

## FW Schedules Visioning Sessions on Revitalization

FANWOOD — The borough will hold a series of visioning sessions through March 30 to explore possibilities for revitalizing the South Avenue commercial corridor.

"We're offering our residents and property owners an exciting opportunity to help us create a vision for the future of Fanwood," said Mayor Colleen Mahr.

The revitalization of the South Avenue corridor will be part of the borough's innovative Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) for Historic Preservation Initiative, which is supported by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

TDR is a "smart growth" planning approach that redirects growth from areas with important natural or community resources to places where

growth and development are more appropriate. Fanwood will use TDR to preserve its Historic Preservation District and other historic properties, while at the same time revitalizing the South Avenue commercial corridor.

While many communities have used TDR to preserve farmland and other natural resources, Fanwood is the first on record to apply TDR to preserve historic homes.

The visioning sessions will be held on the following dates:

Community Visioning Session, Thursday, March 9, 7:30 p.m., Forest Road Park Recreation Building, Forest Road.

Presenting the Vision (Presentation of Findings): Thursday, March 30, 7:30 p.m., Forest Road Park Recreation Building, Forest Road.

## Union County Using GIS to Improve Emer. Response

ELIZABETH — Union County is moving forward with plans to use its Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Bureau to improve disaster preparedness for every county resident with special needs by mapping the homes of those people who require evacuation assistance.

During natural disasters such as hurricanes and flooding, telephone service is often unavailable. The information provided by the GIS Bureau will help rescue personnel to locate these people with disabilities and special needs.

"The significance of this great program is it improves our abilities to help as many people as possible during a crisis," Freeholder Chairman Al Mirabella said. "GIS is a versatile program that has many applications."

The GIS Bureau is also mapping all 11,000 fire hydrants throughout the county in order to aid local fire

departments. When responding to an address, a wireless device on fire trucks will inform firefighters of the nearest hydrants. GIS is connected to 911 to facilitate easy access to an emergency call.

Union County was the first to develop a Megan's Law database using GIS, according to the county's office of public information.

The Union County Prosecutor's Office and law enforcement agencies throughout the county use this mapping information to track sex offenders.

Union County residents can view GIS maps showing property, parks, polling places and other locations on the county's web site at <http://www.ucnj.org/maps/index.htm>.

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ESSAY WINNERS...Assemblyman Eric Munoz poses with the winners of the District 21 Anne Frank Essay contest after they saw *The Diary of Anne Frank* at the Papermill Playhouse in Millburn on Saturday, February 18. The contest was sponsored by Senator Tom Kean, Jr., Assemblyman Jon Bramnick and Asm. Munoz.

## Winners Announced For Anne Frank Essay Contest

WESTFIELD — Senator Tom Kean, Jr., Assemblyman Eric Munoz and Assemblyman Jon Bramnick, all representing the 21st Legislative District, recently announced the winners of their 2006 Anne Frank Essay Contest. The nine students selected were among more than 200 entries.

"We were extremely pleased with the number of students who decided to participate," Senator Kean said. "One of the main reasons we decided to sponsor this event was to encourage students to reflect on the Holocaust, comprehend what happened and relate it to the present day. From the large number of students who participated and the high quality of their work, I believe the contest was a success."

The contest was open to all students attending middle school in the 21st Legislative District. Students were asked to write a diary entry as if they were Anne Frank living in the present day. The winners were awarded with four theater tickets to New Jersey's Papermill Playhouse premiere of *The Diary of Anne Frank* where their winning essays were prominently displayed. Students were also given an opportunity to go backstage to meet some of the performers.

"All the essays submitted were exceptionally well-written, demonstrating the students' ability to grasp the question that was posed and answering it in a clear and concise manner," Asm. Munoz said. "I am extremely proud of these students and feel their work is a direct reflection of the education they are receiving in our schools."

"Anne Frank was only 13 years old

when she wrote her now famous diary," added Asm. Bramnick. "These students are roughly that same age now. This story helps them relate to someone their own age who lived during such a poignant time, increasing their understanding for the need to be sensitive to diversity."

For more information regarding the essay contest, call the Westfield legislative office at (908) 232-3673.

The essay winners are: Genevieve Chaleff, Kristen Labbate and Mike Cohen, Orange Avenue School, Cranford; Emily Nesi, St. Michael School, Cranford; Kyle Gautieri of Cranford; Ellen Gormley of Westfield; Maddie DeJohn, Edison Middle School, Westfield; Airel King of Morristown, Harding Township School, and Mike Uhouse of Berkeley Heights.

## Freeholders Oppose Ports Deal, Push for Jets Move

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
Specially Written for the Westfield Leader and The Times

BERKELEY HEIGHTS — The Union County freeholders last Thursday approved a resolution opposing the \$6.8-billion sale of the operations of six United States ports including Newark and Elizabeth to Dubai Ports World, a state-owned company in United Arab Emirates.

"It is frankly outrageous that the President is really the only public official standing that is supporting this," said Freeholder Dan Sullivan. "This is a real bi-partisan effort by the governors of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, all the representatives, all the senators" to oppose the proposed sale.

The board also approved a resolution supporting Berkeley Heights in its effort to bring the New York Jets training camp to the township starting next summer. "We will be there every step of the way" in the township's efforts, said Freeholder Chairman Al Mirabella. Last Wednesday's meeting was held in Berkeley Heights as part of the board's mobile-meetings initiative.

"I want to thank the board for their support in our effort to obtain the Jets for Berkeley Heights," said Berkeley Heights Mayor David Cohen. The Connell corporate site is one of five sites under consideration by the Jets.

During the public comment section of the meeting Springfield resident Dave Makkar criticized county freeholders, saying with 21 municipal governments in the county, each with their own police chiefs, school boards and superintendents, there is no need for county government. "The office of freeholder itself is a joke when you have 21 mayors...Why do we need you guys?" he asked. "We don't need you guys because you are misusing the public funds."

At that point Freeholder Mirabella

requested that Mr. Makkar not make accusations towards the board. "We prefer to keep it more cordial than that." Mr. Makkar fired back that Freeholder Mirabella was trying to "defy Franklin Roosevelt" and his visions for freedom of speech. He said New Jersey does not have political leaders but "bosses who are corrupt."

"I feel like I am living in a Banana Republic," Mr. Makkar, noting that in New Jersey elected officials are allowed to hold to multiple elective offices.

On another matter, Summit Councilman Thomas Getzendanner said the city would support plans for a county-run animal shelter provided that "it is a secured facility and the costs are under control." He also asked the freeholders to consider capping the open-space tax at a specific amount of money.

He said the current tax has significantly increased because it is based upon equalized property values. County voters approved an open-space, recreation and historic preservation tax of 1.5 cents per \$100 of total county equalized real property value in November 2000.

"It seems that the open-space project or endeavor, as well-funded as it is today, doesn't need to have a huge amount of additional finding," Councilman Getzendanner told the freeholders.

Freeholder Mirabella responded, "It would not be my recommendation at this point to change the way it is being funded because I think we all see so much value in what we can do from a preservation standpoint of open space and recreation and historic preservation."

Pat Moschetti of New Providence, a teacher in Hoboken, inquired about why substitute teachers have to be certified by each county's superintendent of schools. He supports statewide certification for teachers.

Linden resident Kevin Retcho asked what progress the board was making on resolutions he drafted for consideration on pedophile-free zones and on banning pay-to-play in the county, the practice of giving out lucrative government contracts in exchange for campaign donations to elected officials.

Freeholder Mirabella said the pedophile-free zone proposal is under consideration. He said the county adheres to state pay-to-play rules.

Tina Renna of Cranford said that from documents she has received the county has only fixed eight of 19 safety violations at the county juvenile detention center in Elizabeth following the suicide of 17-year-old Edward Sinclair in May of 2003. The Sinclair estate has sued the county over his death.

Counter Manager George Devaney said the county has "worked very closely with the state" to bring the detention center "up to standards."

Director of Human Services Frank Guzzo said door hinges "have been an ongoing problem." Reversing the direction of the doors would reduce space in the corridor, creating a fire hazard, he said. Bathrooms have also been renovated.

At the start of the meeting, Mr. Devaney said the county has completed the \$13 million purchase of a 17-acre industrial site off Snyder Avenue in the township. The county is paying \$8 million, with the township picking up the remainder. County ballfields and a township senior center will be built on the property.

## Fanwood Postal Officials To Host Passport Fair

FANWOOD — Acting Fanwood Postmaster Edgar Grayon and his staff will host a Passport Fair on Saturday, March 11, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Fanwood Post Office, located at 275 South Avenue.

This event is designed to make it more convenient for postal customers to obtain a passport. Postal officials will be on hand to accept passport applications. Spanish, French and Tagalog speaking interpreters will be available. The United States Postal Service can accept first-time passport applications and passport renewals.

Acting Postmaster Grayon has offered these tips for applying for a

passport:

Fill out the passport application (DS11) before coming to the post office. Applications can be downloaded from [http://travel.state.gov/download\\_applications.html](http://travel.state.gov/download_applications.html).

Bring proof of United States citizenship and current photo identification. Fanwood postal officials can take the photographs.

Have all necessary documentation.

All information on passport applications, procedures and fees can be obtained by contacting the Fanwood Post Office at (908) 322-7978 or on [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) by clicking on the government links page then clicking on "get a passport."

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Please Note: Registrations for Great Decisions 2006 will be accepted on-site at the Westfield Memorial Library on the night of each lecture.

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