

# THE TIMES

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SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD, N.J.

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## Charges Against Fanwood Police And Youth Will Go To County Prosecutor

Cases involving two Fanwood patrolmen and a youth arrested by the two officers on February 19 will be forwarded to the Union County prosecutor for eventual disposition by the Grand Jury, following a preliminary hearing conducted by Fanwood Borough Court Judge Melvin Whitken last Monday night. The patrolmen are Officers Mitchell Arnold and Robert Furchak. The youth is 19-year old Carl Napolitano of Farley Avenue, Scotch Plains.

Napolitano recently charged Patrolman Arnold with malicious assault, threat to take a life, misfeasance and malfeasance and false arrest. He charged Furchak with assault and battery and with aiding and abetting Arnold in malicious assault, threat to take a life, malfeasance and misfeasance. Napolitano has been charged by the patrolmen with being disorderly, threat to kill, and possession of a dangerous weapon.

In such probable cause proceedings, no decisions regarding guilt or innocence are made. The hearings are held to establish to the satisfaction of the municipal judge that offenses such as those charged might have been committed, in which case he forwards the cases to the prosecutor.

The incident which resulted in the charges originated with a telephone call from a Locust Avenue resident complaining of excessive noise around 12:15 a.m. on February 19. The two patrolmen were dispatched to the scene to investigate.

According to Furchak's testimony, the two officers stopped the automobile driven by Napolitano. Furchak took license and registration and asked if Napolitano had been blowing his horn and received a negative reply. The two patrolmen returned to their vehicle, where Furchak began to write a report, Furchak pointed out.

Officer Arnold then exited from the patrol car, Furchak testified, after which Furchak heard screaming and yelling from the Napolitano vehicle. Furchak said he went to investigate, and Arnold informed him Napolitano was under arrest at which point Napolitano was told to leave his car. Furchak said he had to be pulled from his car and was handcuffed and brought to headquarters by himself and Arnold. Furchak said Napolitano was swearing, uncooperative, nasty and refused to cooperate on questioning at headquarters. He also said Mr. Napolitano threatened to kill the officers.

At headquarters, Furchak said Napolitano's father was summoned. He added that the youth complained of pain in his right hand, the two officers and his father accompanied him to Muhlenberg Hospital.

Furchak said when the two officers returned to Locust Avenue

to the scene of the arrest, they found a gravity knife and beer mugs in the automobile.

Under cross examination, Furchak denied having seen Arnold's gun out of its holster, denied having seen a billy club in Arnold's hand, and denied having kicked Mr. Napolitano following the placement of handcuffs.

Furchak said when Napolitano got out of his automobile, he grabbed for Arnold's chest.

Patrolman Arnold did not take the stand.

Napolitano alleged that, early on February 19, he picked up a hitchhiker and dropped her off where requested, at Locust and South Avenues. He had just turned into Locust, he said, when he was pulled over by the officers.

He gave them license and registration and explained, when asked, that he was on his way home, he said. The two officers asked away, but Napolitano said Arnold returned and asked and over what Napolitano was doing on the street and where he was going. Arnold told him to turn his car around and Napolitano said he asked why. Napolitano said Arnold then told him to exit from the car and put a gun to his temple and said he would blow Napolitano's brains out.

Napolitano said he yelled for help, and Officer Furchak came running. As Furchak approached, Napolitano claimed Arnold was holding the gun at his head in the window of the car. Officer Furchak told him to calm down, Napolitano said. He further claimed that Officer Arnold returned to the patrol car at that point and returned with a nightstick. Napolitano said, that as he tried to explain to Furchak that he wouldn't leave his car as directed until Arnold pulled away, Arnold hit him with the stick. Furchak pulled him from his car, claimed, whereupon Arnold beat him with the stick. Furchak slapped, punched and kicked him in the back of the neck, both officers put him in the patrol car and took him to headquarters.

At headquarters, Napolitano said he had to ask several times before he was permitted to call his father. He said he was taken to Muhlenberg by his father and the officers, where his injury was diagnosed as bruises of the finger and wrist.

Under cross examination, Napolitano said he had not sworn at the officers on Locust Avenue but had later in headquarters. He further testified he had two knives in the car, neither of which were switchblades. He stated that he had refused to get out of his car only because Arnold was nearby and had told Furchak he would leave the car only if Arnold left.

## Plains Council OK's \$3,595,525 Budget

### George Venezia

George Venezia, a 35-year resident of Scotch Plains and a 20-year secretary of the Recreation Commission, died on Sunday, March 25, 1973, at Muhlenberg



Hospital. Mr. Venezia, who lived at 2125 Mapleview Court, was 60 years old.

Mr. Venezia was born in Elizabeth and moved to Scotch Plains in 1938. He owned the Stanbery Inn, Route 22 and was also engaged in the real estate business. He served as secretary of the Recreation Commission from 1957 to 1967, was past president of the Scotch Plains Republican Club and a member for 25 years. He was a charter member of the board of directors of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood YMCA and a charter member of the Scotch Plains Players.

Two of the major projects undertaken during Venezia's years with the Recreation Commission were building the Scotch Hills Golf Course and the first municipal park and playground.

Just hours before his death, Mr. Venezia had attended a dinner-dance held to benefit an Italian day nursery.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Anne Burke Venezia; a daughter, Mrs. Donna McGarry of Chantilly, Virginia; three sisters, Mrs. Rose Woolman of Elizabeth, Mrs. Mary Caliendo of Cranford, and Mrs. Margaret Schettino of Westfield; two brothers, Robert and Frank, both of Elizabeth, and three grandchildren.

### Plan C. of C. In Plains And Fanwood

A planning meeting has been called by the Plainfield Area Chamber of Commerce for April 3rd at 8:00 p.m. at the Scotch Plains Library to discuss plans for the formation of a Fanwood-Scotch Plains Chamber Division.

According to Samuel J. Damiano, Executive Vice President of the Plainfield Area Chamber of Commerce, preliminary indications show a favorable attitude towards the formation of such a division.

Both Mayor Theodore F. Trumpp of Fanwood and Mayor William Kitz of Scotch Plains have indicated approval of the plans and will be on hand that evening.

Anyone interested in learning more is welcome to attend the meeting.

### Plea To Allocate \$25,000 For Day Care Center Fails

A last-ditch plea for funds to permit opening of a day care center here was denied to the Committee for a Scotch Plains-Fanwood Day Care Center by the Scotch Plains Council on Tuesday. The day care committee members attended a public hearing on the 1973 annual municipal budget, seeking an amendment which would have allocated \$25,000 for day care as a new budget line item.

Lou Sperber of the committee explained that the center had been scheduled to open this month, a variance for operation at Saint John the Baptist Church had been approved by the Scotch Plains Board of Adjustment and Council, and funding had been lined up. Funding was anticipated from "seed" money pledged by private sources and civic groups here, to be matched by Title 4A federal funds on a 3 to 1 basis. However, the federal funds depended upon the eligibility of the day care users.

Recent pending changes in eligibility requirements have completely changed the plans of the local committee. Heretofore, when the committee qualified for the federal funds, which have already been received for three months, a qualifying family would carry a total family income of \$9,800. Changed laws would drop that total to \$5,400 per four-member family, making it virtually impossible to find enough local families to qualify. Therefore, the Committee is now seeking some source other than the federal one with its tighter income restrictions.

The total annual operating budget of the center, which would provide all day care and hot meal under a professional staff, would be \$35,000 for 20 children. The Committee asked municipal funds of \$25,000, to be supplemented by tuition of students and private donations.

After a caucus to discuss the question, Mayor William Kitz announced that, although day care here is undeniably a worthwhile goal, it is the opinion of the Council that there are many unanswered questions and the area of day care is one wherein many

other charitably oriented groups might similarly seek funds. It was not felt that this was an appropriate time to make this type of allocation, Kitz said.

The annual municipal budget for 1973 totals \$3,595,525, and was approved unanimously. It brought forth a smattering of comment from two or three citizens.

Thomas Van Vliet questioned an appropriation of \$37,000 for Scotch Hills Golf Course. With \$30,000 in anticipated revenues from the public golf facility, the course costs \$7,000 from general taxation. He favors more annual cleanups instead.

Kitz noted that bids had been sought for more than one annual cleanup but costs were too high. The golf course fills a recreational need for a category of the citizenry, just as parks and schools fill needs of others, Councilman Albert Theurer pointed out.

Van Vliet favors opening the Scotch Hills clubhouse for a teen meeting place. Kitz said extensive renovations will eventually permit more utilization of the building.

The total amount to be raised by taxation for municipal purposes in 1973 is \$1,321,440, up \$481 over 1972. The areas of increased costs include salaries and wages, up \$79,360, and other expenses up \$101,810, offset by a minus of \$50,000 in capital improvements and \$3,128 in municipal debt service.

Anticipated revenues jump \$154,085, over 1972. Among capital improvements for 1973 will be two new fire trucks, storm and sanitary sewers and stream maintenance and improvements.

## Seeks Candidates For Fanwood Council Seats

Mrs. Joan Geer, Republican Municipal Chairman in Fanwood, has invited any interested citizen of the Borough who would like to be considered for the GOP endorsement as a candidate for the Borough Council to contact her or any member of the Municipal Committee.

"Although it seems we just finished a Presidential election, the filing deadline for candidates in the 1973 primary election is less than one month away," Mrs. Geer pointed out. "The Republican organization will be meeting in mid-April to consider its endorsement of two candidates for council, and we are anxious to meet with any citizen who would like to serve the Borough in this capacity."

Mrs. Geer also urged any organization in town who wished to sponsor a candidate to call her at 889-2129.

Mrs. Geer pointed out that the seats presently held by Democrats John Swindlehurst and Ste-

ven Ritter will be contested this year. "Three years ago these men won their elections by 15 and 42 votes, respectively, and they have certainly had ample opportunity to be a constructive minority on the Council. Instead, they have been obstructionists, partisan and divisive and I believe our Borough is ready to return to six working Councilmen."

Mrs. Geer explained that the 1973 ballot will include the Governor, one State Senator, two Assemblymen, the Surrogate, the Register of Deeds and Mortgages, three Freeholders and the two local Councilmen.

### Did You Get Newsletter?

Any resident of Scotch Plains who did not receive a copy of the "Township Newsletter" may obtain a copy by calling the Township Managers office, 322-6700 EXT. 27