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30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Karl Gerckens has been creating beautiful kitchens for 30 years



DON'T CONNECT SP/FW...At last week's Courage to Reconnect Scotch Plains and Fanwood meeting in Fanwood, residents, including Mayor Colleen Mahr, voiced their concerns regarding the petition to explore a SP/FW consolidation.



WHY MERGE OUR TOWNS?...Fanwood resident George Weiss questions Courage to Reconnect Scotch Plains and Fanwood and state Department of Community Affairs representatives regarding the petition to merge the two communities.

SP Farmers' Market Crash Damages Vehicles, Stands

By SARA MAGNOLA-TANER
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

SCOTCH PLAINS — Last Saturday morning, less than an hour after the Scotch Plains Farmers' Market opened for business, a motor vehicle accident occurred, resulting in damage to other vehicles as well as to vendors' stands and wares, and sending one person to the hospital.

At approximately 8:50 a.m., Scotch Plains police responded to a motor vehicle accident reported at the farmers' market, which is held in the municipal parking lot next to the municipal building on Park Avenue on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

According to Captain Brian Donnelly of the Scotch Plains Police Department, an 88-year-old Fanwood resident driving a 2000 Chevy Malibu was backing out of a parking spot when she hit the gas pedal instead of the brake. Her vehicle then struck another parked vehicle, which then hit a 19-year-old woman who was sitting in a chair at the bakery stand. The younger woman suffered a leg injury, and was taken to Overlook Medical Center in Summit. The driver of the vehicle, who received a summons for careless driving, also was taken to the hospital after complaining of chest pains, but was not injured.

"It was pandemonium for a minute," Captain Donnelly said. "It looked a lot worse than it was. The accident could have been very bad, but fortunately, there was only property damage."

Lisa Mohn, president of the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association, told *The Westfield Leader* that the driver is a frequent customer at the market.

"The driver was so shaken up, (because) the girl was so upset and in shock," Ms. Mohn said.

According to Ms. Mohn, the vehicle struck by the driver was an SUV belonging to a vendor.

"Luckily, she hit the truck," Ms. Mohn said. "The noise of her hitting it caused everyone to run and get out of the way. After the SUV bumped into the girl, (the Malibu) came through the truck and took out about four tents, eight tables

and lots of produce. Her car was sitting on top of tents and tables."

Ms. Mohn told *The Leader* that she had spoken with the woman's employer - Bake You Crazy of Berkeley Heights - and that she had "suffered from a sprained ankle."

"We have never had an incident like this in the 21 years of the market - it was a freak accident," Ms. Mohn said. "Safety is a big issue, and we want everyone to be safe, so I am planning to meet with a member of the SPPD to discuss potentially blocking off more than one lane for vendors and patrons and not having as much parking so close to the vendors."

"We don't want people to be scared. We still want our farmers' market to thrive," she said.

Mountainside

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Mr. Greiner went on to explain to the board that at full capacity, the proposed center would enroll up to 192 children, and have a staff of 22 people, but that most Primrose facilities operate at 80-percent occupancy.

"We are a nationally accredited, high-end child-care center, and we picked this area because of the demographics," Mr. Greiner said. "We look forward to being here."

After hearing additional testimony regarding the architectural plans for the proposed 12,000- to 13,000-square-foot, two-story building, the board carried the case due to lack of time. The board will continue to hear testimony on the application at its next meeting on Thursday, August 9.

The board also heard an application from NG Holdings LLC, the land acquisition company for Union Paving and Construction Company, Inc., seeking change of tenancy, change of use and change of ownership for a contractor yard, located at 1131 Route 22.

Gerard Burdi, principal of Union Paving, explained to the board that the company has been operating in Mountainside for 10 years from its current location on Globe Avenue, and recently purchased the adjacent property on Route 22, where SavATree is located.

"SavATree, who we are purchasing the building from, will remain a tenant and their operations will stay the same. We are looking to expand into the vacant building (on the lot)," Mr. Burdi explained to the board. "The layout of the property will remain the same, but we will be updating the facade."

After hearing testimony about the site plan from architect Richard Keller of Millburn, the board voted to approve the application, with conditions on signage height, landscaping upgrades being made, restrictions on the height of items stored on the property and the addition of a cut through between the companies' two properties.



TOBACCO-FREE...Rep. Leonard Lance meets with the Wheatley family of Westfield after Sara's poster was chosen as the 2012 State of New Jersey winner of an important tobacco-free educational campaign and contest. Pictured, from left to right, are: Matthew Wheatley, Maria Suarez, Anabel, Emmy and Sara Wheatley, and Rep. Lance.

WF Student Congratulated By Lance for Winning Contest

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Rep. Leonard Lance (R-7th) met with Sara Wheatley, 10, of Westfield in his Capitol Hill office this week. During the meeting, Mr. Lance congratulated Sara as the 2012 State of New Jersey winner of an important tobacco-free educational campaign and contest.

The nationwide contest, known as "Tar Wars," is a tobacco-free education program for fourth and fifth graders presented voluntarily by family physicians and other healthcare professionals to public and private schools within their communities. As part of the contest, students create a poster dis-

playing a positive message regarding what they have learned about the importance of being tobacco-free.

"I was pleased to meet with Sara and her family and commend her for her participation in this important national tobacco-free educational contest," Mr. Lance said. "Sara is a very bright, dedicated and talented young person who cares about the safety, health and well being of her friends and members of her community."

Sara is the daughter of Maria Suarez and Matthew Wheatley of Westfield. She attends Franklin Elementary School in Westfield.

Springfield Bd. of Adjustment

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According to Mr. Page, "a flat roof is going to leak - it's only a matter of when."

According to Mr. Cohen, the memorabilia is actually 100 to 200 collections, which he has acquired over his lifetime but, "more seriously, over the last 20 years." It consists of more than one million items, including vintage lunch boxes, jukeboxes, presidential election history, advertising memorabilia, aviation memorabilia, wind-up toys, historic Americana items, battery toys, tin toys, cereal boxes, comic books, circus items, candy wrappers, cap guns, postage stamps, movie theater memorabilia and more.

Board member Cynthia Siderman seemed to sum up concerns of other board members when she said, "I like

very much what this use is intending to do. I'm troubled by the fact that it doesn't have set hours that anyone, myself and say my family, can go in without an appointment and see the memorabilia."

In a foreshadowing of his vote, board member Luigi Monaco said, "I don't see any benefit to Springfield. It's a glorified storage unit."

As the board prepared for a vote, it was apparent that there were many concerns and there were indications that the board might vote it down. In the end, board members approved the variance, with Mr. Monaco delivering the only no vote.

When asked why he wanted to do this and why he was not interested in profit, Mr. Cohen said, "This is my field of dreams."

The Pointe in Garwood

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ough council meetings, stating the residents at The Pointe pay about double the taxes, about \$12,000 to \$14,000, of the average taxpayer in Garwood. In its legal argument, The Pointe relied on the Municipal Services Act, which was written to protect condominium dwellers, such as The Pointe residents, from double taxation. The Pointe residents have argued that they pay taxes and condo fees and also pay for private snow removal.

"Even if it is a private community, according to the Municipal Services Act, they [the borough] are supposed to reimburse you for part of it [snow removal]. We pay half a million dollars a year to Garwood. That is what I am upset about more than anything," Tom Pedas, a resident of The Pointe, told *The Leader*.

"The residents sadly do pay high taxes but that is a result of the market at the time of the purchase of the property. New construction taxes are based on the sale of property and some of those townhouses at the time were selling for close to \$600,000," Borough Clerk Christina Ariemma told *The Leader* in an e-mail.

"However, I do feel for these people in this situation. Let's not neglect the fact that the only service not being provided is snow removal on what the judge determined to be a 'private driveway/road.' We do provide them services and no one ever mentions that," she said.

The municipality provides The Pointe garbage, recycling, leaves and grass pickup, Ms. Ariemma said, as well as street lighting in the areas that are not private. Ms. Metz said The Pointe pays for the electricity of the street lamps on Chestnut Street and Maple Street, which are municipal streets.

Gudrun Minton of Maple Court in The Pointe said at last week's council meeting, "Here in Garwood we are being shortchanged. 512 Maple Court, you would think that is a street, but the city decided it is a driveway and we are not getting the basic services you are talking about. This is not fair. We are paying the highest taxes in this community - we should be getting something."

The plaintiff, as stated in the ruling, said that Chestnut Court and Maple Court "allow for two-way traffic and has a fire lane."

Testimony at the hearing by plaintiff witnesses Mark Epstein, chairman of the Association at The Pointe, and Russell Fernandez of Bechtel Engineering, and defendant witnesses, Police Chief Bruce Underhill and Borough Engineer Victor Vinegra, were used in the basis of the court's decision, as well as case law Bligen versus Jersey City Housing Authority as introduced by the defendant and case law Stonehill Property Owners Association versus Township of Vernon as introduced by the plaintiff.

In the Bligen case, "...the court held that a driveway located within the housing authority did not fall within the Municipal Land Use Law's

definition of a 'street'..."

The plaintiff had argued the Bligen case law was inapplicable and had cited case law Stonehill Property Owners Association versus Township of Vernon that found a paved area providing access to vehicular traffic from public streets to private homes is covered under the Municipal Services Act.

At the May 8 council meeting, William Connolly of Maple Court in The Pointe, said, "The only access for an ambulance is Maple Court. The only way a fire engine can get to me is through Maple Court. The only way a police officer in a patrol car can respond to an emergency in my unit is through Maple Court. Nonetheless, Garwood deems Maple Court to be something less than a public street. I think that is unfair."

"This case was closely watched by other municipalities here in New Jersey, as this situation has come up in other towns who are confronted with the question about access to condo neighborhoods who have signs warning non-residents to 'keep out'...these residents cannot have it both ways. If my town is expected to plow your private road, our kids should be allowed to skateboard there and ride bikes and teachers should be able to park their cars there," Mayor Patricia Quattrocchi told *The Leader* in an e-mail.

Cranford

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concerned" about the Birchwood Avenue development, asked that the township secure the services of an environmental consultant to assist with the township's fight against the project.

In other business, the committee gave unanimous approval to the 2012 capital budget, which amounts to \$1,361,800 for several projects, according to Deputy Mayor Andis Kalnins. He said \$280,000 in radio upgrades for the police department will be funded by the capital budget, along with \$265,000 earmarked for sewer repairs, \$280,000 for resurfacing of several streets, a replacement street sweeper and de-silting efforts in the Rahway River.

"This is a well-balanced capital program," he said. In response to a resident's query, Mr. Kalnins said no funding was included for repairs of the dikes along the Rahway River. He said the township is still reviewing cost estimates for the project, which range from \$1 to \$3 million.

Commissioner Kevin Campbell, while voting to approve the capital budget, said he would have preferred to have money included for dike repairs. "But a half or two-thirds of a loaf is better than none," he said.

Commissioner Edward O'Malley presented certificates to two local businesses - the Cranford Chamber of Commerce and NJDriver.com - for their efforts at adopting environmentally-sustainable practices as part of the local Go Green initiative.



RAZZ MATAZZ...The Chuck Lambert Band entertains the crowd at the Sweet Sounds Downtown Jazz Festival Tuesday night on the north side train station parking lot lawn.



THE FINEST...Scotch Plains police officers receive the Chief's Achievement Award on July 12. They were given this award for their years of service in volunteering their time to run the Scotch Plains Junior Police Academy. This year was the seventh class and the academy received rave reviews from all who attended. It allows fifth- through seventh-grade kids to experience what it is like to become a police officer. They do everything from physical training to demonstrations from the Union County SWAT team, Bomb Squad, Scotch Plains Police K-9, etc. The academy lasts for two weeks. Pictured, from left to right, are: Scotch Plains Police Chief Brian T. Mahoney, Officer Dave Lavery, Sgt. Ernesto Hernandez, Officer Jerry Brown and Det. Shawn Johnson.



JAZZ NIGHT...The Glenn Alexander Group with Orio Apsen entertain the crowd at the Sweet Sounds Downtown Jazz Festival Tuesday night at the corner of East Broad Street and North Avenue.