

## Fireworks in Local Towns Salute Independence Day

Thursday, July 2  
Westfield

The Westfield Community Band, under the direction of Thomas Connors, will perform its traditional town-wide Independence Day celebration tonight at 7:30 p.m. at Mindowaskin Park. The Sons of the American Revolution and Daughters of the American Revolution will join the band for their traditional ceremonies.

The intermission of the program will highlight Westfield's Town Crier sharing local news stories with concert attendees and an Independence Day address.

The event is free to the public; audience members are encouraged to bring blankets or chairs. In the event of inclement weather, the concert will

be held in the community room in the municipal building.

### Plainfield

Plainfield's 86th annual Independence Day fireworks will be held tonight at 9:30 p.m. at Cedar Brook Park, located off Park Avenue. The city's annual Independence Day parade will be on Saturday, July 4, beginning at 10 a.m. on East Front Street.

### Friday, July 3

#### New Providence

The borough will close South Street from Springfield Avenue to Gales Drive at 8 p.m. and hold its fireworks at 9:30 p.m. in the downtown. Rain date is Sunday, July 5, at 9:30 p.m.

#### Summit

The city will host a TEA Party by the Taxed Enough Already (TEA)

organization from 3 to 6 p.m. on The Village Green, located at Maple and Broad Streets across from the Summit train station.

### Saturday, July 4

#### Clark

The township's annual Independence Day celebration at Arthur L. Johnson High School on Westfield Avenue will have rides and food vendors from 3 p.m. until the fireworks display at dusk.

#### Cranford

The township's annual celebration at Nomahegan Park, located across from Union County College on Springfield Avenue, starts at 8 a.m. with canoe races by the Cranford Canoe Club followed by the Cranford Jaycees-sponsored Firecracker Fun Run at 9 a.m. at Nomahegan Park and, later in the day, by bicycle decorating, an egg toss, and fireworks, which begin at 9:15 p.m.

#### Morristown

The town will host a TEA Party by the Taxed Enough Already organization from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on The Green at 10 Park Place.

#### Mountainside

The borough will hold its fireworks at Our Lady of Lourdes School, located on 300 Central Avenue beginning at 8:30 p.m. The show is presented in conjunction with the borough's volunteer fire department and the Mountainside Police Athletic League. The rain date is Sunday, July 5.

#### Scotch Plains

Marty Marks and Bo Vastine, Republican state Assembly candidates, will hold a community reading of the Declaration of Independence at Brookside Park in Scotch Plains followed by a picnic barbecue. The event, to be held from 1 to 4 p.m., costs \$40 for each adult and \$20 for anyone under 16.

#### Summit

Summit's 62nd annual Fourth of July event will be held at Soldiers Memorial Field. The festivities start at 9:15 a.m. with a flag-raising ceremony followed by the Children's Decorated Bicycle Parade. There will also be rides, games, amusements, a Polka Dot Children's Performance, the annual Emergency Services softball game and music by the Summit Stompers Dixieland All Stars. The evening's entertainment will feature a "Party Dolls" concert at 7:45 p.m. followed by the fireworks display at 9:15 p.m.

#### Union

The township's annual fireworks show will begin at dusk at Biertuempfel Park on Winslow Avenue. The rain date is Sunday, July 5.

#### Roselle Park

The borough's Independence Day activities begin at noon at West Webster Avenue in front of the high school and continue until 11 p.m., highlighted by an evening fireworks show beginning at 9:15 p.m. behind Roselle Park High School with an entrance on West Colfax Avenue. This is part of a carnival, which includes rides, games, light music and food vendors, held from July 1-5; hours vary.

#### Springfield

The township's annual July 4 festivities kickoff at Meisel Park at 5 p.m. and will have food and beverages, a petting zoo and rides. Musical performances, which begin at 7:30 p.m., will include the Fruitgum Company and Terry Sylvester, formerly of the Hollies. The township's fireworks display begins at dusk. Donations of \$5 per person are requested with children under 2 admitted for free.



**OPEN MARKET...**The Scotch Plains Farmers Market kicked off its 17th season on Saturday in the municipal parking lot adjacent to town hall on Park Avenue. The market is open every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. through October.

## Scotch Plains Council, On 4-1 Vote, Enacts 2009 Municipal Budget

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

SCOTCH PLAINS — The township council on Tuesday approved the 2009 municipal budget. The expenditures total about \$25 million, with a reduction in the municipal property tax rate from \$1.52 per \$100 of assessed value to \$1.44 per \$100. Although, the lesser amount in tax bills will be offset by the new separate sewer bill that all property owners will receive starting this fall.

As an additional effort to lessen the property tax increase, the council also reduced salaries and wages via layoffs of two full-time and three part-time township employees and the reduction from full-time to part-time of three other positions. Mayor Nancy Malool, who called the layoffs "the hardest decision" the council had to make, said the individuals in the three reduced positions chose not to take their demotion and have left township employment.

The council's 4-1 vote, with Councilman Kevin Glover voting no, followed an hour-long public hearing that was far less rancorous than budget sessions of the past two months. Mayor Malool started the hearing by presenting the same slide program she had shown at the budget's introduction in late May. The mayor said the average taxpayer, after factoring in the new separate sewer bill, would see a net tax increase equal to about 12 tax points this year.

The new sewer utility, which was created earlier in June, will issue sewerage bills and collect payments and thus remove from municipal budget appropriations the fee presently paid to the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority (RVSA). The council created the new entity to bring this year's municipal property tax hike down to within state-mandated parameters.

Mayor Malool on Tuesday noted that the governing body faced a number of challenges in putting together this year's budget. The state's property tax cap, a 43 percent increase in fees owed to the RVSA, a 9 percent hike in health insurance premiums, and decreases in state aid and interest on investments were some of those challenges.

Nearly half the budget is made up of mandated non-discretionary expenses, she pointed out. Another \$5 million is discretionary and includes departmental operating expenses and township services such as curbside recycling and leaf pick-up. The remaining \$9.3 million is for salaries and wages, and includes \$400,000 this year for contractually mandated salary increments.

## RVSA Discusses Concerns For Cogen. Exhaust System

By WAYNE BAKER  
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

RAHWAY — The Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority (RVSA) board, on June 18, discussed the meaning of a statement in Caterpillar/Foley's commissioning report for the cogeneration engines at the RVSA's wastewater treatment facility. The authority also approved a treatment works application for a "Mount Laurel" housing complex, approved on June 22, by Roselle Park.

Caterpillar's report noted a concern about restraint of the exhaust system on the cogeneration system. The question centers on how much movement of the breeching (a flexible connection) of the engines' exhaust is acceptable. Caterpillar supplied vertical breeching, which is connected to the exhaust system, which includes a heat reclamation section.

Caterpillar claims the design allows for an unacceptable four to six inches of movement, while RVSA Executive Director Michael Brinker described about three-eighths of an inch of movement. According to Mr. Brinker, Caterpillar cited a "worst case" scenario, but only after commissioning. This concern has suspended the authority's planned 10-day test of the equipment. Caterpillar's report notes the system should be "rigidly restrained."

It was noted that Paulus, Sokolowski and Sartor, the engineer-

Township Democratic Chairman Richard Samuel read a statement opposing the budget, calling it "an abomination" that "should be defeated and sent back to the drawing board." He said the council should have opted to defer about \$600,000 of payments to the state pension system, saying that refusing to do so was akin to "turning down stimulus money."

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**ROBIN HOODS...** Jerson Calderon and Jim Cuevas demonstrate their archery skills during the opening of the new Union County archery range at Oak Ridge Park in Clark. Mr. Calderon and Mr. Cuevas are members of the Spinal Navigators, a championship-winning team organized in 2007.

Evan Falk for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

## Flag Waves for GW Family Due to Neighborly Help

By CHRISTINA M. HINKE  
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

GARWOOD — The Sullivans of Willow Avenue may let freedom ring in the comfort of their own home this Fourth of July, six months after losing their house of 44 years to a fire that spread through the entire residence destroying many of their precious belongings. But most of all, they will observe the generosity of their neighbors in Garwood who proved invaluable in restoring the house.

"The whole town is just amazing," said Kathi Sullivan, who lived with her mom, Dolores, at the house. She said she received donations from her hometown, as well as from Westfield and as far out as Bridgewater.

"After the story had ran in the paper we had received a lot of response. I think we collected over \$12,000. That paid for the windows, the roof, the two outside doors, and a sink," said Barbara Tweedle, a neighbor that has been there for Ms. Sullivan through it all.

At 2:45 p.m. on January 31, a two-alarm fire took hold of the Sullivans' home at 307 Willow Avenue in Garwood, damaging the structure. The family lost their cat, Lucky, and most of their possessions, with the exception of a few photos and a wedding band and engagement ring, remarkably preserved by candle wax. The items were sitting inside a candleholder at the time of the fire and the wax melted to form a protective shell around the set.

"The only thing left standing was the foundation and the sidewalk," Ms.

Tweedle said, plus some exterior walls.

The Sullivans had planned to move in Memorial Day, but weather restrictions have pushed back their anticipated move-in date to Fourth of July weekend. "We could still use a few hands over the Fourth of July weekend," Ms. Tweedle said.

As of Friday, walls are up, floors were going down, electrical and plumbing were installed. Now all that is left to complete is the finishing work — from installing cabinetry, plumbing and lighting fixtures, to painting and trim work.

With Mrs. Sullivan's Alzheimer's disease, Ms. Sullivan said her mom needs the stability of living in her own home after staying at a friend's house during the reconstruction. Before the blaze, Mrs. Sullivan was living on the top floor of the two-family home and her daughter below. "Since she is no longer able to process information, she is going to live with me," Ms. Sullivan said. "We will rent the upstairs."

Demolition began on March 5, then local craftsmen volunteered their time to replace the roof, windows and siding; reframing the interior and exterior.

"I don't know how I can repay them," Ms. Sullivan said.

Garwood PBA No. 117 gave the family a dumpster. Joe Moore of Garwood, an electrician from Venture Electric, did all of the electrical work gratis. Cooper Electric, an electrical supply company, donated all of the wire. Lou Petruzzelli of Accent

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**NEIGHBORLY HELP...**Kathi and Dolores Sullivan of Garwood, front, left to right, with the help of their neighbor and close friend Barbara Tweedle, top right, and many members of the community, hope to move in to their rebuilt home by July 4. They lost their house of 44 years to a fire that broke out January 31.

Christina M. Hinke for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

## SP-F BOE OKs Strategic Plan, Course Proficiencies

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

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education on Thursday night adopted a five-year strategic plan for the school district. The plan would take the district into June 2014.

The adopted plan focused on seven areas: incorporating technology into the curriculum, middle school instruction, world language, service learning, global awareness, space and volunteerism. The strategic plan recommends naming a volunteer chairman who will ultimately form a team of other volunteers focused on bringing revenue into the district. Information of the five-year strategic plan is available on the district's website, spfk12.org. Board members also approved course

proficiencies that will be incorporated into the curriculum during the 2009-2010 school year. Middle school students will now study specific units of earth, life and physical science each year instead of one type of science each grade level. The change, however, will only begin with those students beginning sixth grade in September. It will not impact those beginning seventh or eighth grade in September, as those students will continue their regular course of study in the science area.

Facilities Committee Chairman Rob O'Connor said seven district projects will take place over the summer months. They include asbestos removal at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School (SPFHS), an extension of the high school's cafeteria and the reconfiguring of the mul-

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**'NO CAP AND TRADE'...**Mila Chejok of Stirling, left, and conservative blogger Col. Manly Rash of Somerset, center, were among some two dozen protestors picketing the North Avenue offices of Rep. Leonard Lance (R-7th Congressional District) on Monday for Mr. Lance's "yes" vote on the global warming/"cap-and-trade" bill.

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