

THE TIMES

ONLY NEWSPAPER WITH COMPLETE SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD NEWS

VOLUME 13, NO 43

SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD, N.J. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1972

15 CENTS A COPY

Campaign Draws To A Close - Vote For Your Choice Next Tuesday

Campaign '72 - in only four more days it will be over. It's a particularly meaningful election year in both Scotch Plains and Fanwood. In Scotch Plains, the entire governing body turns over, as the electorate chooses five new Councilmen who will comprise the new form of government - a Council-Manager form approved in a voter referendum last year. In Fanwood, the balance of power is at stake, as two Democrats seek to upset the Republican dominance on the Fanwood Borough Council.

Seeking election in Scotch Plains are eleven candidates, including the five incumbent Republicans who now serve as Councilmen, five Democrats, and an Independent.

The Republicans are Alan M. Augustine, Walter Grote, William Kitz, B. Lawrence Newcomb, and Albert Theurer.

Augustine is an automobile dealer, graduate of Lafayette College, and Past President of N.Y., N.J. and Conn. Chrysler-Plymouth Dealers Association. He has served on the Committee for two years.

Grote joined the governing body in January, 1971. A graduate of Upsala, he holds an MBA from Rutgers and is a Systems Analyst for Humble Oil.

Kitz, a lifelong resident of Scotch Plains, is associated with

Henry Kitz and Sons, a local nursery. Kitz served for four years on the Township Committee, and as Mayor during two of those years.

B. Lawrence Newcomb is a newcomer to the government. He joined the Committee this year. A 16-year resident with a BS from Bucknell, he is an Engineer and Training Director for N.L. Industries, and Legislative Aide to the Speaker for the State Assembly.

Theurer, who is mayor at the present time, has served two terms as Mayor and on the Township Committee. He has lived in Scotch Plains for 20 years and has been in dental practice for 28 years.

Continued On Page 9

Freeholders Meeting Hears Plains Residents On Park Avenue Widening

Last Thursday evening about 30 residents of Scotch Plains and Fanwood, including Township councilmen, clergy, civic leaders and members of the Environmental Action Group, voiced strong opposition to the widening of Park and Martine Avenues at the Union County Board of Freeholders meeting.

Mrs. Karen Levy, Coordinator of Preserve Park-Martine Avenue Committee of the Environmental Action Group, appealed to the Freeholders that such widening would destroy magnificent trees in the area, including the historic "Fanwood Oak," and would cause serious bottleneck delays. She pointed out that top priority should not be given to concrete pavement and the rapid movement of automobiles which ultimately pollute our environment. She also read a letter from Scotch Plains Mayor Albert T. Theurer which said that the Township Committee wants "to maintain the rural atmosphere of our town that so many people have moved here to

obtain. We don't want our town to be used as a highway for innumerable cars and trucks." In his letter, he suggested that Rock Avenue in Plainfield be used as a connector for Route 78 and said that Plainfield Mayor Frank H. Blatz, Jr. was receptive to the idea.

Deputy Mayor Walter Grote told the board that the committee would do anything to save Park Avenue and the trees there and that the Township would be willing to set parking limits in front of the municipal building.

William Kluckas, president of Environmental Action Group, suggested that the alternate plans to the widening be used. William Franklin, representing the Scotch Plains Park Avenue Improvement Committee, claimed that the Park Avenue businessmen are opposed to the move. Mr. Franklin stated that his count came to 442 trees which would have to be cut down for the widening. A concerned parent mentioned the schools and churches located on Park and Martine Avenues and that such widening would provide dangerous situations for many children. Father Sweeney of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on Martine Avenue, expressed his concern for the parishioner who attend Mass there. A concerned resident asked "hasn't enough beauty in New Jersey been destroyed by concrete already?"

Listening Post

The regular monthly Listening Post session conducted by Scotch Plains Committeemen Alan Augustine, Walter Grote and B. Lawrence Newcomb has been set for Saturday, from 10 to 12 noon. The sessions have been planned by the committeemen in order to provide for Scotch Plains residents an opportunity to present their views, seek information, and inform themselves on questions of concern. The public is invited to the informal meeting, which is held on the first Saturday morning of each month in the Committee Chambers, Municipal Building, Park Avenue, Scotch Plains.

Freeholder Thomas W. Long stated that he expected a decision to be made on or about November 7th.

Mother And Two Tots Die In Fanwood Fire

Blaze Of Undetermined Origin Guts LaGrande Avenue Home

As Fanwood children paraded and partied Tuesday night in the borough's annual Halloween celebration at LaGrande Park, scarcely 500 feet away down LaGrande Avenue stood a grim reminder of a macabre Halloween tragedy which occupied the borough firemen for most of the day. A burned out home at 125 LaGrande Avenue was mute testimony to the ravaging fire which claimed the lives of three Fanwood residents.

The victims were Mrs. Christine Sandra Hooper, 27, and her two children, Kenneth, 3 and Darleen, 7 months. They were the family of Douglas Hooper, who was at work at the time the fire started. Hooper is a speech teacher at Scotch Plains - Fanwood High School.

The cause of the early morning blaze is still under investigation by the Fanwood Fire Prevention Bureau. Neighbors reported hearing a sound like a door slamming and, by the time fire apparatus arrived on the scene, Chief Piekarski reported that the entire front of the home was engulfed by flames. He and Police Safety Officer Anthony Parenti said they had no idea why the victims were unable to get from the home. The three were found in street clothes in a rear first floor bedroom. They were carried out by Fireman Jack Kenyon.

According to Parenti, a report will be received from the county medical examiner on the cause of death. Piekarski said all three victims appeared to be either dead or overcome when found, and none appeared to have been burned to death.

The initial call was received at headquarters at 10:36 a.m. and the fire was reported under control within approximately 35 minutes.

The small Cape Cod home lies at the foot of Helen Street, and is one of several of the same size and style. The homes have first floor living rooms with kitchens behind, and two bedrooms, also on the first floor. Some of the homes have finished second floors. The Hooper home, like the others, is valued in the \$36,000 range, according to Fanwood Tax Assessor Arthur Gaylord.

The Hoopers had occupied the home since August 6, 1970.

The fire apparently struck primarily on the right side of the home, which housed the living

room and kitchen. This area was a complete disaster, with only open rafters and charred beams remaining. The walls of the front of the house were burned out on the right side, and approximately three-quarters of the roof was gone.

When the fire first began, huge billows of gray smoke could be seen for blocks.

In contrast, just a few feet from the home in the small backyard lay an undamaged, shiny two-wheeler bike and a wheelbarrow.

The rear bedroom in which the three were found had small, high casement. Piekarski said the small, sliding windows made entry of the home more difficult.

Between 20 and 25 of Fanwood's volunteer firemen were on the scene, with a 1,000 gallon pumper and a quadruple combination truck (ladder, hose, pumper). Five lines of hose were playing on the house, with not over 1,500 feet of hose used because of the close proximity to a hydrant just across the street.

The Fanwood Rescue Squad was assisted by the Plainfield Rescue Squad, and the Plainfield Police Department assisted in rerouting traffic. The street was closed off for approximately an hour and a half.

Mrs. Hooper was the former Christine Sandra Bibighaus, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Alexander Bibighaus. Her father is pastor of the Missionary Alliance Church, Somerset Street, North Plainfield.

The fire marked the first loss of life through fire in ten years of Fanwood history. Ten years ago, a fire at the Foster home in Arlene Court resulted in death for two women. Three years ago, on the Fourth of July, the Fanwood fire company were called out for the biggest fire in Fanwood's history - a factory fire at Marlow Lights plant on South Avenue, Crest.

Former Mayor Of Scotch Plains Dies

Russell W. Patterson, a former Mayor of Scotch Plains, died at his home, 4 Clydesdale Road, Scotch Plains on Friday, October 27, 1972. Mr. Patterson was 65 years old, and had retired this year as vice president of sales for Block Drug Company in Jersey City. He had been with the company for 35 years.



RUSSELL W. PATTERSON

A native of Camden, Patterson moved to Scotch Plains from Rahway in 1950.

He was active in many civic endeavors. He served for two terms on the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education and was Board President in 1953. He then served on the Township Committee for one-and-a-half terms and was Mayor in 1965.

Last year, Mr. Patterson was President of South Employment Service. He was active for many years with the Boy Scouts, serving first as a cubmaster and later on the local Executive Committee.

Patterson also was associated with the local committee for the Union County Psychiatric Clinic, with the Red Cross, and as a fundraiser for the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA.

His survivors include his wife, Mrs. Cathleen Pease Patterson; three sons, Phillip R. Patterson of Houston, Richard P. Patterson of Denver, and Robert H. Patterson at home, and a sister, Mrs. Margaret Coleman of Wildwood Crest.



Fire gutted house where mother and two young children died.