

22nd District News

Legislation Clarifies Cable TV Charges, Other Law Aims to Help State Parks



Assemblywoman Linda Stender, Fanwood

Assemblywoman Linda Stender has introduced legislation requiring cable television providers to clearly disclose terms and conditions of introductory rates on cable bills to new and existing customers.

"Customers lured by introductory rates are commonly unaware of when these rates expire or how to terminate their service before being billed at significantly higher rates," said Assemblywoman Stender. "By requiring this information to be included on their cable bill, consumers will be less likely to exceed their introductory rate period and be surprised by higher bills."

Assembly Bill A-3716 directs the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities to require cable television providers to disclose particular information on cable television bills to new and existing customers who accept the introductory rates.

Information that must be disclosed on the cable television bill included the number of months the introductory rates are in effect, the date when they are scheduled to expire, and the procedure by which the customer may terminate the service without penalty.

State Park Plan Meets Committee Approval

On January 13, legislation sponsored by Assemblywoman Linda

Stender that would allow taxpayers to voluntarily support State park improvements on gross income tax returns passed the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

"Taxpayers presently have the option of donating to a number of important causes when filing their income tax returns," said Stender. "By adding this option, New Jersey residents will be able to support improving state parks and the programs they provide."

A-2017 allows taxpayers the opportunity to indicate on their New Jersey gross income tax return that a portion of their tax refund or an enclosed contribution be deposited in a special fund to be known as the "NJ State Parks Improvement Fund." Net contributions would be deposited into this fund and appropriated to the Department of Environmental Protection for improved facilities and programs in State parks.

New Jersey taxpayers are currently provided the option of donating overpayments to a number of funds including the NJ Endangered Wildlife Fund, the NJ Children's Trust Fund to Prevent Child Abuse, the NJ Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Fund, the Breast Cancer Research Fund and the U.S.S. NJ Educational Museum Fund.

A-2017 now awaits consideration in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Local Arts Groups Awarded Grants From Union County

COUNTY - Forty-eight Union County organizations and presenters of arts programs will receive a total of \$112,395 from the fiscal year 2005 Union County Arts Grant Program.

"That sum represents the majority of the grant of \$195,840 awarded by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts to the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs," noted Freeholder Chair Rick Proctor.

"The remainder and a cash match provided by the Board of Chosen Freeholders will enable the Division to hire staff, present technical assistance workshops, the Teen Arts Program, the Senior Citizen Art Show and other services for the benefit of Union County artists, cultural organizations and residents," he added.

"For the eighth consecutive year, the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs in the Department of Economic Development has been designated as a major service organization by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Department of State," said Freeholder Bette Jane Kowalski, liaison to the Cultural and Heritage Programs Advisory Board.

Phyllis Brociner, Chairwoman of the Union County Cultural and Heritage Program Advisory Board, explained that the applications were initially evaluated by professional panels and then reviewed by the Arts Grant Committee in a highly competitive process before being acted upon by the entire Advisory Board.

"We are very excited by the quality and variety of programs available to

county residents through these programs," Ms. Brociner stated.

For information about the grant program and other services offered by the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, contact the division at 633 Pearl Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202; e-mail, culturalinfo@ucnj.org.

Among those groups to receive a grant are:

Fanwood:

Children's Specialized Hospital, instrumental enrichment program for children with disabilities, \$2,300.

Scotch Plains:

Garden State Cultural Association, East Indian-American Cultural Fall Festival, "Durga Paja," \$1,800.

Westfield:

Chinese American Cultural Association, performances and classes in Chinese and American choral music, \$1,700. Choral Art Society, general operating support leading to public performances, \$2,400. Community Players of Westfield, \$3,450. First Congregational Church of Westfield, \$1,900. Holy Trinity Parochial School after school drama club, \$1,800. New Jersey Workshop for the Arts, Little Opera Co., \$2,700. Union County Educational Services Commission, performing arts classes by WYACT (Westfield Young artists Cooperative Theater) for students in alternative high school setting, \$3,300.

Classifieds

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SCOUTING SECRETS... On January 6, St. Bartholomew Church's Cub Scout Pack 103 in Scotch Plains received a presentation from Mr. Jose Riera. Mr. Riera is both an Eagle Scout and an agent for the US Secret Service. He discussed his role in the Secret Service and how scouting has helped him. Mr. Riera displayed a bulletproof vest and walkie-talkie. Pictured above are members of the pack, Father Donald Hummel, pastor of St. Bartholomew's Church and Mr. Jose Riera.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Contest Winners Awarded

WESTFIELD - On Monday, January 17, a community-wide service in Westfield was held at Temple Emanuel to honor Martin Luther King, Jr.

The following Westfield Public School students were awarded prizes for essays, poems and art that reflected this year's theme: "Fear and How to Conquer It."

High School/Essay:

Ravi Netravali, first place, ninth grade; Yuchen Zhang, second place, 11th grade; and Alissa Eisenberg, third place, 11th grade.

High School/Poetry:

Rachel Charatan, winner, 11th grade; Gregory Greifeld, honorable mention, 10th grade; and Hannah Weisman, honorable mention, 10th grade.

High School/Art:

Cindy Wang, winner, ninth grade; Maggie Lee, honorable mention, 12th grade; and Shane Strano, honorable mention, 10th grade.

Intermediate Schools/Essay:

Jessica Harris, first place, eighth grade, Edison Intermediate School (EIS); Andrew Deutchman, second place, seventh grade, EIS; Olivia Ryan, third place, sixth grade (EIS); and Cassie Simcox, eighth grade, Roosevelt Intermediate School (RIS).

Intermediate Schools/Poetry:

Shannon Murray, first place, eighth grade, RIS and Maddy Archambault, honorable mention, sixth grade, EIS.

Intermediate Schools/Art:

Alex Goldin and Carla Ralston, winners, eighth grade, EIS; Dominique Gillyard, honorable mention, eighth grade, EIS; and Amelia Morabito, honorable mention, sixth grade, EIS.

Elementary Schools/Essay:

Sarah Chandler, first place, fifth grade, Washington School; Rebecca Sarkos, second place, fifth grade, Washington; and Dean Schapow, third place, fifth grade, Jefferson School.

Elementary Schools/Poetry:

Jeff Marino, winner, fourth grade, Wilson School.

Elementary Schools/Art:

Henry Hershey, winner, fifth grade, Tamaques School and Matias Werner, honorable mention, fifth grade, McKinley School.

Prizes for the contest were savings bonds ranging from \$50 to \$500 denominations at the various grade levels and categories. Students who were awarded Honorable Mention received gift certificates from the Town Bookstore in Westfield.

Ravi, who won a \$500 savings bond for his essay, wrote of Dr. King, "His methods of love embraced mercy and forgiveness, promoted life and community, and let people reach out to other members of their community. I feel that today we need leaders who can preach and practice these methods of love."

Klondike Derby to Be Held At Reservation on January 29

MOUNTAINSIDE - At 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 29, Boy Scouts of the Patriot District of the Patriots' Path Council will hold their 48th Klondike Derby sled race and scout-skill contest at the playground area above Surprise Lake in the Watchung Reservation in Mountainside.

Bruce Monticello of North Plainfield, a long-time leader of many scouting activities, will serve as Derby Governor. Some 100 adult leaders and volunteers from various scout troops will assist with the event.

On Derby day, the Reservation will be transformed to resemble the Klondike region of the Yukon Territory, and the locations where different skill events occur will take on the names of Klondike towns.

Scout patrols in timed waves will use compass directions to map out their routes and will pull Eskimo-style sleds between the towns, where they will be graded on their performance of different scout-skill problems, such as first aid, lashings and knots, measuring and fire-building. Each team's test scores and elapsed times will be relayed to a central scoreboard and will determine the winners in each age group.

If there is too little snow, the patrols will hike around the course with backpacks loaded with the required equipment. Only severe rain or mud will cause cancellation or postponement.

The public is welcome. Awards will be presented around 2 p.m. The Patriot District is comprised of area towns including Garwood, Westfield, Fanwood, Scotch Plains, North Plainfield, Watchung, Millington, Summit and Mountainside.

Fanwood GOP Club To Induct '05 Officers

FANWOOD - The Fanwood Republican Club will induct its officers on Monday, February 7, at 7:30 p.m. at the Community House on North Avenue at the borough's train station.

The officers for 2005 are Joel Stroz, President; Christine Graham, First Vice President; Louis Jung, Second Vice President; Thomas Drubulis, Treasurer; Margaret Dunn, Recording Secretary, and Maureen Mawby, Corresponding Secretary.

Club meetings are held on the first Monday of each month. Anyone interested in joining the club may call (908) 322-3241.

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