



COLONIAL GREETINGS...A colonial figure meets a young fan at Union County's annual Harvest Festival, held last Sunday at the Trailside Nature and Science Center in Mountainside. See additional photos on page 9.

Summer Workshop Grows; BOE Questions Future of Field Lights

By JESSICA E. JASKULA
Specialty Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — Ray Torella presented a report on the creative summer workshop program to the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education Thursday, stating that after completing its 25th year, the five-week-long program had 213 students enrolled in its 354 classes.

The driver-education program, held at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, enrolled 12 students. According to Mr. Torella's report, multiple workshops targeted younger students, such as "Kindergarten Express," which works to develop skills before the students enter the classroom, and "Creative Tales," in which children in kindergarten through grade 2 heard stories from different genres.

The summer program also offered a new class this year, "Globe Trotters," in which students grades K to 2 "visited" five countries around the world

through the study of music, language and art activities. Programs for grades 4 to 8 included "Magic Mysteries," a class investigating the history of magic, and "Microwave Cooking."

Parents and friends came to a "Show and Share" program at School One in July to see the students' accomplishments. That evening, Music School students put on a performance for family and friends at Park Middle School.

According to Mr. Torella's report, the summer program generated a profit of \$24,322, and students are signing up for more classes than previous years.

Mr. Torella also presented the board with suggestions for future years, such as the addition of new programs, including an SAT-prep course, chorus, jewelry-making, drama/performing arts, fashion design, chess, the addition of strings instruments to the music school, mini sports camps for baseball, basketball, football, soccer, tennis and gymnastics and a dance pro-

gram for ballet, tap, jazz and modern, enrichment programs in math and language for grades 5 through high school, world languages for elementary and middle school levels, a study on classic movies, writing/performing mini plays and a book club.

He also suggested offering programs that varied in length (such as two two-week programs or three two-week programs) and exploring the possibility of working with the YMCA and JCC for

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SP to Hire RBA for Design On New Scotch Hills Facility

By FRED T. ROSSI
Specialty Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — The township council expects to award a \$21,000 contract to an architecture firm next week. The contract will be used to develop conceptual designs for a new senior citizens and community center at Scotch Hills Country Club which would cost about \$3.6 million to construct.

RBA, an architectural firm based in Morristown, will develop designs for a new building to replace the existing facility at the township-owned country club and submit them to township officials before the end of the year. If the council approves and funds the project, the razing of the old building and construction of a new three-story facility would be completed by early 2009.

At its conference meeting on Tuesday, the council discussed RBA's qualifications for 90 minutes with recreation commission members and Ray Poirio, township recreation director. Last month, six architecture firms had submitted proposals to the commission, which then narrowed the candidates to two firms — RBA and The Musial Group of Mountaintop — with whom the commission met two weeks ago.

Councilman Jeffrey Strauss, the council's recreation liaison, said on Tuesday that the commission had voted unanimously to recommend that the council secure RBA's services.

Omni-Point/T-Mobile to Request Delay For Cell-Tower Hearing

By FRED T. ROSSI
Specialty Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — The township's zoning board of adjustment will consider a request tonight by Omni-Point Communications, Inc./T-Mobile to again postpone a hearing on its application to place a wireless communication tower at Willow Grove Swim Club.

Last month, the board granted Omni-Point's request to adjourn the application's hearing, which had begun at the board's July 12 meeting with testimony from one witness. In a letter to the zoning board last Friday, Constantine Stamos, Omni-Point's attorney, said that, given the existence of wetlands in the Willow Grove property's vicinity, Omni-Point's consultants need "additional time to determine a new location" at the site for the cell tower and to draw up revised site plans. Mr. Stamos asked the board to continue the hearing at its December 6 meeting.

Omni-Point Communications seeks to construct a 120-foot high tower at the Roosevelt Avenue swim club, located next to McGinn School. Original plans situate the tower on the southeastern edge of the Willow Grove property, adjacent to a township-owned wooded area abutting Kramer Manor Park.

Omni-Point's representatives must appear at tonight's meeting to request the adjournment, according to board attorney Vincent Loughlin. He told *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* that the board is asking Omni-Point "to come in and tell us what's going on." The board can grant the continuance or dismiss the application and ask Omni-Point to reapply.

Barbara Lockley, an Evelyn Street resident who is among a group of residents who have banded together to oppose the cell tower, told *The Times* that, while she is not certain what Omni-Point's request for another postponement means, the wetlands on the site "are a big issue." She said the proposed location of the tower

is close to those wetlands, as well as to creeks that eventually feed into the Raritan River.

A tower at that site, she said, "would only exacerbate" flooding and other stormwater management issues. "Development of that land would detrimental to all the residents in the area."

Richard Samuel, an attorney representing Ms. Lockley in objecting to the application, told *The Times* last week that Omni-Point's request for a continuance of the hearing "is a graceful way for them to withdraw their application. I don't think we will see them again."

Last month, Ms. Lockley and a group of neighborhood residents took a reporter on a tour of the wooded area where the cell tower would be situated to show where, they claim, a number of trees have been either cut back or cut down in preparation for the tower's installation.

The group walked easily, she said, through the wooded area, which was littered with downed branches and larger sections of tree trunks, some of which appeared to have been cut; it was unclear as to how recently any cutting had been done.

Ms. Lockley told *The Times* two weeks ago that traversing the wooded area would have been much more difficult several months ago before the trees were thinned.

It is unclear who has been involved in cutting the trees. Ms. Lockley and others in the group that toured the woods last month said they had observed what appeared to be day laborers there, as well as what appeared to be a municipal government truck and workers.

Ms. Lockley said she has spoken about the matter to Township Manager Thomas Atkins, who told her he "did not believe there was any activity there sponsored by the township."



AND THE WINNER IS...Sagor Pate, 9, of Fanwood won the first round of the annual ice-cream eating contest sponsored by the Double Dipper Cafe in Fanwood. Sagor celebrates his victory with the Fanny Wood Day crowd. DANCING WITH THE CROWDS...Members of My Little Dance Studio attend Fanny Wood Day.



DesRochers: Cutting Waste Would Save State Money

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specialty Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

AREA — Bryan DesRochers, a Rahway resident and graduate of Union County College and Kean University, said Scotch Plains Mayor Martin Marks' 2003 run for State Senate was one of the reasons he decided to run for the Assembly this year in the state's 22nd legislative district.

Mr. Marks, a Republican, received 45 percent of the vote against Linden Democrat Nicholas Scutari in that 2003 race.

"Even though it is put down as a 'safe Democratic district,' there are still gains that we can make here. If you are talking about needing a 5-percent-plus-1 type of swing, maybe [it's] not unheard of, especially given the situations that have arisen in the state as far as the taxes and affordability and some of the corruption scandals," said Mr. DesRochers, a Republican running with North Plainfield resident Robert Gatto for the Assembly seats.

In an exclusive interview with *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* last Friday, the candidate said he would use some "aspects" in the Republican Party's "The Choice for Change"

statewide platform. The GOP has been in the minority in the State Assembly since 2002 and the State Senate since 2004, after the Senate had been equally divided in 2002 and 2003.

"I didn't think personally that [the GOP platform] went far enough. I think we need to get more specific as far as exactly what ethics reforms need to be made [and] exactly what should

be sent to a referendum on the ballot [in terms of] the sale of the Turnpike or the leasing/monetization plan...I think that should be something that goes to a referendum," he said. "I'm not in support of it personally because it sounds like a borrowing-money-from-Paul-to-pay-Peter type of thing."

He said there is no guarantee that the money raised through such a deal would reduce the state debt of \$33.7 billion. The candidate said the issue, along with developing a new school-funding formula, should be done now, not in the lame-duck session after the November 6 General Election.

Mr. DesRochers called the Turnpike deal another tax, noting that a recent study showed that leasing the highway would result in a 150-per-

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Republican State Assembly candidate Bryan DesRochers (LD-22), right, discusses state issues with Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times assignment editor Paul Peyton in the Times offices last Friday.

FW Council Delays Action On Ordinance for Signals

By TED RITTER
Specialty Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

FANWOOD — The governing body Tuesday night postponed the first reading of an ordinance pursuant to the installation of new traffic signals along the Martine Avenue corridor.

Officials said the ordinance would facilitate the completion of signal upgrades at Martine intersections.

"We're going to pull this [from the agenda]," said Mayor Colleen Mahr. "I'm concerned about some [already replaced signals] not working that well."

She said the borough would like new traffic signals that feature numeric pedestrian-signal countdowns, instead of the older versions that employ a chirping sound to indicate when it's safe to cross the street.

Councilman Bruce Walsh asked whether timing of Martine traffic signals could be better synchronized.

Mayor Mahr said she believed traffic counts used by Union County to determine signal installation and operations were taken as long as 10 years ago.

The governing body discussed the issue of parking in the Watson Road neighborhood adjacent to Borough Hall and the nearby "pocket park."

Mr. Walsh said the pocket-park parking lot and the spaces provided for the Kuran Cultural Center across the street are not included in the borough's parking ordinance.

"In [the police department's] opinion, it should be," he said, to prevent commuters from filling the spaces.

In addition to pocket-park and arts-center users, senior citizens, who then board buses for trips or other events, use the parking spaces in question.

"I'm going to suggest that we have the [council's] public safety committee look into amending the ordinance to prevent commuter parking, while still allowing seniors and others to park there for special events," Mr. Walsh said.



COUNTY LINE...John Russitano of Westfield, center, and Patricia Quattrocchi, Republican candidates for Union County freeholder seats, discuss county spending and major issues they plan to address in their campaigns with Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times assignment editor Paul Peyton, left, in the Times' Westfield offices on Friday. See story on page 12.

Fanwood Candidates Forum Update

FANWOOD — The Fanwood Candidates Forum, sponsored by *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* and the League of Women Voters, will be held on Monday, October 22, at 8 p.m. at Fanwood Borough Hall at 75 North Martine Avenue.

Participating in the forum are those seeking election to the two seats up for grabs on the borough council for terms of three years each. Republicans Anthony Parenti and Joel Stroz oppose incumbent Democrats William Populus and Katherine Mitchell.

Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr, a Democrat, runs unopposed for reelection as mayor for another four-year term. According to the rules of the League of Women Voters, Mayor Mahr will not participate in the forum, as she is uncontested.

There are no municipal elections in Scotch Plains this year.

The public can attend and can submit questions for the forum in advance by e-mail to editor@goleader.com.

Fanwood TV 35 will air the forum live and replay the telecast several times prior to Election Day, November 6.

Times reporter Fred Rossi and Merry Wisler of the League of Women Voters will moderate the forum.

View candidate biographies and video at goleader.com/07election.

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