



SCOTCH PLAINS

THE TIMES

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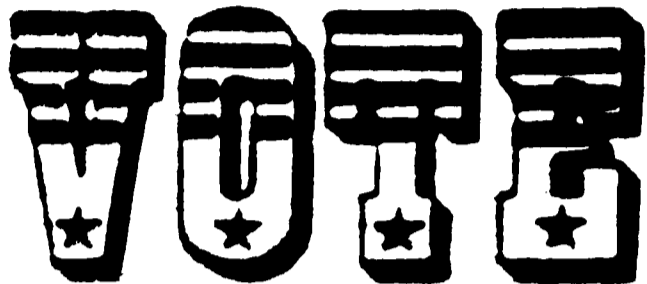


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30 CENTS



Election Day



A special Fanwood family

Mary Ellen, John and Patty Mulholland are very special people who live in Fanwood. It takes a special kind of person to take a child with painful and severe medical problems into your home and love them as if they were your own. Especially when you know that the child will one day be leaving you to return home. That's exactly what Mary Ellen, John and daughter Patty have done.

Through an agency called Healing the Children located in Passaic, Noemi Vargas came into their lives. Noemi (nicknamed Mi-Mi) is a six-year old little girl who comes from a very poor region of the Dominican Republic. She returned this past Saturday.

The Dominican Republic is the country that makes up the eastern two-thirds of the island of

Hispaniola. Haiti covers the island's western end. It is located in the West Indies island group, about 575 miles southeast of Miami, Florida.

When Mi-Mi was 17 months old, a fire caused by a kerosene lamp caused burns to 60 percent of her body. Although she was hospitalized for six months following the accident and received treatment from United States doctors (through Healing the Children) who periodically visit poor areas of the world, it was apparent that Mi-Mi's wounds would require more sophisticated treatment.

Healing the Children arranges for children in medical need come to the United States for treatment. Doctors and hospitals donate their services. Airline personnel also donate their time and services. The airlines



Mi-Mi (second from left) enjoys a moment with her Fanwood family.

themselves offer a reduced rate.

Six months ago, Mi-Mi was among 76 youngsters who arrived at Kennedy Airport. It was then that she met the family that would dramatically im-

proved her life. Mi-Mi did not speak a word of English, nor did the Mulhollands speak any Spanish. When I visited Mi-Mi, she not only spoke to me in English, she sang 'You Are My Sunshine.'

Originally, Mi-Mi was scheduled to stay with the Mulhollands for six weeks. Because of the need for additional surgery and the complexity of her condition, six weeks turned into six months. The entire right side of Mi-Mi's body had been severely burned. Her right hand and foot were

maimed for life. It is only through the operation performed by Montclair plastic surgeon Dr. Loverme that Mi-Mi will not be crippled for life. Although she has no toes on her right foot and only three fingers on her right hand, Mi-Mi is a thankful little six-year old.

As if this child has not gone through enough, within two years she will have to undergo additional operations to correct the burns on her stomach. When Mi-Mi returns to the United States for these operations, the Mulhollands hope to again have her stay with them.

Mary Ellen and John have two other daughters and one son. They have lived in Fanwood for 23 years. John works for Family Investors in Fanwood and Mary Ellen is quite active in New Jersey Right-to-Life. She is a past N.J. statewide president and has served on the national executive board from 1975-1990. The Mulhollands heard about Healing the Children from a Westfield friend, Betty La Rosa. Mrs. La Rosa has had two other children from this organization stay with her.

Because Mary Ellen

thought it would be too difficult for Mi-Mi to pronounce her name, she told Mi-Mi to call her 'Maria.' That name has stayed with Mary Ellen throughout Mi-Mi's visit. Mi-Mi calls Mary Ellen's husband John by his first name and has no difficulty pronouncing daughter Patty's name. Patty is a 5th grade teacher at St. Bartholomew's in Scotch Plains.

Mary Ellen said that her two young grandsons, Jonathan, 4 years old and Chris, 2 years old, heard Mi-Mi calling their grandmother 'Maria' so frequently that they now call her 'Maria.'

When asked what she will miss most when she returns to her mother, father, two sisters and one brother in the Dominican Republic, Mi-Mi replied 'ice cream and television.' Mi-Mi comes from abject poverty. There is no running water and numerous families share bug-infested bathrooms. No doubt Mi-Mi will also miss the children and neighbors that have befriended her. It will be a long time until Mi-Mi watches 'Pinocchio' or '101 Dalmations' on a VCR again.

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Public input sought for educational foundation

An initial meeting of those community members interested in assuming a leadership role in the establishment of The Foundation for Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Education are invited to attend a meeting Monday, November 16, beginning at 7 pm. Led by Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Robert Howlett, the meeting will occur at the Administrative Offices of the Board of Education, Evergreen Avenue & Cedar Street, Scotch Plains.

On hand for this first organizational meeting of the Foundation will be William Jeremiah, Esq.,

who is President of The Education Fund of Westfield, Inc. Mr. Jeremiah will explain Westfield's approach to the launching of a local educational foundation. Discussion among those in attendance will then ensue regarding starting such a venture in Scotch Plains-Fanwood.

Those planning to attend this November 16 meeting are asked to respond to the school district Public Relations Office by calling 232-6161 ext. 42. Responses would be appreciated by November 11.

TIMES deadline moves up

Due to a change in the mailing technique of this newspaper, all copy for upcoming Thursday issues of THE TIMES must now be submitted no later than 3:00 p.m. the Friday before publication date. Thank you for your cooperation.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

