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INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE...Nineteen security officials of Zhejiang Province in China visit the county public safety headquarters in Westfield on December 7. Pictured from left to right, are: Vice President Hua Naiqiang, Lieutenant Ron Esposito, County Police Chief Dan Vaniska, Freeholder Bette Jane Kowalski and County Public Safety Director Harold Gibson.

Children's Health Insurance SCHIP Senate Bill Advances

WASHINGTON - A legislative measure by U.S. Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) advanced in the Senate this week. It is designed to address millions in anticipated shortfalls for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for several states including New Jersey.

According to a press release from the senators, the measure allows for unspent federal SCHIP dollars from previous fiscal years to be redistributed to states in need of the funding in 2007. Without this effort, 14 U.S. states would have faced millions in SCHIP shortfalls as early as January and be forced to cut critical health insurance aid to needy children.

"Our votes and efforts on the floor of the U.S. Senate reflect not only the conscience of this legislative chamber, but also the values of our nation," said Sen. Menendez. "It would be unconscionable for the Congress to allow states to default in their promise to the neediest children in our nation. I was proud to stand with Senator Lautenberg and other colleagues in protecting the programs that protect those Americans most in need."

I have always put children at the top of my agenda, and this measure will provide healthcare to the neediest children in New Jersey and across the country," said Sen. Lautenberg. "These children needed a voice in the United States Senate and today it was heard loud and clear."

SCHIP is jointly funded by states and the federal government, and provides comprehensive health insurance coverage to more than 4 million low-income children who would otherwise be uninsured. Under current law, 14 states - including New Jersey - are estimated to have nearly \$890 million less in federal SCHIP funds than they need in FY07 to maintain their

existing enrollment of children. Without a fix to the SCHIP funding shortfall, 610,000 children would potentially be at risk of losing their health insurance coverage.

New Jersey's SCHIP program, NJ FamilyCare, enrolled more than 528,000 children in 2006 and also covered pregnant women and parents. The anticipated 2007 federal funding shortfall for N.J. is estimated to be about \$200 million.

The measure passed last Friday evening provides the state with adequate funds to continue providing services well into the second quarter of 2007, with lawmakers planning to reevaluate the needs of the state when the new Congress convenes.

Senators Menendez, Lautenberg and U.S. Senator Olympia Snowe (R-Me.) last month called on Senate leaders to enact emergency legislation to fully fund the State Children's Health Insurance Program before projected shortfalls force needy children off insurance rolls.

In a letter to Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) and Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), the lawmakers were joined by 16 of their colleagues in urging action to avert a projected \$927 million shortfall in the SCHIP program - a shortfall that would have forced states to cut critical health insurance aid to its neediest children.

Join us on Christmas Eve—
Sunday, December 24

Children's Musical @ 10:15 a.m.
An engaging script and upbeat blend of new songs with traditional carols.

Traditional Candlelight Service @ 7:30 p.m. w/ readings and carols. Special pre-service music at 7pm. Childcare provided for both services.



www.fbcwestfield.org

Les Marmitons of Cranford Set January Dinner Event

CRANFORD - Les Marmitons of Cranford, drawing members from across Union County and beyond, will hold its January dinner event at Restaurant 89 in Mountainside at 5:30 p.m. on January 22, 2007. Chef Wes of Café Monet located on 309 Millburn Ave. in Millburn will guide members and guests through the preparation of a multi-course French-influenced meal paired with wines. The restaurant is

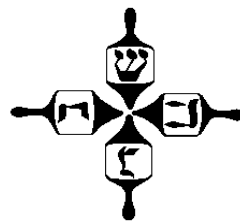


closed on Mondays and the event is open to members and guests only. Les Marmitons is an international culinary and social club of gentlemen who share a common interest in preparation and understanding of fine food, wine and culinary arts.

For more information on Les Marmitons of Cranford, see www.lesmarmitons.org or email Bob Rial, president, at les_marmitons_cranford@yahoo.com.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH, WESTFIELD & BETH EL MESSIANIC CONGREGATION

invite you to a
Chanukah Celebration and Service



Sunday, December 17th at 7:00PM

For information call Rev. Marc Danzis at 718-520-0247 or Redeemer Lutheran Church at 908-232-1517

Join us as we learn more about the Jewish roots of our faith!

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STUDY GROUP...Jim Murphy (right) of Copies Now on North Avenue in Westfield reviews management literature with representatives of 10 other Sirs Speedy centers. Jay Boyle of Acorn Financial conducted the seminar on group health insurance.

MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY HANUKKAH FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS

Bottom Row Left to Right: Matthew P. Chemidin; Peter J. Chemidin, President; Fred J. Chemidin, CEO; Joseph P. Chemidin, VP; William Achtel
Top Row Left to Right: Edna Trujillo; Darraugh Valk; Diana Cifuffa; Neil Schembre; Emmy Salerno; Steve Goldberg

May the peace, joy and love of the holiday season remain in your hearts throughout the year.

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Fanwood Presbyterian Church

Martine & LaGrande Avenues, Fanwood
(908) 889-8891

Senior Pastor - The Reverend Paul F. Rack
Pastoral Associate - The Reverend Elizabeth Anderson-Domer

10 a.m. Public Worship on Sundays

Festival of Lessons and Carols
4:00 pm - Sunday, December 17
The Story of Salvation in Scripture and Song

Christmas Eve
5:00 pm - Family Service of Worship
10:45 pm - Special pre-service music
11:00 pm - Candlelight Worship and Communion

Christmas Day
10:00 am - A short, joyful service of Word and Song

PT REPORTERS NEEDED

Strong, community-minded, detail-oriented writers with professional demeanor needed to cover local government evening meetings. Must be able to meet deadlines, know how to write a lead, and take an active interest in a regular beat in order to develop news stories. This opportunity is perfect for stay-at-home moms, as a second income or just for those who love to write. Please e-mail resume and clips to:

editor@goleader.com
The Westfield Leader & The Scotch Plains-Fanwood TIMES

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Our extended holiday hours:
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Sunday Dec. 24, 8am-4pm

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