

Rec. Commission Looking To Boost Scotch Hills Revenues

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

SCOTCH PLAINS – The recreation commission is looking to boost revenues at Scotch Hills Country Club and the Shady Rest clubhouse by perhaps increasing rental fees and looking at ways to maximize the usage of the building.

At its meeting on Monday evening, commission members talked about what other towns are charging the public for use of similar facilities and what ways rental fees for Shady Rest could be adjusted to increase revenues to the township, which owns the property. Commission member Colleen Gialanella said she did not

want to see costs increase for township residents wishing to rent the facility while township Recreation Director DJ Salvante asked whether fees should be different for a daytime vs. nighttime event.

At present, the facility can only handle one event per day due to staffing limitations, but Mrs. Gialanella said that “as we grow, we could do more than one event per day,” such as a children’s party in the early afternoon followed by a wedding reception in the evening. She also said that as the Shady Rest building “becomes more marketable,” it may be a good idea to hire a banquet manager to oversee functions at the facility.

In other business, Mr. Salvante said that signage is ready to be posted at grass playing fields on days of inclement weather as part of an effort to curtail field usage by outside groups that don’t have permits. The township council is expected to consider an ordinance setting out the terms and criteria for securing a playing-field permit and the penalties for using a field without a permit. The signs will be posted at appropriate times at the fields at the Union County Vocational-Technical School as well as the south side soccer field and the Route 22, Memorial Park and Brookside Park baseball fields.

Mr. Salvante also told the commission that McGinn Elementary School will be used as a rainy-day location for summer campers. Instead of canceling the day’s camp when it rains, campers will be dropped off at McGinn and have the use of the school’s gymnasium and multi-purpose room. The details still need to be worked out, he said, including how to inform parents of the venue change early in the morning and how to transport camp equipment from Brookside Park to the school.

Mr. Salvante also briefed the commission on several ongoing projects and on planned events for the summer. The new restroom building at Greenside Park has been installed, he said, but not yet usable. The playground equipment for Brookside Park has been ordered but a date for its delivery and installation has not yet been set.

July is national Parks and Recreation Month, and Mr. Salvante said he is planning for the Alan Augustine Village Green to play host to Monday night movies and Thursday night concerts as well as other activities during July. He also reminded members that the annual Easter Egg Hunt, with more than 6,000 eggs set out for the children, will be held this Saturday, April 13 at 10 a.m. at Brookside Park.



ARCADIE GAMES BUYERS...Interested buyers at last Wednesday's auction at Bowcraft Amusement Park sorted through arcade games, bags of toys, kitchen equipment and amusement rides as the area landmark prepares to close. The Route 22 property is to be developed into an apartment and townhome complex.



LOOKING FOR GOOD DEALS...Interested buyers at last Wednesday's auction at Bowcraft Amusement Park sorted through amusement rides as the area landmark prepares to close. The Route 22 property is to be developed into an apartment and townhome complex.

Board Allows Containers On Residential Property

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

SCOTCH PLAINS – A split zoning board of adjustment last week gave its approval to Raritan Road homeowners to keep 10 large storage containers on their property for a year.

Archana Parmar and Chandra Sarkar told the board at its April 4 meeting that they moved to Scotch Plains from Connecticut two years ago with, as Mr. Sarkar put it, “a lot of baggage,” namely autos and auto parts that are his hobby and which had formerly been in storage in Connecticut. The couple is planning to build a four- or five-car garage at the rear of their home at 1630 Raritan Road that they will use to store the autos and auto parts, and the zoning board will likely hold a hearing on that plan at some point in the near future.

There currently are 10 large storage containers on their property, and Mr. Sarkar said he and his wife had been unaware of the need for a permit for those containers.

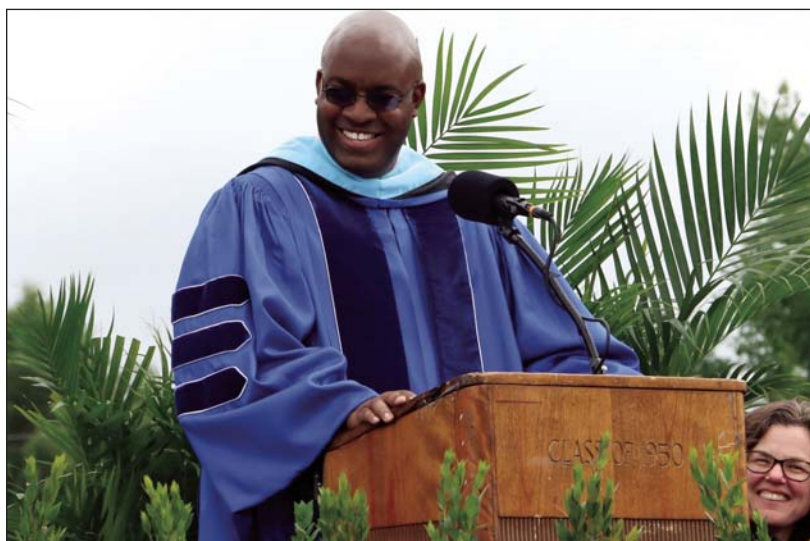
Several board members raised questions about the volume of autos

and auto parts, with Rich Duthie expressing concerns about the “thin line between a hobby and a business,” adding that the planned large multi-car garage also could give the appearance of a business being operated in a residential neighborhood. But Ms. Parmar joked that she was “not going to allow that,” telling the board she wanted to have her husband’s items “cleared out” while the garage was being built and calling the containers “an eyesore for me.” Her husband further assured the board that the cars and related parts were “purely a hobby.”

Jon Schweitzer, a nearby resident, echoed Mr. Duthie’s concerns, saying that the containers have been on the property for more than a year and that there was no guarantee at this time that a garage will be approved and then built. He felt Mr. Sarkar and Ms. Parmar were trying to put together a plan in a “piecemeal” fashion.

Another Raritan Road neighbor, Bill Wilkins, said the containers seemed like “overkill for a hobby.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



REMEMBERING DERRICK NELSON...Westfield High School Principal Derrick Nelson addresses graduates at the WHS 2018 commencement. Dr. Nelson passed away on Sunday.

Community Mourns Loss of Westfield Principal Nelson

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

WESTFIELD — Westfield High School (WHS) Principal Derrick E. Nelson, 44, died Sunday night, the school district reported Monday. Although the cause of death was not revealed, the school’s newspaper, *Hi’s Eye*, did an interview with Dr. Nelson in February about him becoming a bone marrow donor for a teenager from France who he never met.

The website nj.com reported Tuesday that the procedure was done at Hackensack University Hospital in Bergen County. Dr. Nelson’s father told nj.com that his son had been in a month-long coma from which he never recovered.

Parents and students were notified on February 22 that Dr. Nelson was dealing with a medical issue and would be absent for at least a few weeks.

The WHS community was notified Monday afternoon of Dr. Nelson’s passing, according to a letter to parents released to *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* Monday afternoon.

“Dr. Nelson touched us all with his kindness, compassion, integrity, and endlessly positive attitude. We hold him and his family in our hearts as we grieve this loss together and I know you join me in granting his family the privacy they have requested,” said Superintendent of Schools Margaret Dolan in her letter.

“As a committed educator, he understood that he was a role model at all times. He knew he was a role model to students, the staff, and for his colleagues, and he never forgot that. He had a strong moral compass, perhaps the strongest moral compass that I have ever experienced,” the superintendent said during a press conference with a half dozen or more

Westfield Soccer Association Gives Feedback on Town’s Parks Plan

By MICHAEL BONACCORSO
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

WESTFIELD – Residents provided feedback on Westfield’s public parks and recreation at last Wednesday’s public information feedback session for the town’s master plan re-examination and strategic parks plan. Mayor Shelley Brindle said the feedback sessions allow residents who participate in town programs including structured athletic programs and general community programs to provide feedback on current facilities and programming.

Attendees were given stickers to select park features and programs which peak their interests the most or they are concerned about, Mayor Brindle said.

Brandstetter Carroll Principal Patrick Hoagland said his firm will review the conditions of all Westfield’s public parks in the coming months. Resident feedback through an online survey and at Wednesday’s information session will help the firm put together a summary for the master plan, Mr. Hoagland said.

The summary will allow Mayor Brindle and the town council to address timelines for any capital projects to improve parks or public open space and enhance desired programming, Mr. Hoagland said.

According to resident feedback at Wednesday’s meeting, the parks features which received the most stickers or which are considered the highest priority were “a turf multi-purpose field installation, maintaining natural areas and park restroom maintenance,” Mr. Hoagland explained.

Westfield Soccer Association Field and Operations Vice-President Eric Judka said a multi-purpose turf field would allow for a more usable athletic space. He said turf fields are often lined for up to five separate

sports.

He said a turf soccer field would benefit the soccer program as the youth league would not have to travel to other towns for games, stated Mr. Judka.

“You are seeing Westfield money and athletes leave town to attain open field time,” Mr. Judka told *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*.

The soccer association will pay for field time in Garwood and other municipalities, stated Mr. Judka. While the towns have been “very accommodating,” money could be saved in the long run for the soccer association including recreation, travel, and club teams, stated Mr. Judka.

Mr. Judka said the association is “expressing the need” for a turf field, but he estimates other recreation sport teams would benefit to the same degree the soccer association would benefit from a cost savings and increased field time perspective.

He said turf fields allow for numerous games to be played in various conditions disregarding “time consuming and costly field repairs” from frequent use, stated Mr. Judka.

Soccer teams who would benefit from a turf field would be “Fun of Soccer,” the Westfield recreation league, Westfield’s travel teams, and

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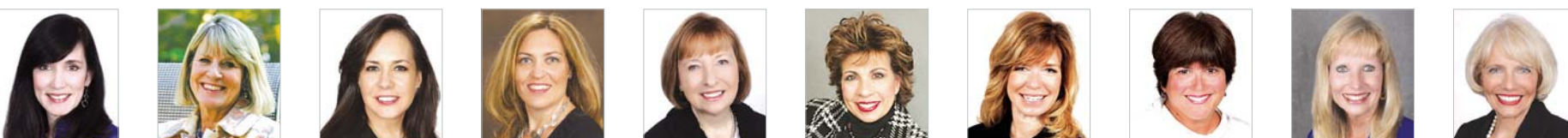
POWER MEETING...Scotch Plains Councilman Ted Spera, left, joins Mayor Alexander Smith, Recreation Commissioner Deanna Dell Bene and Redevelopment Coordinator Tom Strowe at Sunday morning's pancake breakfast sponsored by the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club. Proceeds from the breakfast are going to the Frazee House committee overseeing refurbishment of the historic home.

PAGE INDEX

Regional	2-3	Education	16
Editorial	4-5	Sports	9-13
Police	14	Real Estate	9-18
Community ...	5-7, 14	Classifieds	15
Obituary	6	A&E	17-18



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