

THE TIMES



FANWOOD

of Scotch Plains - Fanwood

OUR 38th YEAR - ISSUE

USPS 48520
Periodical - Postage Paid at Scotch Plains, N.J.

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Published
Every Thursday

232-4407

FIFTY CENTS



David B. Coblin for The Times

NOT THE FIRST... But David Furst of Club 40 batting in the seventh inning of the JCC Softball League game against the Sour Grapes on July 27 at Tamaques Field in Westfield. The taste of grapes was too sour for Club 40 as the Sour Grapes celebrated at Club 40's expense with an 11-6 crushing.

Planning Board Approves Home Businesses; Discusses Master Plan

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

Only one of two scheduled applications was heard July 23 during an hour-long meeting of the Fanwood Planning Board, after Chairman Gregory S. Cummings announced at the outset that the second appeal had been postponed until the board's next meeting on Wednesday, August 27. The major part of last week's meeting dealt with the borough's Master Plan, as well as a proposed merger of the Planning Board and the Board of Adjustment.

Kathleen Daniele of La Grande Avenue received the board's approval for conditional use of her home for a cruise travel business. Although she is affiliated with a travel agency, Mrs. Daniele said this would be a separate venture. She reported that 80 percent of her business would be done over the telephone and the remainder by mail, adding that there would be no need for clients to come to her home. Mrs. Daniele also stated that there would be no need for a business sign on her property.

The board postponed a public hearing on an application by Ernest Fantini of Edison for an amended subdivision and site plan to develop a piece of property which he owns on Fifth Avenue. The applicant, who board representatives said had not completed his obligation to notify neighbors of the appeal in time for last week's meeting, lost an earlier bid in April to develop an adjacent lot.

Mr. Fantini was granted a subdivision in 1985 which would have allowed him to build two homes. He recently sought to alter the agreement, however, by increasing the total lot coverage and frontage for a new home, and by proposing to construct a new driveway to open onto Fifth Street rather than onto La Grande

Avenue, as was stipulated in the original plan. The board cited safety concerns regarding the driveway among its reasons for denying Mr. Fantini his previous appeal.

During a separate discussion concerning revisions to the Master Plan, Edward Sargent, a member of both the Planning Board and the Fanwood Volunteer Rescue Squad, urged that the updated plan include a provision addressing the impact certain future large-scale development projects could have on the ability of the Rescue Squad and the Fanwood Volunteer Fire Department to respond to emergency situations.

Mr. Sargent cited as examples the Chelsea at Fanwood, an assisted living facility on the former site of the Mansion Hotel, and Children's Specialized Hospital, both on South Avenue. He explained that these facilities comprise multiple individual units occupied by handicapped or elderly individuals, making transportation or evacuation procedures particularly difficult.

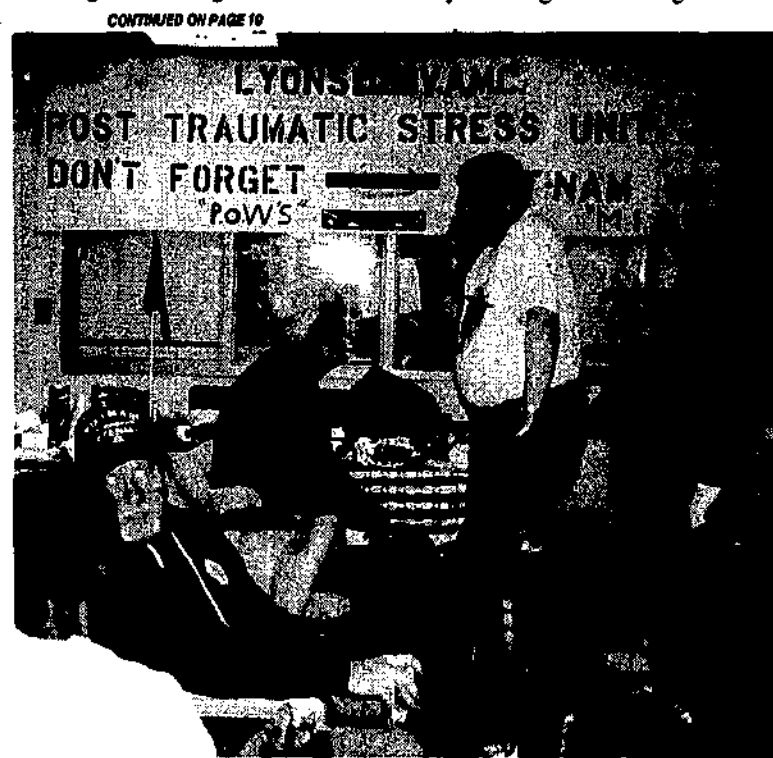
The board member noted the assisted living facility also has created an increase in the number of calls to the rescue squad, at the same time that the squad is having difficulty covering all its shifts. Another problem, he observed, is that some members of the squad are older people themselves and that transporting a large person down from one of the Chelsea's upper floors could cause an additional strain.

Board members subsequently discussed Mayor Maryanne S. Connelly's recommendation that the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment be combined. Under the new format, the Board of Adjustment would be phased out and the Planning Board would assume the duties and responsibilities of the former. The Mayor, who also serves on the Planning Board, nevertheless conceded that it is a topic "which will have to be discussed at greater length"

before any action is taken.

Mayor Connelly explained that there are often not enough volunteers for a quorum on both boards, and that merging the two would also reduce the costs associated with maintaining the dual boards. Board Secretary Ruth Page confirmed that the number of applications heard by the Planning Board has dwindled over the past five years.

Councilwoman Karen M. Schurtz, who also sits on the Planning Board, said she has discussed the proposal with Mayor Michael Tripodi of Kenilworth, which combined its own Planning and Zoning Boards. She is



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FRIENDLY CHATS... Members of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 688, representing the American Legions and Veterans of Foreign Wars of Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Westfield and Mountainside take monthly trips to the Post Traumatic Stress Unit of the Lyons Veterans' Hospital in Basking Ridge and bring food, refreshments and engage in friendly conversations with the residents. The residents look forward to these monthly meetings and appreciate the consideration and time taken by the chapter members.

UNION COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP. HOSTS NETWORKING EVENT

Foul Weather Does Not Dampen Spirits of Business Leaders On Fifth Annual Cruise of County Waterfront, Port Area

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Times

While many workers and residents in Union County were dealing with flooding from last Thursday's stormy weather, business and government leaders braved the rough surf for the opportunity to network with each other for the common goal of economic development as part of the fifth annual cruise of the New Jersey and Manhattan waterfront sponsored by the Union County Economic Development Corporation (UCEDC).

Heads of Chambers of Commerce and downtown revitalization programs, local business leaders and elected and appointed officials had the opportunity to discuss important issues such as the dredging of the New York and New Jersey ports. The cruise began under a windswept tent at the Elizabeth Marina. Among the sites were the Elizabeth and Manhattan Waterfront, Statue of Liberty and

the Brooklyn Bridge.

Although the weather did not cooperate, the event provided an opportunity for networking among official and business leaders as well as an opportunity to learn more about development along the county's waterfront.

Although a sea and air rescue demonstration by the United States Coast Guard had to be canceled due to the inclement weather, those in attendance did receive a presentation about the dredging project currently ongoing in the harbor.

Maureen Tinen, UCEDC President, said the networking event enables representatives of local Chambers of Commerce, Special Improvement Districts, grassroots groups, community leaders and people employed in workforce development, to interact with one another.

Although attendance was down from previous years due to the

weather, a majority of the 150 invited guests turned out for the four-hour cruise from the Elizabeth Marina to the Brooklyn Bridge and back.

Ms. Tinen said the first cruise in 1993 focused on the development along the waterfront. Last year the guest speaker was the head of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, who spoke about the importance of dredging the port.

As a special theme this year, the UCEDC gave out gift bags of items made in Union County to each of the guests as they disembarked the Amberg Jack V enclosed yacht charter.

"This (the gift bag) gives them (the guests) a sense of the kinds of things our rich manufacturing-base produces," said Ms. Tinen.

In the past few years she said development in the county has been geared towards retail, such as IKEA furniture stores and the Metromall projects, both in Elizabeth; national

chains in downtowns as well as increased entrepreneurship in the less affluent communities.

The UCEDC, Ms. Tinen said, offers microloans for those starting out in business. The program includes six weeks of training for new entrepreneurs as well as start-up financing. She also noted the emphasis by the county Freeholder board over the past few years on the county's transportation infrastructure.

During the 1989 to 1992 period, she said, Union County lost one out of every four manufacturers. She said those manufacturers that are left have had to do more with less and thus have been unable to create new jobs. Ms. Tinen noted that although job growth has not been tremendous, neither has the population growth in the county. The county unemployment rate currently is around 5.3 percent.

Union County Freeholder Donald

Goncalves, who chairs the board's new Economic Development Committee and is employed by the Elizabeth Economic Development Corporation, said the cleanup of the waterfront and the Port of Elizabeth are crucial to the county's economic future.

"From an economic development standpoint, we always said that Union County thrives because of our ports and because of our location," he explained, noting that the water and air are the county's natural resources and thus must be cleaned up.

Given the tremendous volume of passengers arriving daily at Newark International Airport, 40 percent of which lies in Union County, Freeholder Goncalves noted that it is important that the county start to become a destination point for new businesses.

Freeholder Frank H. Lehr said the

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TERRILL MUSIC DIRECTOR LEAVING DISTRICT

Residents Petition School Bd. To Expand Sports Programs For Grade 9, Middle Schools

By JEANNE WHITNEY
Specially Written for The Times

One hundred residents of Scotch Plains and Fanwood have petitioned the district Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carol B. Choye to expand middle school and ninth grade interscholastic sports programs by this fall "to accommodate all those children who have the desire and ability to participate."

Board member Edward J. Saridaki, Jr., who also signed the petition, agreed to deliver the petition to the board according to a letter included with the 100 signatures, "because of problems some of us have experienced with taking a public stand on issues within the district."

Dr. Choye said she will "talk to staff about the issue when they return from vacation." The residents' letter said they were aware that the administration is considering expansion of some of the district athletic programs.

The petition claims that "with the increase in student enrollment, opportunities in interscholastic sports "have not expanded adequately. We recognize the need for and importance of a broad-based educational experience for the children. This experience should include opportunities for all children who wish to participate in co-curricular activities such as instrumental and vocal music, club activities and interscholastic athletics."

In other business, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education approved the district's 1997-1998 Program of Study for elementary and middle schools last Thursday at its regular meeting. Earlier in

the month, board members suggested changes to the state required annual publication.

Board Vice President Jessica D. Simpson cited a description of middle school reading skills in a draft of the Program of Study saying, "As a parent, this doesn't tell me what I want to know."

She asked to know specifically what students will be reading by questioning officials, "is it short sto-

In a separate matter, the board agreed to accept \$179,107 from the federal government. The four-part grant includes funds for innovative educational programs, staff development in mathematics and science, attention to a safe and drug-free environment and disadvantaged students. A portion of the funds is shared with private schools in the area.

The board also agreed to approve \$361,189 in transportation costs for 62 students last year in conjunction with the Union County Educational Services Commission. The board indicated the expense was a savings of \$18,000 over last year. The bus routes are primarily to special education facilities.

On a separate matter, the board accepted the resignation of Terrill Middle School music teacher Charles Dettmar, who will become Director of the West Orange High School Band. Assistant Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Football Coach and physical education teacher John Maggio also will resign to become Director of Athletics in Bound Brook, according to Dr. Choye.

According to district personnel reports, other high school football assistant coaches for this year will be Thomas Baylock, James Foy, Kyle Banghart, Richard McGriff and Erik Rosenmeier. Kimberly Gable will coach high school junior varsity cheerleading.

The board reported the hiring of two special education teachers for a new program at Coles Elementary School for preschool age children exhibiting signs of autism.

Patricia Boland was hired through the summer as a social studies and Language Arts Supervisor for the middle and high school departments.

District Assistant Superintendent for Business and Board Secretary Richard J. Marshall will retire by January but will continue part-time as a planning associate for six months at \$500 a day, according to the personnel report.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, September 11, at 8 p.m.

ries, novels or what?"

While some suggestions from board members were heeded in this year's program, Dr. Choye recommended waiting until next year to make any major revisions to the Program of Study because of staff changes and time constraints.

On a separate matter, Dr. Choye told the board she would not endorse proposals to increase counseling services during school hours. She said she would be focusing on how time is spent in the classroom and how counseling services fit into the overall picture, emphasizing academics. The board did approve \$123,500 for ongoing counseling services with Resolve Community Counseling Center, Inc., for the district this school year.

In other business, the board approved its yearly report on violence and vandalism in district schools. Damages for the 1996-1997 school year totaled \$1,155 from graffiti, broken windows and desks and a garbage can fire in a girls' locker room. Violence was limited to student scuffles, according to board President Dr. Donald E. Sheldon.

Township Neighborhoods Plan 'Night Out' Event

Neighborhoods throughout Scotch Plains are being invited to join forces with thousands of communities nationwide on Tuesday, August 5, for the annual National "Night Out" Crime and Drug Prevention event.

National "Night Out" is designed to:

- heighten crime and drug prevention awareness;
- generate support for, and participation in local anti-crime efforts;
- strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships;
- send a message to criminals letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

From 7 to 10 p.m. on August 5, residents in neighborhoods throughout Scotch Plains and across the nation are asked to lock their doors, turn on their outside lights and spend the evening outside with neighbors and police.

Many neighborhoods throughout Scotch Plains will be hosting a variety of special events such as block parties, cookouts, parades, visits from police, flashlight walks, contests, youth activities and anti-crime and drug rallies. All residents of Scotch Plains are encouraged to participate in the event.

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 gleader@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 must 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.