 newspapers for \$1,100. Contact: dtrent@njpa.org.

Advertisement for New Jersey's Credit Unions. Slogan: 'The Difference is YOU'. Website: www.njdifference.com.

Advertisement for Narconon Stonehawk. Offers help for those losing a loved one to drugs or alcohol. Contact: 1-800-998-0989.

Advertisement for Playway childcare and learning center. Now open at 410 C Clermont Terrace, Union. Contact: 908-352-7570.

Large advertisement for Robert Siessel General Contractor. Features 'Affordable Gutter Protection' and 'Eliminate Messy Gutter Clean-Up Forever!'. Contact: 732-815-9667.

Advertisement for www.localsource.com Internet Directory. Lists various local businesses and their websites, such as Agape Family Worship Center and American Bank of New Jersey.

Advertisement for The Vein Center. Slogan: 'Treat yourself...'. Promotes sclerotherapy for spider veins. Contact: (973) 740-1400.

SPORTS

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2006

THIS IS H.S. FOOTBALL

By JR Parachini
Sports Editor

The only victory left for Elizabeth's Chet Parlavocchio and Brearley's Scott Miller is out there this weekend.

Both have done a lot in their coaching careers so far, with Parlavocchio having been at it a bit longer.

Both have won plenty of regular season games and both have won in the state playoffs.

However, both have never coached a team to a state title.

Each will get their second chance this weekend.

Parlavocchio will lead Elizabeth into tomorrow night's North 2, Group 4 championship game at Rutgers. He is 0-1 in state finals, having lost to Hoboken 33-12 in the 1996 North 1, Group 3 final at Giants Stadium while coaching underdog Passaic Valley.

Miller will lead Brearley into Saturday morning's North 2, Group 1 championship game at Giants Stadium. He is 0-1 in state finals as well, having lost to two-time defending champion Florence 19-6 in the 2005 Central Jersey, Group 1 final at Rutgers.

Both coaches won state championships as high school players their junior and senior years, Chet for Tony Verducci at Seton Hall Prep in 1976 and 1977 and Scott for Bob Taylor at Brearley in 1985 and 1986.

Chet, a 1978 SHP grad, went to Penn State. Scott, a 1987 Brearley grad, went to Pittsburgh. Back then, Penn State vs. Pitt was a real college rivalry. Now, it no longer is, with Penn State in the Big Ten Conference and the teams not playing each other anymore.

Both will have their competitive spirits at an all-time high this weekend. Both also have very good teams with more-than-excellent chances of winning state championships.

WINNING SEASONS

Of the 17 teams in Union County, 10 posted winning seasons, while Cranford was the only one to finish .500 at 5-5.

All three new head coaches also guided their teams to winning records.

Parlavocchio has Elizabeth in its first state championship game since 2000, while Jim DeSarno and James Foy led Westfield and Roselle Park to 6-4 campaigns.

DeSarno guided the Blue Devils to their first winning season since 2002. Westfield was just 1-9 in each of the past two seasons, only beating winless Edison in 2004 and winless Columbia in 2005 in sectional consolation games.

Foy produced a third consecutive winning season for the Panthers, who finished 6-4 for the third straight time.

Next year, Westfield will seek to make the state playoffs for the first time since 2003, a year in which it still finished under .500 at 4-6, while Foy will try to get Roselle Park back into the state playoffs again for the first time since 2001.

THIS WEEKEND'S GAMES

NJSIAA Finals
Friday, Dec. 1, 8 p.m.
North 2, Group 4
Rutgers Stadium, Piscataway
3-Elizabeth vs. 1-Phillipsburg
Saturday, Dec. 2, 10:30 a.m.
North 2, Group 1
Giants Stadium, East Rutherford
4-Verona vs. 2-Brearley

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Wednesday, Nov. 22
Elizabeth 34, Scotch Plains 14
Thursday, Nov. 23
Johnson 21, Rahway 0
Brearley 28, Hillside 0
Roselle Park 16, Roselle 12
Friday, Nov. 24
Linden 14, Union 12
Saturday, Nov. 25
Westfield 17, Plainfield 7
New Prov. 17, Gov. Livingston 14
Off: Cranford, Summit, Dayton.

JR'S CHAMPIONSHIP PICKS
Elizabeth 21, Phillipsburg 8
Brearley 28, Verona 21
Last week: 4-2
This year: 102-28 (.785)

JR's Union County rankings are listed on Page 4.



Mark Garcia (No. 7) will be one of the top returning senior signal-callers in Union County next season. The Roselle Park junior quarterback guided the Panthers to a 6-4 record.

Roselle Park football has a bright future ahead of itself

Key players return for promising 2007 season

By JR Parachini
Sports Editor

If the Roselle Park football team can take the momentum from this season into its 2007 campaign, the sky could be the limit for the Panthers next year.

Roselle Park concluded a third consecutive winning season and third straight 6-4 campaign after holding on in the mud and rain in defeating neighborhood rival Roselle 16-12 last Thursday morning at Herm Shaw Field in Roselle Park.

Roselle Park's fourth straight win in the Thanksgiving morning series upped its advantage to 46-35-8.

The 90th game is scheduled to be played in November of 2007 at Arminio Field in Roselle.

"The kids always look forward to this game," said James Foy, who just completed his first season at the helm of the Panthers. "Roselle Park vs. Roselle is still a big game, the kids get up for it and it's still the talk of the town."

One athlete who has played in Roselle Park's last three wins in the series, junior Mark Garcia, had the most impact in last week's triumph.

Garcia returned a kickoff 90 yards for a touchdown and then kicked the extra point to give his team the lead for good at 7-6 in the first quarter after Roselle opened with a 30-yard touchdown run by senior Taj Martin.

Garcia scored again on a 73-yard run in the second quarter and kicked a 24-yard field goal in the third for Roselle Park's final points of the season.

Keith Hood scored on a six-yard run for Roselle early in the fourth quarter for what turned out to be the game's final touchdown. Roselle Park's defense shut down the Rams the rest of the way.

"The game is still a special thing in town," said Foy, who is a 1990 Roselle Park graduate that played in the game himself. "I got a lot of calls from buddies, wishing me good luck. We were lucky to get it in."

Of the six games involving Union County matchups last Thursday, Roselle Park vs. Roselle was one of only three played that morning.

"We like to play on Thanksgiving, no matter how bad the weather is," Foy said.

Not only did Roselle Park win its last three, but the Panthers went 6-2 after opening with tough setbacks to Metuchen and Middlesex.

"The year went pretty good," Foy said. "We were a little shaky at 0-2 and we could have won both of those games."

Roselle Park opened with road losses to Middlesex County schools Metuchen 25-14 and Middlesex 28-20.

"We had a lead against Metuchen and got going in the second half against Middlesex," Foy said.

Roselle Park's season turned around with a convincing 14-0 win the next weekend against a 2-0 Highland Park team outscored its first two opponents 89-14. That was also Roselle Park's home-opener.

The Panthers finished 4-1 at home, losing only to North 2, Group 1 playoff qualifier New Providence 25-7. The Pioneers also finished 6-4.

"We regrouped against Highland Park and had a great game," Foy said. "We sort of got it rolling after that."

Roselle Park just missed qualifying for the North 2, Group 1 playoffs, finishing as the team with the ninth most power points at the cutoff date.

Next season, the Panthers will again attempt to qualify for the state playoffs for the first time since 2001.

Leading the way will be Garcia, who this year was the starting quarterback from day one for the first time.

"Mark got out to a slow start in the beginning, this being his first year as the full-time starting quarterback," Foy said. "Our last three wins, the way he played, I want to see him play that way from the start next year."

"He threw the ball well, ran well and, on defense, is all over the place. He sometimes forgets he's a safety and wants to get his nose in everything."

Other juniors who will make a big impact as seniors next season include halfback and outside linebacker T.J. MacDermant, halfback and cornerback Mike Williams and linemen Ryan Henry and Mike Lefano.

"Next year will be T.J.'s third for us on defense," Foy said. "We'll also have Mike Williams returning in the backfield. Ryan and Mike played all 10 games this year after getting their feet wet as sophomores last season."

Mike Williams is Allen Williams on the roster simply because his first name is Allen. However, Foy said that everyone refers to him as Mike and he doesn't mind being called that name.

Among the seniors who will be missed include captains Dave Strahan and Burjir Kadrijaj, Richie Benner, Rich Reinhart and Tom Krynicki. Benner was a standout at full-back and defensive end, Kadrijaj excelled at outside linebacker, Benner did a nice job at defensive end for the first time, Reinhart was tough on both lines and Krynicki did an excellent job of covering opposing wide receivers from his defensive back position.

"All of our seniors did a phenomenal job," Foy said. "Strahan carried us a couple of games, including Highland Park and Dayton where he took over by running the ball." Strahan paced the Panthers with more than 800 yards rushing.

"He was also our leader in tackles," Foy said.

Kadrijaj, Foy said, was a solid outside backer for the Panthers for the past two seasons.

Benner's efforts did not go unnoticed either. As a sophomore, he played outside linebacker. As a junior, he moved to inside linebacker in Roselle Park's 5-3 defense.

He was moved again on defense this year and excelled at the end position.

"Richie's a true team player," Foy said. "He never complained about being switched. He was also among our leaders in tackles."

Reinhart was a two-year starter who excelled in the trenches without much fanfare.

"Rich didn't get much recognition, but he was really a solid player for us," Foy said. "When we needed that one or two yards, we went right behind him."

Krynicki was also an unsung player for the Panthers. At 5-7, 145, he proved that you don't have to be huge to play huge.

"Tom really did an outstanding job for us," Foy said. "You look at a corner to pick on a bit and you might choose him because of his size. However, he stepped up to the challenge and got better every day."

"I wish that I could put his effort in other kids. He practices hard every day and finally got to start this year as a senior. He's a program player."

After serving as an assistant to former head coach John Wagner, Foy learned a thing or two about being the head coach this season.

"I learned to never take anything for granted," Foy said. "Sometimes things are going well all week in practice and then an injury happens. I just want the kids to practice every day with enthusiasm and to get better every day."

Roselle Park will play the same teams next season, just reversing the home and away situation. Foy realizes that this year's squad just missed making the state playoffs.

"I'm really excited about next year and wish the season could start next week," Foy said. "We have some key kids coming back in Mark at quarterback and the two halfbacks. We also have a number of guys on the line coming back."

"I'm real excited to get it going. The kids know how close they were to the playoffs and there was real excitement from those returning who walked off the field after our game on Thanksgiving."

NOTES: Roselle Park outscored 10 foes by a 218-166 margin and managed a shutout of a Highland Park team that finished 6-4 and qualified in Central Jersey, Group 1.

ROSELLE PARK PANTHERS (6-4)
(A) Metuchen 25, Roselle Park 14
(A) Middlesex 28, Roselle Park 20
(H) Roselle Park 14, Highland Park 0
(A) Roselle Park 37, Dayton 6
(H) New Providence 25, Roselle Park 7
(A) Roselle Park 35, Newark Central 14
(A) Brearley 35, Roselle Park 7
(H) Roselle Park 34, Cardinal McCarrick 13
(H) Roselle Park 34, North Arlington 8
(H) Roselle Park 16, Roselle 12
Record: 6-4
Home: 4-1
Road: 2-3
Points for: 218
Points against: 166
Shutouts: 1
Overtime: 0-0

Elizabeth, Brearley one win from glory

Going for titles this weekend

By JR Parachini
Sports Editor

Picture this: Elizabeth is up 13-8 with a minute to go when Phillipsburg running back Art Wright gets to the outside and is off to the races.

Out of nowhere comes Elizabeth defensive back Taron Lanier as he catches up with Wright and manages to strip the ball from him. Teammate Khaseem Greene recovers the fumble and returns it some 85 yards for a touchdown.

Picture this: Brearley is trailing Verona 21-20 with 50 seconds left and it's fourth down. Quarterback Anthony Evans lets go of a pass intended for receiver Eric Schindler. However, the ball is tipped and falls into the arms of end Darrell Brown for a touchdown.

Lanier and Brown, both No. 11 and both seniors, come up as the unsung heroes for Elizabeth and Brearley.

It could happen. This is what championship weekend is all about. These are the things coaches are preparing for at the moment.

We have four very good teams here trying to capture another state crown. Two can call themselves great after a victory.

Two Union County teams performed well enough to reach state championship games this weekend.

On tomorrow, Elizabeth will take on Phillipsburg in the North 2, Group 4 final at Rutgers Stadium in Piscataway, kickoff set for 8 p.m.

On Saturday, Brearley will tangle with Verona in the North 2, Group 1 final at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, kickoff set for 10:30 a.m.

The last time Union County had more than one state champion in a season was way back in 1993 when Union, Summit and Roselle Park won. That was before the internet and cell phones were as prominent as they are now. That was a long time ago.

Union County's last state champion was Johnson winning North 2, Group 2 in 2002. It's time for that streak to end.

Third-seeded Elizabeth last won North 2, Group 4 in 2000 when it repeated by beating Montclair for a second straight year in the final. Top-seeded Phillipsburg won the section for the second time last year, beating Piscataway in the title game after losing to the Chiefs in the final two years ago.

Elizabeth is 10-1 and winners of nine straight, while Phillipsburg also sports a 10-1 mark, but just had a 22-game winning streak snapped by Easton, Pa. by the score of 21-7 at Lafayette College last Thursday morning in Easton, Pa.

Elizabeth is led by senior quarterback Michael Eargle and sophomore running back Raymond Graham on offense and by everyone on defense. Graham has rushed for over 1,000 yards and his best days are still ahead of him.

Perhaps the best linebacking corps in the state includes seniors Basim Hudeen and Khaseem Greene on the outside and Syim Bass in the middle.

The secondary, featuring Eargle, Graham, seniors Syam Rhodes and Taron Lanier and sophomore Jaheed Mayers, has not allowed a touchdown pass this year. Elizabeth has not trailed since Sept. 16 in its 21-8 loss at Hudson Catholic.

The team has allowed only 10 scores in 11 games and the starting defense only seven rushing touchdowns, with only one of them coming in the second half. Elizabeth has not been scored upon in the third quarter.

Elizabeth has five shutouts and has outscored the opposition 311-69.

(See FOOTBALL, Page 6)

3-ELIZABETH MINUTEMEN (10-1)

(H) Elizabeth 26, Plainfield 6
(A) Hudson Catholic 21, Elizabeth 8
(H) Elizabeth 14, Union 0
(H) Elizabeth 14, Irvington 0
(H) Elizabeth 33, Shabazz 0
(A) Elizabeth 38, Westfield 6
(A) Elizabeth 39, Linden 0
(A) Elizabeth 42, Newark East Side 8
(H) Elizabeth 42, Watchung Hills 14
(H) Elizabeth 21, Linden 0
(H) Elizabeth 34, Scotch Plains 14
Dec. 1 Phillipsburg, 8 p.m.
at Rutgers Stadium, Piscataway

Record: 10-1

Home: 7-0

Road: 3-1

Points for: 311

Points against: 69

Shutouts: 5

Overtime: 0-0

Key players: Michael Eargle, Raymond Graham, Basim Hudeen and Khaseem Greene.

Unsung players: Taron Lanier, George Norena.

4-VERONA HILLBILLIES (10-1)

(A) Verona 40, Mont. Immaculate 7
(H) Verona 47, Kinnelon 6
(H) Verona 42, Morris Catholic 7
(H) Verona 56, Boonton 14
(A) Verona 55, Pingry 0
(A) Verona 49, Glen Ridge 15
(H) Verona 44, Whippany Park 0
(A) Verona 35, Mountain Lakes 0
(H) Verona 33, Secaucus 20
(A) Verona 7, Hoboken 3
(A) Cedar Grove 22, Verona 12
Dec. 2 Brearley, 10:30 a.m.
at Giants Stadium, East Rutherford

Record: 10-1

Home: 5-0

Road: 5-1

Points for: 420

Points against: 94

Shutouts: 3

Overtime: 0-0

Key players: Mitch Roshong, Mike Canfora, Dan DePalma and Dom Dellavalle.

Unsung players: Chris Looney, Carlo Calabrese.

1-PHILLIPSBURG STATELINERS (10-1)

(H) P-Burg 28, Bergen Cath. 27 (OT)
(A) Phillipsburg 17, Franklin 6
(A) P-Burg 37, Watchung Hills 21
(H) P-Burg 47, Bridge-Raritan 20
(H) P-Burg 27, North Hunterdon 10
(A) P-Burg 28, Hunterdon Central 18
(H) Phillipsburg 50, Warren Hills 6
(A) Phillipsburg 25, Hillsborough 6
(H) P-Burg 42, North Hunterdon 14
(H) Phillipsburg 42, Union 20
(A) Easton, Pa. 21, Phillipsburg 7
Dec. 1 Elizabeth, 8 p.m.
at Rutgers Stadium, Piscataway

Record: 10-1

Home: 6-0

Road: 4-1

Points for: 350

Points against: 169

Shutouts: 0

Overtime: 1-0

Key players: Justin Viscomi, Art Wright, Vernon Fountain and Blair Decker.

Unsung players: Dennis Hardick, Albie Moran.

2-BREARLEY BEARS (11-0)

(H) Brearley 45, Card. McCarrick 0
(H) Brearley 41, Dayton 7
(A) Brearley 13, New Providence 7
(H) Brearley 27, Cranford 7
(A) Brearley 26, Rahway 20 (2 OT)
(H) Brearley 35, Roselle Park 7
(A) Brearley 40, Iselin Kennedy 0
(H) Brearley 41, Highland Park 14
(H) Brearley 36, Wood-Ridge 0
(H) Brearley 33, Belvidere 14
(A) Brearley 28, Hillside 0
Dec. 2 Verona, 10:30 a.m.
at Giants Stadium, East Rutherford

Record: 11-0

Home: 7-0

Road: 4-0

Points for: 365

Points against: 76

Shutouts: 4

Overtime: 1-0

Key players: Anthony Evans, John Dalman, Eric Schindler and Darrell Brown.

Unsung players: Jesse Boyden, Joey Mraz.

INSIDE

PAGE 4 - The Football Page has coverage of Elizabeth, Linden victories.

PAGE 5 - Roselle Catholic girls' soccer sparked by six standout seniors.

PAGE 6 - Johnson football captures MVC-Mountain Division crown.

The Football Page



Elizabeth sophomore running back Raymond Graham, who has rushed for more than 1,000 yards this season, will try to dazzle Phillipsburg with his moves tomorrow night in the North 2, Group 4 championship game at Rutgers.

Elizabeth's 10th win puts it one away from, 'The Ring'

Minutemen handle S. Plains for 9th straight

By JR Parachini
Sports Editor

ELIZABETH - A state championship is right in front of the Elizabeth Minutemen.

Elizabeth is now, officially and without interruption, 48 minutes away from winning its seventh North 2, Group 4 crown and first in six years.

The team's No. 1 goal is out there for the taking. Tomorrow night at 8 at Rutgers, Elizabeth will be playing for, what it calls, "The Ring."

Elizabeth improved to 10-1 last Wednesday night, winning for the ninth straight time as it took care of Scotch Plains 34-14 at Williams Field. Scotch Plains, which qualified for the North 2, Group 3 playoffs, lost for the fifth straight time and finished at 4-6.

Elizabeth also finished a perfect 8-0 against Watchung Conference regular season opponents to capture another Watchung Conference championship.

Phillipsburg, who Elizabeth will play in the North 2, Group 4 final, had a 22-game winning streak snapped by Easton, Pa. 21-7 in last Thursday morning's 100th game between the two. The game was played at Lafayette College's Fisher Field in Easton, Pa. and was televised live on ESPN2.

Phillipsburg, now also 10-1, played Elizabeth for the first time two years ago in the North 2, Group 4 semifinals at Phillipsburg's Maloney Stadium. The Stateliners held on for a 14-12 win.

Phillipsburg is in the North 2, Group 4 final for the third straight year. The Stateliners lost to Piscataway 27-26 in overtime two years ago before beating the Chiefs 15-6 in last year's final. Both of those games were also played at Rutgers Stadium in Piscataway.

Phillipsburg has the most football wins of any school in New Jersey, owners of 595.

Scotch Plains managed a one-yard touchdown run by senior captain Greg Brand in the second quarter against Elizabeth's starting defense, while junior quarterback Mike Chervenyak completed a nine-yard touchdown pass to senior end Kyle Rowbotham in the fourth quarter against Elizabeth reserves.

That was the first touchdown pass Elizabeth allowed this year in 11 games and came with less than four minutes to play. However, it was not the starting defense that allowed the score.

So, going into the Phillipsburg game, Elizabeth's starting defense still has yielded only one score in the entire second half this year - that being a rushing touchdown by Watchung Hills - and still has not yielded a touchdown pass in 11 contests.

Elizabeth also has not trailed in 10 of its 11 games. The only game Elizabeth trailed in was its 21-8 setback at Hudson Catholic back on Sept. 16 at Caven Point in Jersey City. HC took a 21-0 halftime lead before Elizabeth made a comeback in the second half.

So, by the time kickoff takes place next week, the Minutemen will not have trailed in a game in two and a half months. Not bad.

For the first time since beating Irvington 14-0 at home - which was Elizabeth's best victory of the season over the

best team it played this year - the Minutemen did not score a defensive touchdown.

For a brief moment, it appeared that Elizabeth had one against Scotch Plains, but senior defensive back Michael Eargle's 48-yard interception return for a touchdown was called back in the third quarter because of an Elizabeth penalty.

Elizabeth had scored all nine of its defensive touchdowns in its past six games and at least one in all six. Minutemen senior defensive back Taron Lanier almost had an interception that he would have returned for a touchdown very early in the game, but the ball just slipped out.

Eargle scored Elizabeth's first touchdown on an eight-yard run in the first quarter. Sophomore running back Raymond Graham, who entered the game with more than 1,000 yards rushing, scored Elizabeth's next two touchdowns on runs of 11 and one yards.

Eargle scored on a three-yard run in the third quarter and reserve running back Stephen Hunter ran in from seven yards out in the fourth.

Sophomore placekicker George Norena was a perfect 4-for-4 on his extra point kicks. One snap was bad on an extra point attempt, with the ensuing two-point pass attempt falling short.

NOTES: Elizabeth won its 10th game for the first time since finishing 11-1 in 2000 when it last captured North 2, Group 4. Elizabeth finished 9-1 in 2001 after falling at home to Roxbury 27-26 in the North 2, Group 4 quarterfinals in Jerry Moore's final season at the helm.

Elizabeth finished 9-2 in 2004 during Jeff Wiener's third season at the helm, beginning 9-0 before falling at Phillipsburg 14-12 in the sectional semifinals and then at Scotch Plains 13-12 on Thanksgiving.

This was Elizabeth's second straight win over Scotch Plains since losing three years in a row to the Raiders from 2002-2004. Elizabeth blanked Scotch Plains 27-0 at home last year to finish 6-4.

Scotch Plains (4-6)	0	7	0	7-14
Elizabeth (10-1)	13	7	7	7-34

FIRST QUARTER

ELIZABETH - Eargle 2 run, Norena kick (E 7-0)
8 plays, 58 yards, 3:47 used
ELIZABETH - Graham 11 run, pass failed (E 13-0)

SECOND QUARTER

ELIZABETH - Graham 1 run, Norena kick (E 20-0)
S. PLAINS - Brand 1 run, Rowbotham kick (E 20-7)

THIRD QUARTER

ELIZABETH - Eargle 3 run, Norena kick (E 27-7)
7 plays, 44 yards, 4:28 used

FOURTH QUARTER

ELIZABETH - Hunter 7 run, Norena kick (E 34-7)
10 plays, 65 yards, 8:01 used
S. PLAINS - Rowbotham 9 pass from Chervenyak, Rowbotham kick (E 34-14)
6 plays, 60 yards, 2:21 used

OTHER MINUTEMEN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Elizabeth also scored on a punt return when Rhodes returned one 85 yards in the first quarter of a 14-0 home win over Union on Sept. 22.
- Elizabeth also had a safety in the Shabazz win when a Shabazz running back was tackled in the end zone for two Minutemen points in the first quarter.
- Also, Greene picked up an offensive fumble and returned it 12 yards for a touchdown in the second quarter of the Linden regular-season victory.
- Elizabeth has given up only 10 scores - one kickoff return, eight rushing touchdowns and one touchdown pass. The defense has allowed only three scores in the second half, those being touchdown runs in the fourth quarter against Newark East Side and Watchung Hills and a touchdown pass by Scotch Plains in the fourth quarter. Elizabeth has not been scored on in the third quarter all season long.
- The starting defense has allowed only seven scores all season long, all seven being rushing touchdowns, and has allowed only one touchdown in the second half, that being a rushing touchdown by Watchung Hills.
- Elizabeth has five shutouts and its starting defense still has not allowed a touchdown pass all season long. Elizabeth has only given up two or more scores in three of its 11 games.
- Elizabeth scored at least one defensive touchdown in six straight games before that streak was snapped against Scotch Plains. Senior defensive back Michael Eargle had a 48-yard interception return called back because of an Elizabeth penalty.
- Elizabeth has only trailed on Sept. 16 when it lost to Hudson Catholic 21-8 at Caven Point in Jersey City.

Linden's Jones to Samuels combination strikes quickly

That and Tiger defense leads squad to victory

By JR Parachini
Sports Editor

UNION - The always potentially dynamic offensive tandem of senior quarterback Jerry Jones and senior end Andre Samuels has proven to be very difficult to stop the past two seasons. It struck again for a big score last Friday afternoon at Cooke Memorial Field.

Jones rolled right and found a wide open Samuels for a 39-yard touchdown pass with just over four minutes remaining in the third quarter that cemented an eventual 14-12 Linden win over Union.

"They're a nice combination," Linden head coach Bucky McDonald said. "Jerry really matured this year and was more familiar with our offense. Andre is a big receiver, with big hands. I felt we might be able to do some things deep."

It was the third straight win in the series for Linden, which trimmed Union's lead to 31-28-5. Since the Watchung Conference rivals began playing on Thanksgiving again in 2002, Linden has won four of the five games and has allowed Union to score only 40 points in those contests. The teams originally played every year on the holiday or the holiday weekend from 1932-1990.

Both teams, who were defeated in the North 2, Group 4 semifinals, finished 7-4.

Linden won seven games for the second time in three seasons and posted a third straight winning campaign. The Tigers finished 7-4 two years ago and were 6-4 last year after the 2003 squad was only 2-8 and won just one game on the field. Linden reached the North 2, Group 4 semis in 2004 and the quarters in 2005.

Union finished 7-4 for the second straight year and, like last year, finished its season with consecutive losses to Phillipsburg and Linden. Union reached the North 2, Group 4 semifinals for a second straight year after gaining the final in 2003 and the quarterfinals in 2004.

Union did well to march 90 yards in 10 plays in the fourth quarter, with senior quarterback James Melody capping the drive with a nifty 16-yard touchdown run up the middle that brought Union to within 14-12 with 4:05 remaining. However, on a pitch right to senior tailback Chris D'Andrea, Linden's defense came up with a big stop on the ensuing two-point run attempt. D'Andrea fell just inches short of the goal line as Linden held on to its two-point advantage.

"We've made big plays on defense all year," said McDonald, who just concluded his 22nd season at the helm of the Tigers. "That's Linden football."

Union stopped Linden on Union's 41 on a fourth down reverse run, getting the ball back with 2:38 left, but without a timeout. The Farmers got as far as the Linden 48 before their final drive of the season stalled.

Melody's first of two touchdowns came on a one-yard sneak that gave Union a 6-0 lead late in the first quarter. Unfortunately for the Farmers, Kyle Dickerson's extra point attempt sailed wide left.

Linden took a 7-6 lead at the half after senior running back George Bease scored on a six-yard run and Kevin Martinez kicked his first of two extra points with 6:22 remaining in the first half.

THE LAST TIME: The last time Elizabeth and Phillipsburg met, Phillipsburg won 14-12 at home in the 2004 North 2, Group 4 semifinals.

The last time Verona and Brearley met, Brearley won 28-14 at home in the 1988 North 2, Group 1 semifinals.

NOTES: Linden won 13-0 at Union in 2004, which was the last game played on Thanksgiving. The 2005 game was played the night before Thanksgiving in Linden, with the Tigers coming back for a 12-8 victory.

Linden carried 35 times for 92 yards and gained 146 in the air for 238 yards of offense.

Union carried 41 times for 265 yards and gained 16 in the air for 281 yards of offense.

Linden's leading rusher was Bease, who carried 16 times for 72 yards and his one touchdown.

Jones completed 8-of-16 passes for 146 yards, one touchdown and was not intercepted.

Samuels caught two balls for 58 yards, including his score. Junior end Desmond Wade caught three passes for 34 yards, senior running back John Miller two for 36 and Wilkerson one for eight.

Senior defensive end Muhammad Wilkerson had a fumble recovery, Wade an interception and senior linebacker Darius Evans a quarterback sack for the Tigers in the first half.

Jones, Bease, Wilkerson and Wade will now turn their attention to basketball, hoping to lead Linden to a second straight Group 4 state championship.

"When you have great athletes like that, it helps our football and basketball teams," McDonald said.

D'Andrea paced Union with 147 yards on 22 carries. He finished the season with 1,575 yards, which ranks with the best running backs in Union County.

Senior fullback Isa Abdul-Quddus carried 10 times for 88 yards and was in on his usually number of tackles from his linebacker position. D'Andrea and senior linebacker D.J. Frain combined for a sack in the first half, while junior defensive lineman Jacklin Petion also had one in the first 24 minutes.

Melody gained 30 yards on nine carries, including his two scores.

He completed 3-of-10 passes for 16 yards. Melody did well to guide Union to a 14-8 record during his two years under center, including back-to-back trips to the North 2, Group 4 semifinals.

Senior end Andrae Lowe caught two passes for five yards and senior receiver Dwight Mitchell one for 11.

Linden (7-4)	0	7	7	0-14
Union (7-4)	6	0	0	6-12

FIRST QUARTER

UNION: Melody 1 run, kick failed (U 6-0)
9 plays 54 yards, 4:33 used

SECOND QUARTER

LINDEN: Bease 6 run, Martinez kick (L 7-6)
6 plays, 38 yards, 3:22 used

FOURTH QUARTER

LINDEN: Samuels 39 pass from Jones, Martinez kick (L 14-6)
3 plays, 63 yards, 2:01 used
UNION: Melody 16 run, run failed (L 14-12)
10 plays, 90 yards, 3:37 used

HERE'S A LOOK AT ELIZABETH'S 9 DEFENSIVE TDs THIS SEASON

- No. 1 - Syam Rhodes 38 interception return in first quarter of 33-0 home win vs. Shabazz Oct. 6.
- No. 2 - Raymond Graham 45 interception return in first quarter of 38-6 win at Westfield Oct. 21.
- No. 3 - Khaseem Greene 35 fumble recovery in first quarter of 38-6 win at Westfield Oct. 21.
- No. 4 - Michael Eargle 100 interception return in first quarter of 39-0 win at Linden Oct. 27.
- No. 5 - Tyshan Allen 25 interception return in fourth quarter of 39-0 win at Linden Oct. 27.
- No. 6 - Syam Rhodes 60 interception return in first quarter of 42-8 win at East Side Nov. 3.
- No. 7 - Khaseem Greene 98 fumble return in first quarter of 42-14 home playoff win vs. Watchung Hills Nov. 10.
- No. 8 - Jaheed Mayers recovered blocked punt in end zone in first quarter of 21-0 home playoff win vs. Linden Nov. 17. This was the defense scoring on special teams.
- No. 9 - Syam Rhodes 70 interception return in fourth quarter of 21-0 home playoff win vs. Linden Nov. 17.

TOP LOCAL PERFORMERS FROM LAST WEEK'S GAMES THAT WERE COVERED IN PERSON

SCOTCH PLAINS at ELIZABETH
Elizabeth junior lineman Hafis Williams

RAHWAY at JOHNSON
Rahway junior running back Donte Dennis
Johnson senior lineman Oliver Haney

LINDEN at UNION
Linden senior end Andre Samuels
Union senior quarterback James Melody

JR'S UNION COUNTY FOR 2006:

- 1-Elizabeth (10-1)
- 2-Brearley (11-0)
- 3-Linden (7-4)
- 4-Union (7-4)
- 5-Johnson (9-1)
- 6-Gov. Livingston (8-3)
- 7-Rahway (7-4)
- 8-Westfield (6-4)
- 9-Cranford (5-5)
- 10-New Providence (6-4)
- Roselle Park (6-4)
- Scotch Plains (4-6)
- Hillside (3-7)
- Roselle (3-7)
- Plainfield (1-9)
- Summit (0-10)
- Dayton (0-10)

As many as 10 of the 17 Union County football teams finished with winning records this year.

Elizabeth now has 26 consecutive winning seasons, beginning from 1981. The Minutemen were last under .500 in 1980 when they finished 4-5.

Brearley is 11-0 for the first time since 1981.

Where JR will be for final weekend of the season
TOMORROW:
Elizabeth vs. Phillipsburg, 8 p.m., at Rutgers Stadium in Piscataway.
SATURDAY:
Verona vs. Brearley, 10:30 a.m., at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford.

RC boys' harriers coach still finds running quite enjoyable

By Jeff Cummins
Staff Writer

So many high school coaches drill their players, lording over them in an almost authoritative manner. Cross country coaches tend to be different, though.

Sure, they have been runners, just like coaches in other sports have participated in their sports they coach.

There's just something different about cross country coaches.

Maybe that difference is best exemplified by Roselle Catholic boys' coach Paul Irwin. He ran as a high school student, but more than that, he still runs and is quite successful at it.

Irwin completed the New York City Marathon earlier this month, narrowly missing the qualifying time for the Boston Marathon.

As you might expect, he marveled at the experience of running the marathon, particularly the sheer enormity of the event.

However, he has an athlete's inherently competitive nature, showing some frustration that he missed the opportunity to compete in the Boston Marathon by mere seconds. Irwin finished in 3:11:34 and the qualifying time for the Boston Marathon is 3:10:59. Just 35 seconds faster and he would have qualified.

"In a distance like the marathon, 35 seconds is nothing," Irwin said.

"It really kills you a little bit. I really wanted to qualify, but it's not the end of the world."

To judge one's performance by something to do with another race isn't fair, though.

The fact is that Irwin completed a marathon and did it in remarkable time.

More even than the athletic accomplishment, Irwin

joined a community involved with running. For one day, this race winds its way through all five boroughs. Runners and spectators combine to illustrate the true melting pot that both New York and the world really are.

"I thought it went great," Irwin said. "It was an absolutely phenomenal race. I mean, just the spectators and fans and everybody who lines the streets of New York. It's just amazing."

"I ran a seven-minute personal record from my Marine Corps Marathon time last year, so that was good for me. You could have run slow and the experience of the marathon itself is just amazing."

Irwin said he doesn't plan to travel to Boston to see that race, though he remains intent upon qualifying for it in the future.

"You want to go because you made it," he said. "If I went to watch, I would probably be sitting there, aggravated the whole time."

Aggravated certainly isn't the way that Irwin feels when he's running.

More than a decade ago, a shoe company used the catch phrase, "Just do it."

Few people embody that philosophy more than Irwin, who will not let adversity get in his way.

He will just run past it.

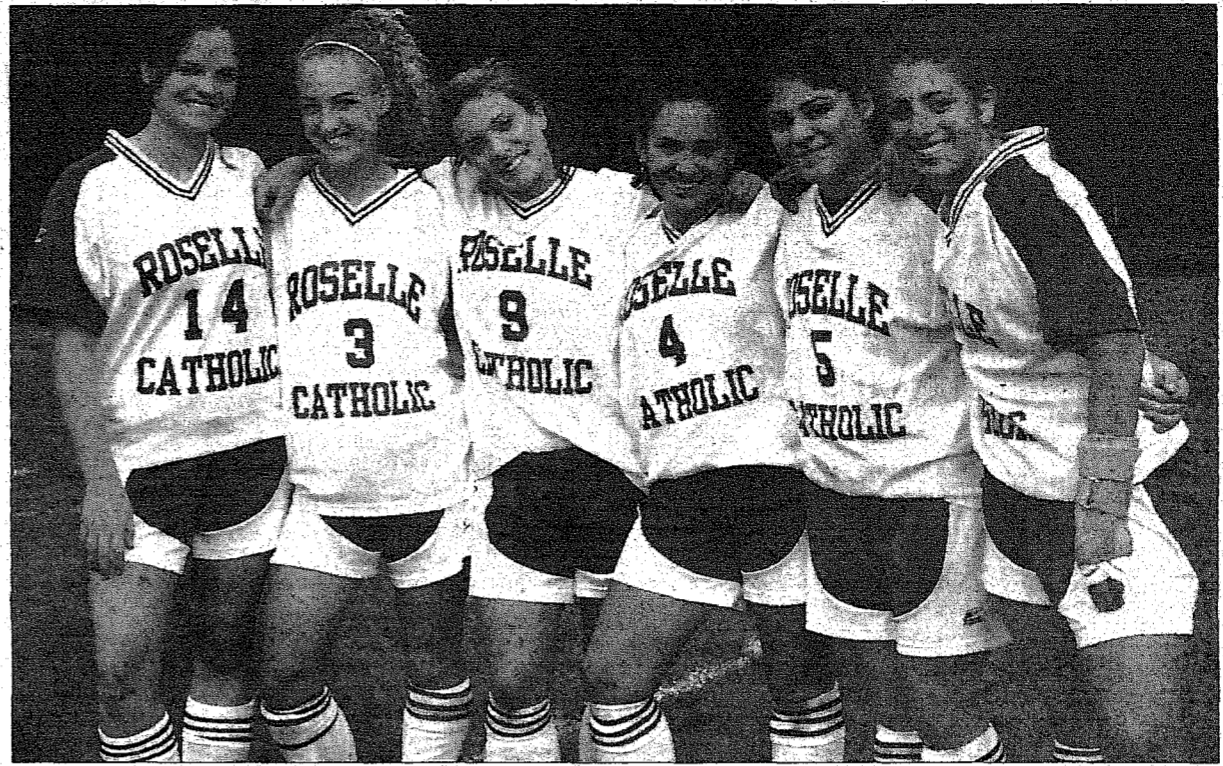
"One of my goals was to qualify for Boston and it didn't happen, but that just drives me more for next year," Irwin said.

Irwin coaches at his alma mater, Roselle Catholic. He always coaches his athletes to embrace challenges and he's quick to lead by example, taking on many challenges himself.

Jeff Cummins may be reached for additional comment at jcummins@thelocalsource.com.



Roselle Catholic boys' cross country coach Paul Irwin continues to have a passion for long distance running. He finished the New York City Marathon earlier this month, narrowly missing the qualifying time for the Boston Marathon.



The Roselle Catholic girls' soccer team was sparked by six seniors, five of them four-year starters. Their second year they were joined by Allison Braithwaite and the group was set for the next three seasons. From left are Allison Braithwaite of Winfield Park, Dana Faulks of Roselle, Angela Neves of Hillside, Emily Vieni of Roselle, Lindsey Gilcrest of Mountainside and Lauren Ferrigno of Colonia. They made up the nucleus of Roselle Catholic's team for the last three years.

RC girls' soccer squad sparked by 6 outstanding senior players

By Jeff Cummins
Staff Writer

It's been said before, but you can't always measure the contributions of a group of athletes in wins and losses, championships or statistics. Six senior players on the Roselle Catholic girls' soccer team personified that fact.

Five of the six players were four-year starters. Their second year they were joined by Allison Braithwaite, and the group was set for the next three seasons.

Braithwaite, of Winfield Park, Dana Faulks of Roselle, Angela Neves of Hillside, Emily Vieni of Roselle, Lindsey Gilcrest of Mountainside and Lauren Ferrigno of Colonia made up the nucleus of Roselle Catholic's team for the last three seasons.

"I was impressed with the way they stayed together and played together," Roselle Catholic head coach Gary Carvalho said. "With Allison's exception, they were all pretty much four-year starters and they came together in their final year."

Roselle Catholic finished the season 6-11-1, but all six seniors received post-season honors. Faulks was named Third Team All-County, while the rest were named Honorable Mention. More than post-season accolades, each of the girls brought specific strengths to the team.

"Faulks also received the team's MVP and Defensive Player of the Year awards," Carvalho said. "She was the heart and soul of the team. We went as she went."

"She was a hard worker who broke her back last year. She had chipped vertebrae from running hurdles in 2005 and she played with it in her junior season. It healed in the off season and she was fine this year."

"Vieni was the girl who would play anywhere we needed," Carvalho added. "She would fill in anywhere and was very versatile."

"Braithwaite was the girl who set up our set plays and free kicks. She had quite a leg on her. She took our direct kicks because she had such a strong foot."

"Gilcrest anchored the center of the field on the defensive side. She won most of the 50-50 balls in the middle of the field. The same thing was true with Lauren Ferrigno, our outside fullback, who was pretty tenacious on defense."

"Angela Neves was, without a doubt, the most conditioned girl I have seen in my life. She would run for 45 minutes and she would get to any ball she wanted to get to. She was our center-mid and helped control the middle of the field."

Carvalho said he didn't think any of the girls had finalized their college plans and there's a chance none of them will play soccer in college.

However, in the larger picture, there are bigger issues than playing collegiate sports. Many of the cliches that coaches preach are actually more important in life than big-time athletics.

Each of these girls built their character and learned to work together as a cohesive unit, honing their collective skills while working on their communication with each other at all times.

They will go on to do various things with their lives, but no matter where they go or what they achieve, the lessons they learned on the soccer pitch will serve them well.

Jeff Cummins may be reached for additional comment at jcummins@thelocalsource.com.

Lacrosse officials to hold cadet classes in January

The New Jersey Interscholastic Lacrosse Officials Association will be holding cadet classes for individuals interested in becoming high school boys' lacrosse officials. Classes will be held at various locations throughout the state beginning in January.

Prior playing experience is not necessary. Individuals must be 18 years of age or older.

More information may be obtained by logging on to www.njiloo.org or by contacting Charles Talley at this number: 908-753-1926 or e-mail address: cadets@njiloo.org.

Roselle Park's Milici rolls a 289

Nicholas Milici of Roselle Park bowled a 289 at Hi Way Bowl in Union two weeks ago. Milici, a senior at Roselle Park and a member of the school's varsity bowling team, hit the front 10 frames with strikes before knocking down nine pins in the second shot of the 10th frame, just missing a perfect 300 game by one shot.

Roselle Park's season is scheduled to begin on Dec. 13 vs. Technology at Hi Way at 3:30 p.m.

Linden Rec indoor soccer to kick off

The Linden Recreation Indoor Soccer League will be accepting registration forms beginning tomorrow and ending Dec. 22 for all Linden boys and girls between the ages of 8 and 10 as of Jan. 6, 2007.

All games will be played at the Linden Multi Purpose Center.

A cost of \$50 will be assessed each player. Payment may be made by cash or by check or money order, made payable to the Linden Recreation Department.

Children may register at either of the following three locations.

- The Community Center Building on 605 S. Wood Ave.
- John T. Gregorio Rec Center on 330 Helen St.
- Linden Multi Purpose Center on 1025 John St.

Registration will be limited to a maximum of 80 players. Children must wear sneakers and shin guards.

Proof of residency and a copy of the child's birth certificate must accompany their registration form and form of payment.

More information may be obtained by calling the Linden Recreation Department at 908-474-8600 or by logging on to www.linden-nj.org.

Styles Inn dominates fall softball

The Styles Inn of Linden won the regular season title and then the Fall Tournament championship of the Union County Athletic Conference Men's Fall Softball League.

Styles finished 15-3 in the regular season and then captured the Fall Tournament crown last week by beating the Sherrifs/Firehouse 11-4 in the semifinals and the Baron's Mackenzie Group 10-0 in the final.

Styles was sparked by excellent pitching and solid defense as the team gave up less than 2.5 runs per game.

The U.C.A.C. Spring League is scheduled to commence in April.

Cranford's Gallo excels at Footlocker

Cranford standout senior girls' cross country runner Laura Gallo completed her high school career by finishing 30th out of 176 runners at last Saturday's Footlocker Northeast Regional Seeded Girls Race at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx.

Gallo finished in 18:49.0, which was her personal-record time for the 5K course.

She was the eighth highest finisher from New Jersey.

Roselle Park

Boys' Basketball

- Dec. 15 Technology, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 19 at Union Catholic, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 22 at Johnson, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 26-27 Holiday Tourney, home
- Jan. 4 Glen Ridge, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 6 New Providence, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 9 at Dayton, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 12 at Brearley, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 15 at Dunellen, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 16 Oratory Prep, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 18 St. Mary's, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 23 Union Catholic, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 24 at Technology, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 26 Johnson, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 30 at New Providence, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 2 Dayton, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 5 South Amboy, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 6 Brearley, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 9 at Oratory Prep, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 13 Newark Central, 4 p.m.
- Feb. 16 Gov. Livingston, 7 p.m.

Roselle Park

Girls' Basketball

- Dec. 15 at Technology, 4 p.m.
- Dec. 20 St. Mary's, 4 p.m.
- Dec. 21 Newark Central, 4 p.m.
- Dec. 26-27 Holiday Tourney, home
- Jan. 3 at Glen Ridge, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 5 at New Providence, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 9 Dayton, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 12 Brearley, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 16 at Kent Place, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 17 at Hillside, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 19 Technology, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 22 at Newark Central, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 23 at St. Mary's, 4 p.m.

Roselle Park

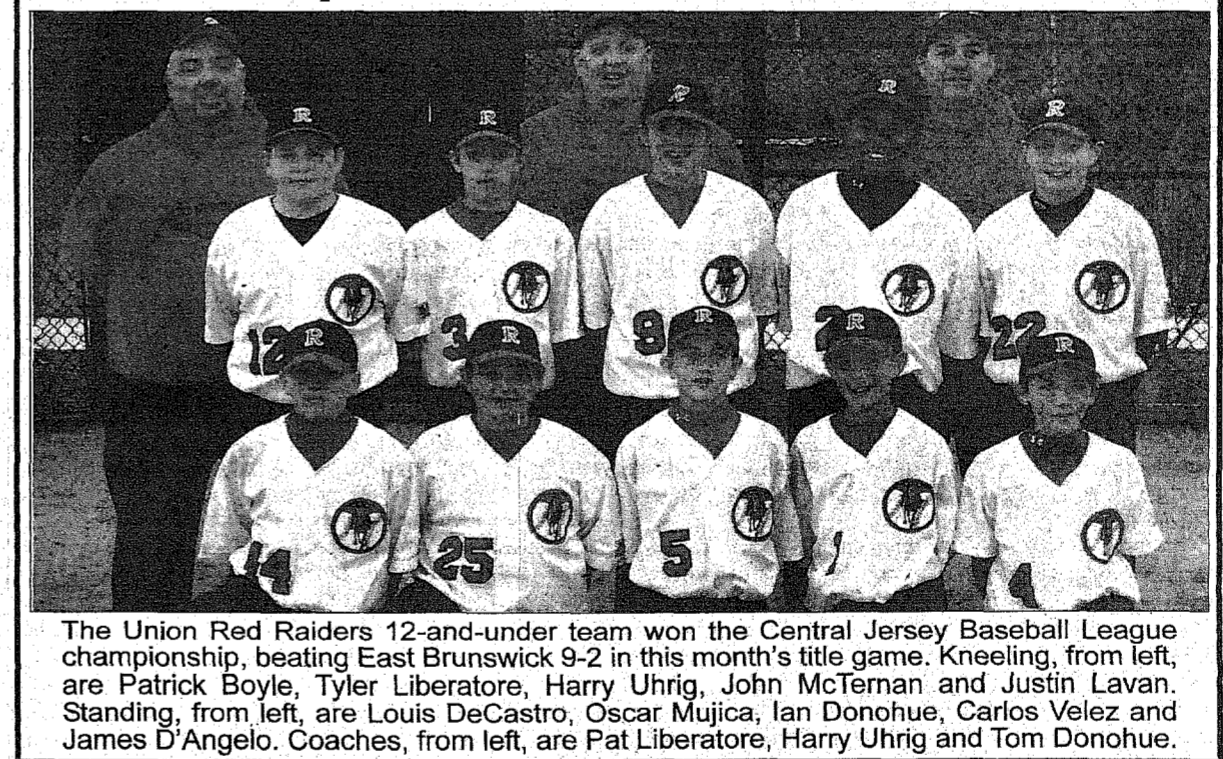
Wrestling

- Dec. 16 Roselle Park Tourn., 9:30 a.m.
- Dec. 19 Jefferson, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 22 Johnson, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 23 at Scotch Plains, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 27 at Voorhees, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 29 R. Park Invitational, 9:30 a.m.
- Jan. 4 at Cranford, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 5 New Providence, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 6 Union, 1 p.m.
- Jan. 10 at Rahway, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 11 St. Mary's, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 13 at Walkill Valley quad, 10 a.m.
- Jan. 17 at Gov. Livingston tri, 5 p.m.

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Organizations submitting news releases to the sports section can email copy to: JR@thelocalsource.com

Fall champions



The Union Red Raiders 12-and-under team won the Central Jersey Baseball League championship, beating East Brunswick 9-2 in this month's title game. Kneeling, from left, are Patrick Boyle, Tyler Liberatore, Harry Uhrig, John McTernan and Justin Lavan. Standing, from left, are Louis DeCastro, Oscar Mujica, Ian Donohue, Carlos Velez and James D'Angelo. Coaches, from left, are Pat Liberatore, Harry Uhrig and Tom Donohue.

OPEN HOUSE EVENTS

Saturday, December 2 • 10:00 am • Alumni Theater

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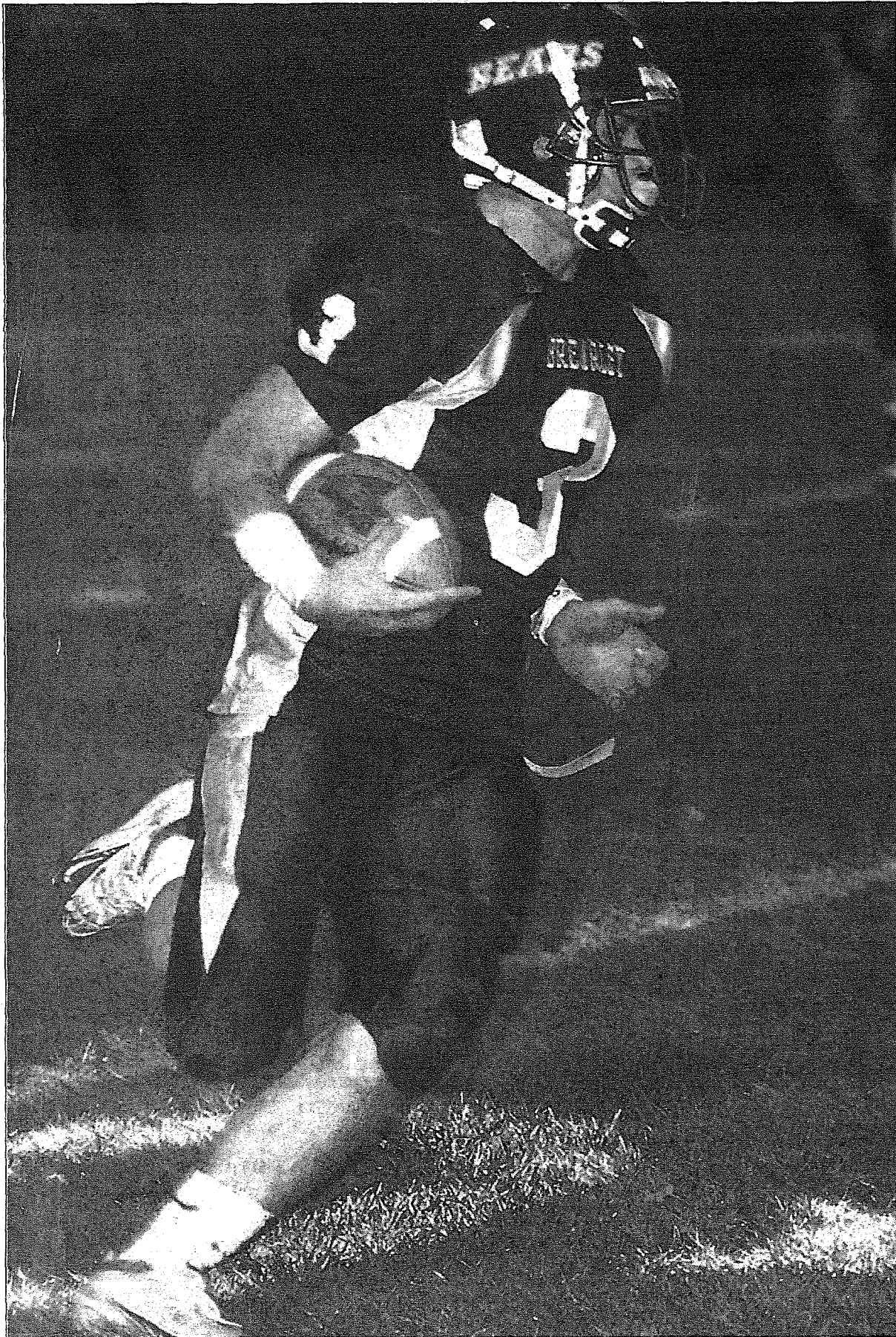


Photo by Sean Havy

Brearley senior running back John Dalman has rushed for more than 1,600 yards this season in helping lead the Bears to an 11-0 record. Brearley seeks its first state championship since 1991 when it faces Verona Saturday morning at Giants Stadium.

Football locals preparing for contest of their lives

(Continued from Page 3)

Phillipsburg counters with four outstanding seniors in quarterback Justin Viscomi, running backs Art Wright and Blair Decker and wide receiver/defensive end Vernon Fountain. The Stateliners are very disciplined and like to spread the ball out on offense, with Viscomi, Wright and Decker getting to the outside.

Viscomi has been accurate all season long throwing the ball, with Wright, Decker and Fountain among his main targets.

Phillipsburg's defense swarms to the ball and closes gaps before they become much bigger.

However, the Stateliners do give up points as evidenced by the 169 they have yielded in their 11 games. They do not have a shutout, while they have scored 350.

Brearley last captured North 2, Group 1 back in 1991, which was also its last state championship.

Verona won the section for the only time in 2001 for its only playoff crown.

Both teams lost in finals last year, Verona to Hoboken 21-6 in North 2, Group 1 at Giants Stadium and Brearley to Florence 19-6 in Central Jersey, Group 1 at Rutgers.

Brearley is 11-0 for only the second time and first time since 1981 when it won North 2, Group 1 for the first time. Verona is 10-1 after last Friday's 22-12 loss at Cedar Grove. However, the Hillbillies took out undefeated and top-seeded Hoboken 7-3 in its semifinal in Hoboken.

"Verona is a very good football team that does a lot of things well offensively and defensively," fifth-year Brearley head coach Scott Miller said. "In order to beat them, we must make no mistakes, take care of the football, stop (Mike) Canfora and be able to run the ball ourselves."

Both teams have their standouts at the skill positions. For fourth-seeded Verona has senior Mitch Roshong at quarterback, senior Mike Canfora at running back and senior Dan DePalma at wideout. Second-seeded Brearley has senior Anthony Evans at quarterback, senior John Dalman at running back and seniors Eric Schindler and Darrell Brown as tight ends.

"Watching them on film, they do a lot of things similar to what we do," Miller said. "Although we have different styles of defense, we both play well against the run."

Both Canfora and Dalman have rushed for over 1,000 yards, with Dalman over 1,600 after gaining over 800 in his last four games.

"We'll stick with what got us here and that's running the football," Miller said. "We're not going to be pig-headed and try to run the football if we're not having much success. We have a lot of stuff in our offense that we really haven't used this year. This is the last game, so we will use whatever we need to."

Brearley reached last year's Central Jersey, Group 1 final with a nine-game winning streak, but was going up against a Florence team that had won the section the previous two seasons and was on a 35-game winning streak.

Two bad snaps to the punter on Brearley's first two possessions resulted in the Flashes getting two quick, short and easy scores to take a 13-0 lead right away.

"Going into that game, we wanted to do a lot more offensively, but it was a windy that night and we couldn't throw the ball," Miller said. "Later in the game we had some open receivers, but couldn't get them the ball because of the wind."

There lies the irony in football. When the season begins it's almost 100 degrees, but when a team is playing for a state championship, sometimes the temperatures hover around freezing - 32 degrees - and a heavy wind can alter a game plan.

"Last year, our kids were excited to be in the championship game," Miller said. "Now, our kids have an understanding of wanting to win a state championship."

"After our win against Belvidere, there was not that jubilant celebration like there was after we beat Burlington City last year. I think it will help us that we were there last year and didn't finish the job."

Verona head coach Lou Racioppe might feel the same way about his kids after they were defeated by Hoboken in its championship game last year.

"Our kids are a little more grounded," Miller said. "They understand better what they have to do."

For Brearley, the Bears will now play in an empty stadium that seats almost 80,000 instead of roughly 42,000. Apparently, long gone are the days when these games are played at the higher seeds, unless your in South Jersey.

"Playing at a bigger venue takes away from the bigger excitement you get when the game is played at the smaller schools," said Miller, who speaks from experience. Miller played on state championship teams at Brearley Regional when he was a junior and senior in the mid-1980s. Brearley defeated Roselle Park in the North 2, Group 1 final at Ward Field in Kenilworth in 1985 and then defeated the Panthers again in the 1986 North 2, Group 1 final at Herm Shaw Field in Roselle Park.

"When we went to the Verona-Secaucus game, it was a nice environment, with loud people right on top of the field," Miller said. "At a school like Verona, or our place, you can sense the crowd. You can feel it."

"At a pro stadium, it's not the same kind of feeling. Playing for a state championship now, you have to block that out and enjoy the surroundings. It's something nice for the kids to say that they played at Rutgers or Giants Stadium, but playing the games there loses that feeling you get when the game is played at the small town's field."

In place of graduated running backs Jake Floyd and Robert Shippey, Dalman has more than stepped up.

"He's done a nice job filling the position we needed to fill," Miller said.

Miller lauded the consistent play of an offensive line that includes junior Jesse Boyden and sophomore Jimmy Stafford at guard, junior Hany Elsiehik at center and senior Danny LoBello and junior Mark Arrendondo at tackle. Miller also gets four of the five back for next season.

"As well as John has run, our offensive line has done an outstanding job of blocking for him," Miller said. Senior Ryan Jayne, who rushed for over 100 yards in Brearley's 28-0 win at Hillside last Thursday, is also another capable back.

Schindler (6-3) and Brown (6-2) provide big targets for Evans to throw to.

Both have also excelled on defense, with three-year down lineman Brown the leader at his end position.

"Darrell does a tremendous job for us," Miller said. "He seems to be there every time we need a big play."

Everyone on defense will need to step it up a notch for Brearley. The Hillbillies have scored 420 points in 11 games, including more than 50 in back-to-back weekends.

Canfora has rushed for 1,585 yards, averaging almost 8 a carry to go along with his 33 touchdowns. DePalma has 36 catches for 757 yards for a 21-yard average and has scored 13 touchdowns.

Roshong has thrown for 1,277 yards, 18 touchdowns and six interceptions, with five of his INTs coming in his last two games.

Other threats include sophomore receiver Chris Looney and sophomore tight end Carlo Calabrese.

On defense, Calabrese is back at linebacker after a broken wrist injury he suffered in Verona's third game. He blitzes up the middle quite a bit, with Canfora staying back in coverage.

The Hillbillies have been prone to giving up the big pass play all year. DePalma was injured in the Hoboken game and did not play against Cedar Grove. He may or may not be at full strength this Saturday.

Also, senior captain Dom Dellavalle, a 275-pound offensive lineman, missed previous playoff games due to a leg injury. He is projected to be back for Saturday's game.

Another thing Brearley has going for it is a tougher schedule that it had to maneuver through to get to this point. After expected easy home wins over Cardinal McCarrick and Dayton, the Bears won at New Providence 13-7, defeated Cranford at home 27-7 in their first-ever meeting and then came back to win at Rahway 26-20 in double overtime in a battle of 4-0 Mountain Valley Conference squads.

Brearley won the Valley Division for the second straight year, while Rahway was the defending Mountain Division champion. Johnson won the Mountain Division championship this year and was the only other team in Union County to go 9-0 in the regular season, other than Brearley.

Beating New Providence for a second straight season is never easy, while the win over Cranford was a victory over a North 2, Group 3 school that finished with a record of 5-5 and beat a playoff team in Scotch Plains. The win over Rahway, which Brearley tied the Indians in the last minute, came against a team that was 4-0 on the road and had the weekend before off before hosting its first game of the season against Brearley.

"Since I've been here, I've tried to upgrade our schedule each year," Miller said. "I do it for the sole purpose of getting us ready for the playoffs."

Miller has guided Brearley to the state playoffs in each of his first five seasons at the helm, twice in North 2, Group 1 and three times in Central Jersey, Group 1.

"When we play these teams in the playoffs, we don't want to be in shock," Miller said. "My first year here (2002) we breezed through eight opponents and then were not as prepared as we should have been against a very good Boonton team."

"This year, by far, has been our toughest schedule. We overcame a good Rahway team in overtime and beat New Providence on the road. Coming out undefeated this year has been a bonus for us."

It also kept Brearley at home for the first two rounds. Miller is 5-4 in the state playoffs, but 5-0 at home.

"We're 11-0 because the kids got better each week," Miller said. "They got better in practice and then they executed the game plan on game day."

This North 2, Group 1 section began with five of the eight teams 8-0 and then all four semifinalists were 9-0, the other two being Hoboken and Belvidere. Secaucus was also 8-0 at the start.

However, Hoboken was the prohibitive favorite to repeat from the start of the season. The Red Wings were also ranked No. 4 in the state when the sectional playoffs began.

"A lot of people didn't even mention us this year, with us being in a new section," Miller said. "Hoboken was supposed to cruise. However, Verona is a very good team and proved that by beating Hoboken. To have that many undefeated teams in a section shows you the quality of the section."

Brearley actually scrimmaged Verona at home last season, which was the first one for the Bears. This year, Brearley scrimmaged Chatham, Parsippany and North Plainfield, while Verona scrimmages included Montclair and New Brunswick.

"A player on our team last year, his father went to college with coach Racioppe, so we were able to set up a scrimmage at our place," Miller said. "It just happened to fit with our openings."

"With a scrimmage, you don't really focus on the xs and os, but on how the kids play. They have tough kids and are similar to what we are."

Brearley defeated Verona 28-14 in the 1988 North 2, Group 1 semifinals in Kenilworth. It is believed that that was the last time the two teams met in a game that counted.

"Getting back to any championship game is great," Miller said. "Getting back in this section, though, we still are not that familiar with some of the teams, including Verona. We did play Morris Catholic a couple of years ago and I know they play Verona, but that's it. So, that makes it hard to get a feel for a team like Verona."

"Hopefully, we'll take care of business and achieve our ultimate goal."

Johnson wins Mountain title, finishes 9-0 in regular season Crusaders trim Rahway on Thanksgiving

By Jeff Cummins Staff Writer

CLARK - Uniform colors were impossible to determine in the mud at Johnson High School's Nolan Field last Thursday morning, but it was clear to see Johnson senior Oliver Haney, who plowed through anything in his path.

The Johnson Crusaders went back to their roots in posting a 21-0 win over neighboring rival Rahway on Thanksgiving Day, running behind the Minnesota-bound Haney, who proved impossible for Rahway to deal with.

Haney was just as much of a force on defense, where he scooped up two fumbles and forced a third that was recovered by senior defensive lineman Joe Colatrella. He caused substantial difficulty for Rahway's center-quarterback exchange.

Senior running back Vin Reis gained 120 yards on 22 carries for Johnson, scoring two touchdowns in the process, but Haney was the dominant force, living up to his reputation as the team's "Big Dog." His disruptive presence on defense may even have been more important than his blocking on offense.

"They couldn't control it," said Haney, referring to the exchange between the Rahway center and quarterback. "They put the big guy on me, but it didn't work, though."

As a result, Johnson finished 9-1, concluding its 2006 campaign with a perfect 9-0 regular season record and the outright championship of the Mountain Valley Conference's Mountain Division. The only other Union County team to win all nine of its regular season games was repeat MVC-Valley Division champion Brearley.

Rahway, which won the Mountain Division crown outright last year, finished at 7-4.

Two years ago, many of the 17 seniors on this year's team got considerable playing time as sophomores. That 2004 Johnson squad fought valiantly, but finished 1-9 after concluding with a 14-6 loss at home to Rahway on Thanksgiving.

Although the Crusaders fell short of their No. 1 goal - which was winning Central Jersey, Group 2 - they did manage to outscore all nine teams they defeated by double digits and went on to capture their first MVC-Mountain Division title since 1996.

"I'm very happy with the effort we had," third-year Johnson head coach Gus Kalikas said. "We went back to basics and the big boys took us home today."

"Considering the type of day it was, we just rallied up behind the five linemen and gave it to Vin and they took us home."

Kalikas was correct. The inclement weather forced both teams to scale back their playbooks. Normally, the Indians would have thrown at least a couple of long passes to speedy receivers Paul Jones-Burden and Demetrius Washington-Ellis, but the rain and chilly wind made gripping the ball difficult and throwing it next to impossible.

Rahway's best passing threat came late in the game when quarterback Troy Eastman connected with senior tight end Jerrod Johnson on back-to-back plays for gains of nine and 16 yards.

Rahway also showed flashes of next year's attack, with junior tailback Donte Dennis gaining 103 yards on 17 carries. Dennis ignited the Indians with a 35-yard run to the Johnson 24 in the second quarter, but the drive was halted when Haney tackled Eastman for a two-yard loss on fourth down and goal to go at the Johnson one-yard line.

Rahway has a solid nucleus of juniors who will return, including Dennis, defensive tackle David Colvin and two-way lineman Ike Igbinsun. Eastman, a sophomore, has two years remaining.

The Indians also appeared to sustain some early momentum, but Johnson's Jake Parrott ended that when he recovered a fumble at the Johnson 12 with 6:45 left in the first quarter. Fifteen plays later, Reis capped a long drive with a one-yard plunge that put Johnson ahead to stay.

Later in the fourth quarter, Matt Siessel finished off the Crusaders' triumph with a nine-yard sack.

"The whole year, the offensive and defensive lines have been the base of the team," Siessel said. "When I got that sack, it just put the icing on the cake."

Enrico Basso and John Reider summed up how the departing Johnson seniors felt about the game.

"It's a good way to end as seniors," Basso said. "The field is gone and we were the last group to play on it," alluding to the school's plan to install field turf for next year.

"We worked our rear ends off since last season and accomplished what we wanted to do," Reider said. "We won a conference championship. We said we wanted the shutout and we got the shutout."

NOTES: Senior quarterback Ryan Burnett scored on a 20-yard run in the third quarter. He guided the Crusaders to a 16-4 mark under center the past two seasons, including back-to-back Central Jersey, Group 2 playoff appearances.

Reis scored his second touchdown on a two-yard run in the fourth quarter. Joe DeConte was a perfect 3-for-3 on his extra point kicks.

Since playing again on Thanksgiving beginning in 2004, Johnson has won two of the three games and the last two. The Crusaders won 20-19 in Rahway last year.

Gary Mobley has a 23-10 record in his three seasons at the helm of the Indians, Rahway reaching the Central Jersey, Group 2 semifinals each of those seasons. Rahway was 8-3 in 2004 and 8-3 in 2005.

Kalikas has a 17-13 record in his three seasons at the helm of the Crusaders, Johnson reaching the Central Jersey, Group 2 quarterfinals last year and this year. Johnson was 1-9 in 2004 and 7-3 in 2005.

Rahway (7-4) 0 0 0 0 - 0
Johnson (9-1) 0 7 7 7 - 21

JOHNSON: Reis 1 run, DelConte kick (17-0)
JOHNSON: Burnett 20 run, DelConte kick (14-0)
JOHNSON: Reis 2 run, DelConte kick (121-0)

Jeff Cummins may be reached for additional comment at jcummins@thelocalsource.com.



FUNDS RAISED - The Soccer Club of Springfield's First Coaches' Classic was held Saturday at Dayton. It helped raise \$1,000 for the Springfield First Aid Squad. The idea was originally suggested by club trainer Dale Brunton as a "friendly game" between coaches of the travel and recreation departments. Additional donations may be sent to P.O. Box 247 Springfield, N.J. 07081.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

'If I Had a Wish'



In the Paper Mill Playhouse's production of 'A Wonderful Life,' a musical version of the late Frank Capra's 60-year-old film classic, 'It's a Wonderful Life,' from left, the rich and evil banker, Potter, played by Nick Wyman, enacts his revenge on George Bailey, played by James Clow, a revenge that would come to fruition if not for the town of Bedford Falls that comes to George's aid. The production runs through Dec. 17.

Performances make this 'Island' one worth visiting

By Ruth Ross
Correspondent

If the axiom that vacationing on a Caribbean island can save a floundering marriage and heal psychic wounds, then it stands to reason that natives of the paradise must live happy, carefree lives, right? Not according to "Island," Peter Link's intimate little musical now receiving its Tri-state premiere at 12 Miles West in Bloomfield.

In Larry Rosler and Joe Bravaco's book, bickering, unhappily married Carrie and Michael leave the rat-race of wintry New York City for the hamlet of Manchonel, located "as far south as you can go in Jamaica" without stepping into the jewel blue ocean, where they vacationed seven years ago during happier times. In the interim, Michael has lost his beloved younger brother, Danny, in a tragic automobile accident, an event that has left him angry, guilt-ridden and unavailable to his wife.

Returning to the guest house run by Delia and her husband, Sparks, the couple realizes their paradise has become a tad run down and their hosts have suffered the loss of a child and the breakdown of their own marriage. That secrets are kept on both sides only complicates matters, so despite Delia's sunny predictions, the situation doesn't look very bright for either couple.

Using 12 Miles West's wide stage to depict a variety of venues, director Lenny Bart guides four talented actors-singers through 21 musical numbers, accompanied by recorded orchestrations.

Gwen Ricks-Spencer is a sprightly Delia, complete with a

huge welcoming smile, a charming, totally credible Jamaican accent and a lovely singing voice. She commands the stage whenever she appears, especially when she claims she has to "do everything in display," even putting up suns, moons and clouds to clue us, and the actors, into the weather and time progressions.

As her hapless, seemingly lazy husband, Sparks, Adam Wade does a credible job, starting off a bit wooden but loosening up as the play progresses. He works hard to convince us and Michael of the existence of Moses, a mysterious shaman on a mountain top who helps people with the sickness of the heart through the magic of the wind.

"More in love with grief than with life," Gary Lynch as Michael is really terrific. His taut body language while singing "The Right," where he castigates his dead brother for dying while driving "85 in a 50" zone, visibly communicates the character's conflicting emotions of rage and guilt. And no one does tremulous, on-the-verge-of-weeping better than Tricia Burr.

As Carrie, she's the embodiment of sadness and rejection, which she beautifully conveys in the lovely ballad, "Without You," one of the best songs in the show. And her pluck is most evident in the gospel-flavored "Time to Carry On." After all, she's the one who initiated the possible divorce — the papers are waiting to be signed if the vacation reconciliation is unsuccessful.

The production team of Ty Stephens as musical director and Sean Hennessy as lighting designer, costume designer Maggie Baker-

Atkins and choreographer Jennifer Amir Di Minni convey the idyllic setting very well, although lowering the lights on a sunny day to focus on a character delivering a song at times seems counter-intuitive.

Based on an ideal originally conceived by Brent Earle Nicholson, "Island" has been almost 30 years in gestation. Would that the time spent had rendered music and lyrics better, for most of the melodies are forgettable and the rhymes are often lame and predictable, and reprising the opening song, "In Paradise," five times becomes annoying.

Also, the concept of Moses is more an obvious plot device of "de ole religion" at war with Delia's quoting the Good Book — never really explored — than a spiritual force able to heal psychic aches.

Sparks' proclamation, "Me fix it," would be advice well taken by the playwrights and composer to move "Island" away from the stogy, predictable, rather uninvolved play it is to something more affecting and tuneful.

As it stands, "Island" is a mildly diverting mini-musical performed by four gifted actors, which, opening on this past Thanksgiving weekend, reminds us to choose life over consuming regret.

"Island" will be performed Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 8 p.m. through Dec. 17. 12 Miles West Center for the Arts is located at 562 Bloomfield Ave., two blocks west of the Garden State Parkway in Bloomfield Center.

For information and tickets, call the box office at 973-259-9187 or visit www.12MilesWest.org.

Star names prove 'The Value Of Names' at GSP

By Anita Louis
Correspondent

Buy your tickets immediately for "The Value of Names," which closes Dec. 17 at the George Street Playhouse, in New Brunswick. It is sure to sell out and you will miss seeing acting legend Jack Klugman in a stage production that approaches perfection: a compelling story rich in wit and with co-stars equal to the caliber of Klugman's performance.

Klugman stars as Benny Silverman, a retired comic whose career was derailed by the McCarthy blacklist, in a story of friendship, betrayal, the choices people make and how those choices reverberate from the past to the present. This is the perfect role for both Klugman and the audience. We get to see everything from the biting humor and comic timing that gave life to Oscar Madison in the "Odd Couple" to a passion even more intense than he delivered in "Twelve Angry Men."

Dan Lauria plays Lee Gershen, Silverman's former friend and betrayer, while Liz Larsen plays Silverman's daughter, Norma.

What is the value of a name? Say, "Jack Klugman" and you immediately think of Dr. Quincy or Oscar Madison, or even the "Twilight Zone." Say "Dan Lauria" and his role as Fred Savage's father from "The Wonder Years" probably springs to mind. But these are careers established through decades of performances on stage, television and film.

Oscar and Quincy disappear

When lights come up, there is Klugman, with Larsen. The house erupts in applause, acknowledging the star, and initially there is doubt about how Klugman will keep Oscar Madison and Quincy from sharing the stage with him. But minutes later, after some humorous bickering with his daughter, Benny Silverman gives her a heartfelt kiss and the audience spontaneously responds, "Awww." Klugman's other personae have been put aside and the story of Silverman has our total attention.

Klugman's transition from star to character is facilitated by Larsen, who imbues Norma with the affectionate playfulness and frustration of a daughter who loves her father, but is struggling to carve her own path while trying to forge a stronger relationship with him.

Lauria once again provides evidence that his best skill may be as a stage actor. This is a performer who acts with his whole body, not just his voice and

face. As he demonstrated in the George's production of "The Winning Streak," he can sit, back to audience, listen to another character and convey a range of responses with a mere change in tilt of a shoulder or curve of his spine.

Before Gershen appears on stage, we hear about him and grow to dislike this man who has robbed his friend of a career in order to further his own. But through Lauria, we come to realize that even those who named names in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee might have also become its victims.

After 90 intermission-less minutes, the audience was completely silent except for an occasional snuffle or sob. Then the lights went down and the eruption of applause was for the performers as fleshed-out people — not as celebrities.

As good as any play is, it stands or falls by the production. Heard after the performance: "I was so tired, I kept falling asleep, so I had trouble following the story, but I loved the play anyway because, whenever I woke up, the acting was so compelling."

A whisper is more powerful than a shout

In 1989, Klugman underwent the partial removal of his vocal chords due to a recurrence of throat cancer. When he woke up in the hospital without a voice, he said it was worse than he had imagined it would be. He had never been blacklisted, but he was now cut off from his career, livelihood and love: acting. But with encouragement from his buddy and former co-star, Tony Randall, Klugman once again appeared on stage in 1991, ultimately strengthening his whisper back to an actor's instrument of communication.

Although raspy-toned, Klugman is vocally expressive and intelligible, and the technical team at GSP have done an excellent job of amplifying his voice. The passion absolutely blazes from him when he confronts Gershen, and his voice exudes bitterness and pain when he tells Norma, "He took my name, (that's like death for an actor)... He interfered with me making contact with an audience. I'll never know how good I could have been."

How does a play like this end? It ends suddenly on a note of laughter and love. Is forgiveness to be found? You will have to see it to find out.

Playwright Jeffrey Sweet wrote "Names" early in his career, about 20 years ago, and re-tailored some of the dialogue to better fit this cast. Much of what happens in the play is a composite of real events from the era, but no particular

person is portrayed. An interview with Sweet and director James Glossman in the program guide includes the sources for some of the play's material.

The writing is free of clichés and moves the story along with humor and intelligent wit. For example, Gershen, describing why he prefers New York City to Los Angeles, says, "Every three months, you get another season kicking you in the (rear), telling you the meter is ticking."

We asked Klugman how much direction he had taken. His answer: "Very little; it all came from the heart." Director Glossman concurred, saying it was an easy cast to direct and that his function was more about making sure the movement of the characters on the set was well choreographed. Glossman also took advantage of "happy accidents" during rehearsal. Interactions originated by the performers, such as when Norma playfully poked at an imperfection on her father's painting, were expanded by Glossman and incorporated for the audience to enjoy.

Glossman has worked with Klugman before and feels he is a freer and better actor than even two years ago. When describing what a physical actor Klugman is, Glossman said he asked costume designer Bettina Bierly to put Klugman in short sleeves so the audience could see nuances as minor as the movement of his forearm muscles.

Glossman went on to say that the George has a "very, very well-supported staff," and called them "extraordinary."

The set, designed by R. Michael Miller, is an airy flagstone-paved patio with lawn furniture and flowering vines, which received comments from the audience on how pretty it is.

Jack Klugman is 84 years old and intends to keep acting until he dies, which hopefully for all of us won't be for a long time yet. But don't miss this chance to see him at the intimate space of the George Street Playhouse, where you'll be close enough to see that the people on stage aren't acting; they're being.

"The Value of Names" opened Nov. 14 and will close Dec. 17. As a bonus, Klugman will meet the audience and sign copies of his recent book, "Tony and Me: A Story of Friendship." The book will be for sale at the Playhouse and includes a DVD of outtakes from "The Odd Couple."

Anita Louis can be reached at njnews@njnews.com.

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DOPLEY NEWS SERVICE By Charles Preston

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ANSWERS APPEAR IN OUR CLASSIFIED SECTION

What's Going On?

FAIR

SATURDAY
December 2, 2006
EVENT: Peppermint Boutique Craft Fair
PLACE: Mother Seton Regional High School, OSP Exit 135, across from the Crowne Plaza
TIME: 9am - 4pm
PRICE: FREE
Hand crafted items, holiday decor and more. Kitchen open all day. Raffles. Over 75 Crafters.
ORGANIZATION: Mother Seton Regional High School. 732-382-1952.

BAZAAR

SATURDAY
December 16, 2006
EVENT: "A Holiday Bazaar To Remember"
PLACE: West Side Park Community Center, 600 South 17th Street, Newark
TIME: 10:00am - 5:00pm
(Vendors arrive at 9:00am)
DETAILS: 100 VENDORS WANTED. Face Painting, Gifts & Prizes, Toys, Food, Clothing, Accessories, Electronics. FUN!
Contact: Sophia, (973)676-5506 ext.2187 or (973)494-8052. Denise: (973)676-5506 ext. 2182 or (973)674-6411
ORGANIZATION: Sponsored by Sisters About Something in conjunction with Tri-City Peoples Corporation.

OTHER

SUNDAY
December 3, 2006
EVENT: Chanukah Boutique
TIME: 10am - 4pm
DETAILS: Do your holiday shopping here. VENDORS contact Hanna Hoffman 973-608-9068. Hot dogs, soda and snacks on sale
ORGANIZATION: Sisterhood Congregation Israel of Springfield

FLEA MARKET

SATURDAY
December 2, 2006
EVENT: Big Indoor Flea Market
PLACE: Roselle Catholic High School, 1 Raritan Road, Roselle
TIME: 9am-4pm
DETAILS: Call for information 908-245-2350
ORGANIZATION: Roselle Catholic High School.

BREAKFAST

SATURDAY
December 9, 2006
EVENT: Annual Pancake Breakfast with Santa
PLACE: United Methodist Church, 2095 Berwyn Street Union
TIME: 9:30am - 11:15am
PRICE: \$7 per person
DETAILS: Pancake, sausage, bacon, coffee, tea, juice and bread. Children sit with Santa. Reading of the Night Before Christmas and live Christmas music. All profits benefit Children Specialize Hospital in Mountainside. For more information call 908-877-8077 leave message
ORGANIZATION: United Methodist Church

OTHER

SATURDAY
December 2, 2006
EVENT: HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE
PLACE: Battle Hill Moravian Church, 777 Liberty Avenue & Hus Court, Union, NJ
TIME: 10:00AM - 4:00PM
DETAILS: Holiday crafts, baked goods will be available for sale along with a White Elephant table. Subs by the inch and soup will be available for lunch. For more info call the church, 908-686-5262
ORGANIZATION: The Women of the Battle Hill Community Moravian Church

SATURDAY
December 2, 2006
EVENT: Alternative Gift, Craft and Flea Market
PLACE: First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County, 35 Cleveland Street Orange, (One block north of Main Street behind Central School, or 2 blocks from NJ Transit Orange train station)
TIME: 10 am - 4 pm
DETAILS: Enjoy live music and delicious food from Chef Jesse of Heart and Soul Catering while shopping at the fair. Gift-giving opportunities range from donations to nonprofit organizations, to crafts created by local artists, as well as "nearly new" items at the White Elephant table. For more information call 973-874-0010 or go to essxout.org
ORGANIZATION: First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

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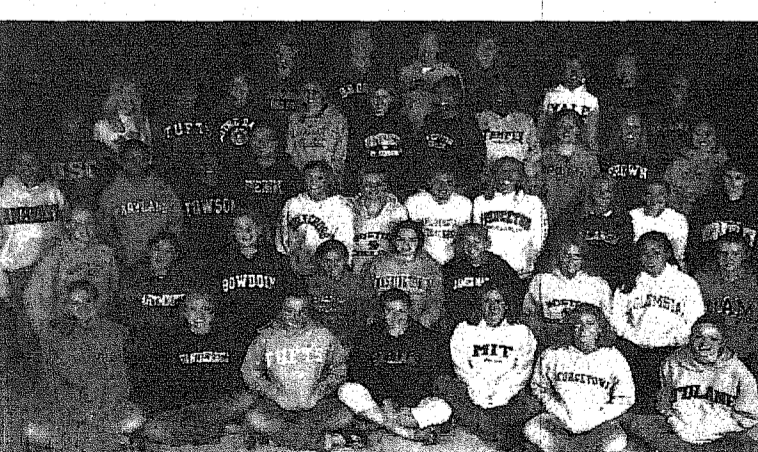
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David Jablonski, Editor
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Organizations submitting releases to the entertainment section can mail copy to: 1291 Stuyvesant Ave., Union, NJ 07083 908-686-7700 x124

KENT PLACE SCHOOL



INFORMATION SESSIONS
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Middle School (Grades 6-8)
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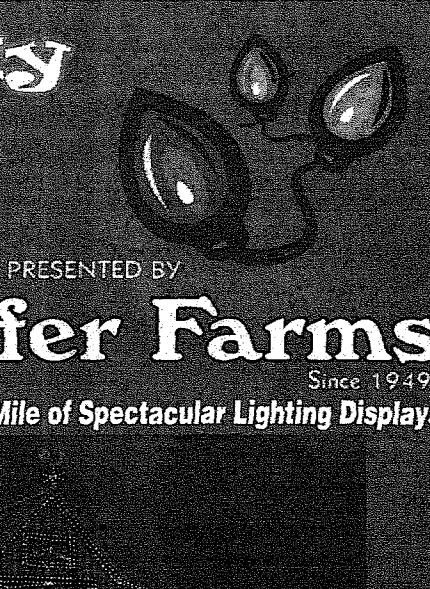
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HOROSCOPE

Dec. 4 to 10
ARIES, March 21 to April 19: Education, philosophical or political issues are highlighted this week. Make an informed decision about a school, concept or candidate. Stick to it.
TAURUS, April 20 to May 20: Work to restructure your personal budget. Come up with a long-term plan to improve your status and to eliminate the possibility of fiscal limitations or poverty.
GEMINI, May 21 to June 21: Avoid presenting yourself as argumentative, loud or aggressive this week. You can get your point across without making enemies or upsetting your loved ones.
CANCER, June 22 to July 22: Look forward to support from colleagues or co-workers this week. Expect the most outrageous requests to be met with a yes.

LEO, July 23 to Aug. 22: Take steps to nourish the important relationships in your life. Delight in the personal interactions that will lead to a deeper understanding and respect for each other.
VIRGO, Aug. 23 to Sept. 22: Your emotions are magnified to the point of influencing your every move. Do your best to calmly separate reason from strong sentiment and passion.
LIBRA, Sept. 23 to Oct. 23: Relax while awaiting the answer to a very important question. Be prepared to accept the truth and to adjust your expectations to support a positive outcome.
SCORPIO, Oct. 24 to Nov. 21: Take steps to prevent a financial disaster. Budget your income wisely and manage your expenditures with logic.
SAGITTARIUS, Nov. 22 to Dec. 21: Deep, transformational activities are on tap for you. Be emotionally and intellectually prepared to go places you have never been before.

CAPRICORN, Dec. 22 to Jan. 19: Learn to trust or read your instincts. Before reaching a final conclusion, compare a hunch to the facts and see how accurate you were to the truth.
AQUARIUS, Jan. 20 to Feb. 18: Use the "it's who you know" factor to open doors this week. Surround yourself with friends or associates with a high level of influence.
PISCES, Feb. 19 to March 20: The road to success and happiness is clearly marked. Design your goals or ambitions around something that you truly care about and enjoy, and you are halfway there.
If your birthday is this week, adopt a pioneering spirit and make up your mind to blaze new trails during the coming year. Partners are positioned to help establish a balance in your life. Do your best to be responsible and disciplined with your finances. Postpone making any major fiscal decisions until after you have gathered all of the necessary facts.
Also born this week: Jay-Z, Walt Disney, Dave Brubeck, Larry Bird, Lee J. Cobb and Jakob Dylan.

Start the Holiday on the Right Note!

The United Methodist Church in Union

Proudly Presents the
Union Fellowship Choir
Performing A New Christmas Cantata,
"A Great and Mighty Wonder" by Tom Fettke
Friday, December 8, 2006
at 8:00 PM

Join Us For This Spirited Hour of Holiday Music
Free Admission All Welcome
After the Concert Please
Join the Choir for Caroling and
Good Food To Top Off the Evening
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Stepping Out is a weekly calendar designed to guide our readers to the many arts and entertainment events in the Union County area. The calendar is open to all groups and organizations in the Union County area. To place your free listing, send information to: Worrall Community Newspapers, 1291 Stayvesant Ave., P.O. Box 3109, Union, NJ 07083 or djablonski@thelocalsource.com. Faxes may be sent to 908-686-6681.

Stepping Out

ART SHOWS

SPORTS IN ART, black and white sports photography by American artist, Geoff Wingham, will appear now through Dec 16 at EDGEArt Gallery, located at 1575 Irving St. in downtown Rahway. The gallery hours are Thursdays through Saturdays, from noon to 7 p.m., and Sundays, from noon to 5 p.m. Other days are by appointment. The phone number is 732-669-0112.

MALE FIGURATIVE ART will appear Saturday through Jan. 13 at EDGEArt Gallery. A diversified look at the male figure in art, it will include paintings, prints, photographs and sculptures by Paul Cadmus, Michel Bez, Robert Bliss, Stephen Hopkins Hensel, Lachapelle, William Horace Littlefield, Christopher Makos, Javier Marin, Nazarene School, Lowell Nesbitt, Neo-Raphaelite School, Juan Jose Olivieri, Pennsylvania Academy of Arts, Wade Reynolds and others.

EDGEArt Gallery is located at 1575 Irving St. in downtown Rahway. The gallery hours are Thursdays through Saturdays from noon to 7 p.m. and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. Other days are by appointment. For information, call 732-669-0112.

BERKELEY HEIGHTS ARTIST NANCY ORI is featured at a permanent exhibit at Berkeley Heights Public Library, 290 Plainfield Ave., Berkeley Heights. For information, call 908-464-9333.

BOOKS

NEWARK MAYOR CORY BOOKER will be at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, on Saturday at 3 p.m. as they raise awareness and celebrate the holidays in honor of the Newark Literacy Campaign, the Holiday Book Drive recipient group. Booker will read some of his favorite holiday stories. Refreshments will be served. All are welcome!

Give the gift of literacy this season by participating in the Holiday Book Drive. The goal is to get as many books as possible into the hands of needy children. The book drive will benefit the Newark Literacy Campaign this year. See the in-store display to learn how you can contribute.

K-12 EDUCATORS WILL SAVE 20 PERCENT on books and 10 percent on compact discs and DVDs during this special event at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, on Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon. Come for specials, door prizes and personal assistance with your holiday shopping.

MEET AND GREET LOCAL AUTHOR QUWAN LEWIS as he discusses his inspirational new book, "Bruised But I Refuse To Stay Broken," at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, on Saturday from noon to 3 p.m. Minister Ellis believes that people should not let their past control their present and dictate their future.

IRVINGTON MAYOR WAYNE SMITH brings holiday cheer and his special story telling talent to Springfield to support the Newark Literacy Campaign, the holiday book drive recipient at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, on Dec. 8 at 4:30 p.m.

AUTHOR JOANNE AUSTIN will discuss "Weird Hauntings" at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, on Dec. 9 at 2 p.m. "Weird US" authors present something a little different: a book on America's scariest places. Come discuss these chilling tales with the researcher and compiler Joanne Austin.

COME FOR THE HOLIDAY BOOK BRUNCH where today's hottest gifts and Barnes & Noble programs will be discussed at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, on Sunday at 1 p.m. Enjoy free refreshments and you could win a great prize!

THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN BOOK GROUP will meet at Barnes and

Noble, 1180 Raritan Road, Clark. For information, call 732-574-1818.

THE "LORD OF THE RINGS" READING GROUP meets the first Wednesday of the month at Barnes and Noble, 1180 Raritan Road, Clark. For information, call 732-574-1818.

KEAN UNIVERSITY'S OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS and *The Star-Ledger* have partnered to publish a new book titled "World of Wonder: Exploring the Realms of History, Science, Nature and Technology." The book brings together 90 of the most fascinating subjects surveyed by the World of Wonder series. The book is now available for purchase in the Kean University book store and on the Web site of *The Star-Ledger* at <http://www.nj.com/worldofwonder>.

BARNES & NOBLE, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, will have a Knitters' Group every Monday at 10 a.m. Join the group of happy knitters in the cafe every Monday morning. Bring your latest project and a smile.

BARNES & NOBLE, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, will have a Chess Group every Sunday at 7:30 p.m. Players of all levels are invited to discuss, play and enjoy chess in the cafe each week.

BARNES & NOBLE, 240 Route 22 West, Springfield, will have Weekly Children's Story times with various themes on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. for preschoolers and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. for 5- to 7-year-olds.

CLASSES

THE DUCRET SCHOOL OF ART is located at 1030 Central Ave. and is situated on a seven-acre campus in a historic residential area of Plainfield. The school offers full-time and part-time day and evening classes in fine art, graphic design/computer graphics and illustration. For information call 908-757-7171, fax: 908-757-2626, or visit the Web site at www.ducret.edu.

LIBERTY HALL MUSEUM, 1003 Morris Ave., Union, chronicles more than 200 years of New Jersey and U.S. history. The museum is open to the public Wednesdays through Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays, from noon to 4 p.m., April through December. For more information about upcoming Liberty Hall events or for reservations, call 908-527-0400.

CONCERTS

CROSSROADS IN GARWOOD will feature the following:
Every Monday, Open Mic Night.
Every Tuesday, Jazz Jam.
Every Wednesday, Karaoke night.

The Crossroads is located at 78 North Ave., Garwood. For information, call Lee at 908-232-5666, or visit the Web site, www.xxroads.com.

COFFEE WITH A CONSCIENCE CONCERT SERIES of Westfield has resumed. All shows start at 8 p.m. and the doors always open at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$15 and will benefit the AIDS quilt. For information, call 908-412-9105, press 2. Other concerts will take place at the First United Methodist Church of Westfield, 1 E. Broad St., corner of North Ave., Westfield.

DANCE

Y-SQUARES, a local square dance club, meets Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. at Frank K. Hehny School, Raritan Road, Clark. The fee for each lesson is \$4. For information, call 908-298-1851, 732-381-2535 or 908-241-9492.

DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY IN ELIZABETH. Pick your choice of social dancing, \$9 per person, or Latin dancing, \$10 per person, at the Bayway Polish Club, 625 Pulaski St. For information, call 908-355-3131.

LUNA LOUNGE hosts "Tasty Thursdays" with DJ Ritchie, who spins raggaeton and hip-hop. Patrons must be 21 or older, dress is casual but trendy. Parking is available. Luna Lounge is located at 1906 E. St. Georges Ave., Linden. Call 908-925-4120 for details.

HOBBIES

THE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB INC. meets at 295 Jefferson Ave., Union, behind Home Depot on Route 22 East. The club is open to the public Saturdays from 1 to 4 p.m. For information, call 908-964-9724 or 908-964-8808, send inquiries via e-mail to TMRCInc@aol.com or visit the Web site at www.tmrcl.com.

Stunning soprano



New to the voice faculty of the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts Music Studio is soprano Catherine Spadora, a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music. Spadora recently appeared as Zerlina in the Little Opera Company's recent production of Don Giovanni at the Wilkins Theatre at Kean University.

on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. For information, call 908-223-5666.

LANA'S RESTAURANT, 1300 Raritan Road, Clark, will offer dinner and live reggae with Exodus Supreme every Wednesday, beginning at 7 p.m. For information, call 732-669-9024.

LANA'S RESTAURANT, 1300 Raritan Road, Clark, will offer dinner and live jazz with Warren Vache every Thursday, beginning at 7 p.m. For information,

adults; \$12 for senior citizens; \$9 for college students with valid identification; \$8 for children, ages 6 to 17; and free for children younger than 6 years. Reservations are required and space fills very quickly.

Visitors can even get their shopping done in the museum's gift shop, which is stocked with beautiful, unique items, perfect for all age groups from children to adults. The shop is also open during the museum's regular hours.

Liberty Hall Museum, 1003 Morris Ave., Union, chronicles more than 200 years of New Jersey and U.S. history. It was the home of William Livingston, the first elected governor of New Jersey and a signer of the Constitution, and houses extensive collections of antique furniture, ceramics, textiles, toys and tools owned by seven generations of the Livingston/Kean families.

In 2005, Liberty Hall added the Firehouse to the Museum's complex. It houses a 1928 American LaFrance Pumper, a 1927 Seagrave Pumper, and an extensive display of fire helmets, uniforms, bells, tools, documents, and photographs. Liberty Hall's 23 landscaped acres contain a formal English garden, a fruit orchard and some of the oldest trees in the state.

The museum is open to the public Wednesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, from noon to 4 p.m., April through December. For more information about upcoming Liberty Hall events or for reservations, call 1-908-527-0400 or visit www.libertyhallnj.org.

GINGERBREAD HOUSE WORKSHOPS, a popular annual event, will be hosted at Liberty Hall Museum on Dec. 16 and 23. The workshops, which are scheduled for 10 to 11:30 a.m.; noon to 1:30 p.m.; and 2 to 3:30 p.m., are priced at \$17 per child. Reservations fill up very fast.

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KIDS

TALES FOR TOTS PRESCHOOL STORY TIME will be offered at Barnes and Noble, Route 22 West, Springfield, Mondays and Thursdays at 11:30 a.m., and the Kids' Writing Workshop, Saturdays at 10 a.m. For information, call 973-376-8544.

MUSEUMS

LIBERTY HALL MUSEUM is celebrating the holiday season by stepping back in time via "The Candlelight Tours." From St. Nicholas to Santa Claus, on Dec. 9 and 16, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Five tales of Christmas traditions are told as visitors travel through Liberty Hall beginning with the Dutch tradition of St. Nicholas, described in the colonial kitchen. The English custom of Twelfth Night, circa 1810, is brought to life through stories and games in the farm kitchen. Upstairs, the dining room and the Victorian parlor are the settings for *The Night Before Christmas* of 1848 and Christmas 1898, giving a fascinating peek into holiday practices of yesteryear. The final stop is in the twentieth century with a glimpse at a World War II holiday. The setting is the morning room, which is decorated for Christmas 1942, complete with blackout curtains.

The admission prices are \$14 for

INTERNET

THE INTERNET LOUNGE, 256 South Ave., Fanwood, hosts an Open Mic/Karaoke Night on Sundays at 7 p.m. Join the group for a cup of gourmet coffee and a wide variety of organic foods and participate in an original poetry reading, a stand-up comedy routine or a musical number. There's no cover charge, and patrons can come in, make new friends, surf the Web or play a game of Diablo2, Never-WinterNights, WarCraft or Counter-Strike. To ask about a schedule of events, call 908-490-1234 or visit its Web site: www.theinternetlounge.com.

JAZZ

THE CROSS ROADS RESTAURANT, 78 North Ave., Garwood, presents an evening of classic jazz featuring recording artist Carrie Jackson & Trio

some of the oldest trees in the state.

Liberty Hall Museum is located at 1003 Morris Ave., Union. It is open to the public Wednesdays through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 4 p.m., April through December. For more information about upcoming Liberty Hall events or for reservations, call 1-908-527-0400 or visit on the Internet at www.libertyhall-nj.org.

RADIO

TRI-COUNTY RADIO ASSOCIATION will meet at 8 p.m. the first and third Mondays of the month at the Willow Grove Presbyterian Church on Old Raritan Road in Scotch Plains. For information, call 908-241-5758.

SCRIPTS

PREMIERE STAGES, the new Actors' Equity Association theater program at Kean University, is currently accepting play submissions for the Premiere Stages Play Festival from professional playwrights born or currently residing in New Jersey, as well as in the surrounding areas of New York, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. There is no fee required to submit a play to the Premiere Stages Play Festival. To request entry guidelines, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Laura Kelly, producing assistant, Premiere Stages is at Kean University, 1000 Morris Ave., Union 07083.

SINGLES

INTERFAITH SINGLES, for single adults older than 45 years old, will meet every Sunday from 9 to 10:30 a.m. for discussion and continental breakfast at First Baptist Church, 170 Elm St., Westfield. A donation is \$2. For information, call 908-889-5265 or 908-889-4751.

SOCIAL SINGLES DANCING, for 45-year-olds and older, meets every Tuesday at 7 p.m. at The Elks Lodge, 1193 Route 22 east, Mountainside. Admission is \$8. For information, call 908-232-9667 on Tuesdays after 5 p.m.

SINGLES MIX AND MINGLE, every Thursday, starting at 7 p.m. Enjoy live entertainment and free finger food at Cafe Vivace, 1370 South Ave., and Terril Road, Fanwood. Admission is free. Call 908-753-4500 for details.

THEATER

THE SHOWCASE THEATER, a tuition-based program, awards scholarship money based on a talent evaluation.

For information on the Showcase Theater or any NJWA program, call 908-789-9696, visit the office at 150-152 East Broad St. in Westfield or log on to www.njworkshopforthearts.com.

VARIETY

THE BACK PORCH in Rahway will present Open Mic Night every Thursday night, and live bands perform on Friday and Saturday nights.

Happy Hour is 4 to 7 p.m. Mondays to Fridays, with \$1 drafts and \$3 Long Island iced teas. Mondays are Mexican Mondays with \$2 shot specials, \$2 Coronas, \$2 margaritas and \$1 tacos. Wednesdays are Ladies Nights and Karaoke.

The Back Porch is located at 1505 Main St., Rahway. For information, call 732-381-6455.

CROSSROADS, 78 North Ave., Garwood, presents a series of jazz, blues and comedy concerts, as well as football-themed nights.

Every Sunday: Live comedy, funk and poetry; Live at Instant Coffee, 8 p.m.

Every Monday: Open Mic Night, Happy Hour all night.

Every Tuesday: Jazz Jam; all pints, \$2.

Every Wednesday: Karaoke Night; Miller Lite and MGD, \$2 all night.

Every Thursday: Fiesta Night; Corona, Cuervo and margaritas, \$2 all night.

For information, call 908-232-5666 or visit www.xxroads.com.

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1426

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908-352-8466.

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bations to characterize biotransformation
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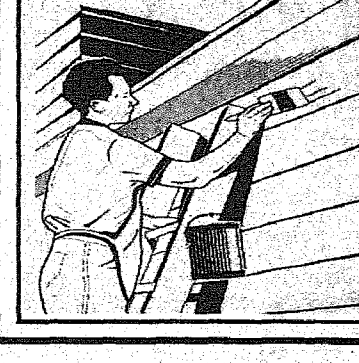
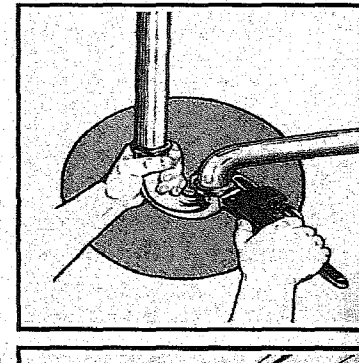
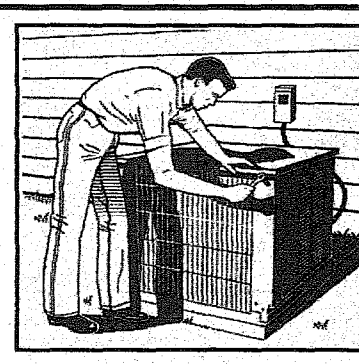
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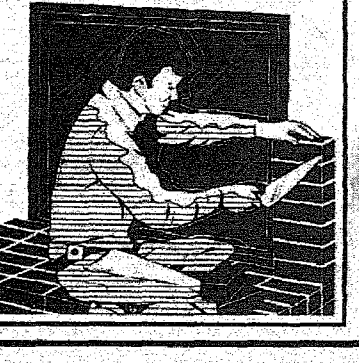
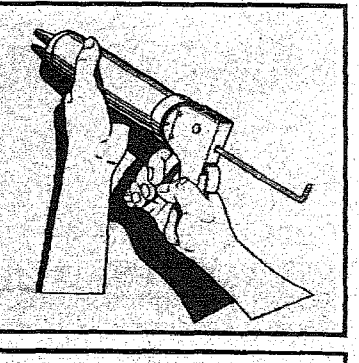
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Home staging before a showing can impress the buyer

When it comes to selling your house in an increasingly competitive home market these days, the old real estate adage, "location, location, location," is taking on new meaning. Staging the optimal location of the furniture and items in the seller's home usually makes a difference between sale or no sale. Home staging experts say there are ways to succeed while other home sellers are struggling.

"Edit, reduce clutter, and rearrange existing furniture," said Dana Dickey, vice director of Interior Redesign Industry Specialists, an organization for professional interior designers and home stagers. Dickey's comments describe what industry insiders have termed "staging."

Staging, the process of preparing and cleaning a home to make it more marketable to potential homebuyers, is something that has gained national popularity in recent years.

"It's a fairly simple process," said

Dickey. "It's also cost-effective. Homeowners I work with are amazed at how the look of their home can dramatically improve with just a little assistance."

Interior Redesign Industry Specialists members tailor their staging services to meet the needs of individual homeowners based on the homeowner's budget and desired level of assistance. Some homeowners have no problem with organization, for example, yet need assistance with the exterior of their home, to create more curb appeal. Others seek professional assistance for re-organization of furniture and decorating. Whatever the task, the goal remains the same.

"We want to give each home that 'wow' factor," she said. "Especially in today's housing market, in which homebuyers largely make their final decision based on emotional factors, it's important that a house make a good first impression."

In addition to the increased speed at which a home sells, staging can also help homeowners boost their asking price. Many professionals focus their attention on two rooms in particular: the kitchen and the bathroom. Due to the high level of traffic through both rooms, each tends to collect clutter and becomes a source of hidden messes.

"It's not that people don't want to pick up," says Dickey, "it becomes a situation where the homeowner just naturally looks past something without even noticing it." She explains that professionals act as objective observers, seeing decorating possibilities and unwanted clutter that a homeowner might not otherwise see.

The recent national popularity in staging services has seems to have sprung from the popularity of television shows such as "Designed to Sell," "Sell this House," and "Clean Sweep." While Dickey acknowledges the com-

petition that her business faces, she is reluctant to compare it to the competition that homeowners face when selling a home.

"It can be brutal," says Dickey of

the housing market. "That's why we offer our service — to let people know that the smallest detail can mean the difference between a quick sale and a depressingly long stay on the market.

We're here to give their home the edge on the competition."

For more information and tips on home staging go to: <http://WeRedesign.com>

Be smart: know your contractor

Whatever might be your motivation for making improvements to your home, you probably will be dealing with one or more home-improvement contractors. This is a good time to brush up on your homeowner-contractor skills. The ancient adage, "caveat emptor," or let the buyer beware, is never more true than when making home improvements.

The more homeowners understand about the basics of the home-improvement business, the less likely it is they will have negative experiences with contractors, according to homeownership advocates.

"Homeowners should take the time to learn the fundamentals of what's involved in working with home-improvement contractors," says Richard Roll, president of the American Homeowners Association. "Being well-informed can help homeowners avoid making costly remodeling mistakes, or be taken advantage of by

high-pressure sales tactics, or by an unscrupulous contractor."

What does a homeowner need to know? There are three fundamental rules of contracting for home improvements that will help take the mystery and guesswork out of hiring a contractor.

• Do your homework. That means not only knowing where to look for prospective contractors.

• Create a strong contract. It's not safe to assume your contractor's standard agreement will protect your interests, as a homeowner.

• Know how to compare bids. One of the easiest-to-learn but least-exercised skills is that of asking multiple companies to submit bids, then selecting the most appropriate company for your needs.

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