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FANWOOD

OUR 37th YEAR - ISSUE NO. 2

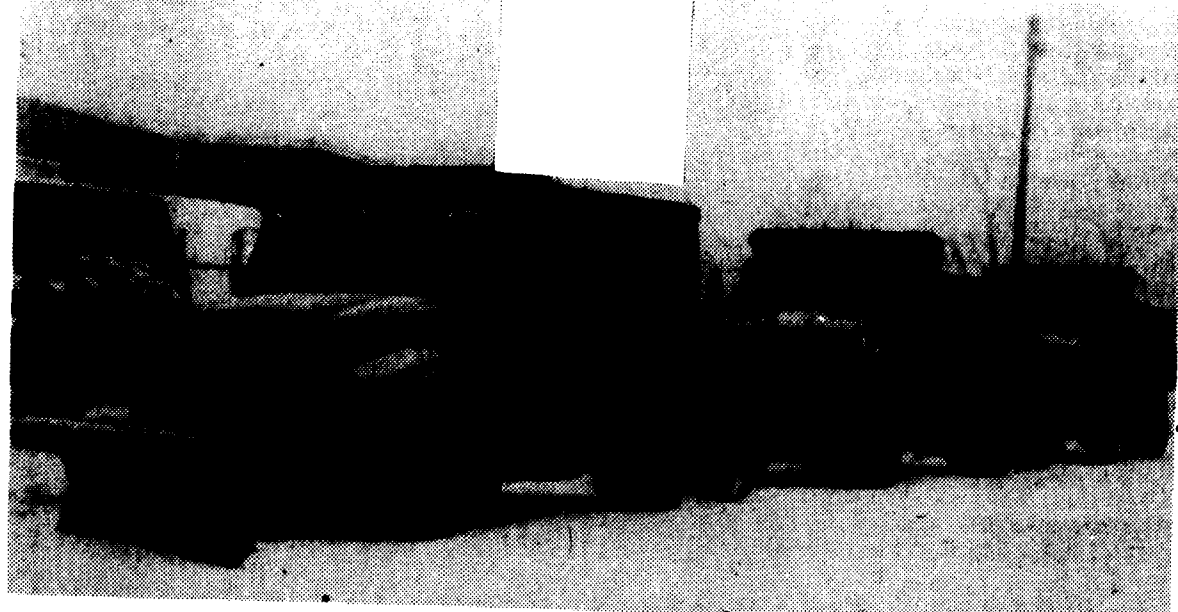
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READY FOR BUSINESS...Snow plows are lined up in Scotch Plains at the outset of this week's blizzard. While many workers were probably hoping for a rest this weekend, that may not be possible. Forecasters have said another half foot of snow is possible for tomorrow night, Friday, January 12, into this Saturday, January 13.

## Mayor Augustine Appoints Robert E. Johnston In His Place to Scotch Plains Planning Board

George Tomkin Elected to Fourth Term as Chairman; Mr. Lauro Named Vice Chairman

By SANDY J. DEVIN  
Specially Written for The Times

His plate already full, Scotch Plains Mayor and State Assemblyman for the 22nd Legislative District Alan M. Augustine declined taking his seat on the township Planning Board January 3 and appointed Councilman and former Mayor Robert E. Johnston as his representative.

This is the first time in the history of Scotch Plains that a mayor has not served on the board.

When reached later in the week for comment, Mayor Augustine said, "In view of the many things I have to do and Robert Johnston's qualifications, it was the prudent thing to do."

Downplaying the mayor's absence from the board and the reorganization meeting, Deputy Mayor Councilwoman, Mrs. Irene T. Schmidt, said "He is taking advantage of recent legislation passed in the Land Use Law which allows him to appoint someone in his place."

The role of a Planning Board has always been pivotal in defining and setting the course for current and future development of a township, making sure the needs of its inhabitants are met. It is here that key issues such as traffic management and business development are addressed.

Councilman Johnston continues sitting on the board with 18 years of service under his belt, 12 of them as the board's Chairman.

**Nominating Petitions  
For School Board  
Available in District:  
See Story on Page 2**

## Thomas Barth Reelected Planning Board Chairman

Mrs. Agran Named Vice Chairman of Township Unit

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY  
Specially Written for The Times

At the reorganizational meeting of the Scotch Plains Board of Adjustment held January 4, Thomas Barth was reelected Chairman with Mrs. Alice Agran reelected Vice Chairwoman.

Anthony D. Rinaldo of Elizabeth was reappointed board attorney. Committee appointments were also made by Mr. Barth, but no applications were heard.

Robert La Costa, Zoning Officer, gave a brief presentation on the status of the Architectural Board of Review and accessory uses and detached garages.

Mr. La Costa, who is a member of the Architectural Review Board, stated the board's function is purely advisory. The board will make recommendations to the Planning Board on proposed changes to the downtown business district only, he said. Meetings of the board will take place at least once a month.

However, Mr. La Costa indicated to the board that development in the downtown business district is expected to be slow.

Board member, Thomas Perrucci volunteered to serve on the board.

Mr. La Costa said that accessory uses and detached garages do not present much of an enforcement problem.

The next regular meeting of the Scotch Plains Board of Adjustment will be Thursday, January 18, in the Council Chambers.

The annual reorganization meeting offered no other surprises. Deputy Mayor Schmidt opened the meeting calling for the nomination and election of its officers. Board members reelected George Tomkin as Chairman of the board, an office he has held since 1993. He previously served as Vice Chairman for eight years. Reelected was Salvatore Lauro as Vice Chairman who has served in that position since 1993. Frederick Webb was reelected as Secretary, a

post he has held for 15 years.

The appointment of the board attorney was awarded non-competitively to Lawrence A. Woodruff. He has held the post for the past 20 years.

Robert La Costa, Donald Novello and Mrs. Maria Sartor remain in their present positions on the board with the exception of Dr. Martin Marks who moves up to a full member from first alternate, thus filling the vacancy created by the department from the board of Scott Burns.

Victor DiFrancesco is now the first alternate on the board.

Planning Board members are appointed by the Township Council. Currently, the council is reviewing applications for the second alternate spot.

Mr. Tomkin appointed chairmen to the board's committees for the year. Heading up the Subdivision Committee, which deals primarily with developers or property owners wishing to divide existing land into smaller parcels, is Mr. Lauro. The Site Plan Review Committee, which evaluates full plans and presentations by businesses or developers with regard to allowed use in changes of structure of land coverage, is chaired by Mr. Webb.

Mr. Novello was appointed Chairman of the Zoning Committee which concerns itself with lot size and the use of land on the lots.

The Master Plan Review Committee continually updates board members on township's potential for development, targets what land is available and assesses the appropriateness of this development for the community.

Mrs. Maria Sartor remains Chairwoman of this committee.

Mr. La Costa will chair the Budget and Finance Committee which controls the board's budget and is responsible for hiring planners and professional consultants.

A new committee under the Planning Board's auspices, the Architectural Advisory Committee, is presently under review. No chairman has yet been chosen.

Applications that go before the Planning Board are evaluated informally by these committees prior to a vote by board members.

In other business, the Planning Board granted approval to Stirling Chase for an amended minor subdivision to move its property line outward three feet. The original minor subdivision was approved by the Scotch Plains Planning Board on October 2.

The next meeting of the board will be this Wednesday, January 17.

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## DECA's Toy Drive Raised \$1,800 for Needy Youth

Donations Used to Buy Gifts for Needy Children

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School DECA Chapter carried out several planned activities to help the needy and homeless during the holiday season. DECA, an association of marketing students, sponsored their sixth annual Toy Drive to help less fortunate children better their holiday season.

This included about 100 children and 30 adults of the Interfaith Council and 40 children from the Scotch Plains Welfare Department. The Interfaith Council rotates those in need of help among local churches which provide shelter and meals.

DECA had a Christmas party for those homeless children and their families on Friday, December 22, at the Grace Episcopal Church in Plainfield. Through the toy drive, DECA was able to raise \$1,800 to buy toys for the Interfaith Council and the Scotch Plains Welfare Department. With contributions from students, residents and local businesses, DECA students were able to distribute many toys at the holiday parties.

In addition, this year DECA started the Adopt-a-Family theme in order to help families of the Interfaith Council attain basic needs. Twelve families constructed lists of items for which their family badly needed in order to help continue living in homes.

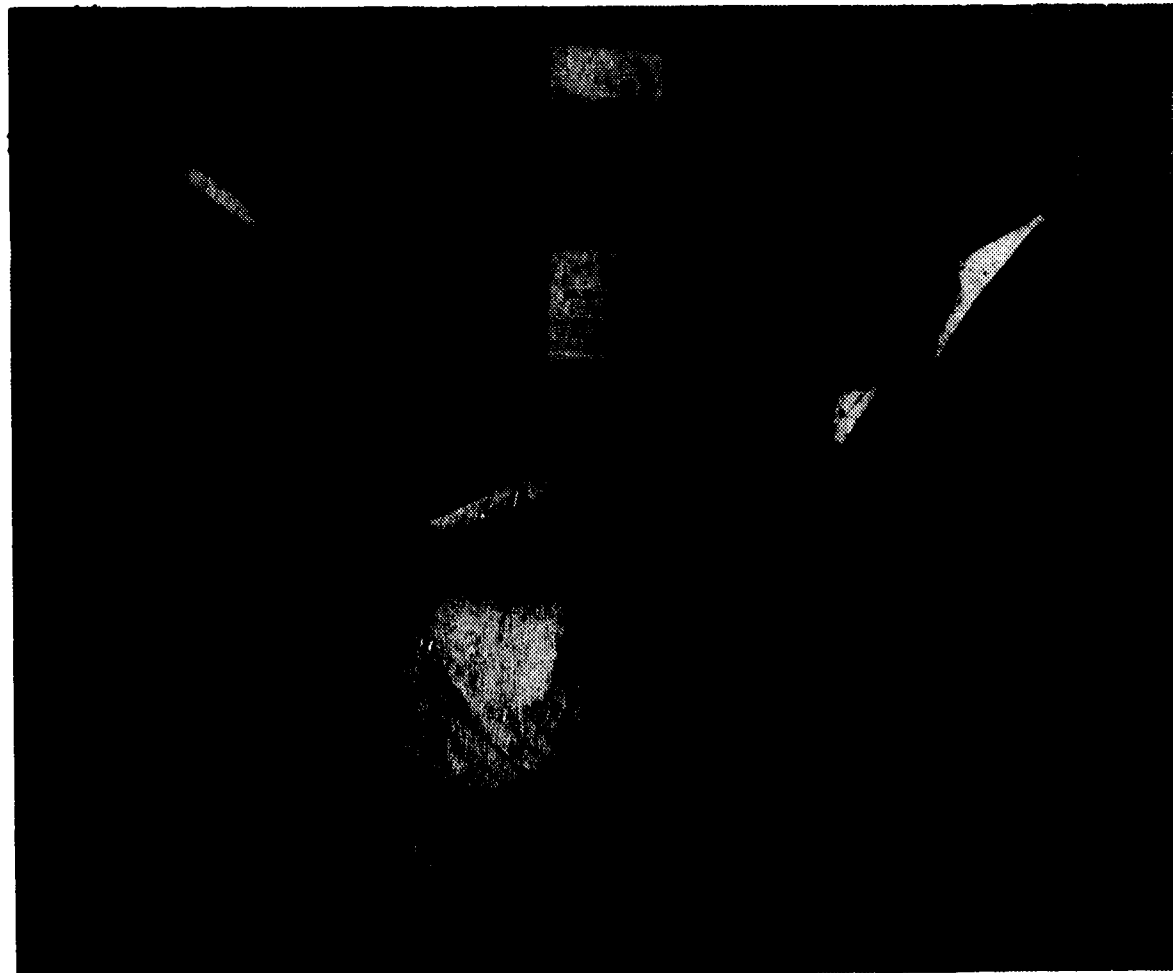
For instance, pots, pans, bed sheets, clothes and other necessities were provided by various groups. High school organizations and clubs as well as student families participated in this event during the holiday season.

A discussion of the 1995 annual report was held. The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law mandates an annual review by the Board of Adjustment of decisions on applications and appeals for variances; recommendations, if any, for amendments and revisions to the township zoning ordinances.

During last year, the Board heard 25 applications for variances and 11 applications for Temporary Operating Permits. An additional 15 applications are pending.

The Scotch Plains board met 11 times last year.

**DEADLINES HELP  
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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 weekend 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 5 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.



NEWLY APPOINTED...Fanwood resident Maurice Jefferson was sworn in as Municipal Court Judge for the Borough of Roselle on January 5 by Judge Edward W. Beglin, Jr., the Assignment Judge of the Superior Court in Elizabeth. A graduate of Rutgers College and New York University School of Law, Judge Jefferson will continue working as a trial attorney with Welner Lesniak, a Parsippany law firm. He has been active in community affairs, having served on the Fanwood Planning Board and coached in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Soccer Association. The 12-year Fanwood resident is pictured with his wife, Mrs. Carol Jefferson and two sons, Dustin and Austin.

## LAW SAVES MUNICIPALITIES MONEY ON HEALTH INSURANCE Zoning Restrictions Proposed On Entertainment Businesses Of Sexual Nature in Fanwood

Borough Attorney Says Law Follows State Statute;  
Collection of Electric Appliances This Saturday

By SUZETTE STALKER  
Specially Written for The Times

In its first caucus meeting of the new year, led by new Mayor, Mrs. Maryanne S. Connelly, the Fanwood Borough Council on January 3 welcomed back Councilman William E. Populus, Jr., who had been recuperat-

ing from surgery, and discussed several key topics which are expected to have significant impact upon municipal government and the community in the coming year.

Mrs. Connelly, who had previously served as Fanwood Council President for eight years, was sworn in during the governing body's annual reorganization meeting New Year's Day, along with incumbent Councilman Bruce H. Walsh, who was named as the Borough Council President, and first-time Councilwoman, Mrs. Karen M. Schurtz.

Borough Attorney Dennis A. Estis during last week's agenda session proposed an ordinance which would amend the borough's zoning regulations concerning operation of sexually-oriented entertainment establishments in accordance with a state statute permitting municipalities to prohibit these businesses from existing within close proximity of certain public places.

According to Mr. Estis, under the proposed ordinance, which is expected to be referred to the Fanwood Planning Board, these establishments would only be permitted within a general commercial zone and would not be allowed within 1,000 feet of any elementary or secondary schools, houses of worship or municipal playgrounds or other recreation areas.

Such establishments would also be required to have landscaped perimeter buffers and would be subject to restrictions on the types and number of signs which could be displayed, the borough attorney explained.

In another matter, Mr. Estis discussed a law signed by the Governor, Mrs. Christine Todd Whitman, in mid-December as a partial response to the recent State Mandate and State Pay proposal whereby the state would foot the bill for programs mandated for local municipalities, thereby relieving residents of the additional tax burden of supporting such programs.

Included among the new statutes was one regarding publication of official notices which heretofore required the borough to publish entire ordinances, as well as the lengthy municipal budget, at an annual cost of several thousand dollars. Under the new law, the municipality would

only be required to publish a "clear and concise" summary outlining the general purpose of each ordinance, which the borough attorney conformed will save a "substantial" amount of money.

Mr. Estis also reported on a state statute allowing municipalities to pay their full-time employees up to 50 percent of the cost of their health care coverage if an employee opts for coverage under their spouse's plan rather than the borough's package. It currently costs Fanwood \$9,000 per employee each year for health-care benefits.

The law was designed as an incentive for municipal employees in dual-income households to choose coverage under their spouses' plans, according to Mr. Estis. He added that should the spouse lose his or her benefits, the municipal employee would be able to re-enroll immediately under the borough plan but would be obligated to return any incentive money previously received.

Mayor Connelly discussed an option which, in accordance with state law, would allow her to designate one person, either a member of council or a resident not on the governing body, to represent her at those meetings of the Fanwood Board which she is unable to attend. The alternate, chosen at the beginning of the year, would always be the same person and would be eligible to vote on Planning Board business.

Mrs. Connelly, in response to a concern expressed by Councilman Andrew J. MacDonald, stated that if the alternate was not familiar with a specific issue, it was expected the person would abstain from voting.

It was announced the Union County Utilities Authority will sponsor a one-day collection of electronic appliances, such as televisions, video-cassette recorders, microwave ovens, printers and facsimile machines, on Saturday, January 13, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Recycling Center on North Avenue.

Authority personnel will be on hand to direct people in depositing their appliances and will be responsible for taking the items away.

## Gas Main Break in Fanwood Forces Several Evacuations

Cleanup From Blizzard Continues in Township, Borough

As public works crews in Scotch Plains and Fanwood continued the mammoth task of cleaning up after this week's blizzard, a cast-iron gas main on Martine Avenue in the borough cracked Tuesday.

The break caused natural gas to seep into homes along neighboring

Shady Lane. Four homes on the street, in addition to a pair of homes on Robin Road, were evacuated about 10 a.m. Tuesday until the line was repaired by 12:30 p.m.

A spokesman for the Elizabethtown Gas Company said a homeowner in the area reported an odor of gas at 9 a.m. By 9:45 a.m. gas company workers arrived and found gas in the home. The fire department arrived and evacuated the homes.

The 1,500-foot-to-2,000-foot gas main, installed in 1946, will be replaced with a plastic pipe.

The gas leak was said not to be serious enough to cause major problems but that the evacuation was done as a safety precaution. Gas company workers discovered a six-inch crack which they said is believed to have been caused when gas collected in a sewer pipe that ran along the main line.

Fanwood Public Works Director Raymond Manfra said the borough's eight-man crew began removing snow from the downtown business district on Tuesday night.

Fanwood used about 200 tons of salt, 100 tons of cinders and about 300 to 400 manhours working on the blizzard, Mr. Manfra said.

The next task was for crews to remove snow from borough-owned sidewalks and all school crossings. Schools reopened yesterday, January 10, after having been closed Monday and Tuesday due to the blizzard.

Scotch Plains Public Works Director Walter Dinizio urged motorists to use caution when driving, noting the storm was perhaps the largest ever to hit the state.

Miss Karen M. Positan, a spokeswoman for Union County, noted the county utilized 60 trucks with plows, 20 pieces of heavy equipment and 150 workers to clear some 277 miles of roads. Crews remained on the job 48 hours straight beginning Sunday morning.