



ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL...Republican gubernatorial candidate John Murphy visited approximately 30 Fanwood Republicans at the Fanwood Train Station on Monday night. Pictured, left to right, are: Fanwood Borough Council candidate Maureen Mawby, Fanwood Republican Club President Joel Stroz, Mr. Murphy and freeholder candidate and current Councilman Stuart Kline.

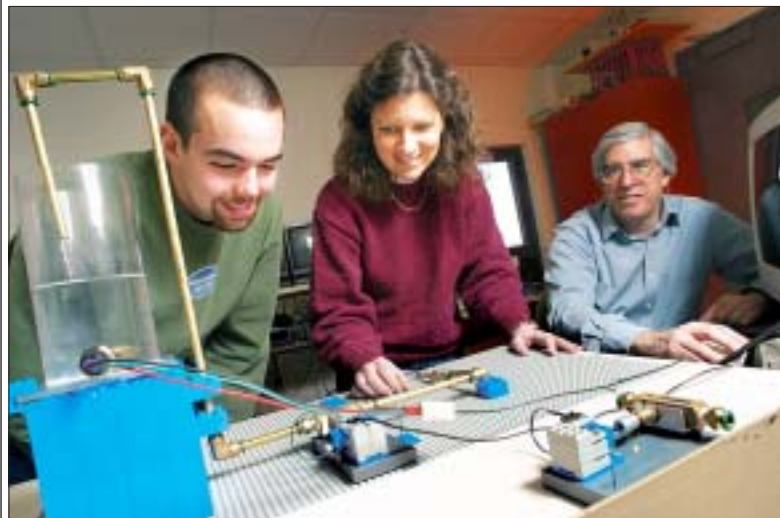
Matthew Metzger Receives Two Awards from Lafayette

FANWOOD — During Lafayette College's Honors Convocation on April 17, Matthew Metzger of Fanwood, a Trustee Scholar at Lafayette College in Easton, Pa., was given two Lafayette academic awards.

Matthew received the American Institute of Chemists Award, which is presented by the Philadelphia Chapter of the Pennsylvania Institute of Chemists to a senior chemical engineering major in recognition of his/her demonstrated record of leadership, character and scholastic achievement.

He also earned the Carl J. Staska Prize, which is awarded annually to a pupil who has demonstrated proficiency in chemical laboratory skills.

Matthew did collaborative research with chemical engineering faculty members Polly Pergiovanni and Scott Moor.



HONORED FANWOODIAN...Matthew Metzger of Fanwood, left, received two special awards from Lafayette College in Easton, Pa. He did collaborative research with chemical engineering faculty members Polly Pergiovanni, center, and Scott Moor, right.

Baby Sign Language Class Planned at Play Away Studio

SCOTCH PLAINS — Fiona Murray, Director of The Play Away Studio in Scotch Plains will offer a Baby Sign Language class for the spring session.

The instructor, Audrey King, is a certified teacher of the deaf, with over 13 years of signing experience. "Babies are able to communicate using sign language before they have the physical ability to speak," said Ms. King. "Hearing parents can use sign language as a temporary means of communication with hearing babies as young as seven months old."

Parents will bond with their babies as they learn simple American Sign Language and boost infant communication skills. The focus is on vocabulary relevant to the child's needs and wants.

The class is open to 6 to 14 month olds and their parent.

The Play Away Studio will also offer an adult yoga class this spring. Certified instructor, Lisa DeMarco, will hold Prana Yoga classes.

Participants will release tension, experience increased energy, heighten body awareness and deepen the mind-body connection. No yoga experience is necessary.

Ms. DeMarco will guide the class through a series of gentle asanas, or postures.

Music Together, the music and movement class for infants through toddlers, will also be held at The Play Away Studio, along with Mommy & Me Art, Mommy & Me Dance, and Ballet.

For class schedules and availability, please call (908) 490-1330.

Tax Levy Passes; Five Elected to School Bd.

By ANNA GITHENS
Specially Written for The Leader and The Times

GARWOOD — Borough voters approved the \$6.4 million school tax levy on Tuesday as well as casting their vote for the five open seats on Board of Education (BOE).

With a record five seats up for grabs, two incumbents and three newcomers walked away triumphant. The four candidates who filed petitions prior to the February 7 deadline, as well as one write-in candidate were elected.

Incumbent Gary Maher was re-elected, pulling in 246 votes, while newcomer Debbie Courtney and incumbent Monty Brown claimed 241 votes each. Tracey Schadewald, a first-timer vying for a chance to serve, pulled in 235 votes.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Maher will serve three-year terms, while Mrs. Courtney and Ms. Schadewald tenure will be for two years each. Christine Guerriero, a write-in candidate, won a three-year seat and received 140 write-in votes.

Ms. Guerriero, a school nurse employed in Somerville, is a previous board member who served from 1990 to 1993.

The \$6.4 million school budget passed by a tally of 230 to 123 against out of 2,440 registered voters.

According to write in candidate Christine Guerriero, the favorable turnout was most likely due to the lack of an increase in the local tax levy. She also stated that the school board worked hard to preserve this flat district tax and, as a result, "received overwhelming support from voters."

The lack of a tax increase was due, in part, to the receipt of deregionalization money received

from the borough's contract with Clark's Arthur L. Johnson High School.

The BOE's task of limiting local tax increases was difficult mainly because of the ongoing school construction project that is scheduled for completion by December 2005.

According to information obtained from the BOE, local students are housed in the district's two school facilities. Kindergarten and pre-kindergarten pupils attend Washington School. Grades one through eight attend Lincoln School.

Construction of the new facilities will provide updated technology programs, including Internet access in all classrooms, and needed space for student instruction and curriculum requirements. The completed construction will allow the district to provide a full service lunch program in the new cafeteria and a new, modern library facility.

Included in the 2005/2006 budget, according to the borough's BOE, is funding for a projected enrollment of 417 regular and special education students from grades pre-k through eight. It also includes tuition for students in grades nine through 12, amounting to approximately 185 students, to attend high school in Clark.

Also included in the adopted budget is salary and benefits for approximately 59 full and part-time employees, which include teachers, administrators and custodial staff.

The re-organization meeting of the BOE will be held Tuesday, April 26, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at Washington School. The swearing-in of the newly elected members will take place at that time.



REVITALIZE AND MAINTAIN... The Scotch Plains Volunteer Firefighters Association honored PH Robinson Landscape and Design Company at their annual awards dinner on February 19 at the Berkeley Plaza. PH Robinson has donated materials and labor over the past two years to revitalize and maintain the front of Scotch Plains Fire House No. 2 located on the corner of Raritan Road and Martine Avenue. Pictured, left to right, are: Fire Captain Michael Cuccurullo, Mayor Martin Marks, Paul Robinson and Firefighter David Triano.

BOE Thanks Saridaki For Years On Board

By MATT MARINO
Specially Written for The Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — In the final meeting before this past Tuesday's election (please see related story on Page 1), the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education honored board member Edward Saridaki, who stepped down from the board after nine years.

Board members paid tribute to Mr. Saridaki's years of service, with many of them pointing out his steadfast convictions to issues, even if it meant being the lone dissenting vote.

Board member Lance Porter told Mr. Saridaki, "You are a man of deep, deep conviction."

Thomas Russo, who moved the special resolution, noted that with regards to financial matters, Mr. Saridaki was the "fiscal conscience of this board."

Likewise, board member Trip Whitehouse stated that, "he truly had your (residents') pocketbook along with the students" in his best interests.

Board President Linda Nelson added that many discussions and meetings with Mr. Saridaki often resulted in a new piece of information being revealed that had been previously unknown by many others.

"There wasn't a discussion on the board that I didn't learn from Ed," commented Mrs. Nelson.

Members of the public along with Mr. Saridaki's family attended the meeting to offer their thanks and praise for nine years on the school board.

Scotch Plains Mayor Martin Marks acknowledged all that Mr. Saridaki had done throughout his time in office.

Mayor Marks even joked that he would "announce the construction of the Edward J. Saridaki ice skating rink," an allusion to the ongoing de-

bate regarding an ice hockey team at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School.

For his part, Mr. Saridaki admitted that the budget actually pushed him to run for a seat on the board nine years ago. Before running for office, he had attended two years' worth of meetings to become more familiar with the board members and board procedures, especially as they related to finances.

"I did my homework," said Mr. Saridaki.

He also referenced his outspoken nature, admitting that often he stood alone on certain issues. He added that while he scrutinized others, it was often a reflection of how he viewed himself.

"I don't judge anyone more sternly than I judge myself," Mr. Saridaki commented.

In other business, the board members heard from Nancy Bauer, the president of the newly-formed Scotch Plains-Fanwood Ice Hockey Association.

Mrs. Bauer addressed several issues concerning the formation of a high school ice hockey team. Specifically, she responded to the financial commitment required for a team in the district, again stating that parents would pay for the team.

However, said Mrs. Bauer, it was becoming difficult to raise money for a team that up to this point, does not exist.

"What we need is a commitment to have a team," she stated.

She also talked about other districts and their procedures for paying for a team, and she added that new policies could expedite the process of establishing ice hockey in Scotch Plains-Fanwood schools.

Mr. Russo, who serves as Chairman of the Policy Committee, responded that the committee had two meetings since the previous ice hockey presentation and that "the ice hockey issue dominated both of those meetings."

He added that while the committee may have a draft policy in place by the next meeting, time constraints may prevent the board from a firm commitment toward a team for next year.

Mrs. Nelson explained that such a decision would not come as quick as Mrs. Bauer hoped, but that many factors had to be taken into consideration. It is a "big step for us (the board) to take," she said, and stated that any such decision required a preliminary cost breakdown with a schedule of who would be paying for what.



HONORING AN ALUMNUS...Fifth graders Aryaman Nichani of Scotch Plains and Lauren Levine of Fanwood present Wardlaw-Hartridge alumnus Greg Casagrande with a "You Make a Difference" certificate on behalf of the students and Head of Wardlaw-Hartridge School Chris Williamson, right.

Dignitary Alumnus Speaks To Wardlaw-Hartridge Pupils

EDISON — Greg Casagrande, a Wardlaw-Hartridge graduate from the Class of 1981 recently spoke to high school and middle school students at his alma mater and was presented with an honor from the lower school students.

Mr. Casagrande is one of 16 people worldwide named to a United Nations Advisory Panel in this United Nations Year of Microcredit to help develop a plan to cut world poverty in half by 2015, in part through microcredit.

His particular focus is providing economic support to women in Samoa, having found that this leads to measurable gains in economic independence for families and then communities. South Pacific Business Development (SPBD), his charitable, Samoa-based, micro-enterprise development organization, is dedicated to providing poor women with real opportunity for self-employment.

On this trip to the states, Mr. Casagrande spoke at Harvard's

Kennedy School of Government since his Foundation in New Zealand is being used in a case study.

During his visit to Wardlaw-Hartridge, he addressed economic classes in upper school, history classes in middle school and the Science and Math Club during his afternoon at the school in late spring.

At lunchtime, Head of School Chris Williamson welcomed the alumnus and introduced two lower school fifth graders, Aryaman Nichani and Lauren Levine, who presented the honored guest with a "You Make a Difference" certificate.

"He had no idea that we were going to present this award and was clearly honored and even a little overwhelmed," Mr. Williamson said.

Mr. Casagrande told the students that the certificate mattered more to him than anything he had received on his trip.

The PreK3 through grade 12 college preparatory coeducational day school has been honoring adults and students alike this year in recognizing lives of people who are changing others and the world around them in a positive manner.

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Horace R. Corbin for The Times

GIDDY UP...Westfield Police Chief Bernard Tracy keeps a tight grip on his two and a half year old granddaughter, Kaylee Marchese, as she enjoys a pony ride at the Spring Fling this past Sunday.

Planning Bd.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

suggested that the board needs to place the plan on the agenda to be ratified, after making any amendments. The next phase will be to adopt it as part of the Master Plan and then update the borough's storm water ordinance.

The plan was drafted from a general outline provided by the Department of Environmental Protection and then customized to fit the borough's needs, Mr. Pryor said.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the board will be on Wednesday, April 27, at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Court Room.

Injured Cat

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"He's a very sweet cat," Ms. Trezza added, maintaining that the cat must belong to someone. "Cats that are just left out on their own don't get that heavy."

The Humane Societies is still hoping to return it to its owner, authorities said. However, if no one claims it, the organization would like to find someone who will give it a lifelong home.

For more information, interested individuals may contact Lieutenant Trigo at Fanwood police headquarters, (908) 322-5000, or Ms. Trezza at (973) 824-7080.

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