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**MEET AND GREET...** At Scotch Plains' National Night Out event on Tuesday evening, police officers got to meet and talk with residents as part of the department's outreach efforts.



**A COMMUNITY RESPONDS...** Westfield Mayor Shelley Brindle addresses a somber crowd at a vigil in Mindowaskin Park on Monday night following mass shootings over the weekend in El Paso, Tex., and Dayton, Ohio. At the vigil, the townspeople honored the victims of the recent gun violence and showed their support to the families of those who lost their lives. Audience members were handed cards with the names of the deceased.

## Library Is Modernizing; Planning Fall Programs

By FRED T. ROSSI  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

SCOTCHPLAINS—While she waits to find out what the coming downtown redevelopment will mean for the township library, director Michelle Willis says, "we're busier than we've ever been."

And it has been busy even during the typically slower summer months, she told *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*. Last week, she said, she noticed all the chairs in the adult section were in use. And numbers from last year back up her point about the library on Bartle Avenue continuing to be a popular spot. More than 120,500 visits to the library were recorded in 2018, with 170,256 items being borrowed by the nearly 22,000 card holders.

Currently, she and her staff have been working on "trying to modernize the library" by attaching electronic tagging to all items, a process that, once it is completed and the proper equipment is installed in the fall, will enable patrons to self-checkout items and also allow for better inventory control.

Meanwhile, Ms. Willis is striving to expand the library's non-physical book collection with more e-books and audio books, plus streaming video and music as well as online learning. Even if card holders rarely come into the library itself, these services give them 24-hour-a-day options that can be accessed on a computer, a smart phone or a tablet.

Ms. Willis said the library will have an open house on Thursday, October 10, so that residents, educators and others can meet the library staff, explore some of the online resources and other new materials and learn about some of the programs and special events being planned. Last year, the library featured 888 different programs, and more are planned for this fall and early winter. "We've always got something going on," she said.

With state elections coming up in three months, the library on Tuesday, September 24, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., will host a voter registration drive, and on Saturday, October 5, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., voters will get to try out one of Union County's new voting machines. The once-a-month "Sunday Sounds" concerts will resume on September 8, with the October program taking place on Saturday, October 5, followed by

Sunday afternoon performances on November 3, December 1 and January 12.

The library also will host several speakers to talk about their most recent works. On Thursday, October 24, Michael Gabriele will speak about his new and updated book on New Jersey diners, while Jon Gerner on Thursday, November 7, will talk about his books "The Ice at the End of the World," which is about Greenland, and "The Idea Factory," which is about Bell Labs and some of the important inventions that came out of that facility. Mallory Mortillaro, a curator with the Hartley Dodge Foundation, will talk on Thursday, November 14, about her discovery of a marble bust of Napoleon that was carved by Rodin and was long considered to have been lost.

A host of children's programs also is planned, including weekly activities starting on Thursday, September 19, that are designed for the kindergarten-through-second grade age group and include sessions on making paper airplanes, sun dials, catapults and ziplines.

It is expected that more concrete plans for redevelopment of the downtown business district will be made public next month and where a new library will be situated will be part of that process. Ms. Willis told *The Times* she does not know much more than the public about where a new facility will be located, but she emphasized the importance of having a larger and more modern facility, "to serve the community better" and "to accommodate all the people who use it every day," including students and their tutors after school along with the everyday visitors. "There are not enough tables and chairs" in the current building, she said, nor are there enough meeting rooms that can be used by community groups.

She is hopeful that, as the redevelopment process goes forward, funding from the \$125-million library bond ordinance approved by voters two years ago will be available to finance part of the construction of any new library. She said she has heard that regulations have been formulated by the state and that a public comment period currently is underway for interested parties to provide input on those rules. But "it looks promising," she said, that funding could become available just about the time any new construction might be ready to get underway.

## Vaporizers

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the January meeting to go in effect into February.

"We're not taking away the right to sell. We're just reinstating the licenses," Board of Health President Dr. Lawrence Budnick said.

Ms. Avallone said businesses that are selling vaporizers currently will not be told to abruptly stop as of tomorrow. Setting a date in the future allows the businesses time to adjust to the policy change, Ms. Avallone explained.

Dr. Budnick said businesses will be able to apply for licenses depending on their business line separate of vaporizers, meaning stores which specialize in vaporizer products or nicotine products will not be banned from downtown Westfield.

In other business, board of health member Thomas K. O'Neill resigned after having served as a board member for 20 years, Dr. Budnick announced. Mr. O'Neill served the board of health as president and vice-president.

Ms. Avallone said Mr. O'Neill moved out of Westfield, making him ineligible to finish his term on the board.

## Suspects Sought In Robbery of Amoco

WESTFIELD — Police are looking for two suspects wanted in the robbery Monday at 9:37 p.m. at the Westfield Amoco at 421 Central Avenue.

Chief Battiloro stated that the alleged suspect, described as a black male, approximately 18 to 20 years of age wearing a black hooded sweatshirt, approached the outside station attendant, made an apparent firearm tucked in his waistband visible, and demanded money.

Police said the suspect was accompanied by another young black male. Both subjects subsequently fled the area on foot, traveling east on East South Avenue. Patrol officers conducted an exhaustive search of the area, but were unable to locate them.

The Westfield Police Department was assisted by the Union County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit, as well as patrol officers from the Union County, Garwood, Cranford, Kenilworth and New Jersey Transit Police Departments.

No one was injured during the incident and the investigation remains ongoing, police said.

Anyone with information relating to this investigation is asked to please contact Detective Dennis DaSilva of the Westfield Police Department by telephone at (908) 789-6085 or by e-mail at [ddasilva@wpdnj.org](mailto:ddasilva@wpdnj.org).

## Former Fanwood Police Chief Anthony Parenti Dies at 87



Anthony J. Parenti

By GRETA FRONTERO  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

FANWOOD — Former Fanwood Police Chief and borough councilman Anthony J. Parenti passed away last Thursday at Overlook Medical Center surrounded by his family.

Born on May 29, 1932, the 87-year-old's life was dedicated to public service, including 43 years with the Fanwood Police Department.

Mr. Parenti was born in Plainfield, and attended Plainfield High School. Following graduation, Mr. Parenti served in the United States Air Force during the Korean Conflict from 1951 to 1955. He joined his brother, George, at the Plainfield Police Department after being honorably discharged from the military, and then

moved to Fanwood in 1957, where he and his wife lived for over 60 years. He quickly rose through the ranks of the Fanwood Police Department to become the youngest police chief in New Jersey.

During his time on the police force, Mr. Parenti also founded and served as president of the New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association for over 30 years, where he drafted legislation for traffic safety regulations at the state and federal level. Numerous New Jersey legislative bills were passed with the help of Mr. Parenti, including the infamous Right Turn on Red Law and the legislation that increased the drinking age to 21 in the state.

According to current Fanwood Police Chief Richard Trigo, Mr. Parenti "lived a life of dedication to his country, his town, and his community at large." He said, "His contributions are felt every day throughout the state, from his role on the Traffic Officers Association, and his death leaves a void in the Fanwood police community."

While president of the Traffic Officers Association, Mr. Parenti also served as chair of the State Commission on Drunk Driving. He later retired from the Fanwood Police Department and became the director of Union County's John H. Stamler Police Academy from 1998 to 2007.

"He affected the lives of hundreds of police officers in his role at the Union County Police Academy," Chief Trigo said. "He will be greatly

missed, but he will certainly never be forgotten."

Chief Parenti also was president of both the Union County Police Chiefs Association and the New Jersey State Police Chiefs Association, and was a member of the New Jersey Police Honor Legion, which recognizes the "Finest of the Finest" for their acts of heroism and valor.

Further continuing his life of public service, Mr. Parenti also served two terms as a Fanwood councilman from 2008 to 2013.

"Tony Parenti served the community in so many different ways — in the military, as a longtime member of the Fanwood police, and later as a councilman," Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr said in a statement. "He always saw the person, not the party. He was fair, smart, and honorable. I loved serving with him, and he loved Fanwood to the core."

Mr. Parenti was born to parents Peter and Anna, and was the youngest brother of six siblings: Albert, George, John, Armando, Laura and Josephine. He was predeceased by his parents and siblings and is survived by his wife, Sally, as well as three children, nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

His children include Nancy Fela Parenti, North Plainfield Police Chief William Parenti and Somerset County Assistant Prosecutor Anthony J. Parenti, Jr.

Services were held Monday from Memorial Funeral Home in Fanwood.

## Fanwood Council

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site and the old Young's Paint site.

The plan additionally will bring new sidewalks, street furniture, such as benches, and new lighting to the area. It was reported that the lighting and street furniture would be funded through grants.

The plan did feature some recommendations from the borough's planning board that were adopted into the ordinance. These include adding green infrastructure, which includes using pervious materials; incorporating a streetscape design that is defined in the borough's existing land use ordinance and zoning rules; and

clarifying the sidewalk areas of the project.

In other business, it was noted that the borough's annual Fanny Wood Day street fair has been scheduled for Sunday, September 15, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. It also was noted that this will be the festival's 24th year.

The next Fanwood Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 19, at 7 p.m., at Borough Hall, located at 75 North Martine Avenue.

## Ntl. Night Out

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"It's important to be interactive in the community. It's important for the community to know we're friends, we're just here to help," Cranford Fire Chief Daniel Czech said. A positive relationship between public safety and the community requires work from both sides, Chief Czech added. "You can tell by the crowd tonight that it's working."



**REMEMBERING LT. KOSHNEY....** Chaplain Father Tom Quinn blesses the new fire truck, Engine 2 Pierce Pumper on an Enforcer Chassis. Engine 2 is dedicated to Lt. Brian Koshney, who passed away last August from cancer. He served the department for 23 years as a volunteer.



**TALKING POLITICS...** Cranford Township Committee member Mary O'Connor, pictured left, talks with Mountainside Borough Council Republican candidate Donna Pacifico at the Union County Republican Committee annual barbecue held at the home of Union County GOP Chairman Glenn Mortimer in Mountainside on July 30.



**FIRST-HAND VIEW...** EMT Shreya Kachroo hosts young visitors in the Fanwood Rescue Squad ambulance 578 at Tuesday's Fanwood's National Night Out event at LaGrande Park.