

BOE Recognizes Teachers, Adopts \$104.3-Mil. Budget

By **KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL**
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS – At the beginning of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education meeting held last Thursday, members read resolutions recognizing two district teachers for their education award nominations.

First, Margaret “Peggy” Brown was recognized for her nomination for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science. According to board member Stephanie Suriani, who read the resolution, this award “is the highest recognition that a kindergarten through 12th grade mathemat-

ics, science or computer science teacher may receive for outstanding teaching in the United States.”

Ms. Suriani stated that Ms. Brown was nominated for her “captivating energy” and for her “unwavering belief that all students can and will develop a deep understanding of complex science concepts.” Ms. Brown also was praised for her meticulously kept unit and daily planning logs. She plans and helps execute the Park Middle School Science Fair and serves as the liaison to the New Jersey Department of Education’s Teacher Leader Network.

In addition, district art teacher Bar-

bara Prestridge was nominated by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools to be recognized as the 2018 Arts Educator of the Year by the New Jersey State Teen Arts Festival.

According to Karen Kulikowski, vice-president of the board, who read the resolution, Ms. Prestridge has initiated a variety of workshops for the district’s middle-school writing teachers in pursuit of improving writing through “unique and innovative formats.” These workshops engage students in writing that is said to be richer, elaborate and more informative through puppetry, visual art and music.

It also was reported that Ms. Prestridge has led professional development for the district through arts, inspiring a range of activities for teachers and administrators that includes watercolor classes and drum circles.

Additionally, she was recognized for her work with the New York Metropolitan Opera by the National Conference for Arts Integration which allowed more than 50 students to attend MET HD Live Performances where an opera was streamed live.

In other business, the board unanimously voted to adopt the school budget, which was presented at recent board of education meetings by Deborah Saridaki, board secretary and business administrator.

According to Ms. Saridaki, student enrollment has remained consistent over the past six years. She said the number for this year has increased by one student.

Ms. Saridaki noted that 95 percent of the budget comes from local taxes, with 3.2 percent of the budget being generated by state aid. Ms. Saridaki stated that the operating budget was noted to have a total salary increase from \$51,531,254 last year to \$54,362,571 for the upcoming school year.

In addition, Ms. Saridaki stated that employee benefits have increased from

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Zoning Board Begins New Hearings On Cell Tower

By **FRED T. ROSSI**
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — The zoning board of adjustment last week began a new round of hearings on an application it had denied last year that sought to construct a cell tower on Route 22.

Horvath Towers V is proposing to build a 105-foot monopole, with a five-foot high lightning rod, on a small piece of land located on westbound Route 22 between a rental truck agency and a small strip mall. T-Mobile will then lease space on the pole and install nine antennas at the 100-foot level.

Last September, the board rejected a similar application by T-Mobile and Horvath, ostensibly because of incomplete documents in its application package but mostly due to T-Mobile’s attorney’s refusal, at nearly midnight and with several expert witnesses still yet to testify, to continue the hearing at another date. T-Mobile then filed suit and a judge remanded the matter to the zoning board.

At last Thursday’s hearing, Richard Conroy, a radio-frequency engineer, said the tower and antennas were needed because T-Mobile has an “area that doesn’t have sufficient signals and coverage,” namely a three-tenths of a square mile area that includes the northern half of Westfield Road, parts of Westfield Avenue and several of the secondary streets adjacent to those two main roads. He said about 1,571 people live in the affected area and estimated that a new tower, with the new antennas, would improve coverage for about 70 percent of them.

Mr. Conroy said T-Mobile had looked at several alternative locations including St. Bartholomew the



Trying the gears...Leah Marino of Fanwood sits in one of the oversized trucks at Sunday’s JCC of Central NJ’s Touch A Truck event. Over 40 sponsors offered their support for the event that attracted 3,000 people last year.

Frazee House Site Name To Be Addressed, Again

By **FRED T. ROSSI**
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — Mayor Alexander Smith will meet with Recreation Commission Chairman Mike Walsh and members of the committee overseeing the refurbishment of the historic Frazee House about possibly revising — again — the name of the park where the house stands.

Earlier this year, the township council formally named the six-acre site at the corner of Martine Avenue and Raritan Road Frazee House Park in a nod to the Revolutionary War-era house where a confrontation took

place in 1777 between Betty Frazee and two British generals. After input from several residents, the council last month voted to change the name to Frazee House Park at Terry Lou Acres to acknowledge the Terry-Lou Zoo that was located at the site for decades.

Members of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Rotary Frazee House Committee, which is overseeing the restoration of the house, protested the new name at the recreation commission’s meeting last week, and several members attended Tuesday’s council meeting to register their displeasure. Andrew Calamaras, the Rotary committee’s president, said the newest name was “historically inaccurate,” noting that the house itself is formally known as the Elizabeth and Gershom Frazee House and will be called by that name once the renovations are completed. He also said that is how the house is named in state and federal historic registries.

While recognizing the importance of the Terry-Lou Zoo, Mr. Calamaras nonetheless called attention to the house and its “major part of the folklore” in Scotch Plains surrounding the Battle of Short Hills. He said the plan has always been to have displays inside the restored Frazee House to

tell the story of the zoo. Mr. Calamaras said Rotary members favored a name along the lines of Aunt Betty Frazee Park or Frazee Family Park.

Bill McClintock, another Rotary member, also objected to the renaming, saying the focus should be on the house and its history. “Betty Frazee should be as famous in Scotch Plains as Molly Pitcher is in Red Bank,” he said.

No firm decisions were made by the three council members who were present at Tuesday’s meeting, but Councilwoman Rose Checchio said she favored revisiting the name change. Deputy Mayor Llewellyn Jones said council members should take some time to ponder the matter before acting. Additionally, Mayor Smith, who opposed the renaming last month, said he would meet with Mr. Walsh of the recreation commission and with Rotary members to discuss an appropriate name for the park.

In other business, the council authorized the planning board to investigate property on Jerusalem Road for possible redevelopment. The tract of land was included in the township’s affordable-housing settlement as a possible location of affordable-housing units.

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Dedicated...EMT Jerry Handsman, left, was honored for his years of service to the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad during last month’s annual Shield Awards presented by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Knights of Columbus. Pictured, from left to right, are: EMT Handsman, Scotch Plains Rescue Squad President Ed Fiedler, Grand Knight Seth McQuillan and Scotch Plains Rescue Squad Chief Sarge.

Kitchen Expansion Approved in Fanwood

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

FANWOOD — An addition to make way for a larger kitchen at 201 Marion Avenue was approved, 7 to 0, by the planning board last Wednesday.

Owner David Duncan and his family moved into the house two years ago and have realized the galley kitchen “has proved to be problematic for the size of our family,” Mr. Duncan said.

The applicant sought a coverage variance, the applicant’s planner, Jim Watson of EKA Associates, said. The current kitchen, Mr. Watson said, is “odd shaped,” measuring about 11.5 feet wide at its widest and 12 feet deep.

The applicant proposed bumping out the kitchen in the rear of the house. The deck and patio would be removed, and a new patio would be installed. The addition would expand the entire northeasterly portion of the home and come out at six

feet, 10 inches, Mr. Watson said.

Zoning Officer Ray Sullivan said the project nets 59 square feet of additional coverage. The pre-existing conditions include an under-sized lot and impervious coverage that exceeds the maximum 35 percent. The impervious coverage exists at 46 percent and the proposed kitchen expansion raises it to 47 percent, Mr. Sullivan said.

Mr. Watson said the lot is “unusually small” for the zone, at about two-thirds smaller than the minimum lot size in the zone.

To aid in mitigating stormwater runoff, the applicant had constructed a rain garden already, Mr. Watson said.

Mr. Watson affirmed that the design is in line with the master plan, in which it “talks about keeping the residential character and I think this fits in with what the reexamination talks about it,” Mr. Watson said.

“There is no substantial detriment to the master plan,” Mr. Watson said.



Selling their wares...Larry and Jesse set out their wares at the Fanwood Vintage Market on Sunday held at the Fanwood Train Station parking lot.



Junior officer...The JCC of Central NJ hosts the popular Touch A Truck on Sunday. The listing of “touchables” included a Scotch Plains Police car, motorcycle, hummer, fire department engine truck, and a dozen other trucks. For the first hour of the Sunday afternoon event, there was a “Hold the Horn Hour” for special needs children. This year’s event entertained thousands of people with over 40 sponsors offering their support.

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