

# Scotch Plains Day/Street Fest Reflects 'Hometown' Community Spirit

By SUZETTE F. STALKER  
Specially Written for Our Town

A perennial favorite among festival-goers, the annual Scotch Plains Day/StreetFest celebration offers something for everyone in its colorful salute to the township and its history.

A blend of merchant wares, local cuisine and family entertainment are all staples of the autumn event, which is held in the community's Towne Centre and on the Village Green adjacent to the Municipal Building on Park Avenue.



**WE LOVE OUR TOWN...**Scotch Plains Mayor Geri M. Samuel and Ray Pardon, President of the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association, present T-shirts to the young winners of a poster essay contest entitled, "What Scotch Plains Means to Me," which was sponsored by the SPBPA. The winners will be able to have their poster designs silk-screened on their shirts.

It is co-sponsored by the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association (SPBPA), the township's Parks and Recreation Commission, the Health Department and the local Lions Club chapter.

The SPBPA, founded in 1994, is dedicated to strengthening and promoting the township's business district through various programs and activities held

throughout the year. It is headed by Ray Pardon, the owner of Nuts n' Plenty on Park Avenue.

Mr. Pardon, who has been President of the association since it began, has characterized the Scotch Plains Day/StreetFest celebration as a way "to bring together and recognize the spirit of the entire community of Scotch Plains."

During the festival, visitors are invited to peruse a variety of merchandise – including unique crafts and seasonal items – at sidewalk sales conducted by numerous merchants and crafters.

Local restaurateurs and food vendors also offer tempting fare throughout the day. In addition, "Jersey fresh" produce is available at the popular Farmers' Market, also



**AND THEY'RE OFF!...**Participants in the annual USATF-certified 5-Mile Road Race get ready to cross the starting line in front of the Scotch Plains Municipal Building on Park Avenue. Winners are awarded trophies, and all who take part in the event receive T-shirts courtesy of the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association.

sponsored by the SPBPA, during the festival.

Entertainment at Scotch Plains Day/StreetFest celebrations over the years has ranged from music and dance exhibitions to martial arts demonstrations and fashion shows.

A highlight of the annual celebration is the USATF-certified 5-Mile Road Race through the township, sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Commission, for which trophies are awarded. All participants also receive commemorative T-shirts courtesy of the SPBPA and its member sponsors.

Also prominent on the festival itinerary each year is the Civic Awards ceremony on the

Village Green, during which local citizens are recognized for distinguished contributions to the township.

Preceding the StreetFest activities each year is a Health Fair presented by the Scotch Plains Health Department at the Municipal Building. This program offers an array of medical screenings, among them vision, hearing, blood pressure and dental examinations. Flu shots are also available.

The Lions Club's annual Giant Flea Market is held in the parking lot of the Municipal Building during the festivities, and typically draws more than 100 vendors. For the first time this year, the event also included crafters.

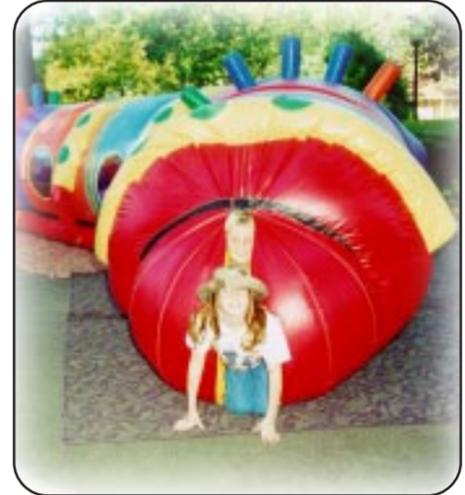
In addition, the club has donated its Eye/Ear Mobile for screenings at the Health Fair. Proceeds from the Flea Market benefit local charities.

Last year's Scotch Plains/StreetFest event featured township officials' dedication of the Victorian motif wood gazebo at the corner of Park Avenue and Front Street on the Village Green.

Built by construction technology students at Union County Vocational-Technical Schools in Scotch Plains, the gazebo was added to the downtown landscape as part of a plan to enhance the "hometown" flavor of the business district.

The township celebration originated 18 years ago, and has been co-sponsored for the past five by the SPBPA. Comprised of approximately 200 members, the association represents the interests and viewpoints of its member businesses.

Information about Scotch Plains Day/StreetFest activities may be reviewed on the Internet at [www.visitscotchplains.com](http://www.visitscotchplains.com).



**FUN AT THE FAIR...**Catelin Genritz and Chris Boket, both from Springfield, emerge from the "giant worm," provided by C and C Amusement for the Scotch Plains Day/StreetFest '99 celebration in the Towne Centre.

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