

## Optimists Help Katrina Evacuees in Perth Amboy

WESTFIELD – Central New Jersey will soon welcome up to 100 families from the Gulf Coast region left homeless by Hurricane Katrina, and the Optimist Club of Westfield will be there to help.

These families will receive temporary housing in a refurbished public housing complex in Perth Amboy as part of the Perth Amboy Gulf Coast Relief Fund project. All of the apartments need refrigerators and gas stoves before occupancy. The Optimist Club of Westfield has donated \$2,000 to fund appliances for three apartments. Almost a dozen families have already arrived.

Optimist President Jeffrey Feldman noted that the Westfield Optimists also had given \$500 to the Katrina Support Our Students effort through Optimist Internations for school supplies, and this new project was a way to help families who have relocated to New Jersey. "These

families have been through so much; it's important to make them feel welcome and safe in New Jersey so they can start to put their lives back together," said Don Pray, the club's project coordinator.

As of late September, only 32 sets of appliances had been funded. Additional funds for the remaining 68 units are being raised through corporate and individual contributions.

Anyone interested in participating in the project should call Mr. Pray at (908) 232-9584 or Mr. Feldman at (908) 654-0478.

The Optimist Club of Westfield is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization to which donations are fully tax-deductible. The club has operated for the benefit of local youth since 1989. It is one of numerous community organizations in Westfield active in efforts to assist the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.



FREE TEN-MINUTE PARKING...Westfield Mayor Andy Skibitsky demonstrates the new free ten-minute downtown parking meters with Ellen Kaplow and Connie Schaffer, owners of Satsang Yoga Studio at 307 South Avenue.

## WHS Junior and United Way Team For Mini-Golf Tourney

WESTFIELD – Westfield High School junior Adam Becker has joined forces with the Westfield United Way to create a miniature golf tournament for youth and adults that will benefit those impacted by Hurricane Katrina. It will be held at the Hyatt Hills Golf Course in Clark on Saturday, October 15, from 2 to 8 p.m.

"My family has always been involved with charities, and I wanted to do something that would involve kids and adults and my love for golf," said Adam. "The United Way was my first choice since they're involved with so many great causes."

The Westfield United Way supports 19 agencies that provide charitable services to area residents. "Unfortunately," noted Adam, "Hurricane Katrina came along and it became obvious that we should try to help those people devastated by the storm. Therefore, we all decided that the proceeds from this golf tournament would go to the United Way of America Hurricane Katrina Response Fund."

The cost to enter the tournament is \$10 per person. The format will be single-person stroke play. Prizes will be awarded for lowest score in each age division: elementary school (and under) division, middle school (grades 6 to 8) division, high school (grades 9 to 12) division and an adult division. In addition, prizes will be given to the player who gets the most holes-in-one and to the team with the lowest score for a foursome. A complete set of rules will be distributed at the tournament.

Tickets will be sold in advance at the Leader Store on East Broad Street.

Randall Shoes on Elm Street, Coldwell Banker on Central Avenue and at the Westfield United Way office by the train station. Tickets also may be purchased at the event.

Hole Sponsorships are being sold to local businesses and individuals for \$100. Each sponsor will receive two \$10 admission tickets to the event, a sign to be posted on the course on the day of the event, and an ad listing in the program that will be distributed to each participant. Prize sponsorships also are available for each of the tournament division winners. Those interested in being a sponsor may call Adam at (908) 232-1200.

## Scotch Plains Lions To Present Market

SCOTCH PLAINS – The Scotch Plains Lions Club will once again feature its market as part of the Scotch Plains Day weekend, October 8 and 9. It will include vendors for crafts, "flea-type" goods and food.

The market will take place on Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the municipal parking lot on Park Avenue next to the Farmers Market. On Sunday, the market will be held on Park Avenue from noon to 5 p.m. as part of the Scotch Plains Day festivities. Park Avenue will be closed to vehicular traffic on Sunday.

All are welcome to the Scotch Plains Day weekend events. For information about participating as a vendor or general information about the event, please call Ron Kelly, Vice President of the Scotch Plains Lions Club, at (908) 753-8218.

## A Reflection on Experiences That Inspire Our Vocation

By RABBI JOEL N. ABRAHAM

This year, in our alternating spot as visiting clergy, we clergy and lay members of the Scotch Plains/Fanwood Ministerium thought that we would use this space as an opportunity to present a type of spiritual autobiography – a moment of self-reflection to share who we are and what has brought us to wherever we may be today.

On Monday evening, the Jewish New Year – Rosh haShanah – began. This holiday marks the beginning of the Ten Days of Repentance – a time when Jews are expected to look at themselves and their past actions, to seek forgiveness and make restitution. How apropos a time, then, for self-reflection.

Different from other clergy "callings," those who have become rabbis rarely speak of God having chosen them for this particular path. The role of the rabbi, as I see myself, is one of knowledgeable teacher, rather than intercessor to God.

Judaism is a religion of much history and tradition, and of many books. I told my congregation, when I applied, that I saw myself as a librarian. I was the one who knew where everything was on the shelves. It was not my job to read the books for my congregation, but rather to enable them to find what it was they needed.

In truth, despite the fact that my father is a rabbi, I did not consider this career for myself until long after college. I studied European History. I went to work at a Jewish Community Center. It was there that I began to feel a pull toward the rabbinate.

In response to a question from a college roommate's father, I asked myself what it was that I enjoyed doing. I realized that I liked working with the children in the JCC preschool as well as the seniors. I enjoyed explaining Jewish holidays to the non-Jewish members and creating community celebrations.

I liked working with different types of people to create community where there had only been acquaintance. If it passes as an epiphany, it was at that point that I realized the career best

suited to those interests was the congregational rabbinate.

I applied to Hebrew Union College, attended in Jerusalem (where I met my wife), Los Angeles and New York, and have never looked back. I have served congregations in the high Mojave Desert, in Lake Tahoe, in West Virginia and in New Jersey. I find my spiritual fulfillment in helping others – not only in times of intense joy or sadness, but also in the everyday learning moments, in working to make my congregation a community, a haimische or home-like place for people to grow, to serve, to learn, to teach and to do, together.

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Rabbi Abraham is the leader of Temple Shalom, a reform congregation serving the Plainfields, Scotch Plains and surrounding communities.

## Genealogical Society To Meet October 13

WESTFIELD – The second lecture for the 2005-2006 season of the Genealogical Society of the West Fields will be held on Thursday, October 13, at 1 p.m. in the Westfield Memorial Library, located at 550 East Broad Street.

Joseph Klett will present a program called "Using the Records of the East-West Jersey Proprietors." Mr. Klett is the Chief of Archives for the New Jersey State Archives and Vice President of the Genealogical Society of New Jersey.

In 1644, James, Duke of York of England, seized from the Dutch the "New Netherlands" – an area stretching from Massachusetts Bay to the Delaware Bay. The Duke gave New Jersey to Lord John Berkeley and Sir George Carteret, two of the Crown's supporters during the English Civil War. Berkeley and Carteret split New Jersey into two sections and eventually sold their vast tracts of land to a group called the "Proprietors."

The public is invited to attend. There is no admission fee. For additional information, please call Elizabeth Youngs at (908) 276-7104.

## Day Care Center Seeks Donations For Fall Sale

WESTFIELD – The Westfield Day Care Center Friends will accept donations for its annual Fall Children's Sale Wednesday through Friday, October 12 to 14, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturday, October 15, from 9 to 11 a.m. The sale will take place Friday and Saturday, October 21 and 22, in Westminster Hall of The Presbyterian Church in Westfield.

Clothing items for boys and girls, from infant to size 14, are needed for the sale. Children's puzzles, games, educational toys, books, tapes and small furniture items also are being collected.

The Friends are unable to accept adult clothing, stuffed animals, cribs, sandboxes and large infant and toddler items. All donations are tax-deductible.

Donations will be accepted at the Westfield Day Care Center in the Christian Education Building, 120 Mountain Avenue in Westfield. For more information, please call (908)

232-6717. The non-profit center serves youngsters age 18 months through kindergarten. It has been operating since 1968 and is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

## Area Student Named Academic Semifinalist

SCOTCH PLAINS – Olutomi Sodeke, a student at Union Catholic High School in Scotch Plains, is one of approximately 1,600 semifinalists nationally named to the National Achievement Scholarship Program's 42nd annual academic competition for Black American high school students.

Of this number, 800 students will receive achievement scholarship awards, worth some \$2.5 million. The awards will be offered next spring for college undergraduate students.



REMEMBERING HEROES...Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad members, Greg Simpson and Jeanne Gladis participated in the Fallen Heroes 5K Memorial Run in Elizabeth on September 10. Ms. Gladis came in first place for females in EMS, while Mr. Simpson took first place for the men in EMS.

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