



# THE TIMES

## Scotch Plains - Fanwood

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FIFTY CENTS

## School Board Hears Report On District Voting Patterns

By JENNIFER PINTO  
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education (BOE) kicked off their regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, November 19 with various board priority items.

Board Secretary and Business Administrator Anthony Del Sordi briefed the board and the public on construction updates throughout the district.

Mr. Del Sordi noted that the high school extension would be completed by March due to the late arrival of

steel materials. The McGinn School multipurpose room will be completed by next week, however Brunner School's multipurpose room is the project that is "lagging behind" according to Mr. Del Sordi.

Representing the School/Community Relations Committee, Vice President Linda Nelson addressed the board by presenting a report with the Ad Hoc committee on voter patterns in school elections.

According to Ms. Nelson "the Community Relation Committee has been working on this project for 10 months" when originally the project was only anticipated to be a few weeks.

Ms. Nelson served as the chairperson for the Ad Hoc committee which also consisted of members: Margaret Ames, Bill McClintock, Lorraine Staniec and additional volunteers. The group gathered Union County Board of Election data as well as voter turnout and approval rates.

"We are only passing the budget by 200 votes," stated Ms. Ames.

Ms. Ames reiterated that half of the voters who are voting for school budgets are not public school voters.

According to Ms. Nelson, a public school voter is considered a parent with a child in the public school district. A non-public school voter is basically anyone who has never had a child in the school district or a parent who no longer has a child in the public school district.

According to statistics in the voting analysis report: "In 2002, in polling places where the budget passed,

public school voters averaged 38 percent; in 2001, public school voters averaged 40 percent; and in 2002 there were six failing polling places while in 2001 there were 9."

"We can not know how each district did, but we can know how each polling place did," said Ms. Nelson.

The report stated, "in 2002 public school voter numbers increased slightly at the North side schools; however, at J.A. Coles, Park, and the high school, public school voters slipped slightly."

Ms. Nelson and Ms. Aims also stated in the report that, "in the past two years the budget has passed by a tighter margin than in the previous four years."

The committee's recommendations were to continue this voter study and explore software options that would help to cut down on the amount of time that the project initially took when it was done manually.

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UP AND OVER...An accident occurred at the intersection of St. Marks and South Euclid Avenues last Friday when a Jeep driven by Israel Sanabria of Union struck a vehicle being driven by Peter Terry of Scotch Plains. Both men reported injuries and were transported for medical treatment by the Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad. Sanabria, whose jeep also struck a telephone pole, a tree, and then overturned, was ticketed for failure to yield at a stop sign.

Carle Schwab-Brody for The Times

## Westfield Linked To Snipers

By LAUREN S. PASS  
Specially Written for The Times

Former Westfield resident, Peter Gianquinto, 53, was arrested in New York on passport fraud charges. According to the Associated Press, Gianquinto is linked to the D.C.-area sniper, John Allen Mohammed, since Antiguan authorities saw them together on the island.

According to Westfield Police Detective Lieutenant Frank Brunelle, Gianquinto has been "doing this (committing fraud) a long time."

Lieutenant Brunelle said that Gianquinto been arrested on fraud charges several times by the Westfield Police Department. He added that Gianquinto would typically impersonate people in the entertainment field.

Gianquinto grew up on Highland Avenue, but there was no record of him in the Westfield High School yearbooks.

The New York Post reported Wednesday that Gianquinto used that passport to travel from Antigua to New York in April and May 2001. It also said court documents indicate federal agents focused on Gianquinto shortly after the arrests of Muhammad and second sniper suspect John Lee Malvo.

A phone call to Attorney Albert Stender, who is representing Gianquinto, was not returned.

## Fanwood Council Holds Special Meeting To Discuss Borough Employees' Insurance

By KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL  
Specially Written for The Times

An emergency Risk Management meeting was called on Thursday evening in the Borough of Fanwood to continue the municipality's workers compensation and employers liability insurance.

According to Borough Administrator Eleanor McGovern, the meeting had to be scheduled before Friday, November 15, so that the premium rates remained the same.

"In order to ensure that the rates remained equal or lower than previously paid, we had to adopt a resolution by November 14 to meet the deadline on the next business day," stated Mrs. McGovern.

The brief meeting ensured that Fanwood remains a member of the New Jersey Intergovernmental Insurance Fund for Workers Compensation and Employers Liability, where it agrees to continue its membership commencing on January 1, 2003 and terminating on December 31, 2005.

According to Mrs. McGovern, the borough has been participating in the Joint Insurance Fund (JIF) for approximately six years. She noted that other local members of this statewide insurance include Roselle Park and Cranford.

When asked why the emergency meeting had to be held, Mrs. McGovern stated that the deadline for renewal "was an oversight." She stated that it should have been on the agenda for November's council meeting.

The next Fanwood Council meeting, which is an agenda-setting meeting, will be held on Tuesday December 2.

A special meeting of the Mayor

and council to hear recommendations from the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Review Committee regarding downtown Fanwood is scheduled for Monday, December 16 at 8 p.m.

## Freeholder Scanlon Tells Residents to Watch Out For Longhorned Beetle

By FRED ROSSI  
Specially Written for The Times

Following meetings in October that included a parade of county residents protesting the decision not to sell a portion of a 63-acre tract of land in Summit to a local church, the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders' regular meeting last Thursday saw just three individuals speaking briefly on the matter.

At its first meeting since the November 5 election that saw three Democrats win re-election, ensuring a 9-0 all-Democratic Board for next year, the Freeholders, after listening last month to some furious and emotional protests by parishioners of Fountain Baptist Church in Summit, seem to have weathered the political fallout and threats by some church members that Democrats would pay a political price at the polls for their decision.

Back in the spring, the Freeholders had voted to purchase 63.5 acres of property owned by New Jersey-American Water Company and then made known their intention to sell seven of those acres to the church.

After a group of Summit residents protested the proposed land sale to the church, a \$15,000 environmental

impact study was conducted by PMK Group of Cranford, which found con-



Photo Courtesy of USDA

**BEWARE OF THE BEETLE...** Union County Freeholder Deborah Scanlon has advised county residents to watch out for the Asian longhorned beetle, pictured, above.

cerns about deforestation and possible harmful effects on local wildlife if the property were to be sold and then developed by the church.

Next Tuesday, November 26, county residents will have an opportunity to dispose of unwanted ammunition and fireworks at the county police headquarters building on North Avenue in Westfield.

"Many residents have these potentially dangerous items in their homes

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## Freeholder Board's Initiatives for 2002 Reviewed; Trash Train No Longer An Issue at Tremley Point

By KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL  
Specially Written for The Times

Just a few weeks ago, the voters of Union County decided that the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders will once again consist of all Democrats. Freeholder Nicholas Scutari, of Linden, was re-elected to his third three-year term, while Angel Estrada of Elizabeth was elected to his second. Rick Proctor, of Rahway, was elected to his first term, following an appointment last February to fill the vacancy left by Linda Stender who won a State Assembly seat last year.

While, an appointment as the Freeholder Chairman is still upcoming and their 2003 initiatives not yet ready to be unveiled, a look back at the 2002 initiatives first introduced last January, seem to have brought some new programs to residents in the 21 municipalities.

At the Union County reorganization meeting held last January, Freeholder Chairman Lewis Mingo, Jr. outlined five new initiatives for the year 2002.

One of the initiatives outlined by Mr. Mingo was the Tremley Point Redevelopment program. According to Mr. Mingo's report, the Freeholders would be working in conjunction with the City of Linden to create a Global Freight Village in the Tremley Point area of the city, expecting to create 3,000 new jobs for the area.

Mr. Mingo stated that the Global Freight Village would be located near the trucks only exit planned at Interchange 12 of the NJ Turnpike. He also noted that the area would house

**"The Freeholder Board has worked to acquire available open space, located primarily in the Western part of Union County. Green the Streets will place needed emphasis on developing recreational areas in our county's older, more densely populated communities."**  
Freeholder Lewis Mingo

industrial businesses, distribution facilities, office and conference space and training centers that utilize truck and freight access.

This initiative, updated from Sebastian D'Elia, Union County Director of Public Relations, is reported to "ensure that the connector road to the Tremley Point will be a reality in the next three years. Currently the Turnpike is evaluating four alternative routes for crossing the Rahway River from Exit 12 and connecting into Tremley Point Road."

The use of Tremley Point as a switching station for a "trash train" from New York brought much controversy in the past year. One of the individuals who owns a piece of Tremley Point was being investigated, and New York backed out, according to Tom Plante, from the County's public information office.

Mr. D'Elia also stated that the

County has estimated that the environmental process of this project will be complete in early 2003. He also notes that permit applications and design will require approximately another 18 months, so that construction will be ready to begin in 2005.

In addition, Mr. D'Elia reports that the County and the City of Linden have met with property owners of Tremley Point and that the Global Village Plans have "advanced significantly." He reports that New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) clean up plans are complete and that a site plan has been reviewed. He further notes that the owner of the property should be "able to select a developer within the next six months to begin work on the property."

Also outlined in his report, was the Youth Employment Strategy (YES) program, which stated that the Freeholders would work with Union County's business community to expand summer employment opportunities for youth within the county. He noted that the program would provide summer scholarships and jobs with local businesses. According to Mr. D'Elia, 12 Union County companies have found 18 jobs for county youths throughout the municipalities after a screening of 52 youths for the YES program.

Also, aimed at youth in the county, Mr. Mingo outlined a program called

"College for Teens" which would be an expansion of Union County College's summer program to provide scholarships to students aged 13 to 17 in grades eight through twelve. The initiative stated that five students from each district would be selected by their district to attend the

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RED OR GREEN?...An accident occurred at the corner of Bonnie Burn and Diamond Hill Roads on Saturday causing the traffic light to be knocked over and tying up traffic.

Fred Lecomte for The Times

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## Toy Drive, Adopt-A-Family To Benefit County's Needy

SCOTCH PLAINS—The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School DECA Chapter, an association of marketing students, is sponsoring its 12th Annual Toy Drive to help the needy and homeless for the holiday season.

Working with the Union County Interfaith Council for the Homeless and the Scotch Plains Welfare Department, DECA is raising funds for the purchase of toys, clothing and household items for over 200 children and 100 families of the Interfaith Council.

Many of these families live in temporary shelters and in various churches and synagogues throughout the county, until permanent housing becomes available.

In addition, DECA asks the community to consider its Adopt-A-Family Program in which residents help to provide necessities for a specific family in the Interfaith Council network.

DECA has already held a Halloween party for the children and will host a holiday party in December. Although the event is billed as a toy drive, DECA is requesting

that cash donations be used for the purchase of new toys, basic clothing and household needs.

DECA is encouraging Union County communities to join in their efforts to help these families who are trying to rebuild their lives.

Sara Finkelstein, DECA President, stated, "It's a great chance to give these kids the holiday they may have otherwise not had. We are really looking to the community and local businesses to help us ensure that at least every child has one holiday gift."

"The Adopt-A-Family program has really grown to become a community event. It's great to see our community band together and help those in need," said Sara.

In addition to toys, DECA has, in the past, been able to provide basic necessities such as shoes, socks, underwear, shirts, jackets, linen sheets and blankets.

To make a contribution as an individual or business, to co-sponsor the DECA Toy Drive, or to aid in the Adopt-A-Family program, please call (908) 889-8600.

## WF BOE Audit Runs Smoothly; Y's Men To Fix Elm St. Field

By CHARLOTTE LEDERMAN  
Specially Written for The Times

WESTFIELD -- "No violation of state laws, regulations, no reportable conditions." Such was the good news at Tuesday's board of education meeting as the Highland Park accounting firm of Hodulik and Morrison, PA gave their report on the 2001-2002 audit.

Indeed, accountant Bob Morrison further informed the board that his firm had found that "the financial statements were fairly represented" and the internal controls of checks and balances were "designed properly and working."

Mr. Morrison also noted that he and his employees had enjoyed the "complete cooperation of the staff" in Westfield and what a pleasure it was to work for such a town. Superintendent of Schools Dr. William Foley credited Business Administrator and Board Secretary Robert Berman and the work that he has done in facilitating the auditing process, both this year and in years past.

During their discussion of the audit, board member Carol Molnar asked Mr. Morrison to explain the impact of "centralized fix asset accounting." Overall, this will be required as part of the audit next year, and as a result, will necessitate the board hiring a full time employee to fill this need.

The board also heard a presentation from the Y's Men, a service organization based at the Westfield Y, that has historically sold Christmas trees at the Elm Street Field. Recently, this field has come under much debate as to its proper care and usage. The Y's Men proposed to the board, though, that as an act of good faith they "change the way we do business on the field."

This year, no tractors will be allowed on the field and they hope to experiment with straw and alternate pathways to eliminate mud and minimize damage to the field.

Y's Men member and field professional Greg Nicoll also proposed to "establish and manage a field conditioning program of aeration, fertilization and seeding for the Elm Street Field."

The service group believes that "this conditioning program will significantly improve the condition of the field and its turf within a short period." It will work in conjunction with numerous suppliers and services to "directly assist the board in covering the costs and managing the program."

Board President Arlene Gardner accepted the Y's Men's proposal, noting it was "generous" as it was "at no cost to the board."

Board member William Ziff also seemed to speak for the entire board when he voiced that he felt it was a "win-win situation."

In other news, Mrs. Gardner alerted the board to several community events. This week is American Education Week and includes the theme of "Making Public Schools Great for Every Child!" As such, cooperation between staff, parents, and the community as a whole are responsible for making the Westfield Public Schools so successful.

Mrs. Gardner noted, "We are fortunate here in Westfield that the level of cooperation and support is so great. We all celebrate the achievements in our schools and commit to working together to help our children succeed."

The board also wished to congratulate the Westfield High School Girls Varsity Soccer team on winning the North Jersey Section 2

Championship on Monday.

Mrs. Gardner reminded the board that the football team will play on Thanksgiving Day in Plainfield, "marking more than 100 years of rivalry between the two schools."

Other events of note are College Night at Westfield High School on Thursday, November 21 and the high school's production of Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth*, which will begin today, Thursday, November 21, and run through the weekend.

Mrs. Gardner closed the meeting, reminding the community that the Westfield Public Schools will hold a four-hour session on Wednesday, November 27, and will be closed Thanksgiving Day and Friday, November 29.

The board will reconvene next month on Tuesday, December 3.

## Beetle

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and would like to dispose of them safely," said Freeholder Board Chairman Lewis Mingo, Jr.

From 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Union County Police Department will accept all fireworks and ammunition of up to 50-caliber in size. This is the first time this type of program has been conducted in Union County. No guns will be accepted. All materials brought in by residents will be placed in a burn container and later detonated by the police.

Saying the program is not just for those individuals who use firearms for target shooting or hunting, Freeholder Chester Holmes said the county "gets many calls from residents who come across these items when they clean out a home after the death of a loved one." People tend to keep these items simply because they are unsure of how to dispose of them.

In another matter, Freeholder Deborah Scanlon is warning county residents to be on the alert for the Asian longhorned beetle, which can destroy thousands of trees in a short period of time. This type of beetle has been discovered near Union County.

Freeholder Scanlon, the board's liaison to the county's Shade Tree Commission, said officials are working with state and federal officials on the problem. The beetle, native to China, lays its eggs in hardwood trees; the larvae then feed off the delicate living tissue inside the tree, an infestation that is fatal to a variety of trees, namely maples, boxelders, horsechestnut, willows and elm trees.

The beetle is 3/4 to 1 1/2 inches in length, with a shiny black shell with white dots. Urging residents to be watchful, Freeholder Scanlon said the beetles "spread very, very quickly and our best chance for stopping this infestation is to catch the beetles very early."

The Freeholders' next regular meeting will be on Thursday, December 5.

## Service Is Announced For Mrs. Hamberger

Jacqueline Hamberger, 57, of Mountainside died on Tuesday, November 19, at her residence. A complete obituary will appear in next week's edition.

Visitation will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. today, Thursday, November 21, and from 9 to 10:30 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, November 22, at the Gray Funeral Home, 318 East Broad Street in Westfield.

A funeral service is set for 10:30 a.m. tomorrow at the funeral home. Burial will take place at Fairview Cemetery in Westfield.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to a hospice program of one's choice or to the American Lung Association.

November 21, 2002



SHE'LL ASK THE QUESTIONS...Lauren Kurz, a resident of Scotch Plains, interviews Martin Marks, the Mayor of the Township, about his views on healthcare issues in Scotch Plains. Lauren is a senior nursing student at Villanova University in Philadelphia, Pa.

## Freeholder Board Says Trash Train Is No Longer An Issue

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program, which focuses on leadership and development.

## Board of Ed.

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According to the report, the group also wanted to recommend doing a focus group for Brunner School parents before 2003, due to their low voter turnout revealed by the study. The report also recommended working with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) legislative chairpersons and BOE liaisons to develop new ways to bring people to the polls.

Board member, Edward Saridaki, stated his concerns on the voting analysis saying that it "could border on unethical."

"When you start analyzing to that degree, you're creating pressure on the voters...our responsibility is to get better voter turnout with an accurate budget," said Mr. Saridaki.

In other business, Barre and Company presented the annual audit, making the following recommendations: SUI taxes should be transferred from the P/R agency account to the SUI trust fund on a quarterly basis; all quarterly payments to the NJ unemployment fund should be paid from the SUI trust fund account; business office personnel should continue to ensure proper payment; and principals should be notified of their responsibility to reconcile accounts on a monthly basis. All of these recommendations were well received and approved by the board.

The board also reviewed the Quality Assurance Annual Report (QAAR), which approved the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan and the School Nursing Services Plan. The QAAR reported on the breakdown of students in the district who need daily or occasional medical attention by the school nurse. The report stated that each school has a certified full-time school nurse and the high school also has an additional part-time nurse.

Superintendent of Instruction, Dr. Margaret Hayes also introduced the updated Information Technology Curriculum for grades five through eight to be implemented in the 2003-2004 school year, which was approved by the board. The curriculum focused on developing proper keyboarding at an earlier age.

Board member Craig Nowlin also reported for the Shared Services committee regarding the Field of Dreams project, stating that bid documents will most likely be going out in December.

According to the motion approved, the board also agreed to participate in the purchase of grounds equipment with the Borough of Fanwood and the Township of Scotch Plains. The cost is estimated to be \$75,000 prorated at 40 percent each to the Township of Scotch Plains and the Board of Education and 20 percent to the Borough of Fanwood.

"We currently rent this equipment...they are looking at equipment to do a number of operations," said Mr. Del Sordi.

The next public Board of Education meeting will be held at 8 p.m. on December 5.

According to Mr. D'Elia 68 students from 14 out of 21 of the county's school districts took part in the initiative attending courses at Union County College's Cranford campus.

Courses for the teens included: science, computer graphics and design, technology and finance. In addition, students were also given courses in leadership skills, time management and conflict resolution as well as recreation time.

In his report, Mr. Mingo outlined a fourth initiative entitled Partnership for Economic Progress, (PEP) which would help Union County's small businesses by aiding those businesses impacted by the tragic events of September 11, 2001. The purpose of the initiative is to bring together economic development organizations to coordinate services to these small businesses.

According to the Union County Freeholder Office, the organizations involved include the Board of Chosen Freeholders and the County Manager, the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Human Services. In addition, the Union County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee, the Union County Workforce Investment Board, the Elizabeth Development Company, the Union County Economic Development Corporation, the Small Business Development Center and Union County College are working towards this initiative.

Projects launched for the initiative include providing technical assistance programs to small businesses in the areas of International Service, export readiness and trade and government procurement as well as a small business debt refinancing loan program to refinance existing business-related debt. Also, additional technical assistance courses are being offered at Kean University while Union County College is providing a new curriculum for small business employment training.

The final initiative reported by Freeholder Mingo is the "Green the Streets" project. According to Mr. Mingo, through this initiative Union County will dedicate \$1.75 million from the Union County Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Trust Fund, to create parks, connect greenways and improve park areas in the County's urbanized, congested areas.

In a press release, submitted by the office of Mr. D'Elia on October 9, it was announced that the program was officially launched.

According to Mr. Mingo "the Freeholder Board has worked to acquire available open space, located primarily in the Western part of Union County. Green the Streets will place needed emphasis on developing recreational areas in our county's older, more densely populated communities."

Municipalities eligible for this matching funds program include, Rahway, Elizabeth, Linden, Hillside, Plainfield, Roselle and Union Township. Each municipality can apply for up to \$250,000 and the deadline for applications is December 31, 2002.

The Freeholders will appoint a chairman for 2003 at their reorganization meeting in January.

## SCOTCH PLAINS POLICE BLOTTER

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12

- A Scotchwood Glen resident reported receiving harassing phone calls.
- A student at the Union County Vocational and Technical School on Raritan Road reported being assaulted on October 30. There were no reported injuries and the victim was referred to the Municipal Court.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15

- A Bryant Avenue resident reported that a Comcast cable box and remote were taken from his home. The owner believes a former tenant removed the items when they moved out.
- A Westfield resident reported that her vehicle hood ornament may have been removed while she was in the Quick Check on Westfield Avenue. The person stated that she did make several prior stops.
- The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School reported that someone spray-painted the letters "Z-B" in two different spots in the gym.
- The Mobile Gas Station located on Route No. 22, East, reported a theft of approximately \$300 from inside the store. The employee's of the gas station recognized an individual inside the store from past thefts, and summoned the police but the actor left before police arrived.
- A Union Township resident reported

having her wallet stolen from the Snuffy's Restaurant. The victim stated that she left her purse open after getting some change to make a phone call. She returned and saw two men standing around the area of her purse. She later called her credit card company and realized that someone had just used her credit card at the Toys 'R' Us and Babies 'R' Us located at the Blue Star Shopping Center.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

- The manager of Sunoco Gas Station located on Route No. 22 reported that a customer entered the store and went down the aisle looking for merchandise. The customer gave the manager \$3 for a bag of potato chips, soda and hot fries. The manager opened the register and the customer jumped over the counter and reached into the register taking an undetermined amount of cash. The criminal ran out of the store and onto Myrtle Avenue. The incident was captured on surveillance tape.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

- Nicholas Mortarulo, a resident of William Street, was arrested and charged with disorderly persons. Mortarulo was arrested after police were called to Sycamore Avenue where Mortarulo rang the doorbell of a residence that he didn't know. Police arrived and Mortarulo refused to leave and became combative.

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**Christopher Radko**  
Meet Tad Donovan of the Christopher Radko Company. There will be the special event ornament "Merry Mouse Magic" that is only available at the event. New additions to the line this year include the Fantasia Vintage Ornaments, Bubble Lights, and over 200 new styles for 2002. A special door prize drawing will be held. Shop our Radko Store Online At www.radkoshop.com **Nov. 24th 1pm-4pm**

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(908) 233-5555

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**Douglas M. Fasciale**  
Certified Civil Trial Attorney  
by the Supreme Court of New Jersey  
Concentrating in personal injury and malpractice cases.

Hoagland, Longo, Moran, Dunst & Doukas, LLP  
Attorneys At Law - A Full Service Firm

40 Paterson Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
(732) 545-4717

116 S. Euclid Avenue  
Westfield, NJ 07090  
(908) 232-9944

DFasciale@hoaglandlongo.com  
www.hoaglandlongo.com