

Celebrate the season at Fanwood's Holiday Party

Annual afternoon of fun high point of a busy month

Fanwood's holiday season officially begins when Santa Claus arrives in town on Sunday, Dec. 7, starting at 3 p.m.

Everyone is invited to meet Santa under the big tent on the lawn in front of the North Avenue Train Station and enjoy an afternoon of seasonal music, holiday crafts and refreshments — all for free.

Children who stop by to say hello to Santa will get a free photograph of their visit with him. And, children can also enter contests and win prizes.

The celebration concludes at 5 p.m. when Mayor Colleen Mahr lights the Fanwood town tree on the train station lawn.

This event is sponsored by the Fanwood Recreation Commission.

Santa's ride, other traditions scheduled in the borough

It's a busy time in December as several groups help borough residents celebrate the holidays.

Escorted by the Fanwood Fire Dept., Rescue Squad and Police PBA 123, Santa Claus will make his annual ride through the borough Saturday, Dec. 13, starting at 11 a.m., distributing gifts.

See Traditions, page 2



Three-year-old Bronwyn Boris, the daughter of Jessica and Kevin Boris of Fanwood, meets Santa for the first time at last year's Fanwood Holiday Party on the lawn of the North Avenue Train Station in Fanwood.

Sign up now for Fanwood's email newsletter!

Be in the know about all things Fanwood with the weekly email newsletter. Go to the borough website, fanwoodnj.org, and enter your email address in the box beneath "Get Email Alerts" in the left column. You'll get timely news updates all-year-round and updated information in case of an emergency, too. Sign up today so you'll be in the know and ready for the winter storm season! While you are at it, sign up for Union County First Alert at ucfirstalert.org to receive additional local and regional emergency information and weather email alerts.

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CSI: FANWOOD

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FANWOOD INFORMATION



ON EMAIL!

Sign up for alerts at www.fanwoodnj.org



ON THE AIR!

Fanwood information radio - 24/7 at AM530



ON FACEBOOK!

Search Fanwood, NJ, and hit the LIKE button

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Let us hear from you!
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FROM PAGE ONE

Traditions (cont'd)

Santa's elves will accept packages at the Fire House behind Borough Hall for a week, beginning Nov. 29. Drop-off times are 5-9

p.m., Nov. 29-30, and 6-9 p.m., Dec. 1-5.

Packages may not be dropped off at the Police Dept. Since Santa has to make his list and check it twice, late gifts cannot be accepted. All packages must include name, address and phone number. **Gifts must**

be no larger than a

typical shoe box and only one gift per child is permitted.

Packages for the same address must be bundled together. The rain date is Saturday, Dec. 20. For more information, check the fire department's website at fanwoodfd.com.



Santa's 2013 trip down North Avenue

Other holiday traditions going on around the borough include:

Holiday Giving Tree For the fourth year, the Fanwood Police Dept. and PBA Local 123 are coordinating a holiday gift donation for the Parents as Teachers program in Union County. A giving tree with ornaments for each child is located outside of Borough Hall. Take an ornament and return the unwrapped gift (with the tag attached) by Dec. 12 to the Police Dept. The Parents as Teachers home visitation program provides a wide variety of services to 60 families in Union County to improve pregnancy outcomes and child health and development, increased parent involvement in children's care and education and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Christmas Tree Sale Begins Monday, Dec. 1. The Lions Club and Fanwood Fire Dept. are teaming up for this year's sale at LaGrande Park, as it has been for 65 years, on weekdays, 6-9 p.m., and weekends, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. All profits are donated to local schools for scholarships and to other local charities. Plain and decorated wreaths and garlands will also be available for purchase.

Tiny Tim Carol Night Leave your porch light on Wednesday, Dec. 3, from 4-9 p.m., so carolers from the Tiny Tim Fund will know they are welcome. For more than 30 years, the fund has provided financial assistance to medically needy local children. Carolers can drop off their proceeds and enjoy refreshments at the Stage House Inn in Scotch Plains. If you would like to participate, contact Flavia Blechinger at (908) 753-4228 or Barbara Anilo at (908) 322-4472.

Rotary Club Luminary Sale Begins Sunday, Dec. 7. Luminaries will be sold Dec. 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Dec. 24, 9 a.m. to noon. Luminary kits (candle, bag, and sand) will be sold at the Fanwood Municipal Garage, 270 North Ave. All proceeds will be donated to charities. Please bring canned food to donate.

Handel's Messiah Concert Fanwood Presbyterian Church presents Handel's Messiah, the Christmas portion, on Sunday, Dec. 7, at 4 p.m., at the church on Martine Avenue. Call (908) 889-8891 for more information. Tickets are \$20. Send a check payable to Fanwood Presbyterian Church, memo Messiah, with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to P.O. Box 69 Fanwood, NJ 07023.



Mayor's message

by Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr

With the season of giving upon us, I ask each of you to consider signing up to be a part of Fanwood's family of community volunteers.

Here in Fanwood, we are fortunate in attracting residents who want to be part of the fabric of the community. These folks bring added value to our collective lives and satisfaction to their own. But, as with all things, the ranks of our volunteers need constant renewal and refreshment.

We have a rich, diverse group of committees that each contribute to what you love about living here, but the truth is, we need help. Although we have terrific volunteers working for you, it cannot always be the same folks doing the helping. So, no matter your age, your background, or even if you have only one night a month to give, we have a place for you to contribute.

I will be at the Holiday Celebration on Dec. 7 and I hope to see you there, too! I will have a list of all volunteer vacancies along with descriptions of each position. I'll be on hand to discuss any questions you have about the openings and I encourage you to stop by and sign up! You'll not only be doing good for the community, you'll find it's good for you, too!



Boarding the first One-Seat Ride train in March

As 2014 winds down, it is time to reflect on the year that was. One of the biggest changes that will impact the lives of all Fanwoodians was the March inauguration of the first New Jersey Transit One-Seat Ride. For all those of you who don't commute by train, One Seat Ride means boarding in Fanwood and arriving at New York Penn Station **WITHOUT CHANGING TRAINS IN NEWARK!**

The reason all homeowners should pay attention is that history has shown that towns with this rail service see property values increase up to 30%. I continue to work closely with the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition to expand the one-seat service so that folks on our rail line have a fair share of the available routes into New York City. It will not be a quick process, but a worthwhile one. As Mayor of Fanwood, I believe this is one of my most important duties and I am committed to seeing this through. Please follow our efforts by visiting www.raritanvalleyrail.com.

And, if there were any more proof needed that one-seat ride will be a boon to the community, we were all

treated to the New York Times Real Estate section, May 6 publication of "Fanwood, N.J.: A Future Coupled With Transit." This was a welcome validation of the work we've done on redevelopment and in maintaining strong and vibrant residential neighborhoods.

On the heels of the publication, we were notified that Fanwood was also a state-wide winner of the 2014 NJ Futures Smart Growth Award!

November brought yet another accolade for our efforts in making sure our infrastructure is maintained. Fanwood's win of the 2014 NJ Society of Municipal Engineers award for the Glenwood Drainage Area Improvements Project was an honor! The 2014 local infrastructure improvements wind down with the full repaving of Vinton Circle, North Glenwood Road, Shasta Pass and Hunter Avenue.

With this, one of the most lovely and temperate summers we have enjoyed in years, came not only the sound of happy children enjoying the LaGrande Park Recreation program, but the din of jackhammers and heavy machinery as American Water undertook a large-scale infrastructure improvement, replacing clogged water mains and old service lines on the south side of the community.

Our neighbors near Martine Avenue took the brunt of this disruption while the water company worked on this busy artery during the night. We thank them for their patience. While it was sometimes a challenge to navigate through the worksites, the water company was most considerate of residents and quick to respond when problems arose. Happily, the water company repaved all the streets affected by the project that had been fully reconstructed by the borough in the last three years.

In 2015, the north side will see the same upgrades of increased water pressure and flow. Although it will be a disruption, it is well worth the trouble to avoid water service disruptions. None of us wants to be drinking bottled water for a week because of a break in an old water main.

As I write, I am keeping my fingers crossed that when you read this we will have had continued good fortune with the weather with no hurricanes, blizzards or tornados! Though we've proven to be up to the challenge, it's time for a break! I am hoping that the rest of 2014 is as picture perfect as summer was.

And, I think we've recently had a wonderful omen with the birth of our newest Fanwoodian, who was actually born IN town. With the capable assistance of Sgt. Marc Gottlick and Officer Ryan Gilmore of the Fanwood Police, a little baby girl named Jamie was the first birth in Fanwood since 1998. We are delighted to welcome Jamie to our little world and wish her family and yours nothing but good health, happiness and prosperity through the holiday season and in 2015.



Walking is about the only way to go during the big winter storms, including this mid-February snowfall.

FANWOOD'S YEAR IN PHOTOS 2014



TOP: Five-year-old Charlotte LaCosta waves her flags in time to the music during the Memorial Day concert;
 BOTTOM: Three-year-old twins Holden and Harper Carton get a breezy ride from their dad, David, near the finish line of the Fanwood 5K in September;
 RIGHT: Pie-eating-contest winner Briana McGowan shows off her clean plate after taking the title in the event at the annual Fanny Wood Day in September.

Photos by Brian Horton, Dean Talcott (Nature Center)



TOP, LEFT: Two-year-old Maggie Basuino checks out her haul for possible prize eggs at the Fanwood Easter Egg Hunt in April. TOP, RIGHT: Mayor Colleen Mahr discusses the framed drawing of the old Fanwood train station with 93-year-old Louise Meyler after Meyler was honored as the borough's, "Volunteer of the Month" in July; RIGHT: A resident of the Nature Center checks things out; MIDDLE, LEFT: Brightly robed Buddhist monks join volunteers on Earth Day in April; MIDDLE, RIGHT: Shoppers fill the downtown streets during Ladies' Night Out in May; ABOVE: a youngster skateboards on Watson Road; BOTTOM: Joe and Angie Murano dance to the Tennessee Waltz during the "Senior Shindig" ice cream social in August.

Schedule set for seniors' winter rec programs

Fanwood Recreation announces its winter program schedule for Fanwood seniors. Programs begin the week of Jan. 5 and run weekly through the week of March 23:

Aerobics	Tuesdays, 9–10 a.m.
Tai Chi	Tuesdays, 10:15–11:15 a.m.
Water Exercise	Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.–noon
Zumba Gold section 1	Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.
Gentle Yoga	Thursdays, 9:30–10:30 a.m.
Line, Ballroom, Latin Dancing	Thursdays, 1–2 p.m.
Zumba Gold section 2	Fridays, 9:15–10 a.m.

All classes will be held in the recreation building at Forest Road Park with the exception of Water Exercise, which will be held at the JCC of Central NJ Wilf Jewish Community Campus indoor pool. The fee is \$15 per program for Fanwood and Scotch Plains residents, \$30 for all others. To register online and pay by credit card, please go to fanwoodrecreation.org. Or, if you

prefer to pick up a paper schedule and registration form and pay by check, please go to Fanwood Borough Hall.

Recreation jobs available for winter, summer programs

Fanwood Recreation is now accepting job applications for ice skating rink attendant at the LaGrande Park rink, and for counselor positions for its 2015 Summer Park Recreation Program and Tweens & Teens Travel Camp.

The Park Recreation Program, which will begin June 22 Monday–Friday at LaGrande Park, provides children ages 5–12 with structured, fun-filled activities under the supervision of experienced counselors.

The Summer Travel Camp will run for two or three weeks in July from 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday.

If you or someone you know would like to apply for an attendant or counselor job, go to fanwoodrecreation.org and click on the “Job Applications” button to download an application. Submission of an application does not guarantee an interview or a response.

Registration for the summer programs will start in February or March.

Makes you want to say brrrrr! Rink opens when temps drop



Skaters on the rink last winter

Ice skating season is almost here!

As soon as the first sub-freezing cold spell arrives, Fanwood Recreation, with the help of the Fanwood Department of Public Works, is planning to fill the LaGrande Rink with water and turn it into a frozen pond for ice skating.

As in past years, once the rink is up and running it will be open to the public for late afternoon hours on weekdays and extended hours on weekends. Skating is free, but you'll have to bring your own skates.

The best place to check for the exact hours of operation and rink status is fanwoodrecreation.org.

Let's hear from you! Take Fanwood Rec's survey

The Fanwood Recreation Commission wants to hear from you! The commission invites you to take the Fanwood Recreation Survey. Your opinions will provide valuable guidance to the commission as it plans future improvements for our parks and recreational facilities. To participate, please go to fanwoodrecreation.org and click on the Fanwood Recreation Survey link. It should only take a few minutes to complete.

The survey will be available to those who want to take it until the end of this year.

Old favorites in the winter after-school recreation lineup

Fanwood Recreation is offering a full slate of after-school programs this winter. Coming back are LEGO Club, Pokemon Game Club, Junior Scientists Lab, Little Bakers Workshop, Computer Skills for Kids and Kodu Game Programming.

And, Recreation is also offering a new Fashion Design class and a new LEGO program for kids ages 3-5. Plus, for our youngest athletes, US Sports Institute offers Soccer Squirts (indoors at the Forest Road Park building). Also, in partnership with Fanwood Recreation, the SKY Yoga studio on South Avenue is offering several programs designed especially for children and teens.

Most of these programs will begin in late January. For more information about them, including detailed descriptions, dates, times, prices, and age group, go to fanwoodrecreation.org, where you can also register and pay for these programs.



Coming up

JANUARY

Brush and branch pickup program

Christmas tree pickup program (all month)

1 - Borough Council re-organization meeting

31 - Dog and cat licenses due

20 - Borough council meeting

FEBRUARY

Registration begins for spring after-school and seniors' recreation programs

1 - Borough property taxes due

17 - Borough council meeting

17 - Fanwood Poetry Series opens 2015 season

MARCH

17 - Borough council meeting

Huegel, Boris re-elected to Fanwood Council



Council president Russ Huegel, right, and Councilman Kevin Boris were re-elected to Fanwood's governing body in the Nov. 4 election. The duo was unopposed in the balloting for the three-year terms.

Local pantry in need of food, other items to fill requests

The St. Bartholomew Community Food Pantry has had a very busy year since taking over the functions of the Scotch Plains municipal food bank, which closed in the fall of 2013.

In addition to the generosity of community organizations - Scouts, SP-F College Club, SP-F Newcomers, among others - and local businesses, donations of food and other items are needed from the public to meet the increased demand.

The pantry is currently in need of the following: individually wrapped paper towels and toilet paper; napkins; tissues; toothbrushes; toothpaste; soap/body wash; jarred tomato sauce; taco dinner kits; Hamburger Helper dinner kits; mac 'n' cheese; pasta side dishes; instant mashed potatoes boxes/bags; snacks such as pretzels or Cheezits; crackers; cereal; peanut butter and jelly.

No pasta, canned veggies or soup are needed now.

Donations are accepted at the Fanwood Library and Fanwood Borough Hall or may be dropped off at the church, 2032 Westfield Avenue in Scotch Plains, during weekend Mass or at the Rectory during business hours. Families or individuals in need may email the church at contact@stbartholomewchurch.org or phone at (908) 322-5192 for a registration letter.

Items are dispensed at the Rectory to approved registrants from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Museum always looking for pieces of Fanwood history

Volunteers at the Fanwood Museum, located in the historic northside Train Station, are always on the lookout for bits and pieces that reveal Fanwood's history.

The museum hosts visitors year-round and is a popular destination for school field trips, too.



Recent finds include an early Fanwood Fire Dept. badge and a pass and buttons from the Central Railroad of New Jersey.

A lot of the museum's displays are made up of items donated or loaned that have been found in attics and basements around Fanwood. Others are purchased and donated when someone comes across a great artifact.

Historic Preservation Commission member Joan Skubish says it is a lot like a treasure hunt. She regularly attends estate sales in the area looking for artifacts and even has a search set up on Ebay to alert her if anything comes up for sale on the auction site that has "Fanwood" in the description.

Several recent acquisitions revolve around Fanwood's connection to the Central Railroad of New Jersey (CNJ), the

company that at one time owned much of what is now Fanwood that led to the founding of the borough in 1895.

Join the treasure hunt! Take a moment and see if you have something from Fanwood's past.

Property tax relief available for disabled, vets, seniors

Seniors, disabled persons and veterans may be eligible for property tax relief programs.

If you are over 65, or a disabled person, with annual income of less than \$10,000 (not including Social Security), you may qualify for a \$250 deduction on your property taxes.

If you are a veteran who served during active wartime, you also may qualify for a \$250 property tax deduction. In addition, veterans who are 100% disabled as a result of service-related injuries may be entitled to be 100% exempt from property taxes.

For more information on these and other state programs, and to obtain applications, contact the borough Tax Collector at (908) 322-8236 x126.

AROUND FANWOOD A postcard from our town



Fanwood first responders are honored at a "Salute to the Heroes" Oct. 18 at Oh' Brian's Pourhouse on South Avenue in Fanwood. Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr, center, leads the salute with Oh' Brian's owner Brian Walter, fourth from left. From left, Fanwood Rescue Squad 1st Lt. Nancy Mustachio, Fanwood councilman and Rescue Squad member Tom Kranz, Union County Freeholder Al Mirabella, Walter, Mahr, Fanwood Police Sgt. Frank Marrerro, Fanwood Fire Chief John Piccola, Rescue Squad president Steve Siegal, Rescue Squad vice president Jeff Downing (rear) and Tony Espinosa of the Fanwood Police. The evening was presented by Guinness, which named Fanwood's first responders Irishmen/women of the Year for New Jersey.