



A Message from Mayor Louis C. Jung



Communicating with the residents of our community is a high priority for the Mayor and Council. We strive to keep you informed about current happenings in Fanwood as well as plans we make that will affect our community in the future. We also provide the means for you to air your thoughts, concerns, ideas

and questions.

Several types of media are at your disposal. The Fanwoodian, the Borough's official newsletter, is published in March, June, September and December. If you have a subject that you want to appear in a future issue, contact Borough Hall in order to get in touch with a member of the Communications Committee.

Fanwood's cable access TV35 is an important medium for providing timely information to the Borough. Vital public information, which sometimes is of an emergency nature, is posted in a timely manner on the channel's Community Bulletin Board. The bulletin board is available to all local non-profit organizations to post meeting dates, events, and activities. The volunteer staff at Channel 35 presents the information in creative, interesting, and individual ways at no charge to the requesting organization. Channel 35 also covers public events such as the Memorial Day parade, Fanny Wood Day, the Holiday Celebration, and activities of the Cultural Arts Committee. The regular monthly meeting of the Mayor and Council and some special meetings are broadcast live and replayed on tape several times.

In the Spring of 2001 Fanwood put into operation its official Web site, VisitFanwood.com. The information on the Web site is kept fresh with weekly updates and more frequently when necessary. Included is a comprehensive calendar of Borough events, meetings and activities of government boards/committees/commissions and non-government organizations. There are links to other Web sites such as the Library, Rescue Squad, Police, and the Business and Professional Association. Some official Borough documents are also there for you to peruse. You can also find an interesting array of photos, some current and some historical.

E-mail, an increasingly popular form of communication, is available to you at Borough Hall to have your questions answered. The address is AskBoroughHall@VisitFanwood.com.

You can also e-mail the Mayor or a Councilperson directly as follows:

- Mayor Jung - Mayor@VisitFanwood.com
- Councilman Brennan - MichaelB@VisitFanwood.com
- Councilman Kline - StuartK@VisitFanwood.com
- Councilwoman Mitchell - KathyM@VisitFanwood.com
- Councilman Ryan - ThomasR@VisitFanwood.com
- Councilman Whitaker - JoelW@VisitFanwood.com
- Councilwoman Wood - CarolW@VisitFanwood.com

Recently we upgraded the Borough's telephone system that now provides individual voice mail for each member of the governing body. Just dial 908-322-8236 and follow the directions.

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Fanwood to Celebrate Memorial Day



The Fanwood Parks Restoration Committee is preparing for the annual Memorial Day Party in The Park. The event will take place on Monday May 27, 2002 at LaGrande Park. It will begin immediately after the parade and continue until 2 P.M.

The day will begin with a memorial service and the laying of wreaths at the Fanwood Memorial Library at 9:00 A.M., followed by a Memorial Service at the gazebo on The Village Green in Scotch Plains.

The Annual Memorial Day Parade will start in Scotch Plains at approximately 10:30 and end at Fanwood's LaGrande Park where The Party in The Park will be held.

Everyone is invited to attend The Party in The Park and enjoy the food and beverages, participate in games and events and stroll through the craft fair. Children will enjoy the many games, pony rides and face painting.

Volunteers are needed to work at the games or concessions. Each volunteer is asked to work for about two hours. If you would like to volunteer please call Linda at (908) 889-4935.

NOTICE:

Fanwood Borough Council Meetings Are Held The First & Second Tuesday of Each Month in the Borough Council Chambers, Lower Level Borough Hall 75 N. Martine Avenue

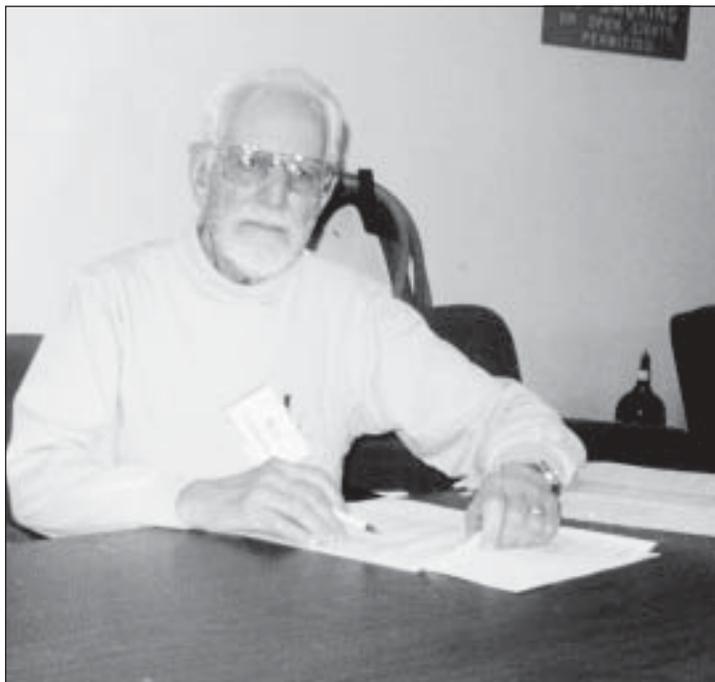
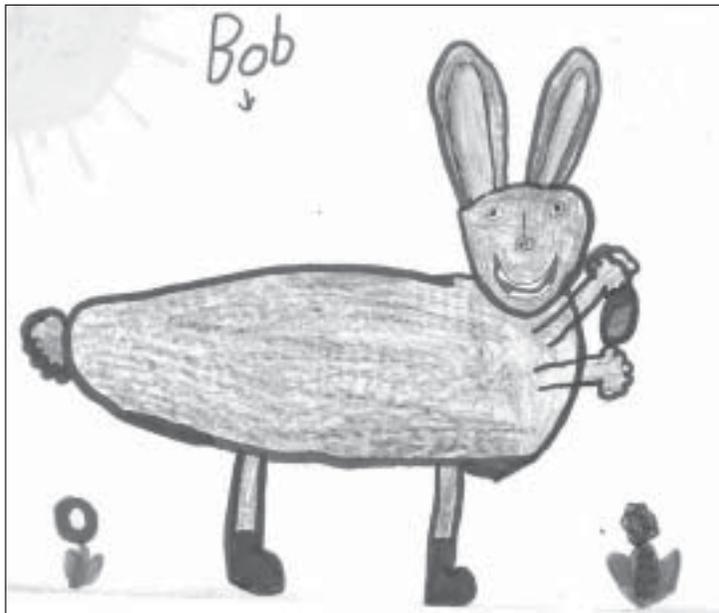
**For information:
(908) 322-8236
council@visitfanwood.com**

Spring Has Sprung... Easter Egg Hunt is On

Spring has sprung and once again it's time for the Annual Fanwood Easter Egg Hunt and Celebration! Grab your Easter basket and join us on Sat, March 30th at 10:00 am behind the Fanwood Fire Station.

There are plenty of hidden eggs, chocolate goodies and prizes to go around. Participate in our traditional egg decorating contest and bunny drawing contest by submitting your entries by 9:45 that morning. Try some face painting and, of course, the Easter Bunny has promised to make a special appearance.

Tons of fun for the whole family. Held rain or shine. For more information call (908) 889-2080.



Fanwood's Volunteers **Bob Sommerich**

When Bob Sommerich agreed to help his son in a Boy Scout fundraiser that involved collecting used newspapers, he probably was not aware that he had set out on a course of volunteerism that he is still actively pursuing at age 87.

If you should drive into Fanwood's Recycling Center on a Wednesday you might see the figure of a white haired man clad in coveralls bent over one of the recycle bins either sorting glass bottles or removing labels from tin cans. Perhaps it was Bob's earlier service on the Environmental Commission that brought him into a natural alliance with the Recycle Association where he has been serving as its president since 1991. Bob believes that the spirit of volunteerism is one of the distinguishing traits in Fanwood's community character that makes it a special place to live and raise a family. To Bob it is most visible on Saturday mornings when member volunteers from various organizations from the community perform the operations of moving and sorting incoming materials. As an involved advocate for recycling, he is active in framing and influencing issues that affect recycling legislation. Specifically, he is pursuing the matter of getting the State to resume offering communities grant money for recycling.

When Bob and his wife of fifty years, Inge, are not visited by or visiting the homes of his three children and eight grandchildren, he is promoting blood drives in Fanwood and adjacent communities as a volunteer with the Red Cross and the New Jersey Blood Services. Once again his son pointed him into this direction when his Eagle Scout project was centered on getting his church involved in sponsoring blood drives.

As a member of Fanwood's Communications/Volunteer Committee, he promotes volunteerism, and he does this best by example. He earnestly believes that most people have the latent desire to do good works, but "the right button must be found and pushed to make it happen." When he was asked what rewards he finds in volunteerism, he replied, "the simple satisfaction that comes from making things better for an individual, a group or the community at large."

He is almost wistful as he expresses a profound sense of gratitude for having the health, a supportive family and the opportunity to do what most men of his age can no longer do. Volunteerism, he says, is one of the special blessings of his long life.

**Stop By The Borough's Web Site
and Sign-up for
The Weekly Fanwood News
Visit Fanwood.com**

A Message from Mayor Louis C. Jung

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I would like to remind you of our annual Memorial Day Service on Monday, May 27th 9:00 AM at the Fanwood Memorial Library. Because of the tragic events of September 11, for each of us this will be a Memorial Day like none previously. Please join us.

Also, on Thursday, May 2nd at 7:30 PM at the Scotch Plains Village Green, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Ministerium is sponsoring its annual National Day of Prayer Service. All are welcome.

Mayor Louis C. Jung

Meet Your Borough Council: Councilman Joel Whitaker When It Comes To Government, Is Bigger Really Better?

This is an ongoing series of columns to help residents get to know their elected representatives. This column is written by Republican Councilman Joel Whitaker.

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*"Since I've been living in Florida," the man at the wake told me, "I've come to realize how much better it is to have the county control almost everything, rather than all these small, local governments. County police, county schools, county libraries - it's much cheaper and more efficient."*

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*"When are you people in Fanwood going to realize that you should simply merge into Scotch Plains," a Scotch Plains resident said. "Why should we pay for two police departments, two public works departments, two libraries? It would be cheaper and more efficient to have one."*

Would it really result in lower taxes and be more efficient to abolish local schools, local police departments, local libraries and put them all at the county? Or to merge with Scotch Plains (or, if size equals efficiency, with, say, Plainfield)?

"It would give us economies of scale," say proponents, "and that would mean less expense."

I'm not convinced. In fact, I suspect that New Jersey's multiple municipalities has resulted in more New Jerseyans having a better quality of life than if we had only county government, or if we merged small towns to create big cities.

The quality of services issue between communities is easily disposed of: Does anyone seriously argue that residents of Newark, Elizabeth or Plainfield have a better quality of life than residents of Fanwood? Are the streets as well maintained? Are the libraries as efficient? Do the police respond to any resident within two minutes, as they do in Fanwood? Does anyone think that merging the Scotch Plains-Fanwood schools with those of

Plainfield would result in a better education for our children?

But, one might say, "I'm willing to give up a little quality of life for lower taxes." Schools account for a huge portion of our local taxes -- about 60%. Would merging with another district lower taxes in Fanwood?

According to the state's school report card, the cost per pupil at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School was \$10,395 last year. Plainfield was \$11,557; Westfield, \$10,765; Jonathan Dayton High School, Springfield, \$11,693. All these schools are in larger communities, so in education, at least, bigger doesn't necessarily

larger communities, all have bigger commercial/industrial tax bases than Fanwood, and yet all saw bigger increases.

If taxes paid are the only criteria, people should be moving from Fanwood, Westfield and Clark to Elizabeth (up 30%), Garwood (up 35%), Plainfield (up 33%), Rahway (up 20%), Springfield (up 31%), or Union (up 33%). Scotch Plains' increase was 39%, but the average residential tax bill there is \$6,205, about 10% higher than Fanwood.

Would we be better off to abolish all these local entities and simply have the county handle everything? Somehow, I doubt it.

Council carpet, the health officer quickly worked out a plan which was implemented last year. At the end of the year, the residents told us the rat problem had disappeared.

Does anyone seriously think that if it had been a county health department, the residents would have gotten before the Freeholder Board? Or that the Freeholders would have gotten action for a small neighborhood?

When Fanwood adopted an ordinance for the town to repair sidewalks damaged by Borough trees, the county adopted a similar ordinance. But when we pointed out the sidewalks damaged by County trees, the county's response was that its policy was not to repair those sidewalks.

Is it likely County police would respond to a call within Fanwood in two minutes or less, as is now the case? If we had a County Library system, how long before the Fanwood library, with its excellent children's department, would be closed as an economy measure, since there are libraries in Scotch Plains, Westfield, Clark and Plainfield?

Does anyone seriously think the County would do as good a job plowing Fanwood streets as Fanwood's public works department?

Fanwood's Council works very hard to maintain good services and keep taxes low as low as possible. The tough decisions that must be made during the budget process, says my colleague Councilwoman Kathy Mitchell, is the part of the \$1-a-year job we like the least. I agree. No town -- and no county, for that matter does it better.

**Fanwood's council has little control over many items in the Borough's budget. Among the things driving any tax increase in Fanwood this year:**

- **A \$100,000 (18%) increase in health insurance premiums for Borough employees.**
- **A federal requirement that police use lead-free bullets. Added cost: \$1,000**
- **A state requirement that all street sweepings be tested to insure they aren't toxic waste. Added cost: \$7,500.**
- **A state requirement that all 911 dispatchers have special medical training. It costs Fanwood less to contract with Overlook to provide EMT dispatch services than to train police dispatchers. Added cost: \$1,500.**

mean less expensive or better quality.

According to the Star-Ledger, in the last 10 years, Fanwood's average residential tax bill, including Fanwood, schools and county government, has gone up 42%, about 4% per year.

Would merging into a larger community have resulted in a lower tax bill? Families in Clark, Hillside, Linden, Roselle, Summit, Cranford, New Providence and Westfield all experienced bigger property tax increases than Fanwood. All are

The county hasn't done a terrific job of managing its work force thus far. How do I know? The county is offering early retirement packages, which is a way of admitting either that it is overpaying workers, or it has more workers than it needs.

As for services, two years ago residents of one Fanwood neighborhood came to the Council protesting a rat infestation problem. They said they had called the health department for two years, but the rats remained. Called on the

The Fanwoodian



Published Quarterly

# Fanwood's 13th Annual Earth Day Cancelled

The Earth Day program for the year 2002 has been cancelled due to the elimination of state funding for this program. The Borough of Fanwood and the Fanwood Department of Public Works have found out through the years that having this program was very beneficial.

Besides having Earth Day we were also able to do programs in our schools, purchase street brooms for our sweeper, pay for summer help, purchase all the receptacles that you see throughout the Borough and in our parks and much more.

All residents of Fanwood are urged to write to local legislators and request that they support Senate Bill 862 which, if passed, would restore the funding for the Clean Community Programs. Listed below are the legislative members you may contact:

Assemblywoman Linda Stender - (908) 668-1900  
1801 East Second Street, 2nd Floor  
Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

Assemblyman Jerry Green - (908) 561-5757  
17 Watchung Avenue  
Plainfield, NJ 07060

NJ State Senator Richard Bagger - (908) 232-3673  
203 Elm Street, 1st Floor  
Westfield, NJ 07090

NJ State Senator Joe Suliga - (908) 587-0805  
222 North Wood Avenue  
Linden, NJ 07036

# Board of Ed Elections Just Around The Corner

Tuesday, April 16th is the Annual School Board Election for the Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District - mark your calendar now! Polls are open from 2:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

This year's election is for one Fanwood seat and to vote on the 2002-2003 school budget. While the seat is uncontested, the budget vote is bound to be interesting.

Fanwood native Susan Dyckman was the only resident to throw her hat into the election ring this year, but is certainly a good candidate for the open Board seat. Ms. Dyckman has spent the last several years covering the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education for *The Times of Scotch Plains - Fanwood*, so she is certainly familiar with the functioning of the Board. Ms. Dyckman is actively involved in the education of her three young children, who all attend schools in the district. Ms. Dyckman is currently President of the Coles School PTA, but will resign from that position in order to serve on the School Board.

The 2002-2003 budget is another matter and has yet to be finalized. Due to the state of the economy, New Jersey State budget numbers have yet to be finalized and it is likely that the budget will reflect a tax increase for Fanwood residents. All residents are urged to watch for and attend upcoming budget presentations by the Board of Education in order to make an informed decision on Election Day.

You must be a registered voter by 8:00 p.m., Monday, March 18th to be eligible to vote on April 16th. Registration forms are available at the County Clerk's Office, Fanwood Borough Hall (until 8:00pm on March 18th) and On-line.

Residents are reminded to apply for an absentee ballot for the April elections if they feel they will be unable to make it to the polls on the 16th. Absentee Ballot forms are also available from the County Clerk's Office, Fanwood Borough Hall and On-line.

Fanwood Borough Hall  
75 North Martine Avenue  
Fanwood, NJ 07023

## Fanwood Community News

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| BULK RATE<br>U.S. POSTAGE<br>PAID<br>FANWOOD, NJ<br>PERMIT NO. 16 |
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on Big Government

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Bob Sommerich

Our Neighbors  
Fanwood, NJ 07023