

Melissa Cook for *The Westfield Leader*

TEACHER-STUDENT BOND...Francine Serpico, one of the 21 Cranford Public Schools employees retiring this year, reunites with her former first-grade pupil from Bloomingdale Avenue School, Kathleen Marie Shatinsky, now a junior at Cranford High School and student liaison to the BOE, at Monday night's BOE meeting at Lincoln School in Cranford.

BOE Recognizes 21 Employee Retirements

By MELISSA COOK

Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD — The board of education (BOE) and Superintendent of Schools Gayle Carrick recognized and commended 21 Cranford Public School employees on their service and dedication at a retirement recognition ceremony during Monday night's BOE meeting at Lincoln School in Cranford.

Among those retirees recognized was Joan Krov, a Cranford native, who has been a language arts teacher at Orange Avenue School, her alma mater, for 39 years. Also recognized was Jo-Ann Jayson, a special-education teacher at Hillside Avenue School, who said, "It was truly an honor and a privilege" to spend her years teaching in Cranford, as she accepted her expression of appreciation from Ms. Carrick and Board President Mary Venditti.

Retiree Francine Serpico, a first-grade teacher at Bloomingdale Avenue School, enhanced the applause as she recognized her former first-grade pupil, Kathleen Marie Shatinsky, now a junior at Cranford High School, who was in attendance as the student liaison to the BOE. Anne-Marie McCarthy, a home economics teacher at Hillside Avenue School, said her "best teaching years were in Cranford" as she accepted her recognition from the board.

The board formally recognized and thanked Kathleen Shatinsky for the successful completion of her term as student liaison to the BOE for the 2014-2015 school year. Ms. Carrick extended a special thank you to Kathleen for her diligence and participation in board meetings and work sessions, adding that she appreci-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

CF Police, Scouts Presented With Awards

By CHRISTINA M. HINKE

Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD — Police officers were honored for their achievement in law enforcement in a ceremony held at the township committee's official public meeting on Tuesday night.

Thirteen police officers were given the 2015 Police Department Award presented by Police Chief James Wozniak.

Detective Spencer Durkin was honored with an award for uncovering a heroin drug ring in Roselle that led to four arrests.

Patrolmen Mike Dubitsky, Greg Federici and Nadia Jones performed lifesaving techniques on Katherine Halix after an emergency call was received. Ms. Halix, who was present at the ceremony, thanked the officers for their efforts in saving her life.

Patrolman Dan Donnerstag, Patrolman Mike O'Neil and Sergeant Russ Luedecker were able to save a 91-year-old choking victim. It took continued attempts of the Heimlich maneuver to save the woman from choking to death.

After an identity theft investigation performed by Detective Derek Farbanec, four individuals were arrested. It was revealed that these individuals were responsible for the identity theft of 71 victims throughout the state.

Det. Durkin, Patrolman Mike Andrews and Patrolman Brian Trotter were responsible for arrests of individuals after pulling over a car and finding drugs and a handgun loaded with hollow point bullets.

"There is no doubt in my mind these individuals came to Cranford to commit a violent act," Chief Wozniak said.

After a motor vehicle stop, Patrolmen Timothy Handy and Donnerstag discovered marijuana, and a passenger of the vehicle fled the scene that led to a chase by Ptl. Donnerstag. Ptl. Handy was left with the other

two suspects, on the first day on the job alone.

Det. Farbanec, Sergeant Frank Williams and Patrolman Matt Siessel apprehended two suspects in an armed robbery at a gas station. In an unmarked car, Det. Farbanec tailed one suspect on the Garden State Parkway while calling in for backup that led to the arrest of the robbers.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, Bonnie Caldwell, Sarah Cassidy, Rebecca Durant, Sabrina Huwang, Jennifer Schneider and Jillian Walter were awarded the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Girl Scout Silver Awards were awarded to Cadette Troop 40334 members Samantha Berry, Katherine Ruane, Isabella Stoto, Grace Varga, Amber Bretz, Julia LoGiudice and Natalie Schindler, and to Cadette Troop 40046 members Julia Lachenauer and Mary Grace McNamara.

Eagle Scouts David Weichert, Andrew Licks and Alexander Levy were presented with Eagle Scout Awards.

During regular business, the

township committee introduced a capital bond ordinance totaling \$4.4 million. Three million dollars is allocated to road resurfacing, with the remainder allocated to new bathrooms at Memorial Field, new police equipment, a generator at the firehouse and other items.

A resolution was passed, by a 4-to-1 vote, with Commissioner Tom Hannen, Jr. dissenting, to award a \$1.2-million contract for work to the North Avenue Train Station Plaza. Part of the cost will be funded with grant money totaling \$500,000. The cost of the project has increased over the years after the project's anticipated cost was much less than bids received.

"The project has ballooned to the point that I don't think it is affordable," Commissioner Hannen said. He also cited the loss of more than 20 parking spots as a downside to the project.

"This is a pedestrian safety project. It was overdue," Com-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Paul Lachenauer for *The Westfield Leader*

DUNKED!...Cranford firefighter Tom Hannen gets dunked in the dunk tank during Cranford's Town-wide Cookout family dinner event held Sunday evening at the fire station municipal parking lot.