

# THE TIMES



## Scotch Plains — Fanwood

OUR 38th YEAR — ISSI

U787485200  
Periodical — Postage Paid at Scotch Plains, N.J.

Thursday, October 9, 1997

Published  
Every Thursday

232-4407

FIFTY CENTS

### Mrs. Stender Highlights County's Economic Development Program

By CANDACE WALLER  
Specially Written for The Times

Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders Chairwoman Linda D. Stender discussed the Freeholder Economic Development Committee's agenda at the Scotch Plains Planning Board's Monday meeting.

Mrs. Stender talked about developing economic initiatives that would make Union County profitable for businesses and residents. "When I campaigned for reelection in the fall of 1996, the people of this county made it very clear to me that rebuilding the economy of Union County had to be job one for county government," Mrs. Stender said.

"Whatever partisan differences exist on other issues, there is complete bipartisan agreement that Union County must have more

good paying jobs, more profitable businesses and widespread prosperity," Mrs. Stender, a former Mayor of Fanwood, explained.

The main attraction to the Union County area, according to Mrs. Stender, is the location. The committee has set aside different plans to make the transportation system more useful.

Mrs. Stender said studies are underway to develop ways to make the infrastructure better in Union County. Five specific planned areas of transportation will be addressed.

"The key thing that emerged from the studies was that developing transportation would be critical to our success," Mrs. Stender said.

"We must market Union County not just as a place to do business but also a place to live."

Plans are underway to study traf-

fic patterns of Martine and Park Avenues which would include Scotch Plains and Fanwood. The New Jersey Turnpike will soon be widening to 14 lanes along a 14-mile stretch between Woodbridge and Newark.

Scotch Plains Planning Board member Maria Sartor was impressed by the points covered in Mrs. Stender's talk.

"It was good for thought," Mrs. Sartor said. "In the study of Martine and Park Avenues, Fanwood and Scotch Plains representatives should be on that committee. Input from our towns should be included. I thought the presentation was good."

The East West Light Rail Link is being developed to spark commercial, industrial and residential development that will expand the

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### OFFICIALS STILL HOPE TO DECORATE POLES FOR HOLIDAYS

## Township Council Agrees To Reject Consolidation Of Local Welfare Services

By JEANNE WHITNEY  
Specially Written for The Times

Scotch Plains Township Council members agreed Tuesday to reject consolidation of local welfare services with Union County under the state's new Work First New Jersey plan. "We want to retain the public services at a local level," Township Manager Thomas E. Atkins said, "but we need to know what the final rules from the state will be."

According to the state's implementation plan for welfare consolidation, the council has until January 1 to decide to go it alone in administration of local welfare services. State officials, however, will eventually handle all checks issued to clients, according to township Welfare Director Maria Santo.

Independent local welfare offices must also be able to file client information with the state via computer according to the Work First plan and provide a local administrator 15 hours a week. Towns may share an independent administrator and township officials proposed a partnership with the Township of Clark.

Towns with high use of public assistance programs say they welcome the relief to municipal budgets that the county takeover provides. Maverick towns say they can keep welfare expenses low, services personalized and fraud to a minimum.

Councilman Robert Johnston went so far as to claim, "We do not need county government at all."

State Commissioner of Human Services William Waldman says the tran-

sition to a county-run system will take a year, with a September 30, 1998 deadline.

In other business, the council considered signing on with Aflac, an insurance provider, to allow township employees to set aside pre-tax dollars annually for anticipated medical bills. "I know that some employees want it," Mr. Atkins said.

If the council moves ahead with the Aflac measure next week at its regular meeting, it may be a month before the program is in place, Mr. Atkins said.

On a separate matter, Deputy Mayor Joan Papen said the council is again poised to wrangle with Bell Atlantic officials over the use of telephone poles in the downtown for December holiday decorations. "We've been getting the constant run-around," Mrs. Papen claimed.

A year ago, when Mrs. Papen vowed to add lighted snowflakes to undercoated poles along Park Avenue near Route No. 22, she described the telephone company as "the new Grinch in town." In a story by children's author Dr. Seuss, a "Grinch" character tries to do away with Christmas.

The problem is that the township has not been able to convince telephone officials to install brackets and electrical sockets on the poles — even for \$150 per pole as in the past — for the additional snowflake decorations. Ownership of the poles is shared by public utilities services and Bell, according to Mrs. Papen.

A Bell Atlantic manager for external affairs told the council last year

that the company outlawed decorations on the poles several years ago, calling it a safety hazard.

Last year, Mrs. Papen said the township promised to have all decorations off the poles within 30 minutes in an emergency.

On another matter, township officials said the Town of Westfield asked the township to share in a sanitary sewer project involving six houses along Lamberts Mill Road near Jacob's Lane. Two of the houses are in Scotch Plains, according to officials. An engineer for the township, Dennis Harrington, said he was contacting the two homeowners about the project.

The council said it would postpone a tour of the township to view recreation and public works improvements until early next year. Part of the tour was originally scheduled for October 25, which is Scotch Plains Day.

The council said it would be looking to regulate the size and location of television satellite dishes in residential zones. Mrs. Papen said neighboring towns limit dish widths to 12 inches placed behind the house. Township attorneys said commercial zones may permit a dish up to two feet wide.

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities reminded the township that local courts are now required by the state to provide a public defender for every needy defendant. Executive Director William G. Dressel, Jr., said 70 percent of towns already provide the service, as does Scotch Plains. By the end of the year, the application fee for defense will rise to \$200 from \$50.

Mayor Irene T. Schmidt said she will meet this week with state transportation officials in an effort to look at potential traffic congestion in the township as a result of increases in business along Route No. 22 and proposed and existing road repairs.

The council is also considering whether to install traffic surveillance cameras, as part of a Union County project, at street intersections from Mountain to La Grande and North and South Avenues in an effort to document traffic volume and possibly seek funding for signal and road improvements.

Township officials noted the receipt of \$655,000 this year so far from the state Department of Transportation Trust Program for road improvements.

The Union County League of Municipalities told the township it will take three months and \$25,000 to study the need and cost of a countywide animal shelter. The results of the study will be revealed in public meetings, officials said.

### New Director Of Library Reveals Plans

"What people are looking for now when they come into a library is so different from what it was five years ago," said Dan Weiss, who took over as Director of the Fanwood Memorial Library on October 6.

Apparently, the people of Fanwood have found the very person to develop just such a library for their community. In the past five years, Mr. Weiss, 45, has created a web page, a personal computer-based, searchable index of the local newspaper, and a circulating audio compact disc collection, in addition to providing extensive reference services — all in the past five years for the Bernards Township Library in Basking Ridge.

A native of Springfield, Mr. Weiss has lived in Westfield for 17 years. He has performed, recorded and toured in the United States and abroad with Tony Trischka and Skyline, an original acoustic group. He graduated



Dan Weiss

summa cum laude from the Rutgers School of Communication, Information and Library Science in 1992.

"College graduates, even high school students, now expect a certain level of technology when they come in to a library," Mr. Weiss explained. "They're just used to finding information in a certain way."

In his unhurried way, Mr. Weiss described how he recently helped a college patron at the Bernards Library tap into her campus personal computer to retrieve her e-mail, grades and course selection. All she needed was a log-on name and a password. Where was this college? In Michigan, revealed Mr. Weiss.

"Small libraries, like the one in Fanwood, can become very valuable resources for all segments of the population, once they get hooked up to the Web," the new Library Director remarked.

He gave examples of how to easily access a list of all the companies in Union County who make a certain item so that an entrepreneur could send them a letter.

"And reference librarians have become so knowledgeable about the Web that home computer users often call us for the on-line address of a specific organization," reported Mr. Weiss. "And yet, I'd be the last person to steer a patron to a computer screen when a book is really the easiest resource."

In fact, he'd like to help Fanwoodians greatly extend the number of materials available to them and get them faster by implementing an improved inter-library loan system similar to that of Middlesex County.

Patrons would search a database containing titles from area libraries. Orders could be picked up from those

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### SUCCESSOR TO TAKE OVER JAN. 1 Council Set to Appoint Next Chief of Police

By SUZETTE STALKER  
Specially Written for The Times

The Fanwood Borough Council is expected to confirm the appointment tonight, Thursday, October 9, of Captain Robert Carboy as successor to Police Chief Anthony J. Parenti effective on Thursday, January 1.

Chief Parenti must retire at the end of the year in accordance with a state law reactivated a little more than a year ago, which obligates all police and fire personnel who have reached age 65 to accept mandatory retirement.

A 38-year veteran of the Fanwood Police Department, Captain Carboy was tapped to replace Chief Parenti based on his length of service with the department and his rank, according to Council President and Police Commissioner Bruce H. Walsh.

During Monday's council agenda meeting, Councilman Walsh said Captain Carboy had received "the highest recommendation" from Chief Parenti, as well as the endorsement of the council's Public Safety Committee, which had interviewed the captain about his future role and his goals for the department.

Councilman Walsh revealed that, with the appointment of a new chief, there also would be promotions within the rest of the police department and the addition of a new officer at the bottom level.

Mayor Maryanne S. Connelly emphasized that it was vital to the morale of the police department that the council name a successor to Chief Parenti. Officials had delayed the appointment for a month while reviewing procedures for the selection of a new chief.

In June, Governor Christine Todd Whitman signed a bill into law granting a six-month extension on mandatory retirement for law enforcement and fire personnel who had reached 65.

The law allowed Chief Parenti, who turned 65 in May, to remain on the job through the end of this year and to play an active role in the selection of his successor. The chief, who has been a member of the Fanwood force for 41 years, has headed the department for 22 years.

In other business at the agenda session, Borough Attorney Dennis Estis said an ordinance would likely be introduced either tonight or early next month to allow the borough's Planning Board and Board of Adjustment to be combined into a single body beginning in the new year.

The merger was proposed as a means of dealing with multiple issues, among them a decline in the number of volunteers willing to serve on the boards and the number of cases being heard, as well as a way to reduce costs.

Councilwoman Karen M. Schurtz, who chairs the council's Building and Zoning Committee, said her committee unanimously supported the merger. The other committee members are Councilman Walsh and Councilman Stuart S. Kline.

Mr. Estis stated that, under a 1996 amendment to the state's Land Use Ordinance, the proposed merger would not have to be decided by a public referendum, as originally thought, because Fanwood has a population of less than 10,000 people.

Borough Engineer Richard Marsden reported that the borough is continuing to work with the Plainfield Area Regional Sewerage Authority

in tracking flow rates to determine where water may be entering the borough's sanitary sewer system.

Mr. Marsden said meter readings were recently taken along Midway Avenue, which is the site of a main pipeline in an old section of the system. He said officials want to find out whether sediment deposits picked up by the meter at that location are indicative of a crack in the pipeline.

Members of the council discussed whether the borough should consolidate its welfare services with Union

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### OFFICIALS LAUD DIRECTOR FOR MANY YEARS OF SERVICE

## Norbert Bernstein Celebrates 25th Year as Township Library Director

By CANDACE WALLER  
Specially Written for The Times

Scotch Plains Library Director Norbert Bernstein celebrated his 25th anniversary with a luncheon on September 30.

"My future goal is to stay here until I'm carried out in a box or the Board of Trustees want a more enlightened directorship," Mr. Bernstein said with a smile on his face.

The Board of Trustees, library staff, family and friends saluted Mr. Bernstein and wished him continued success at the luncheon, which took place in the library meeting room. State Senate President Donald T. DiFrancesco and Assemblyman Alan M. Augustine, both of Scotch Plains, and Township Manager Thomas E. Atkins were on hand to show support.

"I'm glad I was able to get here," said Senator DiFrancesco. "I think he's done wonders with this library."

Assemblyman Augustine, a former township Mayor and councilman, served on the committee that hired Mr. Bernstein as Director in 1972.

"He's done well with this library. It is an excellent resource in the township," Mr. Augustine stated. "Being the (council) Library Liaison was always a pleasurable assignment."

Mr. Bernstein came to this country from France in 1942 to escape the Nazis at the age of 16. His family carried their basic necessities with them, leaving friends and memories behind. This difficult period, he said, made him a survivor.

Mr. Bernstein started his library career more than 40 years ago when he accepted a part-time position at the New York Public Library in 1950. After two months he got a full-time job working as a document searcher.

Originally, Mr. Bernstein, who graduated from Boston University in 1950 with a degree in psychology, planned to continue studying this discipline at New York University. He married his wife, Estelle, right after graduating from Boston University, and was looking for employment while he pursued his master's degree.

Working for the New York Public Library changed his career direction. "As soon as I got the job at the New York Public Library I changed my major to library science," Mr. Bernstein said. "I realized this was the field I wanted to be in."

Mr. Bernstein received his master's degree in library science from Co-

lumbia University in 1954. He then started his job as assistant head cataloger at the Providence, Rhode Island, Public Library.

"In those days, if you wanted to advance, you had to go from one job to another," Mr. Bernstein said.

Mr. Atkins said Mr. Bernstein's people skills and book expertise impressed over the years.

"His people skills and intuition are very remarkable," Mr. Atkins said. "People think of a library director as being erudite but also of because of the level of intelligence. He's very pleas-

ant to work with."

Most of Mr. Bernstein's library experience comes from working in the public sector. He worked at the Brandeis College Library in Massachusetts from 1968 to 1971, while his eldest son, Ron, attended the school. After his son graduated from college, Mr. Bernstein was itching to work at another public library.

"I just wanted to get back into the public library field. I saw an ad in the *Library Journal* put in by the Board of Trustees (advertising an opening for library director in Scotch Plains)," he explained.

Scotch Plains Public Library Board of Trustee member Carl Kumpf, who still is a member of the board, conducted the interview.

"He exhibited administrative expertise and book expertise to the



A MILESTONE... Norbert Bernstein, left, is congratulated on his 25th anniversary as Director of the Scotch Plains Library by Thomas Barth, left, President of the library's Board of Trustees, and Township Administrator Thomas E. Atkins.

40-plus years working in libraries. His next project will be to get the library fully automated.

Mr. Bernstein said bids will be accepted on Thursday, October 16, for this project with the automation process expected to be in effect by early spring.

"It will do things faster and give people a wider search of materials in the collection," Mr. Bernstein said. "It will also expedite circulation methods."

Mr. Bernstein felt the reason the library has been so successful in the community is because it has a good Board of Trustees and a quality and helpful staff.

"He's been a great Director," said Library Board of Trustees member Paula Criscuolo. "I've enjoyed working with him for the last 17 years."

### 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 [goleader@aol.com](mailto:goleader@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.