



# THE TIMES

of

## SCOTCH PLAINS – FANWOOD

### Special Election 2001 Edition



OUR 43RD YEAR – ISSUE NO. 44-43

USPS 485200  
Periodical – Postage Paid at Scotch Plains, N.J.

Thursday, November 1, 2001

Published  
Every Thursday

(908) 232-4407

FIFTY CENTS



**DON'T GIVE UP THE FIGHT...** From October 26-28, a group of Scotch Plains and Westfield residents participated in the Avon Breast Cancer 3-Day walk, which began at Bear Mountain, N.Y. and ended at Rockland County College in Suffern, N.Y. Each participant raised an average of \$1,900. Over 50 women from the Scotch Plains-Westfield area joined in the crusade, after training for six months.

Cheri Rogowsky for The Times

## Downtown Redevelopment Is Main Focus of Fanwood Candidates Forum

By FRED ROSSI  
Specially Written for The Times

The four candidates for the two available seats on the Fanwood Borough Council met last week in a debate that was more notable for the candidates' general agreement on most of the issues than any stark partisan divisions. The Democrats are trying to prevent the Republicans from gaining any further on the council, which now has a 4-

2 GOP majority. Democratic Councilwoman Katherine Mitchell is running for a second three-year term while her running mate, Michael Brennan, is seeking to fill the seat being vacated by Democrat Karen M. Schurtz, who chose not to seek re-election. They are opposed by Republicans Chester Lindsey, a former council member, and David Trumpp. About one-third of the questions

and answers in the debate, held last Thursday in the Borough Council chambers, focused on the downtown redevelopment plan that encompasses the tract of land between Martine Avenue and Second Street and South and LaGrande Avenues. Mr. Trumpp said it was important for Fanwood to move forward with the proposal because it will allow the borough "to broaden the commercial

tax base, help us clean the area up, and provide residents with a more convenient shopping area."

Mrs. Mitchell said that while everyone seems in general agreement that the downtown area needs refurbishing, it was important "to go slowly" on the project. She favors being "very sensitive to those with

tax base, help us clean the area up, and provide residents with a more convenient shopping area."

Mrs. Mitchell said that while everyone seems in general agreement that the downtown area needs refurbishing, it was important "to go slowly" on the project. She favors being "very sensitive to those with

tax base, help us clean the area up, and provide residents with a more convenient shopping area."

Mrs. Mitchell said that while everyone seems in general agreement that the downtown area needs refurbishing, it was important "to go slowly" on the project. She favors being "very sensitive to those with

tax base, help us clean the area up, and provide residents with a more convenient shopping area."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

## 22nd District One of Campaigns Being Watched by Both Parties

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
and FRED ROSSI  
Specially Written for The Times

New Jersey Democrats hoping to take control of the State Legislature in this month's election view the new 22nd Legislative District as one of the focal points of their efforts.

Created as a result of the 2000 census, the new 22nd District — which includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, North Plainfield, South Plainfield, Rahway, Dunellen, Middlesex, Clark, Linden and Green Brook — is made up of parts of the existing 17th, 20th and 22nd Districts.

While the immediate area has been a Republican stronghold for much of the past decade, the composition of the new district has given Democrats reason for optimism since heavily-Democratic Linden, Rahway and Plainfield are now part of it and since registered Democratic voters outnumber Republicans by a more than 2-to-1 margin. Just under half of the district's voters are independent.

State Assemblyman Joseph S. Suliga of Linden, a Democrat currently representing the 20th District, will be seeking election to the State Senate in the new 22nd District against political newcomer Milt Campbell, a lifelong Democrat turned Republican from Plainfield.

Mr. Suliga has served in the Assembly since 1994 and is a member of that body's Appropriations Committee. Mr. Campbell, who is making his first run for elective office, was a silver medalist in the Olympic decathlon in 1952 and a gold medalist in the 1956 games.

Assemblyman Suliga said the election boils down to "leadership and experience versus lack of leadership and experience, and character."

He cited his sponsorship of legis-

lation dealing with everything from prescription drugs for senior citizens to mammograms. He also supported legislation concerning the state's cable TV industry as well as co-sponsoring the bill to increase the amount of Homestead Rebate checks.

Mr. Campbell has issued a number of proposals, among them a ban on racial profiling and legislation to prohibit legislators from holding civil service or appointed positions with financial duties in a school district, municipality, special services district or county.

He said the Democratic ticket has pulled ahead in polls in recent weeks following "positive" literature his campaign has sent out.

Charges have flown back and forth from both campaigns. Mr. Suliga sent out literature, which charged that Mr. Campbell had not paid some \$14,000 in federal taxes on his home in Plainfield, following articles published in area newspapers. Mr. Campbell called the issue a private dispute between himself and the Internal Revenue Service, explaining that he paid the back taxes in order to take the issue away from his oppo-

nent.

The Campbell campaign has also charged Mr. Suliga with not supporting anti-racial profiling legislation and with having a poor attendance record in Trenton.

Mr. Suliga has charged his opponent with a poor record on voting in elections.

To a charge by the Campbell campaign that he holds four "taxpayer supported jobs," Mr. Suliga said he holds the position of Chief Financial Officer for the City of Linden in addition to his Assembly seat. He said that in this capacity, he is the chief custodian of school funds for Linden, a position which is required by state statute.

The Assembly races in the 22nd District pit Republicans Patricia Walsh and Gabe Spera against Democrats Linda d. Stender and Jerry Green.

Ms. Walsh is currently the Mayor of Green Brook, while Mr. Spera is a former Mayor and Councilman in Scotch Plains. Mrs. Stender, a former Mayor and Councilwoman in Fanwood, is currently in her third term on the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders while Assemblyman Green, a former county freeholder, has represented the current 17th District since 1992 and is a member of the Assembly's Housing Committee.

Chris Santora, a spokesman for Ms. Walsh and Mr. Spera, said he believes the race will come down to only a few hundred votes difference on either side. He called the 22nd District contest "the sleeper" race in the state.

"I think they (the Democrats) thought this was going to be a safe race for them. But now they know it's not because we have such strong

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



**AUTUMN FUN...** Third graders from McGinn Elementary School in Scotch Plains spent a recent autumn day atop haystacks during a hayride at Williams Nursery in Westfield.

Cheri Rogowsky for The Times

## SP Downtown Issues Debated At SPBPA Candidates Forum

By FRED ROSSI  
Specially Written for The Times

Downtown business issues were the prime topic in last week's debate between the two candidates for Scotch Plains Township Council.

Democrat Patricia Romano and Republican Guy Celentano, meeting in a forum sponsored by the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association (SPBPA), both stressed the importance of a vital and thriving downtown business district.

Mr. Celentano said a strong downtown would "stimulate growth," while Mrs. Romano said it would benefit "residents because they can shop in downtown."

Both candidates said they saw grants as an optimal way to fund downtown improvements, with Mrs. Romano adding that fundraisers sponsored by local businesses could also serve as a source of money for various projects.

Mr. Celentano said SPBPA and the local government needed to work together-through marketing efforts and favorable zoning decisions to attract new businesses to the area. Both backed the development of the hedge property next to the Municipal Building on Park Avenue into a two-floor retail commercial building.

Mrs. Romano said it would be

beneficial for shoppers to be able to patronize businesses on both sides of the street and might also encourage other businesses in the downtown area to add second floors to their buildings.

Mr. Celentano said he'd like to see retail stores on the ground floor of any building located on the hedge property and a community center on the upper floor. He added that the parking situation in the immediate area would need to be assessed before the project moves forward.

Mrs. Romano said she favored the creation of a local Department of Commercial Affairs to address the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



# Full campaign coverage starts on Page 6

REMEMBER VOTE ON NOVEMBER 6TH

CYAN YELLOW MAGENTA BLACK

## Westfielder Suzannah Plant Gives Account On Feeding Workers at Ground Zero

By HORACE CORBIN  
Specially Written for The Times

WESTFIELD — Suzannah Plant of Westfield chose her way to help with the aftermath of the WTC terrorist attack. Since September, Ms. Plant has joined hundreds of volunteers and private sponsors at Nino's Restaurant in Lower Manhattan in feeding and supplying the workers at "Ground Zero."

A commuter to Manhattan and an employee with Neilsen's marketing research, Ms. Plant saw what was

going on with policemen, firemen and workers of the rescue effort.

She told *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*, "They're just incredible, 12-14 hours a day, day after day; their spirit is amazing, but they get tired, hungry and dirty; they need cheering up too. I just had to do something," said Ms. Plant.

"I started off by obtaining donations of food from generous and patriotic businesses in Westfield and Scotch Plains. I pick up the donated

food and drive it into Manhattan in my jeep on Saturdays," she said.

"Some businesses around here are just so good in helping. Panera Bread Company, John's Meat Market, Northside Trattoria, Ferraro's, Hershey's Deli, My Town Bakery, B.G. Field's, Robert Treat and Feast Catering/Lia's are wonderful for pitching in," she said.

Ms. Plant told the *Leader/Times* that she has expanded her efforts to weekday evenings and to national search for logistics and support. These efforts have led to her obtaining 400,000 pairs of foodservice gloves from AmerCare of Charleston, S.C.; 70,000 pounds of chicken from Tyson's Food; coffee and espresso for the duration from Dallas Brothers of Queens; a walk-in freezer and a 700-pound icemaker from Hoshivaki America and 35 cases of milk from Parmalat.

When asked by *The Leader/Times* what else is needed, Ms. Plant replied that a practical "wish list" is being prepared; but, right now, she said she is frustrated by being unsuccessful in obtaining a TV for the workers while they eat and relax. She also said that comedy entertainment would be good to bolster their spirits. "After all, the work these men do is quite grim," she said.

Nino's Restaurant of the Zendone family has been closed for business as a result of the WTC attack. Since then, "Mamma Nino" has been leading this charity effort at the restaurant to feed the disaster workers at "Ground Zero."



A WALL OF WONDER...Created by a New York City police artist named Chico, an extensive mural is pictured in the backdrop of the catastrophic ruins near Ground Zero in Lower Manhattan. Pictured, left to right, are: "Mamma Nino," proprietor of Nino's Restaurant, and Suzannah Plant of Westfield.

## Bagger, Kean, Munoz Seek to Hold GOP Seats In Contest Against Steinberg, Jardim, Hern

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
and ADAM TURNER  
Specially Written for The Times

WESTFIELD -- This year's 21st Legislative District race has a strong Westfield appeal, as three of the candidates are town residents.

After 10 years in the 22nd Legislative District, Westfield is now part of the re-crafted 21st District. The district also includes Berkeley Heights, Cranford, Garwood, Mountainside, Springfield, Summit, Roselle Park, in Union County; Millburn in Essex County; Chatham, Harding, Long Hill and Madison in Morris County, and Warren and Watchung in Somerset County.

Two former Westfield Mayors, Republican Assemblyman Richard H. Bagger, and Democrat Thomas C. Jardim, are seeking State Senate and Assembly seats, respectively.

Mr. Bagger is joined on the GOP slate by Westfield resident Tom Kean, Jr., the son of former two-term Governor Thomas H. Kean, Sr. Joining the GOP ticket is Dr. Eric Munoz of Summit, a trauma surgeon and GOP Chairman in Summit where he recently served on the Common Council.

Mr. Jardim is running with State Senate candidate Ellen Steinberg of Chatham, an attorney in Union and campaign worker for former U.S. Senator Bill Bradley's 2000

Presidential Campaign and Assembly candidate J. Brooke Hern of New Providence, an attorney who ran for Congress last year.

The major issue in New Jersey legislative races this year is property taxes. The candidates have said more needs to be done to lessen the burden of property taxes on New Jerseyans while maintaining the high-quality public school systems New Jersey has had.

"People are concerned about the education system. They want schools to continue at the high level they are now. The issue for us is to continue funding the schools without breaking the taxpayers' backs," Mr. Jardim said.

The candidates all have their opinions as to what is "the biggest issue in the State Legislature" at the current time, according to Mr. Jardim.

"I want to see a stronger state role in helping communities by merging with the counties to solve problems," said Mr. Jardim, a former President of the Union County League of Municipalities.

Mr. Bagger said he and his fellow Republicans want "to build on what we have been doing the past couple of years." He cited the GOP's efforts of offering rebate checks to homeowners to help offset the school portion of property taxes. He also noted that Republicans, who have controlled both houses of state government since 1992 and the Governor's Mansion since 1994, increased the Tax Saver rebate to \$500 and the Homestead Rebate for seniors to \$750.

The five-term Assemblyman also explained that the Republican majority in Trenton has also frozen property taxes at 1997 levels for medium to low income seniors with the state making up the difference to municipalities. Mr. Bagger said the eligibility levels for seniors, was expanded this year for that program.

He also noted that GOP gubernatorial candidate Bret Schundler has proposed having the state pick up half of the education portion of property tax bills for all senior citizens who are on fixed incomes.

On the issue of property taxes, Mr. Jardim, a former two-term mayor of Westfield, said, "There must be a solution to the property tax crisis. Sooner or later people can't pay anymore; we're not at that point yet. A big part is how we use it to pay for schools and this problem must be solved."

"It's our job as citizens to find out who the best candidate for any position is, and we usually base this on their experience and what the person is going to do for you," Mr. Jardim explained.

When asked the difference between the Democrat and Republican slates, Mr. Jardim noted, "I

believe the chief difference is they (Mr. Kean and Dr. Munoz) were appointed to their positions. I have held the highest office among any of the candidates, so I know of problems municipalities face on a first-hand basis. It is important to have people in State Legislature with this experience," Mr. Jardim said.

Mr. Bagger said he also believes experience is a big factor in the 21st District race. He noted his experience as a Congressional and Legislative District office aid, his eight years of experience at the municipal level in Westfield and his past 10 years in the State Legislature.

Mr. Bagger said he is known for his "proven ability to get things done" in Trenton. He also cited the experience his runningmates, Mr. Kean, a former Congressional aid and candidate for Congress, and Dr. Munoz, and former member of the Summit Common Council.

Westfield, Mountainside and a number of other towns have been represented for the past decade by Senate President and Acting Governor Donald T. DiFrancesco of Scotch Plains, Mr. Bagger and the late Alan M. Augustine of Scotch Plains. Mr. Kean replaced Mr. Augustine in the Assembly in May.

The GOP has a 25-15 majority in the State Senate and a 45-15 edge in the Assembly.

## Fanwood Forum

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

businesses there," and also urged caution in how much housing is ultimately built, saying she doesn't want a parking problem to develop.

Mr. Lindsey, saying he was "all for this plan," said he favors including some residential housing in the area. He also surmised that there will be plenty of time, five or six years, for the proposal to be modified or altered as it moves forward. Speaking about the fear of possible property condemnation expressed by some downtown merchants, Mr. Brennan said any such moves would cost the borough money in legal and other costs.

He also wondered what Fanwood's return on its redevelopment investment is going to be and urged that some "hard numbers" be made available.

All four candidates were in general agreement on the need for further programs aimed at senior citizens and young people in Fanwood. They also supported the convening of a constitutional convention to revamp the property tax system in New Jersey.

## 22nd District One of Campaigns Being Watched by Both Parties

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

candidates.

He cited Mayor Walsh's efforts to rebuild her hometown's municipal building, after the previous facility was destroyed by flooding during Hurricane Floyd in 1999.

Mr. Santora noted Ms. Walsh's emphasis on health and education issues and Mr. Spera's efforts, during his years as a Scotch Plains Councilman and Mayor, in revitalizing the township.

The issue of a controversial marine trash transfer station on the Linden waterfront was also raised by Mr. Santora. He said the Democrats believe the issue boils down to 1,200 trucks on Union County highways versus one train a day. Ms. Walsh and Mr. Spera support New York sending its garbage by ship down to states in the south already set to receive the waste.

Scotch Plains and Fanwood have for the past 10 years been part of the 22nd District, which is currently represented by State Senator and Acting Governor Donald T. DiFrancesco and Assemblyman Richard H. Bagger and Tom Kean, Jr. Mr. DiFrancesco is leaving office. Mr. Bagger, who is seeking a State Senate seat, and Mr. Kean, are running for election in the new 21st District that includes their Westfield home base.

In addition to some new repre-

sentation in Trenton, the new 22nd District will likely have some new issues to consider come January. While the old district was made up of towns that were, by definition, suburban communities, the new 22nd District, with the addition of Linden, Rahway and Plainfield, will have more of an urban-industrial feel to it.

These three towns' populations make up about half the total population of the 11 communities in the 22nd District.

Get with The Times and Become an Authentic Subscriber by Visiting: WWW.GOLEADER.COM!

## Heather Mills Elected As HOSA Officer

FANWOOD — The Union County Chapter of Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) recently held an election to determine this year's officers for their chapter of the HOSA organization.

Fanwood resident Heather Mills was elected as Secretary. She is a student of the Allied Health services program at Union County Vocational-Technical School in Scotch Plains.

This year, the HOSA organization plans to hold a school blood drive in December and to participate in the regional and state HOSA competitions.

## SPBPA Forum

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

concerns and needs of local businesses.

"It would be like having a liaison" between government and the business community, she said. Mr. Celentano said such a new local government agency could further formalize the existing Downtown Task Force, a group of business leaders and government officials that advises on downtown business issues.

"It's an excellent way to bring together everyone to pool resources," he said.



CLEANING THE WOODS...On October 8, Columbus Day, Terrill Middle School students Ryan Krueger, Eddie Kahn, Brian Kahn, David Kahn, Tim Stuart, and Jeff Stuart cleaned up the school's woods. The pupils found beer bottles, cans, a bicycle tire, and a unicycle during their cleaning efforts. These children picked up eight bags of trash. While the students were playing, they decided to clean up the space as generous volunteers.

## Interfaith Council Continues Partnership With DECA

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School DECA Chapter, an Association of Marketing Students, is beginning its 11th consecutive year working with the Interfaith Council of Union County, a non-profit organization that provides for the needs of homeless families in the area.

DECA is planning several activities for over 85 families and over 200 children currently being assisted by the Interfaith Council.

Among the services provided by the facility are housing, basic necessities, medical needs, and educational programs.

According to DECA student Jay Cordes, "These families are doing

these best to rebuild their lives, and need as much help as we can give them." Many of the families live in temporary housing, including churches and synagogues on a rotating basis, until permanent housing can be found.

DECA's first activity will be a Halloween party for over 70 children, for whom DECA will supply costumes, and take the children trick-or-treating. DECA is also planning its 11th annual Toy Drive and Adopt-A-Family Program for the families of Interfaith during the holiday season.

Residents, businesses, or organizations interested in assisting in these activities may call DECA at (908) 889-8600.



WE GATHER TOGETHER...Members of the 50th Year Reunion Committee for the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Class of 1951, pictured, left to right, are: Jean DiFrancesco Ruland, Carol Ann D'Amato Drozic, Bernice DeWolfe Montagna, Laura DiFrancesco Swidersky, Yolanda DiQuillo Schiller and Mauro Iarussi, and back row, Thomas Montagna and Paul Schwem. The reunion was held on September 22 at the Woodbridge Hilton. Members presented \$5,000 to the Alumni Association for a scholarship in the name of the class.

## Open House Organized At JCC Nursery School

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Jewish Community Center of Central New Jersey Nursery School, Wilf Jewish Community Campus, 1391 Martine Avenue in Scotch Plains, will sponsor an Open House for new families on Friday, November 30, at 10 a.m.

Parents interested in the JCC Nursery School for the 2002-2003 school year are encouraged to attend this program.

Children who will be turning 2 years old, 3 years old, or 4 years old before October 1 are welcome to join the 2002 school year program.

Jimbo will welcome the children with magic and his friendly bunny. Visitors will have an opportunity to learn about the JCC Nursery School as they visit the classrooms.

Early Childhood Director Susan Bennett will answer ques-

tions about the JCC Nursery School and Early Childhood Programs.

A tour of the JCC facility, including the Nursery School wing, will conclude the morning activities.

Registration for the 2002-2003 Nursery School year will begin on Tuesday, January 22, 2002. Families wishing to bring their children to visit the JCC Nursery School on an alternate date are asked to call Ms. Bennett at (908) 889-8800, extension no. 204 for a daytime tour and to register for the open house.

Families expecting to enroll their children in the JCC Nursery School or Kindergarten must be members of the JCC.

The Jewish Community Center is a constituent agency of the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey and the United Way.

## SP Council Forums To Be Aired on TV-34

SCOTCH PLAINS — Scotch Plains' local cable television station, TV-34, will broadcast the Scotch Plains Council Candidates Forum, sponsored by *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* and the Westfield Area League of Women Voters, beginning at 8 p.m. each night through Election Day, Tuesday, November 6. In addition, the station will broadcast a candidates forum, sponsored by the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association, each night immediately following *The Times* and League of Women Voters' forum.

## Douglas M. Fasciale

Certified Civil Trial Attorney  
by the Supreme Court of New Jersey

Concentrating in personal injury  
and malpractice cases.

Hoagland, Longo, Moran, Dunst & Doukas, LLP  
Attorneys At Law - A Full Service Firm

40 Paterson Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
(732) 545-4717

116 S. Euclid Avenue  
Westfield, NJ 07090  
(908) 232-9944

DFasciale@hoaglandlono.com  
www.hoaglandlono.com

## Artists Gallery of Gifts

Fall Collection

Friday, November 2nd • 12-4pm & 7-10pm  
Saturday, November 3rd • 10am - 5pm • Sunday, Nov. 4th • 11am - 3pm  
603 Clark St. Westfield, NJ

Fabric Satchels, Gold & Silver Jewelry, Original Watercolors,  
Photography, Stationary, Garden Artifacts, Longaberger Baskets,  
Wooden Gifts, Handblown Glass Sun Catchers, Pottery,  
Fleece & Tapestry Wearables and Holiday Accessories.

Lovely Gifts and Teachers Thank You's

Dam Newell, Hostess - 908-654-3614

"While they're away..."



Give them  
"A Touch of Home"

with a  
College Subscription  
to

THE TIMES  
Scotch Plains - Fanwood  
Call Now  
(908) 232-4407