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BEAUTIFUL GIRLS...Nine Washington School fifth graders, along with siblings in grades one through three, celebrated recently at the home of Maria and Mike Constantinou before their last Daddy-Daughter dance with their Girl Scout Troop. Pictured, left to right, are: Brianna Weber, Ciara Weber, Olivia Bergman, Julia Singer, Summer Stillfusen, Gillian Constantinou, Amanda Ludwig, Cecilia Guarnuccio, Brooke Walden, and Megan Rafferty.

FPD Will 'Take Back' Unwanted Prescription Drugs

FANWOOD - On April 27, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Fanwood Police Department and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will give the public its sixth opportunity in three years to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused and unwanted prescription drugs. Individuals may bring their medications for disposal to the Fanwood Police Department, 75 North Martine Avenue, Fanwood. The service is free and anonymous; no questions asked.

Last September, Americans turned in 244 tons of prescription drugs at more than 5,200 sites operated by the DEA and its thousands of state and local law enforcement partners. In their five previous "Take Back" events, the DEA and its partners took in over two million pounds - over a thousand tons - of pills.

"This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse and abuse. Rates of pre-

scription-drug abuse in the United States are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines - flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash - both pose potential safety and health hazards," according to the FPD.

Four days after the first event, Congress passed the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010, which amends the Controlled Substances Act to allow an "ultimate user" of controlled substance medications to dispose of them by delivering them to entities authorized by the U.S. Attorney General to accept them. The Act also allows the Attorney General to authorize long-term care facilities to dispose of their residents' controlled substances in certain instances. The DEA is drafting regulations to implement the Act.

Union County Freeholders

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son he was out of order and that she would have to have him leave if he continued to speak, but Mr. Paterson left the meeting on his own.

"Maybe you should stay and listen to the answers," Mr. Williams responded to Mr. Paterson.

Mr. Williams told the freeholders that the UCIA requested that the application before the Local Finance Board be deferred until the May meeting so the UCIA could meet with Mr. Neff and his staff and answer their questions. Mr. Neff also serves as director of local government services for the state's Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

Earlier in the freeholder meeting, Mr. Paterson was critical of professional service contracts given by the UCIA to firms that he said donate to the campaigns of the freeholders.

"The problem is there is no accountability (at the UCIA). Nobody's supervising [Ms. DeFilippo]," Mr. Paterson said.

He urged Freeholder Carter "to lead the charge - get rid of her."

"She's pretty useless. I suggest you stop funneling tax money to her. Get it out of her hands, because all she does is politically play with it," Mr. Paterson said.

County Counsel Robert Barry said all UCIA contracts are publicly bid and are "awarded to the lowest responsible bidder," and are not considered "no-bid" contracts as alleged by Mr. Paterson.

Prior to the conclusion of the meeting, Freeholder Carter read a statement in support of Ms. DeFilippo and the improvement authority.

"The County of Union is very proud of the accomplishments that the Union County Improvement Authority has done; the economic developments that they have done that are improving the quality of life for our residents and revitalizing our economy. Under the leadership of our Charlotte DeFilippo over the past 10

years, we can honestly say we've had many projects that have actually been undertaken and have gotten started and also gotten accomplished," Freeholder Carter stated.

UCIA financed projects she listed were the juvenile detention center in Linden; the Park Madison project, a mixed-use development in downtown Plainfield; four new firehouses; a public library in Linden; the new Union County College Kellogg Building in Elizabeth, which houses the Trinity School of Nursing, and the Child Advocacy Center operated by the Union County Prosecutor's Office in Elizabeth.

"We're proud of the work that the Union County Improvement Authority has done, will continue to do, and we're sure that we will continue to support many of their projects that they are doing for the county, and we do appreciate it," Freeholder Carter said.

In other business, Freeholder Dan Sullivan, head of the board's fiscal affairs committee, said the board would hold a special meeting at 6:30 p.m. tonight, prior to the agenda meeting, to introduce amendments to the 2013 county budget. A public hearing on the amendments will be held during the regular meeting on Thursday, April 25.

Freeholder Chris Hudak, a member of the committee, said the panel "has been trying to get that (tax) increase down." The projected tax increase was \$19 million over 2012 per the freeholders' introduced budget, with total spending of \$494 million.

"We do hear the critiques and the criticisms. We're sensitive to them and trying as best we can for this budget and going forward to make sure our budget process is that much more efficient. We'd all like to get down below that (2-percent) nominal cap, but it is a work in progress," Mr. Hudak said.



BOSTON MARATHON...Ellie Tanji, right, a sophomore at Boston College, finished the 117th Boston Marathon in three and a half hours. Ellie ran cross country at Westfield High School and trained with her roommate, Sarah, left. The roommates crossed the finish line minutes before the race was shut down after two bombs went off near the finish line.

Fanwood Rescue Squad to Offer Free CPR Courses to Residents

FANWOOD — The Fanwood Rescue Squad will once again offer free courses in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) during National EMS Week in May. The courses, taught by squad members who are certified instructors, will be offered in the squad's building at 123 Watson Road, Fanwood. They will be open to Fanwood and Scotch Plains residents.

The CPR courses will be taught under the American Heart Association Heartsaver curriculum. The dates are

Saturday, May 18, at 9 a.m. and Wednesday, May 22, at 7 p.m.

Those who complete the course will earn a two-year certification. Anyone interested in one of these free classes must register online at fanwoodrescue.com. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis until the classes are full. In past years, the local business community has sponsored the CPR classes and the squad is asking for their help again this year.

Any Fanwood or Scotch Plains business that would like to be a sponsor will be recognized in literature distributed at the classes and on the squad's website. To become a sponsor, e-mail the squad at fanwoodrescue@gmail.com or call (908) 967-3275 and leave a message.

WF BOA

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said each unit would be separated by a firewall and a sound barrier. He made a point of saying there would be no outdoor living space at any unit.

Mr. Potter said no terraces or patios are planned for the 19-foot backyards. He also said the basements would have cement flooring and sheet rock. The attics would hold the heating and air-conditioning units. He said the facades and heights of the units would vary and have a colonial look.

"I think it will fit into the property fine," he said.

Garwood residents Debbie McCarthy and Ms. Sawicki had questions about the appearance of the low-income units. Mr. Potter said they would look the same as all the others, except, that the more expensive townhomes would have higher end kitchens and hardwood flooring throughout, and the affordable units would have carpeting and low-end kitchens.

John McDonagh, the project planner, said the project would comply with all state Council on Affordable Housing (C.O.A.H.) regulations and help Westfield satisfy its third round obligation to the Mount Laurel agreement.

The board approved the development with the following conditions: sidewalks must be installed on Grove Street and Grandview Avenue; The landscape architecture plan must be submitted for review; drainage compliance and monitoring must be included in the by-laws of the condo association; project revenues must be in compliance with C.O.A.H. regulations; traffic ingress and egress must be compliant with town regulations, and a required Belgian block separator must be installed between adjoining driveways.

MS Council

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pared to last year, which he said contributed to the budget increase. "We had some ups and downs with our revenues. Our [municipal] court fees went down by \$22,000. Our FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] reimbursement went down \$22,168. Interest on our taxes and investments went down by \$4,000. The sewer use charges went down by \$16,000. The sale of municipal assets went down by \$5,500," Mayor stated.

On the positive side, the Mayor miscellaneous revenues went up \$3,393 with the collection of uniform fire safety local fees up \$8,600. He said receipt from delinquent taxes increased by \$25,000 with the borough's cable franchise and trust surplus up \$2,691. "The overall effects on the shortage on the anticipated revenues was down \$29,983 and with the operating increase and the shortfall in the revenue, that's how we came up with the \$312,160," the Mayor said.

The Mayor said the budget would not be formally adopted until the next borough council meeting due to a backlog in the state budget office. "The state notified us that there is a backup in them actually approving the budget. The backup is statewide," he said.

The 2013 budget will be available online at the borough's website, located at www.mountainside-nj.com.

The next borough council meeting open to the public is scheduled for Tuesday, May 7, at 8 p.m., at the Mountainside Borough Hall. This meeting will be the council's regular work session.



FAMILY REUNION...Five first cousins from three different families are in the fifth grade at Franklin Elementary School in Westfield. Pictured, left to right, are: Reid Colwell, Allison DeMeo, Matt Morgan, Gracie Morgan and Tommy Morgan.

Judge Rules Renna Protected

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"comprehensive county information, thereby qualifying the blog as a news medium." He argued that Ms. Renna's writing was "similar to Maureen Dowd or Paul Mulshine in that she engages in original investigative journalism."

In terms of the UCPO's charge that County Watchers writings are biased, Mr. Rosen said, "many traditional news media sources, such as Fox News and MSNBC, often demonstrate a political bias, yet they nonetheless fall squarely within the protections of the Shield statute as television news stations," according to court documents.

The UCPO, represented by Assistant Prosecutor Robert Vanderstreet, questioned Ms. Renna's newsgathering tactics, arguing that Ms. Renna might have concealed her investigation into the Union County Alliance's tax filing status by using a hidden camera when she interviewed an employee at its office. But Judge Cassidy said, in her opinion, that the UCPO, "did not demonstrate that such tactics were used here."

"Ms. Renna's certification [that County Watchers is a newsgathering website] is sufficient to meet the final statutory factor that she obtained materials in the course of professional news gathering," according to the judge's ruling.

In addition, the UCPO argued that "often" Ms. Renna's blogs "devolve into personal attacks on county elected officials." They also argued that, according to court documents, "Ms. Renna and her team of bloggers never referred to themselves as journalists in their blog posts until two days before" the court hearing and that the County Watchers blog was "more akin to a public relations entity" that raises funds for UCWA activities.

Ms. Renna reacted to her victory by posting a column on her website.

"I am the first blogger in New Jersey history to be deemed protected by the New Jersey Newspersons' Shield Law and an important precedent has been set which may protect and inspire other citizen journalists to watchdog their government in place of traditional journalism which hasn't been able to keep up their government coverage in New Jersey which has 21 counties, 566 municipalities, over 600 school districts and countless independent authorities," Ms. Renna said in a blog posted on her website following her court victory.

"In the case of my coverage of

Generatortgate...it's unfortunate that my sources fear Union County law enforcement, therefore they came to me with information as is often the case. The issue wasn't that I had 16 names of county employees who took home generators during the Superstorm Sandy emergency. The issue was the prosecutor was protecting favored employees, and he still is...It isn't my job to be an arm of law enforcement. I did my job as a journalist and reported what I knew; the prosecutor has known of at least four employees who took home generators during Superstorm Sandy, and has done nothing to date to charge these offenders with a crime or to even reprimand them while he spent countless resources harassing me."

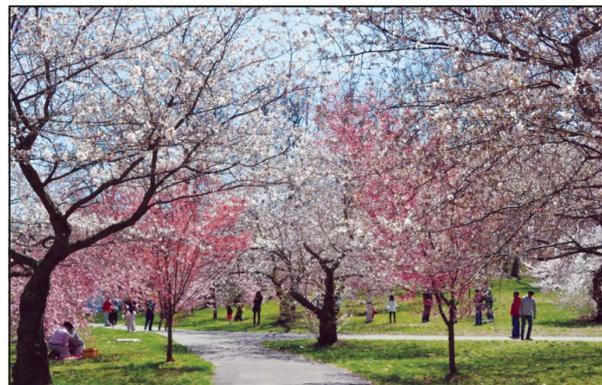
"Let's celebrate the victory this is for all citizen bloggers, and the sources who trust us, even above the people who are sworn to uphold the law," she concluded.

Union County Prosecutor Theodore Romankow released the following statement through his spokesman:

"For the Union County Prosecutor's Office this issue has always been about the investigation into generator usage during and after Hurricane Sandy. For months, Renna claimed that she had names of people who abused the system - a number far greater than what investigators had uncovered. This case was never about revealing the source of the information she claims to have, but rather to get to the truth of what happened.

"Rather than acting responsibly, or in the public's best interest, or publishing the names as she asserted she would, Renna hid behind the court, and now should be considered complicit in harboring the very people she believes committed misdeeds. Personally, I believe she was caught in a lie and chose to waste time and money by hiding. I have great respect for the freedom and speech of the press and believe that a real journalist would have long ago released honest information.

"The ones who really lose today are the people of Union County. Renna, a self-proclaimed 'watchdog,' thwarted the power of a grand jury - a body composed of citizens that act on behalf of citizens. Let it be remembered that Renna chose to hide rather than help. This is a stark contrast to her frequent proclamations that she seeks to root out corruption."



BLOSSOMS ABLOOM...Cherry blossom trees line a walkway on Sunday at Branch Brook Park in Newark during the annual Cherry Blossom Festival.

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