



SCOTCH PLAINS

THE TIMES



FANWOOD

VOLUME 19 NO. 6

SCOTCH PLAINS • FANWOOD, N.J.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1977

15 CENTS

Seniors Enjoy Lunch



Some of the 125 lunch guests, enjoying baked chicken and fixings at a new St. John's Senior Citizen activity.

New Senior Citizen Lunch Debuts Here

The setting was a lovely paneled dining room, highlighted by brass colonial lantern chandeliers and gold tablecloths. The menu? baked chicken, noodles, peas, salad, bread and butter, and fresh fruit. Sound expensive? Believe it or not, the description is that of a brand new free lunch program that debuted here on Tuesday.

Close to 125 people gathered — all of them 60 years or more — for a new senior-citizen program, to be held daily at St. John the Baptist Church on Morse Avenue in Scotch Plains. Everybody's invited, white and black, male and female — with one restriction, that of age. To participate, you must be at least 60 years old.

The daily free lunch program reflects deeply the interests of Rev. Kelmo Porter, the pastor of St. John's. Rev. Porter serves 15,000 elderly each month, as Executive Director of the Newark Senior Citizen Commission. In that role, his finger is on the pulse of all the sources of funding and help for senior citizens. His concern spreads far beyond the senior citizens of

Newark, and into his own community.

Rev. Porter had already established a senior citizen center at St. John's, where seniors come for referral services, trips for the elderly, and limited recreational services. He turned to the Union County Anti-Poverty Program and the Title Seven Older Americans Act for funding for a meal program to add to the other senior citizen offerings. On Tuesday, Peter Shields, Director of the Union County Office on the Aging, and George Williams, Deputy Director of Union County Community Services, were on hand to initiate the new lunchtime offering, as was Scotch Plains Mayor Ann Wodjenski.

Board of Education Gets \$185,000 Bid On School One

Two bidders vied for close to 45 minutes, each trying to outbid the other for possession of old School One on Park Avenue in Scotch Plains. At bidding's end, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education had a bid for \$185,000 for the old school. The auction, conducted by Board attorney Casper Boehm, Jr., took place last Thursday night, before the agenda-setting session of the Board. On Tuesday of this week, the Board was expected to vote on acceptance or rejection of the bid.

The top bidder was Julius Pereira, Jr. of a West Paterson firm, Makor, Inc. Richard Schneider of Livingston was the other active bidder. Bidding opened at \$40,000, and progressed quickly in the beginning moments of the sale, as Schneider called out "a hundred thousand." When Schneider and Pereira got into the higher figures, the bidding slowed considerably, and there were pauses as the two bidders slowly

made their way up through the thousands, sometimes increasing the bid by another \$500, other times by \$1,000.

The sale is subject to conditions. Pereira has a right to be released from the deal if an application for a variance should fail to be approved by the Board of Adjustment. Pereira wants permission to build up to 37 garden apartments on the land.

Scotch Plains Township had

Continued On Page 3

Township Sells Land Parcels

In a continuing program of returning township-owned land to the tax rolls, Scotch Plains Council approved sale of three properties.

A property at 175 Mountainview Avenue, assessed at \$7,800, brought \$7,000 at public auction. Another — 2514 John Street — brought \$10,500. Although assessed at \$20,000, Township Manager James Hauser recommended sale. He noted that this was the third effort to sell. When first offered there were no bidders. A second sale effort brought a an \$8,000 bid.

The third property sold was 2620 Plainfield Avenue. Assessed at \$11,500, it brought a bid of \$10,000.

The John St. property was sold to the Trink family — a Vietnamese family who came to Scotch Plains during the Vietnamese War.

One resident of the John Street neighborhood, who had bid on the property intending to bulldoze it, asked assurances that building codes be enforced. He said the house is in abominable condition with poor wiring, dropping ceilings, rats, etc. Neighbors have worked hard on their properties and pay high taxes, he said, warning that blight spreads quickly.

Mayor Wodjenski noted that a prestigious group sponsored the Vietnamese family and would probably advise them. Building codes would be enforced, she said.

Hauser recommended rejection of a bid on 182 William Street.

Food Stamp Interviews

Representatives of the Union County Food Stamp Outreach Program will interview prospective Food Stamp applicants in the CD room in the Scotch Plains Town Hall on Friday, February 18, 1977 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The Outreach Program, which only accepts new applications, will determine if you qualify for Food Stamps based on your income and expenses. Residents are reminded that unusually high heating expenses might make them eligible for Food Stamps this winter. Applicants should bring proof of income, savings and checking account statements, and paid bills for shelter, utility and medical expenses.

Single persons with savings in excess of \$1,500, and couples with savings over \$3000 are not eligible for Food Stamps.

S.P. Council Votes Condemn School 1

The Scotch Plains Township Council wanted School One land for senior citizen housing, but apparently was not in a financial position to bid on it when the land was offered for sale last week. On Tuesday of this week, Council voted, 3-2 along party lines, to proceed with condemnation on the 2.3 acre parcel.

The resolution, approved by the three Democrats, Noel Musial, Robert Griffin and Mayor Anne Wodjenski, notes that the township had been unable to secure the land by negotiation, and intended to acquire it by eminent domain. The township manager, James Hauser, has called three people and will solicit appraisal bids and resumes in preparation for the proceedings.

Mayor Wodjenski expressed disappointment that the Board of Education had not seen fit to consider the township desire to acquire the property for the good of people of Scotch Plains. "That property was owned, operated and maintained by taxpayers for many years. Many of them are now elderly and wish to stay in Scotch Plains on a fixed income. I feel badly that the two elected bodies cannot work together for a common good. I wonder if the day will

come when the Board will be willing to work with the township," Wodjenski said.

Musial felt it is undesirable to have school buildings vacant and ignore an effort to look at the best use for the community, "instead of dollar signs."

Councilman Larry Newcomb, who opposed the resolution, felt that there had been a Board obligation to Fanwood taxpayers, who also owned the school, to which Wodjenski responded that if Scotch Plains had acquired the building by negotiation, Fanwood would have received its fair share.

Newcomb listed among his oppositions some question over density. He said the apparent value of the site is \$185,000 (a top bid during auction last week), and he further stated that state financing guidelines for senior citizen housing indicate \$1,000 per unit. At those

Continued On Page 12

School Food Sales Up For Re-Vote

Last year, 60 students in the Distributive Education Club at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High took in \$42,208 in school store sales. The students dispersed \$39,114 — some for restocking store shelves, some for an annual employer-employee banquet, some for financing of DECA competitions. Then, last November, the Board of Education voted to ban sales of food at the store during the hours when the cafeteria is open. Now it appears likely the Board will have at least five votes to allow lunch food sales again.

What triggered a second look? Board member August Ruggiero said this week that board members had not received a letter sent to all nine members on November 8 by DECA adviser Donald Cababe Ruggiero questioned where the letter was, and finally received it at the January agenda meeting. He said information in the letter prompted him to want to reconsider.

Therefore, a three-man committee of board members August Ruggiero, Vincent Shanni and Robert Carlson studied the question and last week said they planned to recommend resumption of noon food sales, with all DECA store proceeds to be turned over to the cafeteria, then all DECA store expenses taken from that account.

The store was originally limited on sales because of a state law prohibiting food sales competing with federally subsidized cafeterias.

When the issue of competition with the cafeteria first came up, the Board approved an arrangement whereby the DECA club estimated its profits,

and turned over an estimated profit of \$100 per month to the school cafeteria. It was later decided by the board attorney not to proceed with this arrangement, and the DECA club was ordered to cease food sales during the three lunch periods.

At last week's agenda session, the three-man committee said they planned to move for an arrangement wherein all profits would be turned over to the cafeteria, and then DECA store expenses would be returned by the Board. This was the board attorney's recommendation of how finances should be worked out.

Ruggiero said early this week that he plans to change his motion for tonight. He said Cababe felt that the above financial arrangement would not be satisfactory or viable. Ruggiero said a new approach, acceptable to Cababe, would be recommended. Now, the Board itself will develop a procedure in consultation with Cababe, the school attorney and school auditor. The Board will develop and approve the procedures, then

Continued On Following Page