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SEE YOU IN 2045... Joseph McCourt of the Scotch Plains World War II Commemorative Committee, left, places an item into the marble time capsule. The capsule, which was placed in a glass case in the Municipal Building, will be taken out of the case in the year 2045 to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War II. Pictured at the podium is Carl Axt, Commander of American Legion Post No. 209. Papers detailing the committee's work the past three years in marking the 50th anniversary of the end of the war, and a copy of *The Times of Scotch Plains and Fanwood* were among the items included in the capsule.

INDIVIDUALS SOUGHT TO GATHER INFORMATION

Fanwood Group Looking To Implement Assessment For Civic Infrastructure

By ALEXANDRA JELKES
Specially Written for The Times

The Fanwood Community Assessment Committee held an open meeting at the Fanwood Community House Monday night to discuss a pending evaluation of the municipality's strengths and weaknesses designed to improve the borough's civic infrastructure. The meeting was attended by Mayor Maryanne S. Connelly and the Borough Council. The meeting was conducted by David Pickering. Other members who were present included Jack Molenaar, who serves as Chairman of the Fanwood Down-

town Revitalization Committee; Candy Santo of CONTACT We Care; Borough Councilmen Louis C. Jung, William E. Populus, Jr., and Dr. Chester R. Lindsey; Carol Wood, Carol Kraus, and Borough Clerk Eleanor McGovern.

Mr. Pickering updated the group on the proposed assessment and gave background information on how this idea was developed.

A meeting was held in the summer of 1995, in Fanwood, to discuss the borough's interest in applying for an All-American Cities designation. Twelve individuals expressed initial interest in the community assessment.

Then in late 1995 Kathy Weiner and the group applied for a small grant from Rutgers University but were denied.

"The negative response got them in a quandary," stated Mr. Pickering.

Last summer, the Kean College Graduate School of Public Administration got involved. The administration joined a volunteer facilitator and a devoted group of Fanwood volunteers to design a community assessment to improve Fanwood's civic infrastructure.

This assessment, according to Mr. Pickering, includes citizens, businesses, government, and the non-profit sector in identifying local strengths and weaknesses in the following areas: Citizen participation, government leadership, government performance, voluntarism and philanthropy, inter-group relations, civic education, community information sharing, capacity for cooperation and consensus building, community vision and pride and regional cooperation.

The purpose of the assessment as explained in the handout given out to those who attended the meeting, is to use the information gathered from the community to target specific problems and develop collaborative solutions to them.

Members of the Assessment Committee also explained how the assessment will not only benefit Fanwood but all of the communities in Union County because it will be shared with any group wishing to conduct a similar project.

The report Kean College developed is an analysis of the tools to conduct an assessment. Last month Ms. Weiner and a student began working free of charge on the project. Bohdan Moczula is the research assistant involved with this project.

Currently, Kean College is looking for consultants to gather the information. These consultants or graduate students will be paid for their assessment. Mr. Pickering explained how the group would be conducting series of focus groups, questionnaires and interviews.

"The next step is to increase our membership," he added.

The group also discussed the time frame involved to push the project further along. The months of March and April would be dedicated to interviews and memberships, while May would be the time to hire consultants.

Between early summer and fall the assessment process would begin. Finally, in late fall, the committee will begin putting all the facts together, and, by early December, start analyzing them.

Mayor Connelly asked the group how many people were being targeted for membership, to which Mr. Pickering replied, "10 to 12, plus additional people. Its quality versus quantity."

"We're looking for a broad section of people, from commuters to seniors," he added.

Mr. Pickering also explained the reason why the group was going before the Mayor and the council by stating, "This cause needs financial support and viability."

"We need a commitment from the Mayor and the Council," he said.

Mr. Molenaar stated that the assessment is like a business in that it is for the long term.

"The assessment looks at everything including the volunteer aspect, whereas a Master Plan addresses infrastructure, zoning and city planning," he explained.

Another issue was borough enhancement. Committee representatives said they felt certain that Fanwood's prestige would grow because of the assessment. Mr. Pickering said he believed that if this project continues to grow, it will generate more volunteers and "we'll also be able to help out the non-profit groups."

"The real estate value will increase if Fanwood receives this designation," he said.

Mayor Connelly also stated that, although the municipal budget has yet to be finalized for introduction by the council, a \$5,000 grant is under consideration by officials.

Several other issues pertinent to the assessment dealt with the sewer problem in Fanwood and how this could be the model for the borough. Mayor Connelly addressed this issue and explained to the committee how the borough was working with other municipalities to solve this problem.

Another issue discussed was selecting the proper consultants to assess a small community.

"It is important to find individuals who have had prior experience in dealing with towns of this size," stated Mr. Molenaar.

The committee has scheduled its next meeting for Monday, March 3.

Deadlines Told For Submittals To The Times

Those persons preparing press releases for submission to *The Times* are reminded that copy should be E-mailed or faxed by 4 p.m. on the Friday prior to publication. *The Times'* E-mail address is golenader@aol.com. The fax number is 232-0473.

Releases, pictures, and letters to the editor can also be dropped off at our office located at 50 Elm Street or through our mail slot. To ensure that submittals reach our office prior to deadline we encourage E-mail or faxed material.

Sports stories which occur prior to the weekend should be in by the Friday deadline. Weekend sports events must be submitted by noon on the Monday prior to the publication date. Obituaries will be accepted up to 5 p.m. on Tuesdays.

All copy must be typed, double-spaced, no more than 500 words in length, and include a daytime telephone number where the submitter can be reached.

For events which are planned months in advance, we encourage submission of stories as early as possible prior to the event.

Please note that in addition to making our deadlines, the publication of submittals may be delayed due to space considerations. All submittals are subject to being cut due to length, edited for style and clarification at the discretion of the editor.

Opening of Chelsea in Fanwood Spotlights Quality of Life for Residents in Facility

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

Administrators and staff at the Chelsea in Fanwood offered a warm welcome January 28 to approximately 165 area residents who turned out for a late afternoon reception to celebrate the opening of the assisted living facility on South Avenue. Visitors were also given guided tours of the building, formerly the Mansion Hotel, which was completely renovated over the course of seven months last year.

The Chelsea, which has units available for 70 residents on its upper three floors, is designed for senior citizens age 55 and older who can no longer live independently but do not require nursing home care and who wish to maintain the same quality of life which they have always enjoyed, according to Chelsea Executive Director Adam M. Hersh.

Living quarters for residents range from efficiency units to two-room

apartments, priced between \$2,400 and \$5,000 per month. Each unit, decorated with warm colors, features bedsprings and other furnishings done in cheerful patterns; a kitchenette with cabinetry and a sink, a refrigerator and microwave, and a private bathroom. The basic package covers three meals per day, housekeeping and laundry services, and recreational and social programs.

On each floor, a cozy living room with sofas, chairs and an armchair in which a television and a videocassette recorder are stored is provided for quiet pastimes in addition to the common areas on the ground floor. Mr. Hersh commented that each of the living rooms overlook the Chelsea's landscaped courtyard.

On the ground floor are a spacious living room and an adjoining card room, with a combination tea room and library located across the hall. Down the corridor are the main dining room, with two seating times each for breakfast, lunch and dinner, plus a separate dining room where residents can enjoy a meal brought by visiting family members or have food specially prepared by the Chelsea chefs for a private gathering.

Along the same hallway is a "country" kitchen where residents can prepare their own meals, an activity which they can also share with family members, according to Sue Lobel, Director of Marketing, who led some of the tours during the opening reception last week. In addition, coffee, tea and pastries are always available in the tea room.

Ms. Lobel noted that residents are encouraged to eat their meals in the dining room rather than in their private quarters, to provide them with socialization and to allow staff members to monitor any dietary changes which may indicate a health problem.

"We are the eyes and the ears for families," said Ms. Lobel, adding that "a change in eating patterns can

be a sign that other changes are going on."

Mr. Hersh reported that the Chelsea also provides a wellness center, for which staff members undergo "an extensive screen process" including not only drug use and criminal background checks but also tests for mathematics and literacy proficiency since these people will be involved in the supervision of medications and assisting residents with walking, bathing, dressing and grooming needs.

A Director of Health Services will meet with all residents monthly for general wellness checks, Mr. Hersh continued, and when appropriate, will make recommendations concerning specialized care such as physical therapy. Residents will still be under the care of their own family physicians, but the Chelsea will help coordinate the transportation of residents to any necessary health care appointments.

Mr. Hersh added that the facility will have a dietitian on consultation who can advise chefs at the Chelsea of any dietary problems that a resident may be experiencing so that a special menu may be prepared for that person. He noted that the chefs are culinary institute graduates who are trained to accommodate the nutritional needs of senior citizens, including those who are diabetics or who may be on a low sodium diet.

Residents will be allowed to bring their own cars, but for those who do not have transportation, a van will be provided for weekly shopping trips, doctor's appointments, and for entertainment excursions. He added that residents will even have an opportunity, if they wish, to visit Atlantic City or to take in a Broadway show. The Chelsea will arrange for show tickets and will accompany residents to offer any assistance they may require.

"The resident body has a council which directs us as to what programs, in a social and recreational

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LOW VISION TECHNOLOGY... Jessica Mattfield is shown with her CCTV, at the January meeting of the Springfield Lions Club, held at L'Affaire in Mountainside, where she was the guest speaker. Please see story on Page 12.

Expenditures in Budget Are Lower Than Expected

By SALLY E. BECKWITH
Specially Written for The Times

Scotch Plains Municipal Manager Thomas E. Atkins briefed Mayor Irene T. Schmidt and Township Council members on the \$15,345,937 recommended municipal budget to be presented at Tuesday's budget meeting.

Although the appropriations side of the ledger are up about 3.5 percent, Mr. Atkins commented that "the expenditure side is not as considerable as I expected it to be."

He added, "I feel the best about this budget as I have in about six years."

Other agenda items of the February 4 conference meeting included a recommendation by Mr. Atkins that the council reject a December 16 bid by Garden State Kennels for the township's animal control contract, as it was the sole bid received.

He advised council members to consider a bid by Associated Humane Societies of Newark as a viable option, although Garden State currently is supplying the service. Associated Humane Societies serves the nearby communities of Westfield, Mountainside and Stanford.

It was decided that a team to include Health Inspector Andrew Snyder, Mayor Schmidt and Councilwoman Joan Papan would inspect the Societies' two facilities in Union

Township and Newark before awarding the 1997 animal control contract.

Mr. Atkins also announced that the Army Corps of Engineers would hold a public meeting at the Municipal Building on Monday, February 24, to present a Green Brook flood control proposal. This open meeting will follow a similar one to be held in Berkeley Heights.

The "hot button" topic of the evening (so described by Councilman Robert E. Johnston) was what officials characterized as the poor quality of service provided by the Scotch Plains Post Office. The subject was introduced by Councilwoman Papan in response to complaints from several of her constituents. Councilmen Johnston and William F. McClintock, Jr. vehemently agreed, calling the poor service "absolutely outrageous" and the "worst in New Jersey."

Although Mr. Atkins pointed out that the root causes of this problem were the Postal Service's seniority system and the letter carrier union, the council agreed with Mayor Schmidt that a "strong letter" be sent to Postmaster Elvoid Christmas, as similar complaints have been made to him over the past three years.

The letter also will invite Mr. Christmas to attend the March meeting of the council.



CHELSEA WELCOME... Adam M. Hersh, Executive Director of the Chelsea in Fanwood welcomed area firefighters during a reception last week celebrating the opening of the new assisted living facility. Pictured, left to right, are: Acting Plainfield Fire Chief John Rieck, Fanwood Fire Chief Daniel Librandy, Fanwood First Assistant Fire Chief John Piccolo, Mr. Hersh, Fanwood Fire Captain Douglas Germinder, Plainfield Deputy Fire Chief Paul Newborn, Fanwood Second Assistant Fire Chief Lenny Watt and Fanwood Fire Department Lieutenant Jason Lowrey.