



SCOTCH PLAINS

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20 CENTS

Born At Home



Ian Blakeslee poses, with his mom, Jane Gray, his dad, Bruce Blakeslee, and his sister, Thalia Gray.

New SP Resident Was Born At Home

At four-and-a-half months of age, Mr. Ian Harris Blakeslee surveys the world with aplomb, sucking on a pacifier as his alert eyes watch every moving thing in the living room of his home at 359 Stout Avenue, Scotch Plains. Young Ian is a new resident. He's a perfectly average baby... but his birth was a bit unusual, according to modern-day standards.

Ian was born in his parents' bedroom, not in a premature rush because his mom didn't make it to the hospital on time, but because his parents, Jane Gray and Bruce Blakeslee, decided long before he was born that they'd prefer home birth.

Jane Gray had always been intrigued with the concept of having a baby at home, even when her only other child,

Thalia, was born twelve years ago. "To me, birth is a very private and natural thing. I'd always wanted it in my own home, with the people I wanted around me who knew me as a person, rather than in a hospital atmosphere. I figured babies used to be born at home all the time, and enough of them survived to carry on the human race."

Continued On Page 20

Variance Remanded To Board Of Adjustment

The Fanwood Borough Council voted unanimously to remand to the Board of Adjustment a decision on a variance which would have permitted construction of three homes on narrow lots. The Board of Adjustment decision had been appealed at the Council level by Norman O. Geuder, Sr., John Kalafat, William Crosby and Al Damiano. Although the four were acting as private citizens, they had been closely involved with the variance case — Geuder as the borough's zoning officer, the other three as members of the Shade Tree Commission.

The variance would have allowed Alan Schwartz of Plainfield to build homes on all three lots, all of which hover around the 50-foot mark in width. Geuder had said that the actual width of each lot is 48'10" in true width. Because of diverging front and rear property lines, they measure at more, but the total of three lots is 146'6".

Schwartz owns Lots 6 and 8, Block 91, near LaGrande School, as co-owner with his wife, of Bonay Construction Company. He owns the middle lot as co-owner with his wife on a private basis.

Councilmen questioned whether he could build two, rather than three homes on the lots, which would bring widths to a measurement more closely approximating zoning

standards. He claimed his wife owns the middle lot alone, and is entitled to do what she wishes with it, and has said in past testimony she doesn't want to sell it to their co-owned Bonay Construction Company.

Continued On Page 3

Fanwood P.D. Solves Robbery Case

In the long-pending "Son of Sam" case in N.Y.C., a license plate number eventually led to solution of the crime. Similarly, in Fanwood, it was a license number and subsequent investigation that ultimately led Fanwood police to an arrest and the arraignment last night of Gregory Paschaian, age 31, of 1123 Sheridan Avenue, Elizabeth for the armed robbery, of the J.E. Keating home at 197 Marion Avenue, Fanwood.

Patrolman Robert Carboy was a key figure in the case, according to Chief Anthony Parenti. Carboy was on walking-town patrol in the business district on Thursday evening, September 1, as is customary for Fanwood police on Thursdays when banks are open late. He noted a vehicle, and two occupants, that appeared suspicious to him, and recorded the license number in his field notebook. An hour and a half later, Carboy was one of the two officers who responded to the call for the armed robbery at Keatings. Two armed gunmen entered the Keating home, tied up Mr. and Mrs. Keating and a grandson, and left with valuables and a grandfather's clock (the clock was later recovered).

Carboy informed police of his suspicions regarding the auto, and a description was sent over teletype. The car was traced to Paschaian, and Lt. Charles Persson of the Detective Division was assigned to the case.

Persson, working with Elizabeth police, established that Paschaian had a criminal record. A picture of him was obtained. It was included in a group of a dozen photos of people of similar type, and shown first to Mr. Keating, who identified Paschaian, then independently to Mrs. Keating, who made a similar identification. Persson then drove to Long Island to show the group of photos to the

Continued On Page 34

State Decision On Cheer Squad

After months of controversy and debate, the final solution to the question of a varsity cheerleading squad is now in the mails. A decision, rendered by state Commissioner of Education Fred Burke, reportedly restores the original cheerleaders, while also maintaining the squad chosen in the second tryouts. This could mean a squad of up to 17 girls, if all successful candidates from both the first and second squads chosen, elect membership.

The decision was given verbally to several people concerned, but has not yet officially been received in the mails by the Scotch Plains Fanwood Board of Education.

Back in the spring, routine cheerleader tryouts were conducted, and 13 girls were named to the squad. Later, a black teacher, who was a judge, and many black parents appeared at several Board of Education meetings, and also registered objections at administrative levels in the district, charging that the tryouts had been unfairly conducted. In response to the complaints, the Board of Education voted to rescind the decision on the original squad and ordered a retrial. Weeks later, new judges from outside the district were obtained and trials redone.

Of the original cheerleaders chosen, nine were renamed to the second squad, while three failed to make it.

Later, the parents of the original cheerleaders filed an appeal with the Department of Controversies and Disputes, N.J. Department of Education. A hearing examiner conducted hearings during the summer, taking testimony from the judges in the original tryouts, from the teacher, Mr. James Mason, and from parents and cheerleaders.

Although the complaints of injustice were filed only by black parents, those parents have

claimed that they did not oppose on a basis of racial injustice. They listed reasons why they felt all applicants had not been fairly judged.

In the original tryouts, only one black cheerleader was chosen, but in the second go around, three black girls were named to the squad.

The Commissioner, in his decision, agreed with attorney Walter Lieb, who represented the parents of the original squad, who said the Board of Education had acted in a capricious and arbitrary manner in ordering a retrial. Burke found that the Board had not had sufficient information or investigation before making the move.

The parents of the original squad members had felt that their daughters had tried out in sincerity, and had been selected fairly, and were "sacrificial lambs" in the battle which ensued. The girls had been hurt by the order for a retrial, it was said.

Lieb said that he had recommended to the Board of Education exactly the action taken by the Commissioner, before the appeal had been filed in behalf of the parents. He also had suggested the action during the hearings, conducted in August. "Had the Board earlier followed the route, I suggested, every bit of this would have been totally unnecessary," Lieb said.

Council Gets Building Estimates

The Fanwood Borough Council will seek professional estimates on costs for a multi-purpose building, to house all borough forces in a new facility which would also incorporate a multi-purpose meeting room center. Originally, Fanwood had applied for an \$80,000 grant from HUD Community Development funds for the multi-purpose facility, which the Council had planned as a separate unit, built with matching borough funds.

Thinking has swayed to an all-in-one concept, according to Mayor Ted Trumpp, because \$80,000 from HUD Community Development, with another \$80,000 from the borough, would not have been adequate for the separate facility. By housing the multi-purpose building as a module in the municipal facility, the borough would be better able to afford it.

Richard Berry, the architect engaged for preparation of preliminary plans, outlined costs

and facilities to Council on Wednesday night. In the multi-use building he envisions, police and fire departments would share 1,200 square feet of space on the first floor, where garage space would be provided for housing of engines, etc. The multi-purpose center would similarly be housed in 2,400 square feet on the first floor.

On the upper floor, 2,400 square feet would be provided

Continued On Page 33

Calendar

Thursday, September 15
Regular monthly meeting, Board of Education, 8 pm, Brunner School

Tuesday, September 20 Regular meeting, Scotch Plains Council, 8:30 pm, Council Chambers

Index

CHIT CHAT	10
CLASSIFIED	32
CONSUMER AFFAIRS	7
EDITORIALS	4
ENTERTAINMENT	13
INVESTORS CORNER	31
LEGALS	30
NUTRITIONAL VIEWS	12
OBITUARIES	24
REAL ESTATE	28
SERVICES	33
SOCIAL TIMES	10
SPORTS	25
YMCA	26