



SCOTCH PLAINS

# THE TIMES

of



FANWOOD

## Scotch Plains — Fanwood

OUR 38th YEAR

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**HONORING FORMER HIGH SCHOOL GREATS...** Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Athletic Director Gene Schiller, left, introduces Joe Scarpati, right, Class of 1960, to the fans during halftime of the game between the Raiders and the Blue Devils at Perry Tyson Field in Scotch Plains on November 8. Attending the ceremony are Assemblyman Alan M. Augustine, next to Mr. Schiller; Scotch Plains-Fanwood Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carol E. Choye and Fanwood Mayor Maryanne S. Connelly, next to Mr. Scarpati. Mayor Connelly presented a plaque to Mr. Scarpati, who lettered in football, basketball and track for the Raiders and served as the captain of the football team in 1959. Mr. Scarpati went on to play as a defensive back for the Philadelphia Eagles and New Orleans Saints professional football teams, and was the holder of the record-setting 63-yard field goal kicked by Tom Dempsey in 1970 during the game between the Saints and the Detroit Lions.

### WELFARE SERVICES ALSO DISCUSSED AT AGENDA MEETING

## Borough Council Anticipates Talk With Garbage Haulers Regarding Burner Proposal

By SUZETTE STALKER  
Specialty Writer for The Times

Several issues took center stage at the Fanwood Borough Council's agenda meeting last week, held just one day after Democratic Councilman William E. Populus, Jr. and Republican Joel Whitaker won two open seats on the governing body November 4.

Mayor Maryanne S. Connelly requested that a meeting be scheduled between council representatives and private garbage haulers to discuss a proposed 25-year lease of the Union County Resource Recovery Facility in Rahway — more commonly known as the incinerator — and the potential impact of the deal on the community.

The lease proposal, developed by the Union County Utilities Authority (UCUA) in conjunction with the

Board of Chosen Freeholders, calls for Ogden Martin Systems, which built and operates the incinerator, to lease it from the county and the UCUA.

Ogden Martin would pay the UCUA \$175 million over the life span of the agreement, according to a recent report by Freeholder Chairwoman and former Fanwood Mayor Linda d. Stender, which would help retire the Authority's debt on the incinerator. The facility, which opened in 1994, was built with approximately \$290 million which was raised by issuing bonds.

Last year, a federal court ruled that New Jersey's waste flow laws — which had provided the Resource Recovery Facility and four other incinerators in the state with monopolies on trash disposal — were unconstitutional. The United States Supreme Court on Monday upheld the decision to deregulate the flow of solid waste.

Haulers serving Union County have been required by state law to dispose of their garbage at the Rahway incinerator, but the Supreme Court's ruling now gives them the option of going wherever the rates are lowest. The potential loss of business at the incinerator has put the UCUA at risk of defaulting on its debt.

The county's proposed agreement with Ogden Martin requires that 250,000 tons of trash be transported annually to the incinerator. It also includes a provision whereby every ton of solid waste diverted from the incinerator would be taxed an additional \$15.

Participating municipalities would

witness an immediate reduction in fees from \$83 to \$50 per ton, which would be guaranteed for the length of the agreement. Tipping fees would rise based on an incline in the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The borough is one of seven Union County communities which currently do not include garbage collection in their municipal budgets. Fanwoodians, like residents in the other six municipalities, contract with private haulers for garbage collection. Haulers then bill customers individually.

The UCUA has requested that the county's 21 municipalities give an indication by Saturday, November 15, of whether they would participate in the program.

The communities which do not regulate waste flow have been told by the UCUA that space will be reserved for their garbage at the incinerator through the end of the year.

The UCUA additionally told them that they face the prospect of having to share in paying off the debt on the incinerator even if they do not participate in the lease agreement.

Borough Council members also expressed concern during the agenda session about the limited amount of time which municipalities have been given to make a decision on a long-term commitment.

Council President Bruce H. Walsh remarked that the county's deadline "doesn't give us any time to explore any other options before entering into an agreement for 25 years."

Under other business, Mr. Walsh revealed that Fanwood Police Chief Anthony J. Parenti is expected to

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### THIRTY STUDENTS TO PLAY ANGELS IN A CHRISTMAS CAROL

## Park Middle School Chorus to Realize Dream

## By Performing in Christmas Choir at The Garden

By CANDACE WALLER  
Specialty Writer for The Times

Some students at Park Middle School in Scotch Plains will soon realize a dream. They are the 30 young people chosen to be angels in the Broadway musical, *A Christmas Carol*.

This year's show, to be staged for the fourth consecutive year at The Theater at Madison Square Garden in New York City, will star Hal Linden ("Barney Miller") and Roddy McDowall (*The Planet of the Apes*) alternating in the portrayal of Scrooge.

"I feel really excited," said Lani Trinh. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

Four choirs were chosen from the 12 groups that tried out from the tri-state area. Mary Lu Farrell, who is a professional singer, said the select few chosen for the show had to meet certain criteria.

"We were looking for diversity, good behavior and excellent voices," Ms. Farrell said. "There is a mix of boys and girls. There is also an age requirement — no one could be older than 13."

Students at Park Middle have been practicing for the performance a couple of times a week since September. The big rehearsal with the other actors, lighting, props and scenery will be this Sunday, November 16.



**HEADED FOR THE GARDEN...** Mary Lu Farrell, Choral Director at Park Middle School in Scotch Plains, rehearses with the Park Middle School Chorus, which has been selected to participate in *A Christmas Carol* at The Theater at Madison Square Garden.

The singers in the group are expected to carry themselves in a professional manner at all times.

Practices and performances are demanding. The choir will have shows three to four times a week.

They will also be in the Christmas Day and New Year's Day shows. Their first performance is scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, at 11 a.m. and the final show will take place on Sunday, January 4. The school's Parent-Teacher Association is setting up bus trips to the show.

The excitement of the debut performance has really affected the students and parents. Kashari Slaughter said her mom has copied the show schedule to give out to friends and family. In addition, her church is hoping to take a busload of residents to the church.

"I'm the first one in my family to make it. I'm very happy I got this opportunity," Kashari said.

"My mom clips out all the newspaper articles (about the choir) to give to her coworkers," said Ayanna Abrams.

Angelo Harris said his entire extended family wants to see him in the show.

Ms. Farrell said she learned of the

possibility of getting students in the show through "the music grapevine." She hopes to audition Terrill Middle School students next year.

"Can you imagine putting *The Christmas Carol* performance on a résumé? It shows prospective employers that students have discipline, talent and responsibility," Ms. Farrell said. "This experience will change these kids."

Participants in this event have made contacts in the industry, according to Ms. Farrell. They met Disney composer Alan Menken, along with Paul Gemigani, Musical Director for the

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## Council Delays Decision On Whether to Support Lease Deal on Burner

By JEANNE WHITNEY  
Specialty Writer for The Times

During a conference meeting last week, the Scotch Plains Township Council agreed to ignore the Saturday, November 15, deadline on deciding whether the township's garbage will go to the Union County Resource Recovery Facility in Rahway for the next 25 years, at \$50 a ton.

This comes in lieu of a lease agreement being negotiated between the Union County Utilities Authority (UCUA), the county and the builder of the incinerator, Ogden Martin Systems.

Scotch Plains, along with the six other municipalities that leave garbage collection to private companies, has been asked by the UCUA to contribute towards the 250,000 tons per year of solid waste required in a leasing deal of the county incinerator to Ogden Martin.

According to Scotch Plains Town-

ship Manager Thomas E. Atkins, "There are too many unknowns right now. It's not a simple thing. There are many sides to consider. It would not be prudent to decide by November 15."

The Union County plan to lease the incinerator would wipe out \$175 million worth of debt on a total of \$290 million worth of bonds issued to build the facility, according to the UCUA. The UCUA said it will have to make good on \$5 million-a-year payments over 25 years in order to retire the remaining debt — an estimated \$60 million.

Union County alone backed \$35 million worth of bonds when the incinerator was built.

The UCUA has said it was obligated to ask the seven towns with unregulated trash disposal (those towns that do not include trash disposal in their municipal budgets) to help pay the bills by committing a

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### New Deadlines for Thanksgiving Issue

Those persons preparing press releases for submission to our Thanksgiving Day issue of *The Times* are reminded of a change in our deadlines: copy should be e-mailed, faxed or delivered to our office by noon on Thursday, November 20.

Sports stories which occur prior to the weekend must be in by the Thursday deadline. Weekend sports events must be submitted by 10 a.m. on Monday, November 24. Obituaries will be accepted up to 5 p.m. on Monday.

### 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 [gotender@aol.com](mailto:gotender@aol.com). The fax number is (908) 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.



**YEARLY AFFAIR...** Scotch Plains Mayor Irene T. Schmidt greets guest Jeffrey Lehrer, a local attorney, at last Friday night's annual Scotch Plains Mayor's Gala held at the Shackamaxon Country Club, an event attended by 250 guests. Barbara Roskin and Harry "Skip" Ungar were honored as the female and male volunteers of the year. Also cited was the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Parent-Teacher Association Council.

### DISTRICT TO SEEK STATE FUNDS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

## New Technology Plan for Schools Unveiled for Board of Education

By SUSAN DYCKMAN  
Specialty Writer for The Times

In response to the state's plan to fund distance learning equitably throughout New Jersey's public schools (providing \$40 per student, per district), Technology Supervisor Jeff Ross introduced a new Technology Plan for Scotch Plains-Fanwood schools during Tuesday's open agenda meeting of the Board of Education.

The district's first technology plan was written in 1966, and was designed to carry the district through the year 1999. With technology changing so rapidly, Mr. Ross elected to rewrite the plan rather than revise the 30-year-old original.

Once approved by the board, the plan will be submitted to Union County, as part of the district's application for the \$168,000 in state funding earmarked for distance learning initiatives in the 1997-1998 school budget.

Aided by representatives from the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Curriculum Committee, Technology Task Force, Scotch Plains Task Force and Scotch Plains Free Public Library, Mr. Ross drafted a plan to form a technology infrastructure within the township and schools.

"We're interested in connectivity, within the district and outside of it," he said. "Our goal is to connect the schools electronically to each other and to the outside world."

Board member Richard R. Meade suggested the technology plan could also be used by the district to apply for state and federal funding through the Universal Services Fund, which provides technology discounts to schools and libraries.

"It is my understanding," Mr. Meade said, "that Scotch Plains qualifies for a 40 percent discount through this fund, and that the application process requires an approved technology plan."

Mr. Ross advised the board that he had addressed every issue of concern to the state and county, despite their "somewhat fuzzy" requirements.

Of the \$168,000 in question, Mr. Ross identified \$76,000 for Internet-related items and \$65,000 for the additional equipment, software, supplies and electrical upgrades required not only to enhance schools' distance learning capabilities, but to strengthen the district's technology base as a whole.

Board member August A. Ruggiero questioned if these dollar allocations were a "safe way" of obtaining approval for state funding.

"The state's goal is distance learning," Mr. Ross said. "I'm trying to move the district forward relative to distance learning."

During the meeting, a discussion was held between board members and several representatives of Suplice Clooney & Co., the district's public

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