

Local

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NEW JERSEY HERALD

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Police chase leaves 1 dead, 2 more injured

KNOWLTON — A vehicle fled from a traffic stop on Interstate 80 early Tuesday morning and eventually crashed, ejecting and killing a 20-year-old passenger, state police said.

State police from the Hope Station said they stopped a blue Nissan for speeding at 1:07 a.m., but the vehicle containing three passengers fled when troopers exited their vehicle.

Troopers pursued the vehicle and noticed its occupants were throwing objects from their vehicle, state police said.

The vehicle left the interstate at exit 4 and crashed into a guardrail on state Route 94, state police said.

The rear passenger was pronounced dead on scene.

A 16-year-old passenger was taken to Morristown Memorial Hospital and the 21-year-old driver was flown to St. Luke's Hospital in Pennsylvania, state police said.

The suspects' names have not been released pending additional investigation.

Charges are pending and their identities likely will be released today, said Capt. Gerald Lewis, a state police spokesman.

State police recovered a loaded 9 mm handgun from the vehicle.

Township promotes 'staycation' events

SPARTA — The Township Recreation Department is promoting "staycation" programs to help families during the recession.

Outdoor sports, picnics, classes and concerts are part of the economical program the department is encouraging for the rest of the summer.

A litany of programs span the next few calendar months. There will be concerts at 7:30 p.m. each Friday at Dykstra Park. Camp Sacajawea programs for children ages 3-13 are ongoing. Basketball games at the lighted Ungermann Field courts are planned for Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Organized walks throughout town are scheduled regularly. There will be fishing expeditions at White Lake every Wednesday. The township even offers picnic packs, which include sets of lawn sport equipment including bocce, badminton, horseshoes and volleyball.

The list of recreation activities is available at www.sparta-nj.org, or by calling (973) 729-2383.

Yard sale will aid neighbors in need

VERNON — A community yard sale in support of the Highland Lakes Goodwill Fund will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at the HL Clubhouse, located at the intersection of Breakneck Road and Lakeside Drive West.

Items of all descriptions will be "priced to sell" in the spirit of community fellowship. A few tables also have been rented to product vendors as well.

Donations for the event will be accepted from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday at the Highland Lakes Clubhouse. All items must be in good condition. Gently used clothing (items with stains or tears will not be accepted) must be brought on hangers.

All proceeds from the event will go to benefit families of Highland Lakes who have experienced significant financial hardship due to a catastrophic event.

Car show, concert event set for Sunday

FRANKLIN — There will be a classic car show and concert fund-raiser Sunday at the Franklin American Legion Outdoor Pavilion with proceeds to benefit the John Wright Memorial Scholarship Foundation.

Country/rock artist Rachel Allyn, one of the first John Wright Memorial Scholarship recipients, will be performing with a full band, playing popular cover songs, as well as original material.

The event is from 2-6 p.m., and tickets are \$10. There will be a cash bar and hamburgers and hot dogs available for purchase. For tickets, call (973) 300-0220 or (973) 222-5265. People are invited to bring lawn chairs and blankets.

Fyffe to head Netcong, Stanhope districts

Will split time with both until next summer

By **BRUCE A. SCRUTON**
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STANHOPE — For now, the agreement between Netcong and Stanhope school districts is to share the same superintendent, who will work half-time in each district.

The two districts hope that by next summer, they will have the same superintendent working for both districts.

While the distinction between the two scenarios is subtle, there was enough of a difference that the districts couldn't come to a shared services agreement this summer and their choice for the job, interim superintendent Art DiBenedetto, had to be let go.

Instead, Dennis Fyffe, who has 40 years of experience in education, has picked up the reins and will lead both districts until next summer, when

the districts will share a superintendent.

The problem is in how such a shared services agreement is put together. While both districts moved forward with the idea, and did it mostly in public meetings, they did not get full public participation according to the steps set down by the state.

Neither side had a full public hearing and community participation in the agreement process.

Stanhope has now put together a committee of community representatives, along with people from the school. Netcong has yet to name a committee.

There also was a timing issue. Under state law, a retired administrator only can serve as an interim for two school years in the same district.

Netcong hired DiBenedetto in the summer of 2007 and his two years with them was up June 30. Stanhope

brought DiBenedetto on board in the summer of 2008.

DiBenedetto had been willing to come out of retirement, foregoing his pension and benefits, so he could take the combined job full-time.

When the problems with no public participation were raised, there was not enough time to go through the process by the end of July, the end of DiBenedetto's grace period with Netcong.

This will be Fyffe's fourth/fifth interim administration post since he formally retired. Last year, he was superintendent of the K-8 district in Clinton Township. Previous to that, he served two years as principal at Westfield High School, and was interim superintendent for a year at Long Beach Island.

Fyffe, 63, said he will not be a candidate to become the superintendent under a shared services agreement between Stanhope and Netcong.

"I can be objective and be helpful,"

he said. "This post is unique, working with two different communities and two different boards."

While there are differences in the districts, he said there appear to be many similarities. "In both schools, there are strong teaching staffs who come to school each day ready to make a difference," he said. "And both boards seem devoted to their districts."

He said Stanhope "appears to have turned the corner under Mr. DiBenedetto." He said that while the district failed an evaluation this past year, that rating is based on a three-year period.

Stanhope also had financial problems, he noted, but they also hired a business administrator who, in the past year, "has started to bring them out of that mess."

"They are in better shape now than last year at this time," he said. "And my major goal is that they will be in even better shape next year."

A little color this summer



ABOVE: Kassie Martinez, 11, left, Carissa Current and Jamie Current work on CD cover designs during the Sussex County Arts & Heritage Council's Summer Arts Camp for Kids Tuesday in Newton.

LEFT: Bethany Rose Vix, 12, of Stillwater, works on a new CD cover for "The Best of World Music."

BELOW: Robert Heimall, of Vernon, who has designed album covers for many famous artists, helps Martinez, of Hamburg, with her CD cover.

Arts & Heritage Council holds camp for children

Herald staff report

NEWTON — An array of art projects were on the palette for local students attending the second annual Sussex County Arts & Heritage Council's Summer Arts Camp for Kids.

"It's vital for children to have art in their lives," said Council spokeswoman Jennifer Waldron. "Especially at such a young age."

Waldron said five students from grades five through eight are participating in the camp this year.

Each day, the students are exposed to a new form of art, Waldron said, from how to create pottery and water colors to drawing with pastels and making wind socks.

"We try to mix it up," she said. "Our goal is to give them an introduction into new (media)."

Instructors for the camp include artist and noted album cover designer Robert Heimall, pastel master Roz Hollander and Arts coordinator Linda Hirsch.

Other activities include nature art, jewelry making, paper collage, sketching and painting. At the end of the camp, the gallery will host an art show of the children's work for the parents.

Waldron said the gallery is a perfect setting for the camp because it allows the students to see future possibilities for the art they create.

"Part of our job is to advocate art. It's what we do," she said. "Why not start at an early age."

Dates for the 2010 camp will be July 5-9 and July 12-16 at the Arts & Heritage Gallery. Cost is \$100 per week or \$175 for both weeks.

For more information, call (973) 383-0027 or visit www.scahc.org.



PHOTOS BY AMY PATERSON
NEW JERSEY HERALD

Police coverage remains concern

Stillwater residents want issue resolved

By **ELISA D. KELLER**
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STILLWATER — While issues involving the part-time Stillwater Township Police Department were absent from the agenda at Tuesday night's Stillwater Township Committee meeting, it was still a hot-button topic during the meeting's open public session.

Concerned about the state's threat to remove New Jersey State Police coverage from the town by Aug. 15, town resident Bob Cassidy requested an update on the town's pending lawsuit against the state, asking if state coverage would be extended beyond the August date.

Township Attorney Lawrence Cohen said the litigation has become temporarily stalled, and he is unsure when the attorney general's office will respond to his letters seeking information on the state's position.

"When the attorney general's office extended the stay (of police coverage), it kind of put the lawsuit in limbo," said Mayor William Morrison. He explained the town's original lawsuit said the state was not providing police coverage, and now since that coverage is being provided, the suit temporarily is without merit.

Since the township's police department became a part-time one last August, it has patrolled the community from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and the state police from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

If the coverage date is not extended past Aug. 15, the mayor said the township will file the same paperwork with the state to seek another extension until the lawsuit, or coverage issue, is resolved.

In response to a story in Tuesday's edition of the New Jersey Herald, which quoted former area police officers questioning the town's dedication to its small police force, resident Anita Straway encouraged the committee to be conservative with any upcoming contract negotiations they may have with members of the Stillwater Police Department.

"For all the people like me who have supported the police, this is a slap in the face," Straway said. "It's not that the township residents don't want the police, it's that the police don't want us."

Resident Ed Szabo also asked for an update on the police study being conducted by Blue Shield Consulting. Morrison said they are in the early stages of the process, with the firm now gathering facts on the current department's set-up and the town's police requirements. The study is expected to take around three months to complete.

Other items discussed at the meeting included proposed alterations to the town's Council on Affordable Housing plan, and an amendment to the town's recreation and open space inventory for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Green Acres Program, including 20 lots on the west side of Crandon Lake in order to secure some grant money through the program.