



SCOTCH PLAINS

# THE TIMES



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## BOARD MEMBERS UNHAPPY OVER TRIMMINGS

# Board of Education Accepts \$500,000 Cut in Their Budget Recommended by Two Councils

### Some Parents Sought Delay in Strategic Planning, Saying Not Enough Time Was Given for Its Study

By TUCKER TRIMBLE  
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education approved a resolution on May 26 to reduce the school budget by \$500,000, according to recommendations by the Town Councils of Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

"I'm disappointed we have to remove this from the budget," board member Mark W. Koster said. "We continue to feel this was a responsible budget. Our budget was very lean," Mr. Koster contended, and added he did not feel there was \$500,000 to cut.

The result of the cut, said Board President Dr. Donald E. Sheldon, is a savings of approximately \$25 per household for the year.

The reduction means five teaching positions were lost, board member August Ruggiero added, including two buffer positions at the elementary school level. These reductions were the only way to comply with the councils' recommendations, Mr. Ruggiero said, since the budget had no other increases.

Board member Morris H. Gillet told the almost 80 parents who attended the meeting, "This \$500,000 cut will affect your kids. This was the best we could do."

The reduction in staff means making class sizes uniform throughout the district, mainly at the middle school level, board member Albert J. Syverisen said.

The \$500,000 reduction is broken down into \$171,000 appropriated from the general fund free balance, \$75,000 from grade 1 to 5 teacher salaries, \$70,000 from grade 6 to 8 teacher salaries, \$70,000 from resource center teacher salaries, \$44,000 from a perceptually-impaired classroom aide and \$100,000 from health insurance premiums.

In response to the teacher reductions, several residents spoke to the board of their concerns over class size at the elementary level.

A resident of Scotch Plains told the board the second grade at School One is expected to have over 24 students per class, some of these students being handicapped students mainstreamed for several subjects. The whole language approach, and cooperative learning all take more

time, she said, and asked for another teacher to be considered.

"It's difficult to deliver to 24 to 28 students," she said. "Give us the tools for all our students. Each student is special," she stated.

Mrs. Rosemary DiBattista from Fanwood told the board that with too many students in the classroom, "it's all chalk and talk," and urged the board to keep class sizes down. Studies show the smaller the class size from kindergarten to grade 3, the better, Mrs. DiBattista added.

"We're concerned about maintaining quality and class sizes," Board

President Dr. Sheldon responded, and Mr. Ruggiero added some people have to realize what their vote against the school budget now means. "We did have two buffer positions," he said.

A resident from Scotch Plains said he sees reductions in staff, but not administration, but Dr. Sheldon told him there had been reductions in supervisors.

The board also approved a resolution approving Strategic Planning.

By law, said Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Carol B. Choye, each school district must set goals each

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SOMBER SALUTE...Scotch Plains and Fanwood Legionnaires salute after placing a wreath at the Veteran's Monument at Park and Front Streets during Memorial Day ceremonies this past Monday.

## Subdivision Over Pleasant Avenue Site Features Lengthy Debate by Experts

### Neighbors Fear Overcrowding Would Take Away Quality of Life From Area

By SUZETTE STALKER  
Specially Written for The Times

The Fanwood Planning Board resumed a public hearing last Wednesday of a subdivision application by a Scotch Plains couple seeking to develop property they own at 93 and 97 Pleasant Avenue, including the proposed building of one home and the renovation of another which some neighbors feel would be overcrowding and detrimental to the quality of life in their area. The hearing had opened on April 27.

Mr. and Mrs. Peter DiNizo purchased two adjacent lots in March of 1993, identified in the application as Block 9, Lot 16 and Lot 16.01, which although originally designated years ago as two separately existing lots was later merged as one lot after the borough adopted its zoning ordinance in the 1950s.

Mr. DiNizo stated that although he wasn't aware that he required a subdivision variance when he purchased the land, he knew the property was

made up of two distinct lots for which he receives separate tax bills.

The DiNizos, if granted subdivision approval, plan to renovate an existing house located on Lot 16.01, which measures 50 by 100 feet, and to build a new two-story home on the larger Lot 16, which measures 25 by 100 feet. They also hope to demolish an existing garage and shed on the smaller lot, to be replaced by a new garage and new driveway, which the applicant said would be an aesthetic benefit to homeowners whose properties border his.

A group of neighbors, represented by attorney James B. Flynn, are opposing the subdivision proposal, fearing that the two homes in such close proximity will have a negative effect on available light and air, as well as possible storm water runoff complications. Members of the public will have an opportunity to share their concerns when the board continues hearing the case on June 22.

Mr. Flynn contested an assertion

by the DiNizo attorney, John Appuzzato, that the status of the property under the local zoning ordinance was an "anomaly of the law," noting that many non-conforming lots were merged years ago with undersized lots to preserve conformity of properties in the borough and to prevent overcrowding.

The topic of conforming and non-conforming lots in Fanwood sparked a lengthy debate between Mr. Flynn and Michael Tobia, a licensed professional planner who, offering testimony on behalf of the DiNizos, said he reviewed the borough's master plan, zoning ordinance and tax maps, and had also had a study of property patterns within the northeast section of Fanwood, where Lot 16 and Lot 16.01 are located.

Mr. Tobia presented schematics of the entire northeast section and of the immediate area surrounding the DiNizo property, detailing each lot, with those lots designated as non-conforming shaded in orange. The diagrams, which he said were developed from borough tax maps, illustrate "a widespread pattern of non-conforming lots in the borough which would cause 'no conceivable detriment' to the area.

He also cited the relevance of the Planning Board's option to grant the applicant a "C-2" benefit/detriment variance, which he maintained was applicable to this case since Lot 16 is "the last 75-foot lot" in the area and that not allowing the property owners to develop the property "in a way that's harmonious" with the rest of the neighborhood would be detrimental.

Mr. Flynn countered the planner's assessment of lots in the area, focusing on lots within a 500-foot radius of

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## John Shippen Scholarship To Be Presented June 5

### Golf Tournament This Sunday at Scotch Hills Course

Ruby Simmons, Chairwoman of the John Shippen Memorial Scholarship Committee, has announced that Patrick A. Freeman and Sherwin I. Banfield are the recipients of this year's John Shippen Memorial Golf Tournament Scholarships.

Each will receive a \$1,000 scholarship towards their college expenses. A presentation ceremony has been arranged at the annual John Shippen Memorial Golf Tournament to be held on Sunday, June 5, at the Scotch Hills Country Club in Scotch Plains.

Freeman is a senior at Bloomfield High School. He will be attending Indiana University in the fall. He has been the Captain of the Bloomfield High Golf Team for the past three years. He will be majoring in accounting and economics and also plans on participating on the golf team. A four handicapper, he hopes to one day play on the pro tour.

Banfield is a senior at Montclair High School. He will be attending Pratt Institute in the fall. He is also the Captain of his high school golf team. He will be majoring in visual arts.

Interested persons are welcome to attend the tournament and scholarship presentation. The tournament is run in honor of the memory of John Shippen, the first American born black golf professional who worked at the pro at the Shady Rest Country Club, now called Scotch Hills.

For further information please contact Laura Botto at the Scotch Plains Recreation Office at 322-6700.



DOWN ON THE FARM...Children in the Chapter No. 1 pre-kindergarten classes from Brunner, Coler, Evergreen, McClain and School One recently spent a day at Green Meadows Farm in Roseland. The children had the opportunity to experience the sights, sounds and smells of a farm in spring. The children spent the day touching and learning about many farm animals and their babies including pigs, cows, goats, sheep, chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese. Highlights of the trip were the chance to milk a cow, enjoy a pony ride and a tractor drawn hayride. Coler student, David DeSichis, enjoys getting to know some postings.

## Brother and Sister Cited as Top Cadets By State Air Force Junior Squadron

### Pair Are Children of Scotch Plains Baptist Church Pastor, the Reverend James Brix

World-renowned aviation artist Keith Ferris, and his wife, Mrs. Peggy Ferris, attended the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Air Force Junior Reserved Officers Training Corps Annual Awards Ceremony. The Ferrises were in attendance to recognize the outstanding male and female cadets of the New Jersey 821st Air Force Junior Reserved Officers Training Corps Squadron.

Mr. Ferris, whose artwork is displayed at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., presented limited edition lithographs of two of his artworks to cadets Michael and Elizabeth Brix. Michael and Elizabeth happen to be brother and sister, son and daughter of the Reverend and Mrs.

James Brix, Pastor of the Scotch Plains Baptist Church on Park Avenue.

Mr. Ferris signed each of the lithographs with a personal message to each of his recipients. He also had the lithographs professionally matted and framed. This was the sixth consecutive year that the Ferrises traveled from their home in Morris Plains to attend the Award Ceremony and donate artwork to the outstanding male

and female cadets.

This was, however, the first time in the 12-year history of the cadet corps that a brother and sister were the recipients of this award. Equally significant is the fact that Elizabeth was selected to replace brother Michael as the Commander of the New Jersey 821st Squadron. Elizabeth also has the distinction of being the first female selected to serve as the Corps Commander.

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CITED CADETS...Keith Ferris, Elizabeth Brix, Michael Brix and Mrs. Peggy Ferris at the Awards Ceremony.

**DEADLINES HELP PAPERS SERVE YOU**  
Those preparing press releases for submission to *The Westfield Leader* or *The Times* are reminded all copy should be in the hands of the Editor at 50 Elm Street, Westfield, by 4 p.m. on the Friday before the Thursday on which they wish it to appear.  
Leader releases also may be mailed to Post Office Box 250, Westfield, 07091, and Times releases to Post Office Box 368, Scotch Plains, 07076, to meet the above requirements.  
For events which happen the week end prior to publication, press releases should reach the Editor by Monday of the week of publication at 10 a.m.  
Obituaries will be taken until Tuesday at 4 p.m.  
For events which are planned weeks or months in advance, we encourage submission of stories as early as possible prior to the event.  
The above deadlines are meant to enable us to prepare your copy carefully.

**Spring Cleaning To Start June 6**  
The Township of Scotch Plains will begin its 1994 annual clean up in Section 1 on June 6, Section 2 on June 13, Section 3 on June 20 and Section 4 on June 27. All residents should have received information with their township newsletter regarding acceptable and unacceptable bulky waste items.  
If you have any questions concerning the clean up, please telephone 322-6700, Extension No 243.  
Residents are reminded to have materials at the curb by 6:30 a.m. of the first day of the week designated for a street clean up, report scavenging as well as illegal dumping to the police as soon as possible.