

ST. BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE CHURCH

All are invited to share in the Liturgy of the Holy Week

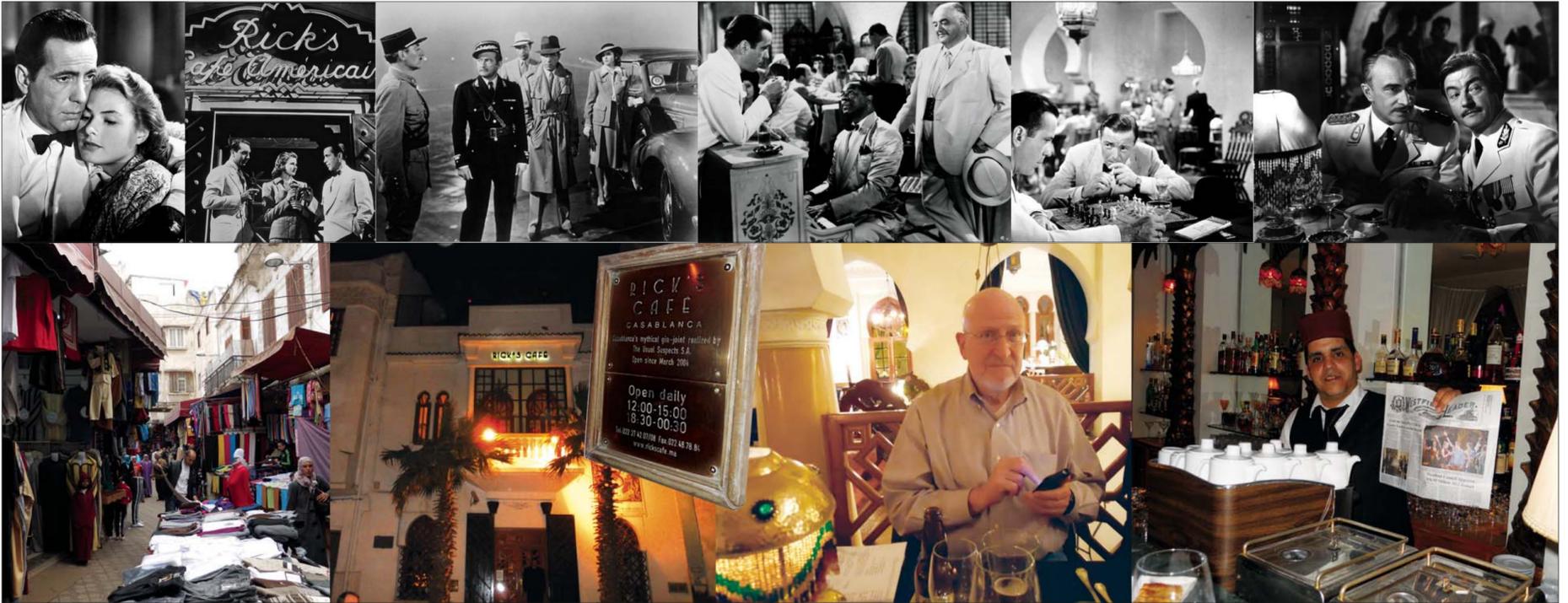
April 5 - **HOLY THURSDAY** - Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:30 pm, Night Prayer 10:00 pm

April 6 - **GOOD FRIDAY** - Children's Walk with Jesus 10:00 am
 Celebration of the Lord's Passion 3:00 pm
 Outdoor Stations of the Cross 7:00 pm



HOLY SATURDAY
 April 7 - Easter Vigil
 Mass 7:30 pm

EASTER SUNDAY
 April 8 - Masses
 7:30, 9:00, 10:30 am &
 12:00 pm



COZZABLANCA...Bob Cozzolina of Westfield recently traveled to Casablanca, Morocco, visiting Rick's Cafe, made famous by the film *Casablanca* starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman. This year marks the 70th anniversary of *Casablanca*, which was released in 1942. Photos courtesy of Bob Cozzolina

Garwood Resident Questions Petruzzelli's \$22,000 Benefit

By CHRISTINA M. HINKE
 Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

GARWOOD – Borough resident Angelo Alimonte asked the borough council Tuesday night why Councilman Louis Petruzzelli is receiving \$22,000 in healthcare benefits. Mr. Alimonte stated his opposition to paying benefits to council members and the mayor.

The borough needs to "prevent this from happening again" by creating an ordinance, Mr. Alimonte said. "Our community is too small to pay medical bills for the council and mayor," he said.

Mayor Patricia Quattrocchi told *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* that Councilman Petruzzelli is the sole council member to receive benefits. He is the longest serving councilperson and is in his second term. Though amendments to state law prohibit the practice, he has been grandfathered to receive medical benefits from the borough. His \$22,000-per-year benefits include medical, eyeglasses and dental insurance. Should he run for mayor, or otherwise have his council tenure interrupted, he would lose those benefits, the mayor said.

After hearing rumors that they could lose their unemployment benefits, the borough's crossing guards also appeared at Tuesday night's council meeting. The guards had heard from Councilman Jim Mathieu that a council committee had been discussing ways to reduce the municipal budget by looking at unemployment benefits given to the guards. Some of the crossing guards said they felt that Mr. Mathieu asking them questions about their jobs was invasive.

Linda Canear, a crossing guard for 20 years, said Mr. Mathieu came to her corner and asked her about her unemployment benefits. "In 20 years, nobody has come to my corner," she said.

"Nobody should be coming to you. A councilperson should take it up with the police chief or police commissioner," the mayor responded.

"What I wanted to do was get your [Mrs. Canear] opinion. I was a little surprised to find out later on that you felt intimidated by me," Mr. Mathieu said. "Chief (Bruce) Underhill said I could not talk to you. I was basically threatened with arrest by talking to you. I think that is basically wrong. You are my constituents ... and I want to hear what you have to say. ... I'm not going to stop talking to people. ... Put me in jail if you want to."

"I never threatened to arrest him," Police Chief Underhill told *The Times*. "He violated Title 40 by speaking to my employees."

"He is not allowed to speak to them about the terms and conditions of their employment contract," Chief Underhill added.

Several crossing guards spoke of their right to collect unemployment benefits when their services are not needed while school is out for the summer.

ment office and they said we can collect because we pay into unemployment."

Diane Cirillo said, "The law is we can collect this. We don't know why this subject was brought up by council at all. I was a crossing guard for 22 years and this has never come up."

"I think there are misconceptions," the mayor said. "There are special laws that do regulate crossing guards. Crossing guards are not seasonal. They are part-time workers. According to the law in the State of New Jersey, you are ready and willing to work and when there is no work, you are entitled to unemployment. For me, nothing will change until the laws of the State of New Jersey change."

"As a crossing guard we have to make sure each and every day we are on the corners, that our children go to school safely and go home safely. We are not there to take abuse by anyone. Our responsibility is the children first. We don't want more abuse," Ms. Snow said.

Resident Fred McCarrick said, "This, with the school crossing guards, is uncalled for. This should have never been made public by the councilman."

In other business, the council approved the hiring of Timothy Delgado as a laborer for the Department of Public Works, replacing retired laborer William Pervarnik.

The council will present its public hearing on the borough's budget on Tuesday, April 10, at 7:30 p.m. With the local Policemen's Benevolent Association's negotiations still ongoing, the budget under review includes the maximum increase the arbitrator has discussed in private meetings, Council President Keith Sluka said.

See it all on the web.
www.goleader.com

Community Invited to Budget Presentations

SCOTCH PLAINS – The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education is inviting the community to attend any of seven upcoming presentations on the 2012-2013 school budget.

The dates and locations of the presentations are as follows:
 Thursday, March 29, 7:30 p.m., Evergreen School multi-purpose room, 2280 Evergreen Road, Scotch Plains.

Monday, April 2, 7 p.m., McGinn School media center, 1100 Roosevelt Avenue, and 7 p.m., Park Middle School media center, 580 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains.

Tuesday, April 3, 7:30 p.m., Brunner School multi-purpose room, 721 Westfield Road, and 7:30 p.m., Terrill Middle School media center, 1301 Terrill Road, Scotch Plains.

Thursday, April 5, 9 a.m., Coles School media center, 16 Kevin Road, Scotch Plains.

Monday, April 16, 7:30 p.m., Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, second floor media center, 667 Westfield Road, Scotch Plains.

Cranford Council

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wildlife activity in neighborhoods.

In other business, the committee, by a 4-1 vote, approved an ordinance setting this year's sewer fees. Under the new structure, the minimal usage for sewer fee assessments is being lowered from 75,000 gallons to 25,000 gallons and the minimum fee is being lowered from \$175 to \$140 – a move that Mayor David Robinson said was good for senior citizens and others on fixed incomes. Commissioner Edward O'Malley voted against the ordinance, saying that larger-volume users such as non-profits and nursing homes were being unfairly hurt by the fees.

The township committee also introduced the 2012 municipal budget, but all five members stressed that much work still needed to be done to cut expenditures and lower what would be a 4-percent increase in the municipal portion of local property-tax bills. No details were provided on Tuesday, but more information is expected to be posted on the township's website next week.

"This is still a work in progress," said Deputy Mayor Andis Kalnins, who added that the committee was looking at several items that would lower the tax hike "significantly." He said the finance subcommittee, which he heads, would be meeting to discuss the budget on Wednesday and said that residents were welcome to speak with him at two

public hearings to be held on Tuesday, April 3 and April 17, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Briefly addressing the latest developments surrounding the Birchwood Avenue development, Township Attorney Phil Morin said the township planning board will discuss at its Wednesday, April 4, meeting proposed changes to the township's master plan to allow multi-family affordable housing at the Birchwood Avenue site. The township committee, he said, will be required to pass an ordinance to formalize such a designation.

The township needs to take these actions, Mr. Morin said, to comply with a judge's December order allowing work at the site to go forward. He said that once these steps are taken and the township certifies to the court that it is in compliance with the judge's order, then the municipal government can formally file an appeal of the judge's order.

At the start of the meeting, the committee congratulated Christopher Koscia for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America. Commissioner O'Malley presented certificates to two local businesses – Artemisia and X-tra Mile Fitness – for their efforts at adopting environmentally-sustainable practices as part of the local Go Green initiative. The flag salute was led by several members of Girl Scout Troop No. 51114.

GOP Names Candidates

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of a balanced budget amendment in Washington.

"I am a vigorous opponent of Obamacare. I voted against it. I voted to repeal it entirely. I have voted to defund it time and time again," Mr. Lance told delegates.

The Congressman also said he supports building the Keystone Pipeline as one of the solutions to lower gasoline prices.

Delegates also heard speeches from supporters of Mr. Romney, Texas Congressman Ron Paul and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich in their quest for the GOP nomination for president. No one spoke on behalf of former Pennsylvania U.S. Senator Rick Santorum.

Senator Tom Kean, Jr. (R-21, Westfield), speaking on behalf of Mr. Romney, said, "This election is about electing a leader who knows how to lead. Everything Mitt Romney has done he has done successfully" from running businesses and creating jobs to turning around the U.S. Olympics, to his governorship of Massachusetts.

State Senator Michael Doherty (R-23, Hunterdon), speaking on behalf of Mr. Paul, said Mr. Paul "has raised some very important issues about the Federal Reserve, about following the Constitution, about getting a declaration of war" from Congress before the nation goes to war.

Meanwhile, a speaker on behalf of Mr. Gingrich commented that Mr. Gingrich is "the only bold conservative in this race."

Sen. Kyrillos, who was given the Union County GOP line over challenger Joseph Rullo of Lakehurst, said since Sen. Robert Menendez

Union County Layoffs

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should cut more of the fat and leave the working guy alone," he stated.

Renne Wilder, president of the Communication Workers of America (CWA) Local No. 1080, representing social, case and clerical workers in social services, said the county hired 17 new workers in October 2011 to handle the heavy caseload.

"Then we are told last month that you have deficit, but we also were told that you knew about it last year. Why were we approved to get a new training class of 17 people last year, October 24, when you knew you were going to have a problem with money in 2012?" Ms. Wilder questioned. "So now the class is going to be out the door... and then we are going to have workers that are left that are not going to be able to do their job."

Joanne Colucci-Turbett, CWA No. 1080 vice-president who is employed as a fraud investigator with social-services, said workers handle caseloads of 600 each. "If we lose our staff we are not going to be able to keep up with that (caseload)," she warned county officials. "People are not going to be serviced properly. It's going to be a mess." She said 12 social-services staff members are being let go in the first wave of layoffs.

Another worker said she was laid off in 2010, brought back in 2011 and now is being laid off again. "We're (October social services class) all going to be let go. Just let go like that. What are we going to do?" she asked the board.

Another social-services worker suggested the freeholders give up half of their salaries for a year to reduce spending.

Brandon Thomas, representing workers at Runnells, asked the freeholders, "When are you going to lay off the guys that sit in the back, do absolutely nothing all day and make \$90,000?"

Albert Hendricks, a 19-year Runnells employee in the activity therapy department, said he and his co-workers serve Runnells residents who are often "withdrawn from their environment." He said some residents when they heard of staff layoffs

cried. Mr. Hendricks said he could find \$600,000 to cut in the Runnells budget "within five minutes."

In response to comments from employees and union representatives, Kathy Hatfield, an outside labor attorney who represented the county in the negotiations with the collective bargaining units, said the county met with the unions twice in February, the second time of which the county made a proposal to avoid layoffs.

"We got silence on that," Ms. Hatfield said. She said the county then reached out a third time when county police and Local 68 made a counter offer that was accepted by the county. She said Council 8, however, "said no" to making concessions.

"It is our hope from now until the layoffs go into effect that we will be able to sit down with people and negotiate so we can try and come up with a mutually satisfactory solution," Ms. Hatfield told the freeholders.

Union County Director of Finance Bibi Taylor said the county is looking into an early retirement incentive program for employees and is currently looking at various options to fund such a program. "At this point in time, one of the issues that we don't have is readily available cash," Ms. Taylor said. The New Jersey Division of Local Government Services must approve the incentives.

Bruce Paterson of Garwood, who is not employed by the county but regularly attends freeholder meetings, said the county has been spending too much money the past 10 years, from a \$20-million clubhouse at Galloping Hill Golf Course to the \$45-million family court project.

He said Freeholder Sullivan has five relatives employed by the county. "Are any of his five relatives being laid off?" Mr. Paterson asked. In addition, he said Assemblyman Joseph Cryan (D-20, Union), an undersheriff in the sheriff's department, is really a part-time employee who spends "most of his time down in Trenton" and should have his \$120,000 county salary cut in half.

SP BOE

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Mr. Whitehouse noted that approximately \$500,000 was set to be used for the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) replacement project to be done at the high school. He also had noted that there was a long-range plan to replace 17 HVAC units to improve both the airflow and energy efficiency to the building. He stated that these units currently date back to the original building, which is 50 years old.

Mr. Whitehouse also noted that in the summer of 2012, roof repairs need to be done at Brunner School, Evergreen School, School One and Park Middle School.

He concluded by stating that presentations of the school budget would be made for the public at all the schools in the upcoming weeks. He added that although the public would not vote on the budget, the board wanted to keep all the presentations they have always had to inform the public.

The next BOE meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 5, at 8 p.m. in the administrative offices at Evergreen School on Evergreen Avenue and Cedar Street in Scotch Plains.



Paul Lachenauer for *The Times* RECOGNIZED FOR LEADERSHIP...Union County College President Margaret McMenamin was among those women honored March 23 at the Union County Commission on the Status of Women's 20th Annual Women of Excellence Awards Dinner held at The Westwood in Garwood. Ms. McMenamin, a Springfield resident, was honored for excellence in education.