



SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD SCHOOLS

Scotch Plains - Fanwood

THE TIMES

of

Scotch Plains - Fanwood



FANWOOD

OUR 37th YEAR - ISSUE NO. 31

USPS 485200
Retail - Postage Paid at Scotch Plains, N.J.

Thursday, August 1, 1996

Published
Every Thursday

232-4407

FIFTY CENTS

Concerns Are Addressed On Summer Course Load

By CHRISTINE A. KRUG
Specially Written for The Times

Dr. Faith Spitz, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for the Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district, addressed the recent parent and student concerns regarding the advanced placement course summer workload at last Thursday's school board meeting.

Dr. Spitz expressed her appreciation to the parents and students, several of whom were in attendance, for bringing this concern to the school board. In order to alleviate these concerns, Dr. Spitz began by offering a short-term solution.

Letters will be sent to all students enrolled in Advanced Placement English and Advanced Placement calculus classes. For English students, the first reading assignment and written assignment are a priority and should be completed before the school year begins, according to Dr. Spitz. The two other assigned readings should also be completed if at all possible, but those subsequent writing assignments will be postponed until the beginning of the school year.

Advanced Placement calculus students also will have time to complete their remaining summer assignments at the beginning of the school year, Dr. Spitz explained. It also was decided that there will be no change in the assignments or due dates for Advanced Placement European/American history. This assignment has been the same since 1990 and it is not considered too rigorous for summer work, according to the Assistant Superintendent.

A student proceeded to voice her concern over the regular calculus class summer assignment. Dr. Spitz stated that this particular assignment was also not considered too lengthy for students to complete over the summer. The student went on to explain that the assignment was just received in the middle of July. Dr. Spitz agreed that for any assignments received after the end of the previous school year, time will be allotted in the coming school year to complete these assignments.

Dr. Spitz then addressed a long-term plan to keep students and parents informed of the Advanced Placement course requirements prior to registration. Beginning in September, meetings will take place among teachers and staff members outlining each course in detail, including summer assignment work. Then meetings will be held between staff and interested students and parents. This way, Dr. Spitz explained, all parties involved will understand what is to be expected of them if they decide to enroll in these courses. These meetings will take place before registration and the board hopes they will become an essential communication tool in years to come.

Dr. Carol B. Choye, Superintendent of School, updated board members on the state's Comprehensive Plan for funding public education in the state. She urged members of the board and the community to get involved in this statewide education plan, which will have an impact on the entire education system. Dr. Choye announced a meeting would be held on July 29 at 2 p.m. at the Voorhees Middle School to discuss this. Senate members and state assemblymen were invited to this meeting at which Dr. Choye was asked to speak briefly.

As part of the Superintendent's Report, a motion for the 1996-1997 out-of-district placements for special education students was approved. There were two case numbers for which the board previously requested

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Township Council OKs Resolution For Immunity From Mt. Laurel Suits

Right-of-Way Agreements Approved for Lone Star Steakhouse

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY
Specially Written for The Times

A brief special meeting of the Scotch Plains Township Council was held Tuesday. The meeting was characterized as a "housekeeping" meeting by Mayor Alan M. Augustine.

A resolution requested by the state Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) was approved which would furnish Scotch Plains with immunity from Mt. Laurel low and moderate income housing lawsuits from now until the year 2000.

The township was represented at the recent COAH meeting by Mayor Augustine and Councilman William F. McClintock, Jr. Councilman McClintock, mentioned that some units in the senior citizens housing complex are included in the plan.

Mayor Augustine thanked everyone for their efforts in making the certification a reality including past and present councils, the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment.

Another resolution was approved authorizing the Mayor and Township Clerk to execute easement modifications and rights-of-way use agree-

Branch Collections Eyed for September

The Fanwood Public Works Department has just completed another brush and branch pickup program in response to a recent storm and has announced its sweeper will be going out again to clean the streets.

Public Works Director Raymond Manfra is asking all residents if they still have brush or branches to be put out, that they store them on their property until the first and second weeks of September when the Public Works Department will be starting its chipper program.

Because of the severe winter, late spring and several storms, Mr. Manfra said his department has spent a lot of time picking up branches and brush. "Also being the year of the locust, you are seeing a lot of the ends of branches dying and they are falling after strong winds," the Public Works Director said.

Mr. Manfra explained his department needs time during the summer months to complete road work and other projects and added the understanding and cooperation of residents regarding the pick up of branches and brush will be much appreciated.

ments with the Lone Star Steakhouse and Saloon of New Jersey, Inc.

Lone Star has applied for and obtained preliminary and final site plan approval from the Zoning Board of Adjustment to construct a restaurant on the property located at 2377 Route No. 22, West, the present site of the Ko-Shing Restaurant.

Lone Star is under contract with 2377 Realty Corporation to purchase the property.

The Board of Adjustment granted Lone Star's application on the condition that Lone Star satisfies certain conditions as set forth in the board's resolution dated July 11.

As a condition of approval, Lone Star was required to obtain the township's approval to install certain parking, landscaping and/or other site improvements on the property over three existing township rights-of-way abutting Harding Road and Lake Park Terrace.

Officials said the township has agreed to modify the terms of its three existing easements on the property and to further allow encroach-

LOCAL BOARD WILL SEEK REPLACEMENT PENDING DR. SPITZ'S RESIGNATION

Dr. Spitz Finalist for Superintendent In Readington District in Hunterdon

Scotch Plains-Fanwood Schools' Assistant Superintendent
Has Been With Local District For Three Years

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction for the Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district discussed her prospective appointment as Superintendent of Schools for Readington Township in Hunterdon County last week, while fondly reflecting on the education community she would be leaving behind.

Dr. Faith Spitz, the sole finalist for the school superintendent's position, told *The Times* on Thursday that although she has not yet officially accepted the job, she came away with very positive impressions of the Readington school district following a day-long visit there on July 24.

"It went very well," reported Dr. Spitz, who was introduced to a gathering of approximately 60 parents, teachers and others, including Readington Mayor Stephanie Stevens, during a meeting that evening of the township's Board of Education. She described the community as having "a growing school district, with lots of opportunities and challenges facing it right now."

The Morristown resident, who will mark her third anniversary with the Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district today, August 1, assumed her current position after having been Assistant Superintendent and Director of Pupil Services in Montclair.

Dr. Spitz conceded that the prospect of leaving the Scotch Plains-Fanwood district to accept the school superintendent's position in Readington has left her with "very mixed emotions," because of her "wonderful" experiences during the

past three years working with fellow administrators, teachers and parents.

"It's been a delight to work here and there's still a lot to do," she commented. She cited development of Strategic Planning goals by Dr. Carol B. Choye, Scotch Plains-Fanwood Superintendent of Schools, and the Board of Education, along with the advancement of technology used in the schools, as the two most significant achievements she witnessed while working in the district.

She characterized officials, teaching staff and parents within the Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district as being "really committed to making the future a bright one for our young people. I think we're moving in a very positive direction."

Dr. Spitz stated that educators and residents of Readington Township have similar objectives for their own school district, and described the municipality as "looking for leadership, long-range planning and for the community to bond together with staff and the board to focus on the future."

Dr. Donald E. Sheldon, Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education President, who has worked closely with Dr. Spitz, said on behalf of the board, "we will miss her and we wish her success if she accepts the position of superintendent of schools in Readington."

"She's played a very vital role in the development of our instruction programs and has been very involved in the initiatives which have been inaugurated since she and Dr. Choye came to the district," Dr. Sheldon commented.

The district, which includes Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, two middle schools and five elementary schools, currently enrolls 4,066 students in Kindergarten through grade 12.

Peter Capodice, Board Secretary and Business Administrator for the Readington Township school district, reported the district, which presently includes three schools serving Kindergarten through grade 8, is "growing at a very high level," and noted that Readington residents are expected to vote on a referendum in October concerning the building of a fourth school.

DEADLINES HELP PAPER SERVE YOU

Those preparing press releases for submission to *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.

Times releases also may be mailed 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.



WHO WILL BE CHAMP?...Scott Smith, left, battles it out with Justin Eusebio at the LaGrande Park Ping Pong Tournament in Fanwood, just one of many playground activities which have been offered at the park this summer. This past week's Ping Pong Champion was Chris Daly. For full playground coverage, please seek a story on Page 16.

Fanwood Presbyterian Gains OK for Preschool

Planning Board Grants Permit for Playground Equipment

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

The Fanwood Presbyterian Church, located on Martine and LaGrande Avenues, received conditional approval from the Fanwood Planning Board last Thursday for a new preschool program to be held on the parish premises. A permit for playground equipment also was approved with the provision that the church install a safety enclosure.

Jonathan Philipp, a Woodbridge attorney representing the church, told board members that Westminster Preschool, a non-profit, self-supporting weekday program authorized by the church's governing body, will be held in three classrooms in the Christian education building which are otherwise used for Sunday school.

The Westminster program will occupy the same part of the building which formerly housed the Acorn School, another preschool, and will operate a morning and afternoon session. Each of the sessions, which will last for three hours, are expected to attract 30 pupils by next year for a total enrollment of 60, according to Mr. Philipp. He added the Acorn School's agreement with the church allowed for a total of 70 preschoolers in the program.

The attorney stated that although children will have the option of attending both the morning and afternoon sessions, church officials expect there would be for the most part two separate groups, and that parents could pick up their youngsters during a half-hour break between sessions.

Each class will have a half hour of supervised outdoor playground time, Mr. Philipp continued, with indoor recreation to be provided in the school gymnasium, upstairs from the classroom area, in the event of inclement weather. Children also would have their meals and snacks in the gymnasium, he said.

Board members confirmed there were no objections to the proposal from the borough's Board of Health, Police Department Traffic Safety Bureau, Fire Department and Fire Prevention Bureau, Environmental Commission or Shade Tree Commis-

sion. It was noted, however, that if milk or food were served as part of the program, the preschool would need to obtain a license from the Fanwood Board of Health.

Chief among board members' concerns was the safety of children in the playground and parking lot areas. Church Administrator Marshall Palmer testified that an existing wooden fence along the edge of the parking lot would remain, and anticipated some supplementary fencing would be added, but conceded that no definite plans had been made to enclose the playground area itself.

Officials discussed whether requiring the church to enclose the playground area as a condition of approval was necessary, or if the matter should be left up to church leaders. Board member Edward Sargent proposed that mandating an enclosure around the 22-foot by 29-foot playground could be "restrictive" and "maybe they don't want the kids playing in a fenced-in area."

Councilwoman and Board Member Karen M. Schurtz emphasized, however, that "preschool children have minds of their own, and I think parents would be more comfortable with a fenced-in play area. You can have 10 sets of eyes watching, but if one child gets hurt, all the attention is focused on that child and away from the other children."

She noted that a fence around the playground also might be of aesthetic value to the neighborhood. Board Chairman Gregory Cummings expressed concern about children having access to the parking lot and what he felt could be a potential visibility hazard posed by an open dumpster on the site. Mr. Palmer responded that in 10 years of overseeing the Acorn School, he had "never seen any children free in that parking lot."

Mrs. Schurtz, who initially made a motion that the church petition be approved in its original form, subsequently mentioned that it be approved "with some appropriate enclosure for the play area," which was seconded by fellow member Jack Molenaar and supported by the remainder of the board.



IN PERFORMANCE...Kate Rhodes and Barry Klussel will appear in the production of *An American Wake*, one of the four, one-act plays produced by Jersey Voices. Mr. Klussel, a Scotch Plains resident, plays the part of Da which will be held Friday and Saturday, August 2 and 3, and Friday and Saturday, August 9 and 10, at 8 p.m. at the Chatham Playhouse. Please see story which appears on Page 6.