



Generosity and Caring: The Essence of Fanwood

The Thing About Robert

There is a teddy bear canister that sits on the counter at the bagel store in Fanwood that simply says "Robert's Rainbow." Robert is 5 years old and in September was diagnosed with Adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD), a rare genetic disease. His motor and cognitive skills, along with his sight and hearing have rapidly declined. The prognosis is not positive.

Robert is in Kindergarten at McGinn Elementary School. From the family website: "Robert has always been kind to other children, adults and animals. He has always seen the good side of situations. He has been eternally hopeful in the goodness of people and the world around him. He has been remarkable with his empathy and humor. His intelligence has at times astounded us. He used to love to talk, endlessly it seemed at times. He was full of energy and joy. He moved effortlessly among people, places and experiences."

The Fanwood Policeman's Benevolent Association (PBA), friends of the family, and local businesses are all collecting money to assist the Clearys.

Eventually, Robert will need 24 hour care. The PBA has already sponsored a bus trip to Atlantic City, and is planning a trip to the NJ Devil's game on Friday March 19th. A fundraiser is also scheduled for March 28th to see Mr. Ray, the popular children's entertainer. And because rainbows are Robert's favorite things to draw, t-shirts with a special "Robert's Rainbow" are being planned. The money raised from each of these endeavors will go 100% to the Cleary family.

"There are incredible people along our path who work tirelessly for both Robert's benefit and that of our family. Relatives and friends have propped us up and kept us going, strangers have prepared meals, new friends are building a foundation to help with Robert's

Family Safe After Fire

About 60 firefighters from Fanwood and three other communities worked for five hours in bitterly cold temperatures to contain a quick-moving fire on North Avenue on Monday, February 16th.

The Smith family got out of their home quickly and Fanwood firefighters arrived on scene just minutes after the 911 call. They were hampered by cold temperatures that made the scene dangerous, with sheets of ice forming on the ground.

The Fanwood Rescue Squad had both its rigs and a dozen members on scene, and six firefighters suffered minor injuries. Fanwood's Department of Public Works also responded, bringing truckloads of salt to treat the street, sidewalks and driveways.



A BENEFIT BUS TRIP TO ATLANTIC CITY was organized by the Fanwood PBA. Pictured above as the bus departed on February 29th is, left to right, Fanwood Police Officer Kevin Stomber, Amy Regenthal, Fanwood Fire Chief Rick Regenthal, Mayor Colleen Mahr and Fanwood Police Officer and PBA President Brian Bartiromo. Proceeds were donated to Robert Cleary.

By the time the last of the flames were put out, the back half of the home was destroyed and the rest was uninhabitable.

The fire was caused by an electrical malfunction in the basement.

Scott and Emily Smith, along with their daughter Audrey, have found temporary housing until they can rebuild their home.

The Smith family would like to deliver the following message to their fellow Fanwoodians:

"We have been deeply moved by the depth and breadth of support in Fanwood and surrounding communities in the aftermath of the fire that consumed our home this past President's Day.

The generosity and genuine caring we have experienced these past days is the very essence of what makes Fanwood such an extraordinary neighborhood and we can think of no better place to raise our family.

It was an easy choice to move to our beautiful town three years ago; it is now an even easier choice to rebuild here." - Scott and Emily Smith

Important Tax Info for Fanwood Senior Citizens

Are you taking advantage of the Property Tax Relief Programs that are available to you through the State of New Jersey and your local Tax Office? The following information may be helpful:

1. If you are over the age of 65 and your annual income does not exceed \$10,000 not including social security you may be entitled to receive a \$250 deduction on your property taxes. Call the Tax Collector at Borough Hall for additional information and paperwork. 908-322-8236.

2. Homestead rebate - Homeowners who pay property taxes and whose gross income does not exceed \$100,000 (\$40,000 for homeowners who are not 65 year of age or disabled) should file for a homestead rebate using either form HR-1040 or by completing form NJ-1040EZ.

3. NJ Saver Rebate - The application for the NJ Saver Rebate is usually mailed to your home. It requires you to call a toll free number and input information using the telephone.

4. The Property Tax Reimbursement Program (also known as the Property Tax Freeze Program) was not available last year to new filers. The State of New Jersey has informed us that it "may" be available again this year. If you applied for the property tax freeze prior to 2003 and were qualified, you should receive the paperwork in the mail during the last week of March. First time filers will have to obtain the paperwork either at the local Tax Office, from your Tax Preparer or on the internet. PLEASE NOTE: There is a section on the form that must be completed by your local tax collector before you mail it in. THESE FORMS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE BEFORE THE LAST WEEK IN MARCH.

5. Veterans Deduction - If you or your spouse served in the Armed Forces in time of war and are now honorably discharged, you may be qualified for a deduction of \$250 on your property taxes. There is no age limit for this deduction. The paperwork to apply for the deduction is available from your local Tax Collector.

If you have internet access, the following website may help with any questions you have. <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation>

Everyone's Invited To Annual Easter Egg Hunt

Spring is here!! Grab your favorite basket and your best bonnet and join us on Saturday, April 10th at 10:00 a.m. at Forest Road Park.

- Hundreds of Eggs
- Dozens of prizes
- Egg decorating contest
- Bunny drawing contest
- Easter Bunny, face painting and more!!

Rain or shine!! Questions?? Call Linda at (908) 889-4935.

Have you seen the newly constructed Forest Road Park building? Be sure to check it out and be on the lookout for new and exciting recreation programs!!

Update on Community Policing Alliance

The inaugural meeting of the Fanwood Community Policing Alliance was held on Friday, February 27th with more than 20 people in attendance. The purpose of the group is to develop a local community policing steering group to mobilize and engage residents to respond and identify potential safety and security issues in the community.

The group present made several suggestions on how they could better serve Fanwood. Some of these suggestions included development of a Civilian Emergency Response Team, identifying local community residents with specialized skills that might be utilized to support local police human resources. One example was the identification of a local resident, Bud Lavin who is a member of the Central Jersey Technical Rescue Team, that is dispatched in time of need by CenCom to assist in looking for missing or lost children or adults. With local manpower limited on calls like these, this information will surely help all the residents of Fanwood in the future.

The group agreed to hold monthly meetings, have guest speakers, and to develop a formal template to address their purpose and resources. The next meeting of this group will be held on Thursday, March 25th starting at 7:30 in Borough Chambers.

Fanwood Business and Professional Association

On February 23rd The Fanwood Business and Professional Association (FBPA) held a reorganization meeting at The Chelsea in Fanwood. The major item of discussion was the date of the Annual Fanwood Spring Fair.

The Spring Fair will be held this year on Sunday, June 27th from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. It will again be sponsored by the Fanwood Business and Professional Association. The FPBA invites all Fanwoodians to attend so please mark your calendars and be sure to come out and join us.

A local resident, also spoke to the group about a fund raising project that some of the local business owners have agreed to participate in to help a young Fanwood resident named Robert Cleary, age 5 who has been diagnosed with Adrenoleukodystrophy. Throughout town you will find collection jars in many business where you can help support this local family. All proceeds will benefit Robert Cleary and checks can be made payable to Robert Cleary. Thank you in advance for your support.

The March Meeting for the Fanwood Business and Professional Association will be held on Monday, March 29th at 6:30 p.m. at The Chelsea on South Avenue in Fanwood. We invite all Fanwood Business Owners to attend. Please call Peter Chemidlin at (908) 322-1800 for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities

The strength of our community lies in the hard work and dedication of our community volunteers. Looking for something to do? Want to meet new people, make new friends and become a vital and active part of what makes Fanwood a "Great Place to Put Down Roots?" Then become a volunteer.

There are plenty of opportunities to assist and for you to put your unique skills and talents to good use. Look through the list below and then contact the appropriate liaison and get started.

Recreational Opportunities

Contact Rec@VisitFanwood.com

MEMORIAL DAY (May)

Assist in the annual Memorial Day Parade by lining up marchers, directing walkers, passing out materials, crowd control and more or head straight to the park and grill hot dogs, work with vendors in setting up displays, entertain children at "carnival" type games or just help out your community enjoy a "family fun day" to celebrate the Memorial Holiday.

COACHES AND SPORTS ASSISTANTS

Fanwood Youth Baseball, Soccer and Basketball

Adults and youth over the age of 16 are needed to assist as coaches and team managers for our many fine youth sports program. Help our young people learn how to throw, catch, hit and run and to take that first step towards a lifetime of sports participation!

Baseball programs run from May to June and are open to kids in K to eighth grades.

Basketball programs are open to boys and girls in the (4th) - (8th) grades. Programs are held at the Park and Terrill Middle Schools Monday - Thursday from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. Coaches need to know basic skills and fundamentals of basketball.

No previous experience required, just a love of children and some knowledge of the sport of your choice.

Game officials are also needed and should have a working knowledge of the "official" rules of the game for each sport.

HALLOWEEN PARADE & PARK CELEBRATION

Assist in lining up marchers, directing walkers, passing out materials, crowd control and more or assist in the park with the distribution of cider and donuts, judge costumes or guide marchers.

Other Community Opportunities

Contact Volunteer@VisitFanwood.com

Listed below are just some of the other opportunities that need your skill and talents. Contact the mayor or a council member for details.

- Recycling Center - Saturdays from 9:00 - 1:00 p.m.
- Fanwoodian - editor, photographer or feature story writer
- Fire and Rescue - training provided to become one of the communities "first responders" in times of crisis
- Board and Committee's - have a special interest in the environment, our public library, historic preservation or other areas, then we need you.



PICTURED ABOVE ARE THE MEMBERS of the 2004 Fanwood Borough Council. From left to right: Councilman Andrew Calamaras, Councilwoman Donna Dolce, Councilman Jack Molenaar, Mayor Colleen Mahr, Councilman Stuart Kline, Councilman Michael Brennan and Councilwoman Katherine Mitchell.

Fanwood's 2004 Mayor and Borough Council Members

Your Mayor and Council welcomes your comments, suggestions and questions. You are invited to call, write or email the Borough Council members at any time.

By Mail:

75 N. Martine Avenue, Fanwood, NJ 07023

By Telephone:

(908) 322-8236

By E-mail:

Mayor Colleen Mahr

Mayor@VisitFanwood.com

Councilman Michael Brennan

MichaelB@VisitFanwood.com

Councilman Andrew Calamaras

AndrewC@VisitFanwood.com

Councilwoman Donna Dolce

DonnaD@VisitFanwood.com

Councilman Stuart S. Kline

StuartK@VisitFanwood.com

Councilwoman Katherine Mitchell

KathyM@VisitFanwood.com

Councilman Jack Molenaar

JackM@VisitFanwood.com

Meet Your Borough Council: Councilman Michael Brennan



Councilman Michael Brennan has been a resident of Fanwood for the past thirty-one years. A 1988 graduate of Scotch Plains - Fanwood High School he is a graduate of Rutgers University with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science.

Councilman Brennan is completing his first term as a councilman and is dedicated to ensuring that other young families will be able to enjoy

the benefits that he has experienced by remaining in his home community. In his tenure on the council, Councilman Brennan has served as liaison to the Recreation Commission, Public Safety, including liaison to the Rescue Squad and Fire Department, and Shade Tree commission. He also serves as a member of the Shared Services Coordinating Council, a partnership between Fanwood, Scotch Plains and the Board of Education.

In each of these roles he has seen first hand the results of his efforts that include; completion of the Forest Road Park addition, "Tree City, USA" designation as part of his work with the Shade Tree Commission, an on-going Borough wide tree inventory project, local ordinances for developers to ensure the replacement of tree's removed for buildings and a cadre of experienced professional volunteers.

His work on the Shared Services committee has resulted in an ambitious "Field of Dreams" project scheduled to begin this summer, that has expanded the quality and number of fields available for our youth and adult recreation sports programs. "I believe the resulting product of quality athletic fields will benefit our residents for generations to come."

Finally, ensuring that we have one of the most safe and secure communities possible, Councilman Brennan is proud of his work on improving communication for our Police, Fire and Rescue Squads. Their dedication and willingness to work collaboratively is a credit to their professionalism and focus on working toward the greater good of our residents.

Michael, and his wife Mary Ann are the proud parents of a fifteen month old daughter Grace. He is also the son of Robert and Barbara Brennan of Fanwood.

The Thing About Robert

Continued from Page 1

care going forward, supportive souls have leant an ear and educators have moved us to tears for their concern and efforts to make Robert's life as joyful and normal as possible. Prayers have quite literally moved around the globe for this little boy who has never been more than several hundred miles from his home."

For more information, visit Robert's Web site at www.TheThingAboutRobert.us.

Donations can be made payable to Robert Cleary and dropped off in the Teddy Bear Canister at the Fanwood Deli and Bagels or mailed to: Robert Cleary, c/o Cuccaro, 336 LaGrande Avenue, Fanwood, NJ 07023.

The Mr. Ray Show is scheduled for March 28th from 3:00 to 4:00p.m. at St. Lukes Church, 182 Main Street in Gladstone, New Jersey. Tickets in advance are \$10, at the door \$12. For advance tickets call Barbara-Ann Cuccaro at (908) 889-6378 or Heather Williams at (973) 543-2959.

Message From The Mayor

Continued from Page 6

planning town-wide meetings to gain your input as well as keep you informed on the direction for development BEFORE development begins.

A very important, agenda item started prior to my term is to replace our Police Department communication tower, which has deteriorated structurally and can no longer provide the communications capacity so critical to our community's most important "first-responders." With the help of Police leadership, we will be soliciting proposals to erect a new tower on borough property that will provide a critical link between our Police, Fire and Rescue units in order that they may serve you better.

With spring around the corner, our thoughts move to getting out in town. Planning a family reunion or children's party? Then consider using one of our fine parks, including the newly completed addition at Forest Road Park, and children and adults alike will have the opportunity to play even more organized sports through our "Field of Dreams" project, which is near completion. This shared-service program with Scotch Plains and the Board of Education is just one fine example of our "neighborliness" that extends beyond our borders.

As spring arrives with renewed vigor, the volunteer spirit is alive and growing in Fanwood. If you would like to become involved, join other Fanwood citizens and groups on Saturday morning, April 24 at 8:30 am for our annual "Earth Day" town wide cleanup - it's a great way to get involve, meet new people and give our community a much-needed face lift.

Finally, I want to take a moment to thank the many neighbors and friends in town who have stepped forward to serve on committees and commissions in our community. The spirit of volunteerism has never been higher.

Mayor Colleen Mahr

The Fanwoodian

Contributions, suggestions and comments are welcome and may be sent to:

The Fanwoodian
75 N. Martine Avenue
Fanwood, NJ 07023

Fanwoodian@VisitFanwood.com



Work of Fanwood's Number One Volunteer Touches The Lives of Every Fanwoodian

How many people can say they never took a sick day in 35 years? Even today, 16 years into his second life as Fanwood's number one volunteer, Joe Nagy hasn't called in sick.

If you live in Fanwood, you've probably been touched by something good done by Joe Nagy.

Have you heard the Fanwood downtown clock this week? That's Joe's work.

Have you checked the announcements on Channel 35 lately? That's Joe's work, too.

How about the paint job at St. Bart's residential quarters and the shelves at the Thrift Shop? Both are Joe's handiwork.

The title of Number One Volunteer has been earned a hundred times over by the tall, thin gentleman originally from Fords, NJ and is bestowed by his best friend, George Weiss. "Hands down, Joe Nagy wins," says George.

And he would know. George and Joe have volunteered together for years at Channel 35, Fanwood's public access cable TV channel. They are fixtures behind the live TV camera at the monthly Borough Council meetings. Joe collects the information for the full-screen announcements from community groups and sometimes is seen on-camera, interviewing people at local functions and parades.

Joe and his wife Claire have been living in the same house on Oakwood Court they found in an ad in the Courier News 42 years ago. Having outgrown their small home in Metuchen, they chose Fanwood to raise their 3 children for many of the same reasons young couples move here today.

"Because of the reputable school system, the railroad access to Newark and New York and the friendly, small town aura of the community," says Joe, who is now very much a part of that small town aura. And it's a good thing too, because Joe seems to be the only person in Fanwood who knows how to program the music in the clock at Martine and South Avenues.

George Weiss remembers one day when Joe had to fix the clock in the icy cold and howling wind. "I went with him to provide moral support, but I could no longer stand being out in the biting cold, so I got into my car and turned on the heater," he says. "Yet, Joe just kept working on a truly miserable day and soon he had the clock and its musical chimes running again."

Among his many community activities, Joe serves as treasurer for the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Scholarship Foundation, which gives thousands of dollars in scholarships to college-bound high school students. He has taken on fundraising for the Foundation and is in charge of annual mailings soliciting donations.

"All of this volunteer activity on Joe's part is accomplished

willingly and with enthusiasm," notes Ellie Kramps, president of the Foundation.

That same enthusiasm is evident in his role as Historian for the Fanwood Historic Preservation Commission and as a member of the Borough's Communications Committee and Assessment Committee, where former Borough Councilman David Pickering worked shoulder to shoulder with Joe.

"He is unique and a legend in his own time," says David. "How lucky the Borough is to have him."

His many activities around town bring him almost daily to the Borough Hall where the staff has gotten used to his sharp wit and great sense of humor.

"I've framed and hung 17 former mayors and can't wait to do the others," he told a staffer one day, referring to his role in establishing a photo gallery of former Mayors in the Council Chambers for the Fanwood Centennial.

Joe's dedication to all the organizations he volunteers for is tremendous. He can work with any person or group and gets along with everyone with whom he comes in contact.

The calendar says he is 81. But Joe Nagy is ageless, his contributions to our town, priceless.

It hardly seems enough just to say thanks, but Joe probably wouldn't accept anything else.

So, thanks, Joe.



Family Safe After Fire

Continued from Page 1

The Smith family wishes to send thanks for all of the offers of support in recent days. Due to the already time-consuming challenges of the rebuilding process, and the overwhelming outpouring of generosity, the family has asked for and received the assistance of Heart for Humanity in administering the receipt of this support.

Heart for Humanity will help the Smiths keep this assistance in trust for any unforeseen contingencies as they rebuild. Once circumstances allow, the family plans to re-direct a portion of this support to other local needs.

Financial donations can be sent to Heart for Humanity, c/o The Smith Family, Tricia Nering, 93 Russell Road, Fanwood, NJ 07023.

For more information about donations contact Heart for Humanity at (908) 322-5206 or on the Internet at www.HeartFH99.com.

A Message From Mayor Colleen Mahr



Whenever I have the opportunity to talk to people from outside of Fanwood, I often point out how neighborly Fanwood is. This neighborliness was best demonstrated on February 16 when the Smith Family watched as their home was destroyed by fire. I was equally proud of how that spirit was demonstrated that day -- and every day -- by those who serve Fanwood, whether members of our Police force or volunteer members of our Fire Department and Rescue Squads.

While certainly a tragedy, the reaction from those individuals in public service in our community is to be commended. It was also a fine example of how those who are sworn to protect and serve can seamlessly integrate their resources with their brothers and sisters who responded through mutual aid from surrounding communities. Fanwood thanks you, all.

I promised during my campaign that communications would be key to this administration. I meant it, and we continue to find new ways to bring word of your government and your community to you - newspapers, e-mails, newsletters, my open-door policy at Town Hall, and my special "Chat with the Mayor" sessions on the third Thursday of each month from 6 pm to 8 pm. Of course, there are always the Council meetings on the second Tuesday of the month.

It has been a wonderful and very busy two months.

In very short order, we introduced a budget in ample time to ensure that Fanwood has the opportunity to submit an application for extraordinary state aid to help reduce our property tax strain. We continue to look for new sources of revenue to attack the long-history of higher property tax rates that we have faced for several years. All members of the council are appalled by a budget that reflects an 11 percent increase over the past year, an indication that -- in the past -- little foresight had gone into Fanwood's fiscal future. We're setting out quickly to change that. The potential aid from the state was an opportunity that could not be overlooked and required that we provide an "introduced budget" along with an application by a March 26th deadline.

Our work is far from over, even while we await word from Trenton, we will continue to meet on the budget and keep you informed. Our nation's open government laws offer you the freedom to watch the process at work, and we invite you to attend our budget sessions. Final passage of the budget will occur in the late spring.

With the budget process now underway, we will be turning our full attention to our downtown. Residents continue to provide me with input on their vision for our downtown; they want a better mix of stores and a nicer look for Fanwood's centerpiece. We are currently seeking additional support from the state through their "Smart Growth" allocations and are

Continued on Page 4

Fanwood Borough Hall
75 North Martine Avenue
Fanwood, NJ 07023

Fanwood Community News

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
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BOROUGH
SERVICES
CALENDAR
INSIDE**

**Our Neighbors
Fanwood, NJ 07023**

