

# THE TIMES

of  
Scotch Plains - Fanwood



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## BOE Okays Curriculum Revisions

By SUSAN DYCKMAN  
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education unanimously approved curriculum changes at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School for the new school year during its public meeting on September 25.

Prior to the roll call vote, discussion focused on the recommendation to change the social studies course, "You and the Law," to a year-long program of study for five credits from the current 2.5-credit, single semester course.

The recommendation to extend the length of the program came from the Social Studies Department, high school Principal Terry Riegel and the district Curriculum Committee.

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Dr. John R. Crews, explained, "Our students' visits to colleges are revealing that colleges are frowning on semester courses, preferring full-year programs of study."

"You and the Law" is a popular course among local high school seniors. It studies state and local law and law enforcement, and highlights some federal laws or movements that affect adolescents and young adults.

"The students are asking for more rigor," Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Carol B. Choye, said. "A year-long course has higher expectations for the students enrolled in it."

Board member August L. Ruggiero proposed an amendment to break the class into a two-semester course for five credits. He argued that students who might not want to commit to taking the course for the whole year would have the option to register for a second semester if the course were broken into two segments.

While fellow board member Albert J. Syvertsen supported Mr. Ruggiero's proposal, the amendment was ultimately defeated.

Despite his concerns that a year-long course would attract only "top students," board member Richard Meade supported the proposed curriculum changes.

"This is an area where it is appropriate to recognize the professional decision of the educators in our district," he maintained. "It's not our job to step into that role."

He asked for feedback on student enrollment in the class once the 1998-1999 school year is underway.

Other curriculum changes included dropping a series of courses from the Art, Business, English, Family and Consumer Sciences, Industrial and Technical Education and Social Studies Departments due to insufficient enrollment and/or teacher time over a minimum of two years.

Course additions included Principles of Marketing I and II; and Research in Science, an accelerated-level program.

In another matter, the board approved the Kindergarten to grade 12 Content Standards and Proficiencies for the district's mathematics program. It was originally presented by department supervisor Don Williams at the board's agenda meeting.

State-mandated content standards for the mathematics curriculum have

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## 'Fanny Wood' Brings 10,000 to Downtown

By SUZETTE STALKER  
Specially Written for The Times

Fanwoodians couldn't have picked a better day to welcome back their namesake, as enthusiastic crowds filled the borough's downtown last Saturday for the second annual "Fanny Wood Day" celebration.

Approximately 10,000 people turned out for the event, which is named for a popular folklore character. Sunny skies and mild temperatures added to the celebratory atmosphere at the festival.

Merchants, vendors and crafters displayed an array of merchandise, ranging from clothing, jewelry and gifts, to food, household goods and souvenirs, at tables and booths which lined Martine and South Avenues.

There also were games and activities for children, musical entertainment and a collection of educational exhibits. Youngsters got to climb aboard a fire engine from 1947, and a restored hose cart, circa 1890, was also on display.

Jack Ruh, a former Assistant Fire Chief in Fanwood, explained that the hose cart, which had to be pulled by two men, was used by the Fanwood



SHE'S NUMBER ONE...Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School cheerleaders pose with Governor Christine Todd Whitman during the Governor's campaign swing through the township September 24. Governor Whitman was given an official football Raiders jersey by the girls. Please see more pictures on the Governor's visit on Page 12.



CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES...The Celebration Singers, a choral group from Cranford which specializes in popular and traditional songs, appeared last Saturday at "Fanny Wood Day" in downtown Fanwood. Among the songs performed by the ensemble were "Danny Boy," "Song of Galilee" and "O Solo Mio."

## CONGRESS HAS EXTENDED PROVISION'S DEADLINE UNTIL OCTOBER 23

### Immigration Law Extension Buys Time for Local Family Seeking to Stave Off Return to Trinidad

By SUSAN DYCKMAN  
Specially Written for The Times

Last week, a national news story played out close to home as Scotch Plains residents William and Gracelyn Aberdeen and their two children tried desperately to stave off a return to their native Trinidad.

The immigrant family was working against the clock as the days

ticked down to the September 30 deadline for remaining in the United States while applying for legal residence. Under new legislation, Section 245 of the Immigration Law, unlawful immigrants would be required to leave the country to apply for legal status at United States consulates abroad. That could take years. The Aberdeen family was booked

out of the country on a September 27 flight in the event the long-awaited confirmation of their legal status failed to arrive from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

This week, the family is breathing a little easier following a telephone call from Congressman Bob Franks at 7 p.m. on September 26. The Congressman's office, to whom the

Aberdeens had appealed for assistance, advised them that an extension of the law allowing undocumented immigrants to file for legal status here in the United States instead of abroad was pending in the House of Representatives.

The Aberdeens gambled that the extension would be granted, and canceled their

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HOPING TO STAY...Marla Aberdeen and her brother, Darlen, seated, are joined by friends, pictured left to right, Jennifer Souza, Manra Loughrey and Caitlin Mahony. An extension of the law allowing undocumented immigrants to file for legal status in the United States has bought the Aberdeen youngsters and their parents some time, as they seek to remain in the United States. They had been scheduled to return to their native Trinidad on September 27.

## FIRST REVISIONS SINCE THE 1950s

### Adjustment Board Attorney Discusses Revised Ordinance

By SUZETTE STALKER  
Specially Written for The Times

Charles H. Brandt, the attorney for the Fanwood Board of Adjustment, made a two-hour presentation to the Planning Board last Wednesday concerning proposed revisions to the borough's zoning ordinance.

The board will review the ordinance over the next several weeks and is expected to discuss it during the body's October 13 agenda session and October 22 regular meeting.

Mr. Brandt, who will retire as attorney for the Board of Adjustment at the end of the year, has worked on updating the ordinance with the Borough Council's Building and Zoning Committee over the last four years.

During last week's regular meeting, Mr. Brandt gave a comprehensive overview of more than 20 separate articles contained in the ordinance, covering everything from zone changes to the proposed placement of cellular towers.

Some of the proposed revisions reflect the advanced technology, as well as changes in business, which have evolved over the past four decades. The revisions are the first to be done since the zoning ordinance was created in the 1950s.

Mr. Brandt reported that several zone changes have been proposed under the revised ordinance. He said the zone currently designated as Light Industrial, which he identified as the area south of the A&P on South Avenue to the Plainfield border, would become General Commercial.

He said the Light Industrial Zone had traditionally been home to manufacturing firms which had sprung up during the World War II era, but which for the most part have been replaced by retail and automotive establishments.

According to Mr. Brandt, the revised ordinance also proposes to "significantly" broaden the central commercial zone, which currently encompasses both sides of Martine Avenue, to include South Avenue, First Street and La Grande Avenue as well.

The updated ordinance would not include provisions for senior citizen housing along Old South Avenue, which was deemed financially im-

practical, or for low- and moderate-income housing.

Mr. Brandt stated that Fanwood's affordable housing requirements under the Mount Laurel agreement had already been satisfied.

The attorney revealed that under the revised ordinance, restrictions regarding home occupations would be a "lot more stringent," particularly concerning the amount of traffic which would be generated by such businesses.

He said that while the existing ordinance allowed for one employee in a home occupation situation, the revised document would not permit any employees who did not live at the residence.

Mr. Brandt added that doctors and dentists would no longer be able to practice within their residences, although those who do so already would be permitted to continue. Under the revised ordinance, medical offices would have to be located either in central commercial or professional zones, he said.

Mr. Brandt anticipated that one of the most controversial aspects of the updated ordinance would involve the location of cellular towers, which are used to transmit signals to people using mobile telephones. There are currently no cellular towers in the borough.

Mr. Brandt, who serves as the Town Attorney in Westfield, said that there are three cellular towers in the town, but they are located on top of the municipality's tallest buildings.

He explained that Fanwood does not have the same type of buildings as Westfield does, and that homeowners typically frown upon having the towers in residential areas for aesthetic reasons. It is an issue which he felt would require "more discussion and thought."

Other articles discussed by Mr. Brandt address the purpose and scope of the ordinance, definitions related to zoning issues and the organization of the Planning Board and Boards of Adjustment. Officials are currently considering a proposal to merge the two boards.

The ordinance also contains articles dealing with requirements for approval of applications; site plans and subdivisions; sexually-oriented businesses; general provisions concerning setback allowances; accessory uses; storage of vehicles in residential neighborhoods; commercial signs; exotic pets, and parking.

A proposal to increase the borough's permitted driveway width from 10 to 20 feet drew immediate

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### Deadlines Told For Submittals To The Leader

Those persons preparing press releases for submission to *The Leader* are reminded that copy should be E-mailed or faxed by 4 p.m. on the Friday prior to publication. *The Leader's* E-mail address is [isgoleader@aol.com](mailto:isgoleader@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 materials.

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, upper and lower case, 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.