



GIVING BACK WITH HONOR...Members of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Air Force JROTC raised money for the families of the uniformed victims of September 11. They are pictured delivering the funds with the Reverend Donald Hummel and members of Truck 1 in New York City.

Scotch Plains Cadets Fulfill Their 9/11 NYC Mission

By BILL SHEPPARD
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

SCOTCH PLAINS -- In the wake of September 11, a group of students from Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School felt compelled to "do something" to show their patriotism and support of their country. These young men and women are members of the Air Force JROTC. But, they were ordered at the time to no longer wear their uniforms at school, for their own safety. New York City was placed out of bounds for school visits or field trips. They felt, like many Americans, helpless to do anything.

Well, these cadets had been taught to "aim high" and strive for leadership in JROTC classes. They decided, with the permission of their parents, to get actively involved on their own. Their reasoning was simple: If a small group of terrorists dedicated to hate was successful in its evil mission, certainly a small group of young cadets dedicated to freedom and patriotism could create and accomplish a mission for the victims' families.

They chose to raise funds for the families of the uniformed "people of service," the first responders, those who never returned to their homes and loved ones after September 11. The students initially raised money on the streets of Fanwood and Scotch Plains. They quickly took their mission to the streets of New York City, directly to ground zero, where weekend after weekend, they collected donations for "their" cause.

In addition, the cadets worked at

Ground Zero at a feeding station, volunteering side-by-side with Vietnam veterans of Rolling Thunder and the New Jersey State Guard. They spent hours doing dirty jobs without complaint but with enthusiasm.

On June 7, the SPFHS JROTC held its annual awards ceremony. The cadets, who initiated and championed the effort to assist the families of the fallen World Trade Center first responders, received two prestigious awards.

Cadets Steven Parker, Jason Parker, Valerie Barattucci, Irisa Grimes, Julio Moncada, Larry Ing, Daniel Reedell and Kristopher Piccola each received one of the highest national awards of the Air Force Junior ROTC program, The Cadet Humanitarian Medal.

The Air Force citation, "Outstanding Humanitarian Activities in the Wake of 11 September 2001 Terrorist Attacks on the United States of America," reads: "You donated your time and effort to bring financial help to those in need, comfort to those suffering, food to those who were hungry, understanding to those who weren't there and pride to those who support you. We are proud to call you United States Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps Cadets."

The cadets and Scotch Plains Fanwood High School were also presented with a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition that read: "in recognition of outstanding and invaluable service to the community," signed by Congressman Mike Ferguson on June 7.

Westfield Street Projects, Schedules Are Updated

WESTFIELD -- Assistant Town Engineer, Kris McAloon has updated the 2002 project list and anticipated schedules of the Department of Public Works as described below.

Curb replacements are scheduled for Standish Avenue from Birch to Cedar Terrace and for Coleman Place from Dudley Avenue to Seneca. Contractor bids will be awarded June 18.

The contractor bid will be awarded on June 18 for various sidewalk improvements throughout the town.

Contractor bids have been received for improvement of Channing Avenue and Dickson Drive. Award of the contract is scheduled for June 18.

Contractor bid requests are scheduled for today, June 13, with anticipated awards on July 1 for curb replacement and installations at Hanford Place from Edgewood to dead end, Forest Avenue from Seneca to Longfellow, Edgar Road from Lynwood to Rahway and Boynton Avenue from Pearl to Twin Oaks.

Contractor bids are to be received on June 24, with the award scheduled on July 2 for road improvements to include Dudley Court, Maye Street, Kimball Turn, Topping Hill Road from Kimball Avenue to Wychwood, Canterbury Road from Kimball Avenue to Winyah, Summit Avenue from Park to Washington, Pine Street from Columbus to the town line, Clover Street from Central to Boulevard, Pennsylvania Avenue and Knollwood Terrace curb replacement area.

Contractors are being contacted for road improvements to Tamaques Way from Ardsleigh to Norwood.

Contractor bids have been received

and award is scheduled for June 18 for road improvement work on Lawrence Avenue from Hillside Avenue to Mountain Avenue. This work is funded through The Transportation Trust Fund.

Contractor bids have been received and awards are scheduled for June 17 for road improvement work on Scotch Plains Avenue from West Broad Street to Dartmoor and for Dudley Avenue, West.

The contract has been awarded and road improvement work is scheduled to begin July 1 on Park Street.

The Rahway Avenue Traffic Calming project is underway and is scheduled to be complete by the end of June.

Construction is underway for the Downtown Streetscape and Central Avenue improvements.

Contractor bid documents are complete for dredging Tamaques Park Pond. Required state permits have not yet been released due to drought restrictions.

The contract for improvements to Gregory's Pond Dam is on hold due to current drought restrictions in the state.

The Mindowaskin Overlook project is complete and dedication ceremonies will be held on Saturday, June 15.

The status of projects will be posted soon on the town website at www.westfieldnj.net. The Department of Public Works is located at 959 North Avenue, West on the corner of Crossway Place. The department may be contacted by phone at (908) 789-4100, by fax at (908) 789-4113 and by email at asstengineer@westfieldnj.net.

Teachers Should Save Receipts For Out of Pocket Expenses

SPRINGFIELD - The Internal Revenue Service is advising teachers to save their receipts for purchases of books and classroom supplies. These out-of-pocket expenses may lower their taxes, thanks to a recent change in the law.

"Many teachers dip into their own pockets when funds for classroom supplies run out before the school year does," said Gregg Semanick, IRS spokesperson in New Jersey. "A new law gives them a tax break this year and next, and we want them to have the records they'll need to claim it on their returns."

The new deduction is available to eligible educators in both public and private elementary and secondary schools. They must work at least 900 hours during a school year as a teacher, instructor, counselor, principal or aide.

Taxpayers may subtract up to \$250 of qualified expenses when figuring

their adjusted gross income (AGI). They will not need to itemize deductions to get this benefit. Prior to the change in the law, educators could take such expenses only as miscellaneous itemized deductions, which must be reduced by 2 percent of the AGI.

Educators who excluded education savings bond interest or payments from qualified tuition programs, or made tax-free withdrawals from an education savings account, will be able to claim the new deduction only to the extent their qualified expenses exceed the tax-free amounts.

The IRS suggests that educators keep records of qualifying expenses in a folder or envelope with a label such as "Educator Expenses Deduction," noting the date, amount and purpose of each purchase. This will help prevent a missed deduction at tax time.

Details on this and other new tax law changes are in IRS Publication 3991, "Highlights of the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002," available on the IRS website at www.irs.gov or by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). More information about these new tax law changes is also available by calling the IRS toll-free help line at 1-800-829-1040.



FORRESTER IN THE PARK...Republican candidate for Senate, Douglas Forrester, recently visited Nomahegan Park in Cranford where he spoke with local residents while campaigning for the primary against Diane Allen and John Mattheuson.

Union Township Man Faces Prison for Theater Hold Up

WESTFIELD -- A 21-year-old Union Township man is facing a six-year state prison term for his role in a violent holdup at a Westfield movie theatre last year.

Union County Prosecutor Thomas V. Manahan said Tuesday that David Loureiro stood in court before Superior Court Judge Scott J. Manahan and admitted that he tried to strike the manager of the Rialto Theatre on East Broad Street with a crowbar during a robbery attempt shortly after the business closed for the evening on November 17.

"We believe that quick thinking by the movie theater employee, who tried to call 911 and then pulled off the defendant's black mask during a struggle, thwarted this robbery," said Mr. Manahan, who said the violent nature of the crime will require that Loureiro serve 85 percent of his sentence before being eligible for parole in 2007.

According to Assistant Prosecutor

Casey J. Woodruff, Loureiro and a co-defendant, who was working at the theater at the time, planned to steal a night's proceeds from the movie house, waiting until the establishment was empty before confronting the victim.

That employee, Bruno Lisa, 18, who lives down the street from his co-defendant, allegedly gave him a signal to go in to commit the crime. As part of his plea, Loureiro will testify against Lisa when he is found and returned to court for trial, Mr. Woodruff said. Lisa was to appear a week ago for a pre-trial conference, but failed to show up and is currently being sought by authorities.

After he fled the scene, Westfield Patrol Officers Christopher Battiloro, Kevin O'Keefe and Jason Rodger captured Loureiro not far from the theater after a foot chase, while Lisa was taken into custody on Elm Street minutes later. Sentencing is scheduled for Friday, October 4.

Westfielder Rides Bike 2,000 Miles To Create Scholarship

WESTFIELD -- On May 17, Steven Nelson of Westfield began his "Ride for Alexis," a nearly 2,000-mile journey from the Eden Institute in Princeton to its facility in Fort Myers, Fla. He is raising money to create a scholarship fund for students pursuing special education majors in college, with a goal of raising a minimum of \$10,000 to create an endowed fund. As of May 31, Mr. Nelson had raised \$9,946 and was in Surf City, N.C. at an old baseball field under a dugout, taking shelter from bad weather.

Mr. Nelson was motivated to undertake this project because of his niece, Alexis Kate, who received treatment at the Wawa House, a division of the institute. "I am so grateful for all the hard work and wonderful things the teachers have done for Alexis over the years," said Mr. Nelson. "I want to do something to assist those extraordinary people who have the desire to pursue a career in teaching those with special needs."

The Eden Family of Services is a not-for-profit organization dedicated

to providing lifespan services for children and adults with autism. For more information, call (609) 987-0099 or visit www.edenservices.org.

Lafayette College Names Graduates

AREA -- During the 167th Commencement Ceremony at Lafayette College in Easton, Pa., students from Westfield, Mountainside and Scotch Plains received their degrees.

Erik Britton Kolb of Westfield received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Computer Science, while Courtney Reis Nemece of Westfield earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology.

Scotch Plains resident Michael Samuel Milberger received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History, with Honors in History, named to Phi Alpha Theta.

Mountainside native James John Herten earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Government & Law.

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