

County Manager Appoints Vaniska as Police Chief

ELIZABETH - County Manager George W. Devanney today announced that he has appointed Daniel H. Vaniska, a 29-year veteran of the County Police Department, as its Chief.

Vaniska has served as Captain of the County Police for the past 15 years, and will be responsible for supervising a force of 70 sworn officers and 10 civilians.

"It is an honor and I am proud to become the police chief of a fine division," Vaniska said. "Now more than ever, we must be prepared to secure and protect the County against the different security issues we now face. I look forward to working with the County Manager and the Freeholder Board toward this goal."

Union County Freeholder Nick Scutari, a member of the County's Juvenile Criminal Justice Advisory Board, described Vaniska as "an experienced veteran who knows what it takes to run the police division."

"Dan has proven himself to be a knowledgeable, tough leader that we need in these challenging times," Scutari said. "He has a lengthy list of accomplishments and he has helped make this department more efficient and effective."

Vaniska becomes the ninth police chief in the history of the County Police and succeeds Richard Mannix, who will retire July 1st after serving as the department's chief for the past 17 years. Vaniska joined the County Police Department as a probationary patrolman in January, 1973 and became a Sergeant in 1982. Four years later, he became a Captain and commander of the Union County Police Department's Administration Division. On numerous occasions he has served as the Acting Chief of Police in the absence of Chief Mannix. Vaniska, a resident of Linden, will make \$95,261 per year, the same salary as Mannix earned.

"Dan Vaniska helped build the

modern, efficient County Police operation we have, today," said County Manager George Devanney. "He is an excellent fit for a leadership position as we face new, different challenges in the near future."

The County Police division is part of the county's Department of Public Safety, and is responsible for providing protection and enforcement services for all county-owned properties and facilities. The County Police also preserves order on county roads and facilities, assists and supports the courts, prosecutor, sheriff and law enforcement agencies. The division's investigation division/detective bureau conducts investigations in the department's jurisdiction. The department also has a Traffic Enforcement Weigh Team that patrols for unsafe trucks on County roads and a Traffic Enforcement Unit that performs the highly successful and popular infant car seats inspections each week.

"Over the past 20 years we have asked much more of our County Police. They keep our roads and facilities safe, and provide so many services to help county and local law enforcement," said Freeholder Chairman Lewis Mingo, Jr. "We are sure that Dan Vaniska will continue this progress in his tenure as Chief."

Westfield Marching Band Parents Assoc. Thanks Community

The Westfield Marching Band Parents Association thanked members of the community for all of their support. Each year the organization raises scholarship money to be awarded to marching band seniors who will be attending college. The Westfield Marching Band Parents Association raised over \$3,000 at the recent Wine Tasting Event.



HONORED FOR 9/11 WORK... Major Fred Trask and Envoy Sylvia Machado were honored at the Mental Health Association of Union County's 57th Annual Dinner. Pictured, from left to right, are: Union County Freeholder Angel Estrada, Mental Health Association Executive Director Dr. NancyMarie Bride, Envoy Sylvia Machado, major Fred Trask, and Freeholder Rick Proctor

MHAUC Honors Salvation Army at Annual Dinner

AREA - "Another year has passed and we are here once again to celebrate and to hold on to each other."

These were the opening words spoken by Dr. NancyMarie Bride, Executive Director of the Mental Health Association of Union County (MHAUC) at its 57th annual dinner. This year's theme was "Healing America" and special awards were presented symbolizing unity and cooperation.

The Keynote Address was given by Assemblyman Eric Munoz. Thirty-four Persons of Special Value awards were presented by non-profit community mental health agencies throughout the County.

The major focus of the evening was the presentation of an Award of Special Distinction to the Salvation Army, presented by Freeholders Angel Estrada and Rick Proctor. This prestigious award was given in gratitude to the Salvation Army's service following the events of September 11.

Dr. Bride offered the following words of praise to the Salvation Army: "The reason we are honoring the Salvation Army of Union County is not just for their long history of service to the community. When disaster strikes

there are those who flee the scene, running for their lives running home to safety; and well they should. There are others who run towards the site. It takes enormous energy, good training, and a strong spiritual life to do this work. We are honoring you tonight because while we of the mental health profession were in New York, Jersey City, and Newark Airport caring for grieving families and first responders, you were there caring for us. You fed us when we were hungry, to the tune of 333,000 hot meals in just one month! You gave us drink when we were thirsty; you brought a spiritual presence along with dry socks and Vicks VaporRub. The smell from SoHo and Canal Street blew over Jersey City on September 12 and even from that reasonable distance it seemed to wrap around us.

Perhaps one day we will all gather to share again the images we carry in our minds, images we do not wish to inflict on those who did not see and who have no need to carry the pain.

We warmly and publicly give this much deserved award of distinction to Major Fred Trask and to Envoy Sylvia Machado of the Salvation Army."

Kean Brownfields Legislation Passes Assembly In 80-0 Vote

TRENTON - The New Jersey General Assembly gave its approval June 27 to legislation sponsored by Assemblyman Thomas H. Kean, Jr. (R-21) that would encourage the remediation of contaminated sites for residential development.

The measure, which amends the Brownfield and Contaminated Site Remediation Act, would offer additional incentives to developers to build new residences at the site of a redevelopment project. The legislation passed the Assembly, 80-0.

"New Jersey has in place a very successful Brownfield Redevelopment Program, but there are still many contaminated sites that could be put to good use. This initiative will improve the effectiveness and impact of the state's existing Brownfield Law by increasing the incentives for residential development, which is both aesthetically and economically benefi-

cial for a community," said Assemblyman Kean.

Currently, the state may enter into agreements to reimburse developers for as much as 75 percent of the costs of remediation from revenues derived from new state taxes generated from the redevelopment of a contaminated site.

Under A-2437, the list of tax revenues that may be considered in estimating the amount of new revenue is expanded. For example, sales tax collected from the purchase of materials used for the residential construction at the site of a redevelopment project could be considered.

"This legislation recognizes that the costs associated with restoring a property for residential development is high and therefore, enhanced incentives for restoration are needed," said Assemblyman Kean.

The bill would authorize the state to enter into a redevelopment agreement to reimburse a developer of residential property upon the completion of construction of one or more new residences.

"Bringing redevelopment to neglected sites offers valuable real estate opportunities in a state where the demand for homes is very high.

"Equally important, it encourages smart growth in New Jersey communities. Unused, neglected properties can be transformed into viable residential sites without new land being consumed or municipal infrastructures being further burdened," concluded Assemblyman Kean.

Bi-Partisan Support Pledged For Pay-to-Play Reform

TRENTON - Assemblyman Thomas H. Kean, Jr. (R-21) and Assemblywoman Loretta Weinberg (D-37) have pledged an aggressive, bi-partisan effort to pass comprehensive, pay-to-play reform in the State Assembly. They are sponsors of an Assembly bill, A-427, which is a companion bill to the pay-to-play measure that passed the Senate on June 24.

The legislation was drafted by the Citizens' Army New Jersey, a non-partisan organization fighting for campaign finance reform in New Jersey. The bill bans contributions by government contractors from the initial contract negotiation phase through the performance of the contract, significantly reduces the amount professionals doing business with the state can contribute, and includes a provision enabling any county or municipality to adopt its own pay-to-play law.

"The Senate victory will help give us the momentum we need to pass this legislation and restore cost-effectiveness and merit to the public contracting system," said Assemblyman Kean.

Assemblywoman Weinberg (D-37) said, "It is time to sever the link between campaign contributions and lucrative government contracts. In

these difficult budget times, it is especially important to insure that every tax dollar spent is well-spent."

Assemblyman Kean and Assemblywoman Weinberg said they plan to aggressively lobby their fellow Assembly members for support in an effort to win passage of the bill when the Assembly returns from summer recess this fall.

"I look forward to working with Assemblyman Kean and Assemblywoman Weinberg to realize the adoption of this important reform," said Harry Pozycycki, Common Cause Chairman and Citizens' Army founder. "We plan an all-out, grassroots campaign that will demonstrate to Assembly members that citizens all around the state know its time to end pay-to-play."

Recently the United Taxpayers of New Jersey, AARP, Communication Workers of America (CWA), American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Sierra Club and New Jersey Environmental Federation have announced their support for the bill. They join the Citizens Army support groups, Common Cause New Jersey, the New Jersey League of Women Voters and NJ PIRG (New Jersey Public Interest Research Group), in backing the legislation.

Postage Stamps Reflecting New Rate Are Available

SCOTCH PLAINS - With new postage rates having taken effect on Sunday, the United States Postal Service has printed and distributed billions of postage stamps for the new, 37-cent rate for mailing a First-Class letter.

New, 37-cent First-Class Mail stamps are available now. A new, three-cent "Star" stamp is also available, to add to any 34-cent stamps customers may still have on hand.

"Families are busier than ever," said Scotch Plains Postmaster Jane Walsh. "So we've made it as convenient as possible for them to keep in touch through the mail."

The new postage stamps are available online through The Postal Store at www.usps.com. The Postal Store offers special rate change combo packs with both 37-cent and three-cent stamps and a handy rate card.

Stamps can also be ordered by calling (800)-STAMP24. In addition, individuals can order them through the mail by asking their carrier for an order form.

"And, of course, we have all the stamps customers will need here at the Scotch Plains Post Office," said Postmaster Walsh, "and in conveniently located stamp vending machines."

Additionally, a new "Heroes of 2001" stamp is available for 45 cents. It meets the First-Class letter rate and also generates funds to assist families of emergency relief personnel killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty in connection with the terrorist attacks of September 11.

Complete rate information is available at www.usps.com/ratecard and at the Scotch Plains Post Office.

Volunteers for Rape Crisis Center Are Needed In UC

AREA - Union County Freeholder Deborah Scanlon, liaison for the county's Commission on Status of Women called for caring, supportive and committed individuals to step forward to volunteer to assist rape survivors during day, evening and weekend shifts at the Union County Rape Crisis Center.

Training will prepare advocates to respond with support and information on the 24-hour hotline, provide emotional support and accompany hospital, police department, prosecutor's office and/or court.

The 40-hours of specialized training to become a Rape Crisis Advocate, which is mandated throughout the state, will be scheduled twice a week from September 24 to November 21. Training addresses the different types of sexual assault, the trauma experienced by sexual assault survivors, their family members and related issues.

In addition to serving as a Rape Crisis Advocate, volunteers may also become involved in making educational presentations to schools or to groups in the community on sexual assault topics.

The center also offers crisis intervention, short-term counseling and therapy with referral for long-term services as needed, which are provided free of charge by qualified professionals.

The dates for the volunteer training are: September 24, 26; October 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31; and November 7, 12, 14, 19, 21. Training is held from 6:30 through 10 p.m. Attendance is required at all training sessions in order to be qualified to become a volunteer Rape Crisis Advocate. Interested individuals should call as soon as possible for an interview. For further information call (908) 233-RAPE (7273) between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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