



SCOTCH PLAINS

# THE TIMES

of



FANWOOD

## Scotch Plains – Fanwood

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### Local School District Reviews Safety Policies; Helps Students Cope in Columbine Aftermath

By SUZETTE F. STALKER  
*Specially Written for The Times*

In the wake of the tragedy at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, which left the nation reeling April 20, local school districts have been working to help students cope with still-unfolding accounts of the massacre while reviewing ways to safeguard their own communities against such violence.

Dr. Carol B. Choye, Superintendent of Schools for Scotch Plains-Fanwood, said on Monday that "a great deal of sympathy" was felt throughout the district for the parents, students and staff impacted by the attack on Columbine, in which 12 students and a teacher were killed, and many left wounded, by a pair of high school outcasts who then took their own lives.

"It's a terrible tragedy and we're very upset about it," added Dr. David Heisey, who took the helm two months ago as Principal of Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School (SPFHS). He added that the event "has been a topic of discussion in many classes" in recent days throughout the high school, which enrolls nearly 1,100 students in grades 9 through 12.

Besides sharing in the national grieving over the lives lost at Columbine, district officials are dealing with concerns over possible "copycat" incidents, as well as evaluating secu-



Michelle H. LePoidevin for The Times

**LOCAL SCHOOL...**Students, parents and staff at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, pictured above, along with members of the district's seven other schools, were helping youngsters deal with the tragedy at Columbine High School this week. Administrators are also reviewing preventative and safety measures in the district.

trity at local schools. Besides SPFHS, the district includes two intermediate and five elementary facilities.

The day after the shootings, Dr. Choye told *The Times* that members of the school district's Crisis Management Team convened to review preventative measures — including where improvements might be made — along with safety procedures currently in place throughout the dis-

trict.

Among the 20 people in attendance at that meeting, in addition to Dr. Choye, were district principals, other administrators and guidance personnel. Also represented were members of the Resolve Community Counseling Center and local police.

She said another meeting was held the following day between Dr. John Crews, Assistant Superintendent for

Instruction, and principals of the district's schools.

The Crisis Management Team is set to meet again next Thursday, May 6. Attending that session, Dr. Choye said, would be the Reverend Kenneth G. Hetzel, who serves as Pastor of the Willow Grove Presbyterian Church in Scotch Plains, and also heads the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Ministerial

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

### SP Budget Fails As Mr. Donatelli Breaks Ranks

By FRED ROSSI  
*Specially Written for The Times*

It's back to the drawing board for Scotch Plains' 1999 municipal budget, after Democratic Councilman Franklin Donatelli broke ranks with his party at Tuesday night's council meeting and abstained from voting in favor of the \$16.7 million proposal, with a six-point tax increase, equating to a \$69 hike for the average assessed home in the township of \$116,000.

The crowd of several dozen residents, most of whom opposed the controversial tax hike, broke into enthusiastic applause shortly after 11 p.m. when Councilman Donatelli announced his abstention after his two Democratic colleagues, Mayor Geri M. Samuel and Councilman Tarquin Bromley, had voted to adopt the budget and the two Council Republicans, William J. McClintock and Martin Marks, had voted against it.

After nearly three hours of public comment — many of them angry —

about the budget and the accompanying tax boost, the five council members were each given the opportunity to speak on the matter. The first sign of cracks in Democratic unity came when Councilman Donatelli declined to speak.

And after Councilman McClintock offered an amendment to the budget that would have incorporated the Republicans' proposal for a zero tax increase by using the township's surplus, Councilman Donatelli abstained from voting, thus failing to break a 2-2 tie.

"I don't know if I have a reaction," Mayor Samuel told *The Times*, before adding that, after the meeting ended, "we went upstairs sort of shaking our heads. It was a shock to all of us." She said she "had no inkling" that Councilman Donatelli was planning to do what he did.

Councilman McClintock told *The Times* he was "surprised, but pleased" by Councilman Donatelli's decision.

"I think he saw there were some

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

### Fanwood Volunteer Fair Garner New Recruits

By SUZETTE F. STALKER  
*Specially Written for The Times*

Fanwood's inaugural Volunteer Fair, which took place outside the Community House at the north side train station last Saturday, resulted in approximately 20 new people being signed up to serve their community in various capacities.

Held under ideal spring skies and in conjunction with National Volunteer Week, the event was organized to acquaint residents with the myriad volunteer opportunities available in Fanwood.

Representatives of more than 25 groups were on hand from 1 to 4 p.m. at tables to greet visitors and discuss their organizations. Among them were the Fanwood Volunteer Rescue Squad; Friends of the Fanwood Memorial Library; the Board of Health, and the Environmental, Shade Tree and Recreation Commissions.

Also in attendance were members

of the borough's Fanny Wood Day and Cultural Arts Committees, along with CONTACT We Care, the College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains, and other local women's clubs.

"We had a fairly good response," remarked David Pickering, who chairs the Fanwood Community Assessment Committee. "Considering this was the first time we were doing this, I think it was a success."

The fair was sponsored by the recently-appointed Communications/Volunteerism Committee, which evolved from action groups assembled by the Assessment Committee last year to address the needs of the borough as it approaches the new millennium.

Among the areas tapped by the committee at that time was a need for more volunteers, particularly within the ranks of emergency service units but also on local boards and commis-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



Cheri Rogovsky for The Times

**JOIN OUR TEAM...**Members of the Fanwood Volunteer Rescue Squad greet visitors to the borough's first Volunteer Fair which took place Saturday outside the Community House at the north side Fanwood Train Station. More than 25 volunteer groups took part in the event, which was held in hopes of encouraging more people to donate time to organizations within their community.



Cheri Rogovsky for The Times

**GROUP EFFORT...**The Fanwood Lions Club gears up for the borough's annual Clean Communities Day last Saturday, during which volunteers picked up litter at various locations throughout the municipality. The 14-member Lions group cleaned 1.3 miles along Route 28, also known as South Avenue.

### School Districts Offered Advice on Recognizing, Helping Troubled Youth

As the investigation into the shooting rampage by two students at Columbine High School continues, parents, adolescents and educators are struggling to comprehend the emotions that could ignite such violence and how such tragedies can be prevented.

The Violence Institute of New Jersey, headquartered at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in Newark, has released a series of "behavioral indicators" for identifying adolescents between the ages of 13 and 19 who may be at risk for harming fellow students, teachers or themselves.

These indicators include social isolation, in which a student has few or no friends and is uncommunicative toward peers; despair; anger; threats to harm others, particularly if specific threats against someone are expressed; acting impulsively and with aggression; defiance of authority; extreme self-centeredness; an obsession with weapons or with violence and death; exposure to violence; chronic truancy; extreme mood swings or drug use.

"In most instances, adolescents behave problematically because something is not right in their lives. Typically, what they need most is to speak with a caring and empathetic adult — or peer — about their problems," Dr. Michael B. Greene, Ex-

ecutive Director of the Institute, revealed in a press statement.

According to Dr. Greene, individuals dealing with troubled adolescents need to "strike an appropriate balance" between the need to punish and discourage violent behavior and taking action to prevent subsequent episodes. He said that in most cases, "early therapeutic interventions can prevent future outbursts."

The Institute has offered ways in which members of an education community can help to avert violent behavior by students.

It is recommended that a team comprised of teachers, administrators, students, counselors, school safety personnel and representatives of neighborhood groups and the local police department formulate school policies and procedures "for preventing violence and intervening when it occurs, including post-crisis counseling," Dr. Greene stated.

A system to identify and assess troubled adolescents is also recommended, including referral of students to appropriate services and follow-up evaluations of their progress.

One resource encouraged by the Institute is adult confidants to whom students can express feelings of anger, confusion or sadness, as well as con-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



Cheri Rogovsky for The Times

**CLEAN-UP TEAM...**Michael DeBiase and his son, Andrew, 2½, of Fanwood do their part to keep their hometown clean as they help pick up litter last Saturday during the borough's 10th annual Clean Communities Day. The event is part of Fanwood's yearly observance of Earth Day.



Cheri Rogovsky for The Times

**WE WANT YOU!**Representatives of Fanwood's Communications/Volunteerism Committee invite local residents to sign up for volunteer opportunities in the borough during the committee's first Volunteer Fair last Saturday. Pictured, left to right, are: front row, Laurie Feinberg, Seena Allen, Cindy DePillo, Councilwoman Katherine Mitchell, Liaison to the committee, and Sharon Walker, and back row, Frank Berger, Peter Billson, Joe Nagy of Channel 34, and David Pickering. Joining committee members at far right in back is Mrs. Walker's husband, Mark.

### Superintendent Choye Identifies Assessment As Administration's Top Instructional Priority

By SUSAN M. DYCKMAN  
*Specially Written for The Times*

During the April 27 business meeting of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carol B. Choye identified assessment as the administration's top instructional priority for the 1999-2000 school year, followed by reading/language arts/writing, communication, technology and professional development.

"We want to use assessment as a way to improve program," stated Dr. Choye.

In the wake of a significant drop in reading scores among Terrill Middle School students on the Eighth Grade Early Warning Test (EWT), Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Dr. John R. Crews offered a three-year comparison of scores in reading writing and mathematics to "put scores in a realistic perspective." The chart showed overall improvement in Scotch Plains-Fanwood scores

from 1996 through 1998.

The administration is in the process of surveying other school districts in Union County to assess how much time they spend on different subjects, where Title I funds are employed, what kinds of materials are used in the classroom and what their leveling practices are.

Board member Edward J. Saridaki, Jr. asked if any research is being done to determine how many Scotch Plains-Fanwood students receive tutoring in reading or math. He suggested "a lot" of students at Park are receiving extracurricular support in math.

Stating that "success in math is definitely related to reading," Supervisor of Grade 6-12 Mathematics Don Williams offered some examples of

how reading skills are being emphasized in math.

The superintendent revealed that the administration is looking closely at English certification among prospective teachers in an effort to bring more English teachers into the district, particularly in the middle grades.

English/Language Arts Supervisor Diane Kelly indicated the new English/language arts curriculum for grades kindergarten through five will support improvement in test scores. "It will encourage children to connect with literature, to think and respond," she explained.

With respect to assessment, board member Thomas Russo said, "We certainly want to improve test scores but not by making students better test

takers. A test shouldn't be an end in itself."

Board member Jessica M. Simpson said she wants students to learn to love reading at an early age, and be expected to read more as they get older. She proposed "extra credit for extra reading in every subject area, and book clubs" as possible tools.

Speaking to the need for effective implementation of the new English/language arts program, board member Jean McAllister said, "Consistency and communication are critical so that all teachers buy into it and are accountable for it."

From the audience, parents Mary Ann Alfano and Mary Ann Bonacum said they could speak from experience to the discrepancy in how subject matter is covered by different teachers within a grade level. As a result, Mrs. Alfano emphasized the need for across-the-board teacher commitment to the new program.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

#### INDEX

Arts ..... Page 25    Obituary ..... Page 10    Social ..... Page 6  
Editorial ..... Page 4    Religious ..... Page 11    Sports ..... Page 13

## Local School Officials React To Columbine HS Shootings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Association. Dr. Choye confirmed that a seventh grader at Terrill Middle School was suspended Thursday after bringing a paring knife to school. No one was injured, and the youngster was released to the custody of his mother.

The Superintendent said she could not recall other such incidents having occurred in the district, which she emphasized has a "zero tolerance" policy for weapons. She said any student found with a weapon faces automatic suspension.

Dr. Choye said that after 9 a.m., only one entrance is open at each of the intermediate and elementary schools in the district, and two doors at the high school. Both the Westfield Road and Evergreen Avenue entrances at the high school are located near offices, where visitors must sign in and be directed to their destinations, according to Dr. Heisey.

Dr. Choye said there are three hall monitors on duty at the high school, equipped with walkie-talkies, and teachers also monitor activity in the hallways at local schools. "I think we're very consistent in having a safe environment," the Superintendent remarked.

According to Dr. Choye, the school district's "good working relationship" with both the Scotch Plains and Fanwood police departments is not only pivotal to security but also to addressing issues concerning the student population.

She cited the efforts of police department personnel who serve as juvenile officers and as participants in the Drug and Alcohol Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program. In addition, retired Scotch Plains police officer Carl Sicola acts as the district's attendance and truancy officer.

As a further safety measure, Dr. Choye said coaches accompanying athletic teams to off-site competitions or events are provided with cellular telephones to use in the event of an emergency.

Dr. Heisey revealed that teachers at the high school have been especially sensitive to students' needs to voice their feelings about the violent deaths of fellow teens at Columbine, which is located in an upscale suburb not unlike Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

"It's very important that students be given the opportunity to express themselves. Students need the ability to express their emotions because they're scared," he observed.

Although he maintained that safety has always been a priority in the district, Dr. Heisey said an incident such as the one in Colorado "makes us look at what we're doing, and at what we could possibly do better."

"Your antenna goes up and it makes you more proactive to preventing a situation before it happens," continued the Principal, who described the Crisis Management Team's meeting last week as an opportunity for participants "to brainstorm" about ways the district can maintain and possibly enhance its safety policies.

The Principal noted that there are "a number of groups within our (school system) to identify and work with" students who may be experiencing difficulties with family, socially or at school. Such problems, experts say, can lead to feelings of isolation, apathy and resentment possibly manifested by antisocial or violent behavior.

Besides services offered by guidance counselors, the district provides a Student Assistance Program and volunteers from the Resolve Community Counseling Center are also available to help youngsters deal with the angst, uncertainty and confusion frequently experienced by adolescents, according to Dr. Heisey.

Dr. Crews said members of the Crisis Management Team will also be talking to district principals about ways schools can encourage students to accept each other's differences and to treat each other with respect - issues which he said are dealt with particularly at the middle school level.

These themes will also be highlighted on Friday, May 21, during an annual program at the high school entitled "Shining a Light on the Shadow of Hate," sponsored by the student-led group SLAM (Students Learning About Multiculturalism).

Dr. Heisey said he expected the tragedy, as well as preventative measures, would be key topics during the May meeting of the high school's Parent Teacher Association, and that parents have also voiced their concerns to him individually.

While he said he had not previously heard of the clique known as the "Trenchcoat Mafia" connected with the Columbine killings, he commented that what is particularly frightening to school districts is that the type of violence that occurred in Littleton "could happen anywhere."

## SP Municipal Budget Fails As Councilman Breaks Ranks

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

real problems there and he wanted us to go back and work on it," he said.

As for the zero tax increase proposal, Councilman McClintock said he didn't yet know whether the Republicans would be standing firm on that point or would offer to compromise. In any case, he said, "the six points is gone."

Township Attorney Andrew Baron informed the Council that Scotch Plains is still operating on a temporary budget, which is close to running out. A fresh round of temporary funds will have to be approved as soon as possible, he said.

Mayor Samuel said the Council will hold an emergency meeting next Tuesday night, May 4, to discuss the budget.

The \$16.7-million budget proposal represented a \$1.02 million increase from last year, but as Township Manager Thomas E. Atkins explained Tuesday night, much of that increase was for items beyond the control of the local government, such as \$240,000 for cleanup from the 1998 Labor Day storm, \$187,000 for interest payments on bonds and notes, \$97,000 for increases in health insurance, \$69,500 for the police pension fund, \$32,700 in payments to the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority and \$238,000 for salary and wage adjustments.

It was also noted that less than one-third of the budget is discretionary; the other 70 percent contains Federal and State mandated spending. Mr. Atkins noted that 65-75 percent of the discretionary area is devoted to maintaining the township's infrastructure, leaving only about 10 percent as completely discretionary.

Mr. Atkins, as well as the Council members themselves, emphasized several times that the two parties were in complete agreement on the spending side of the budget, which included increases for parks and recreation and for roadway work.

Since its introduction last month, the Republicans have decried the six-point tax increase and have proposed using more of what they said is a record \$3.05-million surplus to offset the increase in spending. The Democrats opposed dipping too much into the reserve, saying it would harm the Township's AA bond rating and result in a tax hike next year of 11 percent.

Most of the residents who spoke to the Council on Tuesday night not only decried the proposed tax increase, but also chastised the Council for not cutting spending further and questioned the Democrats' credibility in light of what some termed their misleading campaign statements last fall.

Former Republican Mayor Gabe Spera said, "we are pushing senior citizens who've lived here all their lives out of town because they can't afford it." He called the budget's calculations "Chinese mathematics." Others urged the Council to "sharpen their pencils" and "go back to the drawing board."

A resident, noting that Scotch Plains was looking to raise taxes at the same time the Federal and State governments are trying to cut them, told the Council that "you have not rational-

ized the increase. It lacks common sense."

Another resident told Mayor Samuel that "it's obvious you are not in tune to what the citizens of Scotch Plains want."

Scotch Plains Democratic Party Chairman Walter Boright angered the several former Republican mayors in attendance when he claimed that, under the GOP in the 1980s, there were tax hikes of 18 percent, 28 percent and 42 percent.

Several residents, noting the increase in residential construction, especially on the south side of town, asked where all of the resulting new tax revenue was going. Township government coffers should be overflowing, seemed to be the sentiment, and, if so, why was there the need to increase taxes?

Mr. Atkins pointed to figures showing that construction code fees collected by the township, after peaking at \$424,900 in 1996, have been declining every year since then. He said he expects construction fees this year to total less than \$300,000.

Councilman Marks retorted that such fees totaled \$75,000 in the past month and predicted the total for the full year would be higher than last year's figure of \$309,000.

One resident, speaking of the 1998 campaign, told the Council Democrats that "you misled (residents). Someone would say you lied" in order to get elected.

"When you stole the election, your credibility was called into question. Why should we believe now that you're telling the truth?" he asked, as the audience applauded.

The Council members sparred yet again over the issue of the surplus and its size, with Councilman Bromley pointing to budget messages from previous Republican mayors stressing the need to preserve a healthy surplus level.

The Council's two Republicans displayed a number of charts proving their contention that the surplus is indeed \$3.05 million, not lower, as claimed by the Democrats. Mr. Marks said using more of the surplus this year would still leave the township with a surplus next year of \$1.7-\$1.8 million, "well within a reasonable range."

Both sides had some harsh words in their final statements before the vote. Councilman Marks said the budget was "the most important decision they (the Democrats) have had to make, and they dropped the ball."

He said Councilman McClintock and he had decided to let the Democratic majority put together the spending and taxing proposals because "we thought it was important for the public to see what it was all about. The Democrats said they could do better," Mr. Marks said. "It turns out they couldn't."

Councilman Bromley delivered a blistering attack on the budget's opponents, calling the Republicans' tactics "a purely political sandbag. They never talked, they never proposed, they never said anything. If they had any intellectual and fiscal integrity, then they would have issued a minority report. Playing 'Russian roulette' with the township's finances is wrong," he said.

## FANWOOD POLICE BLOTTER

FRIDAY, APRIL 9  
• A wall at the skating rink at Forest Road Park was defaced by graffiti, according to police.

MONDAY, APRIL 12  
• Peter A. Brown, 34, of Plainfield was charged with shoplifting after he allegedly attempted to steal five cartons of cigarettes and other merchandise totaling \$184 from a South Avenue supermarket. Brown was released on his own recognizance pending a court date.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14  
• A 35-year-old Plainfield man reported that he was assaulted in the parking lot of a Terrill Road establishment by four black males who attempted to steal the beer he had just purchased, police confirmed.

The victim sustained a bruised cheekbone and scratches on his body but refused medical attention, authorities said.

SATURDAY, APRIL 17  
• A residence in the 100 block of Marian Avenue was burglarized by one or more individuals. Police reported that entry was gained through a rear window, and that a videocassette recorder, stereo and compact disk player valued at a total of \$440 were taken.

SUNDAY, APRIL 18  
• Two motor vehicle burglaries were reported. In one incident, which occurred in the 10 block of Tower Place, \$600 worth of clothing and change were removed from a vehicle.

In the second case, an unknown amount of change and Garden State Parkway tokens were removed from an unlocked vehicle parked in a driveway in the 100 block of North Avenue.

• A bicycle was reported stolen from an unlocked garage in the 100 block of Marian Avenue.

## Fanwood Volunteer Fair Garners New Recruits

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sions. Mr. Pickering said most new volunteers recruited at the fair signed up for the latter category.

The fair was one of the proposals for encouraging volunteerism that was contained in a report presented by the Assessment Committee's action groups to Mayor Maryanne S. Connelly and the Borough Council last December.

According to Mr. Pickering, a former Fanwood Councilman, many of the people who came to the fair were newcomers to the community and "didn't know what opportunities existed. They were surprised."

In addition to last Saturday's fair, a "Kids as Volunteers Networking Night"

was held last Thursday at the Community House for school staff members, parents and community group representatives to discuss volunteer opportunities for youth.

Mr. Pickering noted that the Communications/Volunteerism Committee is considering holding another fair later this year, possibly in September, to coincide with the borough's annual Fanny Wood Day celebration.

"I think the committee was pleased with the response," Mr. Pickering commented. "It takes time to get it in people's minds. I think it will get bigger and better."



A WINNING DESIGN ... Joshua Decker, a fifth grade student at School One in Scotch Plains, submitted a winning poster in a contest sponsored by the American Stop Smoking Intervention Study (ASSIST) and the American Cancer Society (ACS). Joshua is pictured, center, with the published version of his winning entry and his award certificate. He is joined by, left to right, Kathleen (Kit) Moulton, Park Middle School nurse; Christine Kline, Chairwoman of the ACS Tobacco Control Task Force who made the presentation; School One principal, Jeff Grysko; and Susan Albert, School One art teacher.

## Joshua Decker Recognized For Stop Smoking Poster

SCOTCH PLAINS — Joshua Decker, a fifth grade student at School One in Scotch Plains, was recently recognized for submitting the winning poster in a contest sponsored by the American Stop Smoking Intervention Study (ASSIST) and the American Cancer Society (ACS).

Joshua's design, titled "There Are Better Things to Do Than Smoke," was selected as the cover for a book by the same name developed by ASSIST, a smoking-cessation program

of the Visiting Nurse and Health Services in Elizabeth, and the American Cancer Society's Tobacco Control Task Force in Essex and Union Counties.

The book contains projects students can implement to speak out against smoking.

Joshua's recognition was held just prior to the national "Kick Butts Day" which was held on April 14, an event started by the National Center for Tobacco-Free Kids, based in Washington, DC.

## SP-F Schools Awarded From Consulting Firm

SCOTCH PLAINS - School Match of Columbus, Ohio, the nation's largest school selection consulting firm, recently presented the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools with its What Parents Want Award for 1999.

The organization, which helps corporate employee families find schools that match the needs of their children, recognizes only about 14 percent of the nation's 15,620 public school districts as meeting the identified needs of families choosing schools.

Among the criteria used to identify districts that offer "what parents want" are competitive academic scores and programs, accredited, recognized for excellence by a national foundation or by the U.S. Department of Education, competitive

teacher salaries, above average instructional expenditures on a national percentile basis, above average in library/media expenditures and known for small class size.

School Match maintains information on every public school system throughout the nation and accredited private schools throughout the world. The group collects data annually from auditable sources and has developed criteria based on more than 56,000 parent questionnaires and surveys.

The service is offered as an employee benefit by about 400 companies nationwide including United Parcel Service, Ernst & Young, Hewlett Packard, KPMG Peat Marwick, Nationwide Insurance, Fidelity, PSI Energy and The Limited.

## Alison Wilks Achieves Outstanding Results On National Exam

SCOTCH PLAINS — Alison Wilks, a sophomore at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School who participated in the American Association of Teachers of German national test, has achieved a score in the 94th percentile of all 23,000 students who took the test.

She was one of six finalists in the northern half of New Jersey, and her scores made her eligible to receive a scholarship trip to Germany.

Alison also competed recently in the Rutgers University Declamation Contest, where she won first place over many junior and senior students.

## Schools Districts Are Advised On Helping Troubled Youth

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cerns about their own safety, or to whom they can anonymously report threats made by other students.

Peer listeners/mediators can serve in similar capacities, and can also be trained to recognize problems that need to be referred to a professional, the Institute maintained.

School-based and neighborhood-based programs have also been cited by the Institute as pivotal for helping "at risk" youth.

The school-based programs should be evaluated for their effectiveness and comprehensiveness, and feedback from students is also considered important to the success of such endeavors, according to the Institute.

For neighborhood groups, the Institute suggested that a directory of community resources and programs be maintained and updated regularly.

According to Dr. Greene, such directories "should specify what kinds of issues each program is designed to address and include information on hours of operation, as well as the name and tele-

phone number of a contact person with whom to discuss potential referrals."

School districts are also encouraged to help parents and guardians become involved in eliminating teen violence by providing resources to families and holding meetings where school safety issues can be discussed.

The Institute has also recommended that parents be afforded opportunities to privately discuss concerns regarding their child's safety.

Comprised of eight groups of experts on violence and more than 100 researchers, the Violence Institute of New Jersey was established in April of 1997 to address incidents of violence in the state.

The multi-faceted organization coordinates more than 40 violence-related projects, including clinical, service, and basic and applied research efforts.

## Stamps by Fax Slated At Scotch Plains Office

SCOTCH PLAINS — Scotch Plains Postmaster Elvold Christmas has announced that the Scotch Plains Post Office will be instituting "Stamps by Fax" service for the convenience of local businesses.

"In today's fast-paced business environment, it's not always possible for an employee to make a trip to the post office to purchase stamps," stated Mr. Christmas. "With 'Stamps by Fax,' a local business can fax us their stamp order and have their order delivered by their letter carrier. In fact, if the order is received by 9:15 a.m., the order can be filled the very same day," he stated.

If the order is received after 9:15 a.m., the order will be delivered the very next business day.

The Scotch Plains Post Office will be sending all local businesses a stamp order form. Any business wishing to use this service, may fax the Post Office at (908) 322-0267. Payment is later made to the carrier when the stamps are delivered.

"We want to do whatever we can to improve the partnership with our local business," said Postmaster Christmas. "I believe that 'Stamps by Fax' service will be a real time saver for everyone."

## Fanwood TV-35 Weekly Schedule

- Thursday, April 29, 8:00 P.M. COP TV
- Thursday, April 29, 9:00 P.M. Fanwood Community Assessment/Action Committee
- Saturday, May 1, 8:00 P.M. Freeholder's Forum
- Saturday, May 1, 9:00 P.M. Great Labor Day storm of '98
- Monday, May 3, 8:00 P.M. FYI Fanwood - Mayor Connelly's Show
- Monday, May 3, 9:00 P.M. Next Stop Fanwood - A history of Fanwood and the railroad
- Wednesday, May 5, 8:00 P.M. Fanwood Community Assessment/Action Committee
- Wednesday, May 5, 9:00 P.M. Three Seasons in The Sun - A bee's eye view of the flowers of Fanwood

## Dr. Choye IDs Assessment As Top Instructional Priority

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Mr. Saridaki suggested talking to parents, staff members and older students to determine what about the old program worked and what did not.

"We should use the new pieces to complement what worked with the old program," he said.

"We're all too quick to be experts on how reading and writing should be taught because we all do it," said Scotch Plains resident Deborah Asher. "We have a lot of expertise in this district that we can rely on."

With two children at Terrill, Mrs. Asher said she is impressed with the sixth-grade reading program which has students reading "whole texts" at grade level or above.

She also likes the fact that students are read to in class.

Dr. Choye briefly discussed the events in the local school district following last week's tragedy in Littleton, Colorado, beginning with the meeting of the local Crisis Management Team.

Members include principals from the middle and high schools; two elementary principals; guidance counselors; Resolve Community Counseling Center representatives; local police; Eleanor McClymont, director of pupil services; and Dr. Crews.

The team is scheduled to meet next week after members have an opportunity to look "with fresh eyes" at the crisis prevention and safety procedures in place in district schools.

Board member Richard Meade pointed to the way rumors have a tendency to take on a life of their own. He suggested the district look at rumor control among

students.

"We have to help kids understand the role they play in keeping rumors in check," he said.

During the meeting, board members acknowledged the contributions of their colleague Morris H. "Butch" Gillet during his final appearance on the board. Mr. Gillet lost his bid for re-election last week to Mr. Saridaki and Dr. Donald E. Sheldon, former board president.

Outgoing Board President August Ruggiero acknowledged Mr. Gillet's "excellent judgment" on the issues that came before the board during his six-year tenure, while Board Vice President Theresa Larkin recalled Mr. Gillet as "always willing to share his expertise."

Mrs. Simpson said, "You are a man who has his priorities in life totally correct - family, faith and community."

Board member Lance Porter commended Mr. Gillet for giving back to the community which had given to him, and Mr. Russo cited the "tremendous amount of dedication" demonstrated by Mr. Gillet in being a board member and running his own business.

Mrs. McAllister said, "In one year, it's apparent (to me) you have the utmost care for the kids in this district. I respect your ability to see differences of opinion."

Speaking from a prepared text, Mr. Gillet thanked the public and his colleagues, saying, "We've not always seen eye-to-eye, but we always came to an agreement."

The board will hold its annual reorganization meeting Monday, May 3, at 8 p.m.

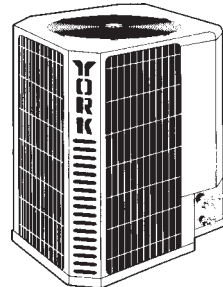
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