

## Board OKs Subdivision Near SP-Edison Border

By FRED T. ROSSI

Specialty Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — The planning board Monday gave approval to Michael Buccola and Frank Tussel to purchase two adjoining lots and create a third lot on which a home will be built.

The two existing lots face Raritan Road at the corner of Wright Street, and the third lot, which will front on Wright Street, will take about one-third from each of the existing lots. They are oversized, deep lots of about 87 feet by more than 300 feet, with houses on each; the new lot will measure about 160 feet deep and 100 feet wide.

The new lot will be situated at the border with Edison. The board decided against requiring a sidewalk on Wright Street but asked the property buyers to consult with an Edison homeowner who lives next to the property about drainage concerns he raised during the hearing.

The board also gave its approval to Angelo Zanfardino and his sister, Assunta

Tummolillo, co-owners of the building housing Alfonso's restaurant and the bank next door, for a minor subdivision in which Mr. Zanfardino would own the half of the building containing the restaurant and Ms. Tummolillo would own the half that houses the bank.

D. Villane Construction presented series of concept plans for an office building it proposes to build on South Avenue. Attorney Robert Kraus showed sketches of the proposed development, which will be located at the corner of South Avenue and Jersey Avenue next to the Exxon gas station.

Each sketch showed the two-story building situated near the property's northwest corner but had different parking schemes. The board said it favored a plan in which the building would be situated closer to the property line, allowing a sixth parking space. The developer will put together a more detailed site plan before returning to the board for a formal hearing.

## SPF BOE

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by \$100,000 next year. The BOE is in negotiations with the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Education Association.

Seventeen new teachers will also be added next year to cover the projected increase in enrollments, officials said. These include eight elementary teachers, four middle school educators, three high-school teachers and two instructors to monitor the resource room.

"We will need the extra positions in the fall because we expect the fifth grade to have 20 more students than this year and many of the teachers will be used to capacity," Mr. Del Sordi explained. The budget does not take into account the members of the staff that may retire, he said.

"There is no doubt that reduced class size increases the effectiveness of teaching,"

said BOE member Don Parisi. "My question is the cost effectiveness, and we very rarely hit the average of 21 to 22 students per class. So we would probably end up closer to 25 throughout the year."

"I had the concern that the staffing was conservative and we might have actually underestimated the teacher student ratio," BOE member Sasha Slocum added.

"When we met with the demographer we found out that 315 children were born in 2001 and just last year we have had an influx of 175 children. So without these teachers, our classes would look more like 28 to 30 children per teacher," explained Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carol Choye.

"I'm very satisfied with this budget. The class size is what keeps our schools great and property values increasing," BOE member Craig Nowlin said.

"I applaud that the administration did not budget right up to the cap. I think this tends to show how the administration is sensitive to property taxes and that we don't have to depend on state money," Mr. Parisi said.

Cheryl Kiney, a Scotch Plains resident, expressed her concern about class size during the public hearing. "I would like the board to adopt a policy that would recommend future boards keep class size to 25 and under."

David Gorbunoff, a Scotch Plains resident and father of three BOE candidate also attended the meeting.

"I was very impressed. I think they have come up with a very balanced budget that meets the needs of the community," he said.

The BOE will present the 2006-2007 school budget at a public hearing on Tuesday, March 28 at 8 p.m. at the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education. The school tax levy will go before voters on Tuesday, April 18.

## FW TDR

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implementing the TDR plan to preserve an historic district. The other four municipalities are utilizing the TDR program to preserve open space and farmlands.

Mayor Mahr explained to the audience that the TDR program could offer the borough many benefits, while preventing unwanted devaluations of borough properties and neighborhoods. She said that several historical properties have already been demolished because the borough did not have any protections preventing this in place.

A final community visioning session is planned for Thursday, March 30, which will be held at the Forest Road Park Recreation Building on Forest Road at 7:30 p.m.

More information about the TDR program can be found on the borough's web site at: [www.visitfanwood.com](http://www.visitfanwood.com).

Mayor Mahr told *The Times* that representatives planned on reaching out to property owners along the South Avenue corridor to include them in the planning and implementation of the program. She and the consultants also plan on going door-to-door to discuss the program with individual property owners.



IT'S A PARADE...County officials, employees and family members march during the 10th Annual Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 11 in the Township of Union.

## Asm. Green Seeks to Abolish Tenure for Chiefs of Police

TRENTON — Assembly Deputy Speaker Pro Tempore Jerry Green (LD-21, Plainfield) Tuesday introduced legislation that would make it easier for municipalities to remove police chiefs.

"Our current laws do more to protect and serve bad chiefs of police than they do to protect and serve the public," said Asm. Green (D). "Current laws are antiquated, counterproductive and an impediment when municipalities attempt to deliver better services at less cost to taxpayers."

Bill A-2864 would make municipal chiefs of police contractual employees and create a "Chiefs of Police Performance Evaluation Commission" to oversee the performance of police chiefs in New Jersey municipalities.

Under current law, municipal chiefs of police are tenured employees and can be removed from office only for incapacity, misconduct, or disobedience of the police department's rules and regulations.

The measure would require municipalities to hire chiefs of police on a three-to-five-year contractual basis. At the end of the contract, the chief would be automatically reappointed unless the municipality decides to renew the contract for a different term or the municipality determines the chief has failed to adequately address deficiencies highlighted in a performance evaluation.

"With virtually no oversight and no real threat of repercussions for poor performance, it is easy for even the most stalwart chief of police to become lax and complacent upon receiving tenure," said Asm. Green. "Making police chiefs contractual employees and creating a system to review their performance ensures that police departments and the public have effective leaders they can trust."

The legislation would create a Chiefs of Police Performance Evaluation Commission in the state Division of Criminal Justice that would consist of 12 members.

It would adopt rules and regulations concerning performance evaluations.

## FW Council

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regarding some of the new recreation programs being offered this spring at the Forest Road Park facility.

"We have nine new programs being offered; we just need people to sign up for them," he said.

Mr. Higgins said the course range from digital photography to a "mad scientist" program for kids. Residents can contact the recreation department at borough hall for details.

The borough's Volunteer of the Month, Pamela Sayles, was also honored at Tuesday night's meeting. Ms. Sayles chairs the recreation commission and serves on the Fanny Wood Day committee, among other local activities, including designing most of the posters advertising special events in town.

Ms. Sayles was presented with a framed drawing of Fanwood's historic train station. "Volunteerism has been a good thing for my family; people should try it," said Ms. Sayles. "It makes Fanwood a better place."

## SP Council

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The program, in which Scotch Plains participates in a shared arrangement with Westfield and Clark, will cost the town \$13,276, which will pay for county law enforcement officers who accompany the individuals working in the program. Under the year-long agreement, the program will provide a sheriff's officer and, according to Township Manager Thomas Atkins, eight to 18 S.L.A.P. workers for two-week periods for 17 weeks during the year.

The council also approved a resolution authorizing an additional payment of about \$8,070 to Wildlife Management Services (WMS) for the service it provided in last month's deer reduction effort in the Ashbrook Reservation.

WMS performed preparatory work last year in anticipation of the program and, last month, removed more deer from the reservation than what had been authorized last year. Mr. Atkins said that half of the \$13,800 cost would be paid by Union County.

Police Chief Brian Mahoney announced the promotions of Brian Donnelly and Paul Belford to the rank of lieutenant. Lieutenant Donnelly initially served with the township police department from 1988-1993 before leaving to join the prosecutor's offices in Somerset County and Union County.

He rejoined the local department in 1999 and was promoted to sergeant in 2004. Lieutenant Belford began his law enforcement career with the Union County Department of Corrections in 1994 and joined the Scotch Plains Police Department the following year. He was promoted to sergeant in 2004.

In addition, Sergeant Dennis Murphy has been assigned to the Detective and Investigative Bureau.

The council passed a resolution naming John Kovalick, Connie Klock and Jim Malfetti to the local Ethics Review Board for five-year terms. The council also honored Julie Robenhymmer, who is Miss New Jersey for 2005-2006.

Mayor Marks issued a proclamation declaring March 15 as Julie Robenhymmer Day in Scotch Plains, and Ms. Robenhymmer spoke briefly about some of her activities. The mayor issued another proclamation declaring this week as Girl Scout Week, and several members of Troop 352 from McGinn School led the council in the pledge to the flag.

which would include the size and population of a municipality, the size of its police force, and the local crime rate.

The commission would conduct a performance evaluation of every police chief at least one year before their respective contracts expire. The evaluation would assess whether a police chief is satisfactorily managing the routine day-to-day operation of a municipal police department, implementing the policies of the appropriate governing authority and complying with the rules and regulations established for the government of the police force. Copies of the evaluation would be sent to each police chief, who would then meet with their municipal appointing authority to discuss the findings.

Under the bill, a municipality may refuse to renew the contract of a police chief if the individual fails to adequately address deficiencies detailed in an unsatisfactory performance evaluation within one year of that evaluation.

The bill also allows municipalities to request a performance review of their police chief within the first year the legislation is enacted into law to determine whether the individual is performing satisfactorily.

Any chief found to be unsatisfactorily performing his or her duties would be subject to removal from office by the municipal appointing authority. However, the bill is not intended to affect the tenure rights, which police chiefs may have accrued prior to its enactment. If a chief of police is removed from office, they would be able to continue to serve as a member of the police department in a different position or capacity.

## Body Found May Be Former SPFHS Grad

By CHRISTIE STORMS

Specialty Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

FANWOOD — A body discovered in the cab of a semi-tractor trailer truck that had been submerged in a canal near South Bay, Florida may be that of 35-year-old Ken Conceicao, who had formerly resided in Fanwood and attended Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School (SPFHS). According to Sergeant Eric Lawrence of the Boca Raton Police Department, Mr. Conceicao had been delivering mulch to an Okeelanta sugar processing plant when his 2001 Red Mack tractor went into the water. Police reportedly believe that as the truck was making a turn, the back trailer fell into the canal first and then took the cab with it.

When Mr. Conceicao was reported missing by girlfriend Melissa Glick of South Plainfield on January 20, police had originally conducted a search of the area but to no avail.

"The canal waters are pretty dark, and the entire truck was submerged," Sgt. Lawrence said. "We couldn't see it by helicopter, and we had no idea it had even gone off a bridge."

Sgt. Lawrence said the submerged truck was discovered last week when South Florida Water Management District employees were using a backhoe to do some maintenance work at the canal and struck the truck accidentally. When the truck was pulled out of the canal, a male body was discovered in the cab.

"We are still waiting on a dental record match," Sgt. Lawrence said.

According to SPFHS guidance secretary Carol Liscinsky, Mr. Conceicao attended the high school from September 1986 through April 1988. He was reportedly a resident of South Plainfield at the time of the accident.

## Brookside

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that a plan of this magnitude, one that was considering several new ball-fields, and a 40,000 square foot recreation center, would entail notifying residents within a 200-foot radius of public hearings before the plan progressed. He said that public input and concerns would be carefully considered.

Mr. Walsh said that he understood their wishes to maintain the park as a naturalistic setting, but there were a great number of township residents who wanted more ball-fields and a recreation center.

Mr. Lipstein told the commission, "We understand the need for ball fields; but Brookside Park, as it exists now, also fulfills a need. If you add more fields, you will be taking something very valuable away from the community," he said.

The commission and the residents had a lengthy discussion about the difference between ball-fields and natural parks. Fieldcrest Avenue resident Barbara Timko said she had seen numerous fields that were astro-turfed and then fenced off and locked up, depriving the public access.

Mr. Walsh explained to the residents that the idea for a 40,000-square-foot recreation center came from the wishes expressed to the commission by two senior citizens organizations in town. There was also a need for more indoor gym facilities for many of the commission's programs.

Mr. Walsh ended with an "oath" to the residents that no development plans would progress without first notifying and including the neighborhood residents in discussions. He said their input would be given consideration and he felt a compromise could be reached.

Mr. McNally told *The Times* that the citizens group felt reassured the Brookside plans were only in a preliminary discussion stage. He said they would continue to monitor the situation and keep in touch with the recreation commission.



## POLICE BLOTTER

Fanwood

Saturday, March 11, Mark W. Parrish, 37, of Newark was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Terrill Road and Mary Lane, which revealed numerous outstanding warrants.

Saturday, March 11, Maurice D. Bodie, 22, of Rahway was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Terrill Road following a subsequent field investigation for motor vehicle infractions.

Sunday, March 12, Sheldon P. Johnson, 55, of Plainfield was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Terrill Road revealed an outstanding body warrant.

Sunday, March 12, Celena Puma, 24, of Rahway was arrested on South Avenue at the intersection of Old South Avenue for driving while intoxicated (DWI).

Monday, March 13, Kirk B. Nabila, 19, of Edison was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on North Avenue at Terrill Road for outstanding warrants.

Scotch Plains

Wednesday, March 8, a resident of Canterbury Drive reported being the victim of criminal mischief. The victim stated that his vehicle, which was parked in front of his house, was hit. The incident caused damage to his mirror.

Thursday, March 9, a resident of Farley Avenue reported being the victim of theft. The victim stated that someone removed her purse after she left on the floor while shopping at a Park Avenue business.

Thursday, March 9, a resident of Morse Avenue reported that someone entered her house through a window, removing several pieces of jewelry. Police are investigating the incident.

Sunday, March 12, a resident of Front Street reported that while he was warming up his vehicle, someone entered the vehicle and drove off.

Sunday, March 12, a student at Union County Vo-Tech reported that someone removed his iPod from his open locker. The iPod is valued at approximately \$200.

Mountainside

Wednesday, March 1, a resident of Deerfield Court reported being the victim of identity theft. The victim told police was notified by his bank that a \$25,000 line of credit was attempted to be opened in their name by a someone whose address did not match the victim's. The incident is under investigation by police.

Thursday, March 2, Reginald T. Gadsen, 24, of Irvington was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Route 22 for numerous outstanding warrants.

Monday, March 6, Stephanie A. Fairfax, 27, of Linden was stopped for a motor vehicle violation and was arrested after it was determined she was operating the vehicle with a suspended driver's license. She was also charged with nu-

merous outstanding warrants.

Tuesday, March 7, Abner Thelisma, 47, was stopped while driving on Route 22 for a cracked windshield and was arrested for driving without a license.

Wednesday, March 8, Steven McIntyre, 21, of Elizabeth was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Route 22 for an outstanding criminal warrant.

Thursday, March 9, Eric S. Hendricks, 24, of Plainfield was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Route 22 for an outstanding warrant in the amount of \$1,253.

Thursday, March 9, a resident of Outlook Drive reported that an adult male had rung her doorbell and knocked on the window next to the door. The victim, who was home alone, did not open the door. According to the victim, the male then walked up the driveway to the back door.

At this time, the victim told police she noticed an older model maroon Ford sedan parked in the driveway with a white male in the driver's seat. The victim reported that the individual who had knocked on the front door was carrying a rose. She asked the individual through the window what he wanted.

According to the victim he responded, "Someone down the street wanted me to give you this rose." The male then dropped the rose, entered the vehicle and both individuals drove away. He is described as a white male, in his early 20s, approximately six feet tall with an almost shaved head.

The Chatham Police Department reported a burglary on Monday, March 6, in which an older model maroon Ford sedan was witnessed by a neighbor in the vicinity of the crime. The rose was retrieved and tagged into evidence, Mountainside police said.

Friday, March 10, James J. Lobello, 21, of Roselle Park was arrested at a Route 22 diner for disorderly conduct and criminal mischief after police received a report of a fight. According to witnesses, the suspect was tipping over tables and breaking glassware before he was apprehended.

Sunday, March 12, Curtis J. Hill, 39, of Irvington was arrested for DWI on Route 22 at Mill Lane after the suspect was observed by police driving carelessly. Police said officers attempted to pull the vehicle over. The suspect reportedly temporarily pulled over and then immediately accelerated back into traffic attempting to flee the scene of the motor vehicle stop.

According to police, the suspect led them on a chase down Route 22 until officers were able to get in front of the vehicle. Hill was also charged with eluding arrest, driving with a suspended license and outstanding warrants.

## Golding

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The governor, who is divorced, has said he never had a romantic relationship with Ms. Golding. He also told the *Star-Ledger* he was unaware when paying the bail that Assemblyman Cryan was the alleged victim.

The niece of former Assemblyman Harry McEnroe, Ms. Golding worked as the director of government relations for Prudential Financial in Newark. She had worked for Liberty Mutual prior to that, according to Maplewood's Columbia High School alumni directory, of which she graduated in 1987. She has a bachelor's degree from Scranton University. Formerly of South Orange, she now resides in West Orange.

The Union County Republican Committee filed an OPR request March 8 with the county "regarding usage of certain county vehicles. Specifically, the probe will center on vehicles controlled and operated by the Union County Sheriff's Office."

"While GOP State Chairman Tom Wilson is asking questions into why Governor Corzine would pay bail for the person who broke into Cryan's car, the Union County GOP is wondering why Cryan had a Union County vehicle in Trenton in the first place," GOP Chairman Phil Morin said.

In statement released Friday, Sheriff Ralph Froehlich said undersheriffs, as second in command to the sheriff, are issued county cars. He noted as a law enforcement agency, officials in the department need to be available 24 hours, seven days a week for emergencies.

*The Leader and The Times* has filed a request for a copy of the county's policy on the issuance of county cars. The sheriff's office, for which Mr. Cryan is employed, is not included in the policy because it is a law enforcement agency, a county spokesman said.

A Union resident blamed Mr. Cryan for stopping a deal to sell an industrial tract of land in Union to the township. Carl Segal reportedly had battled for years with the

## Casino Night March 31, Frazee House Benefit

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club will host a Casino Night fundraiser on Friday, March 31, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Shackamaxon Golf and Country Club, located at 1607 Shackamaxon Drive off Lamberts Mill Road in Scotch Plains.

The cost is \$65 per person and includes a buffet dinner and \$100 of casino play-money. Following the casino games, there will be a Tricky Tray drawing with great prizes. Those wishing to be sponsors of Tricky Tray prizes should contact the Rotary Club.

Funds are being raised to preserve the 18th-century Frazee House. The historic farmhouse at the corner of Raritan and Terrill roads in Scotch Plains was the setting of an encounter after the Battle of the Short Hills in June 1777. British Generals Cornwallis and Howe asked Aunt Betty Frazee for some of the bread she was baking. As the story of the confrontation goes, Aunt Betty replied, "I give this bread in fear and not in love."

The farmhouse and property was home to the Terry Lou Zoo from the 1940's to the 1990's. The zoo was a popular recreational attraction for children and home to exotic and celebrated performing animals.

For further information about the Casino Night fundraiser and the Frazee House Committee, please contact Patricia Plante at (908) 233-2162, or Denise Hughes at (908) 490-0742.

To help preserve the historic Frazee House, please send your donations by check payable to FSP Rotary Frazee House Inc., P.O. Box 426, Fanwood, NJ 07023.

township, which wanted to buy the six-acre property to build townhouses. The township committee's repeal in December of an ordinance necessary for the construction killed the project, according to *The Star-Ledger*.

A warehouse on the Magee Avenue property was destroyed by fire last Friday. Fire officials have said the blaze was likely arson, according to the *Ledger*.

Mr. Segal accused Mr. Cryan with accepting a \$2,000 donation, which was never reported on campaign finance reports. State Attorney General Zulima Farber has cleared Mr. Cryan of the charge. Governor Corzine held up Mr. Cryan's appointment as state Democratic chairman until a decision was reached on the allegation.

## Township to Hold Leaf, Gumball Collection

SCOTCH PLAINS — Leaves and gumballs will be collected in Scotch Plains beginning Monday, April 17. Residents should place all material at the curb, not in bags. Residents are also asked not to park vehicles in the street that week so that the service can be managed efficiently and safely.

Leaves should be free of debris such as branches, rocks, stumps, etc. These items can cause serious equipment damage and slow the program. Residents should also be sure to leave space near the curbline for water to flow to sewer basins.

The collection is only for leaves and gumballs. Branches and tree parts should not be put out until the township's spring clean-up in June.

## Library Book Sale

Today To Saturday

SCOTCH PLAINS — Thousands of used books, many of them like new, will be offered for sale at bargain prices today through Saturday, March 16 to 18, at the Scotch Plains Public Library, located at 1927 Bartle Avenue.

In addition to books, the sale also will feature hundreds of videos, books-on-tape, compact disks and audiotapes. A selection of practically new DVDs will be available.

Children's books will range in price from 25 cents to \$3. Pocketbook-size paperbacks will cost 50 cents each, while large paperbacks will be 75 cents to \$1. Hardcover books will be \$1.50 each. Additionally, an assortment of "coffee table" books will be available from \$2 to \$5.

There will be pre-sorted book categories including cookbooks, gardening, health, parenting, poetry, crafts, classics and sports, among others. Dealers are welcome.

Sale hours will be 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. today, Thursday, March 16; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. tomorrow, Friday, March 17, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 18. A \$5 bag sale will be held throughout the day on Saturday.

## Ferguson to Set Up

Mobile Office In SP

SCOTCH PLAINS — Staff members of Rep. Mike Ferguson, (R, 7th), will host a mobile office stop today at the Scotch Plains Municipal Building to meet with area residents and assist them with any questions they have with federal agencies.

The hours will be from noon to 3 p.m. at the municipal building, located at 430 Park Avenue.

Rep. Ferguson's staffers will meet with residents to discuss the constituent services Congressman Ferguson's office provides.

## Mountainside/Scotch Plains



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