

NAACP, black police leaders back 'permanent' promotion in Orange

By KEVIN DILWORTH

The heads of three black police organizations in Essex County and the president of the NAACP of the Oranges and Maplewood last night said they all support efforts to make permanent the promotion of Charles Whittle to the rank of sergeant in the Orange Police Department.

During a news conference at the NAACP's headquarters in East Orange, they also said they want the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate possible racism in the hiring and promotion policies in the Orange Police Department.

They said Whittle, a black 23-year-veteran of the police force, is a perfect example of how unfair blacks are treated in the Orange Police Department. Whittle has been at the center of controversy since Orange Mayor Paul Monacelli, the city's police director, appointed him to sergeant status on the same day a Civil Service promotion list expired.

Last spring, the state Department of Personnel in Newark invalidated Monacelli's Dec. 29, 1986 promotion of Whittle because it said the appointment was made late.

"We feel the City of Orange's promotional policy should be investigated," said Irving A. Childress, president of the 101-member East Orange Kinsmen.

"We also would like to see Civil Service issue written rules regarding the expiration and closing dates of promotional lists and whether one's appointment date or swearing-in date is to be considered the date someone officially is promoted," Childress added.

"There are 32 superior officers in the Orange Police Department. Two are black and the balance are white," said James Cosby, the NAACP chapter president. "The ratio of minority officers does not accurately reflect the racial composition of the community."

That is one main reason why "we call upon Morris J. Farinella, regional administrator of the Civil Service, to take this into consideration and act on it accordingly," Cosby said.

Additionally, the NAACP leader noted, "there appears to be institutionalized and departmentalized racism in the

Orange Police Department."

Orange already has appealed Farinella's decision with the state Department of Personnel's Merit System Board in Trenton. An answer is expected later this month.

Orange Police Lt. Charles Cobbett, president of the 16-member Orange Kinsmen, the city's black police officers group, said the controversy surrounding Whittle's appointment could have been avoided by Monacelli.

Nine months before the list expired, Cobbett maintained, he and members of the Kinsmen requested the mayor consider promoting Whittle. And he said they also asked Monacelli to think about hiring more minorities on the city's 93-member police force.

"But he (Monacelli) refused. He flat-out refused," Cobbett charged, referring to the mayor waiting until the last minute to promote Whittle. "I believe it was a cooked up plan" to wait until the last minute and make the appointment. "And I believe the Policemen's Benevolent Association had something to do with it."

The bottom line, Cobbett continued, is that Whittle's provisional rather than permanent appointment as a sergeant is "pure prejudice. Anybody can see it."

Just two blacks were hired to fill 14 police officer openings in the past year, Cobbett added.

He explained there were 30 blacks in a pool of 75 applicants from which the mayor could have chosen police officer candidates.

Ronald L. Arbuckle, president of the 50-member Federation of Afro-American Police Officers in Newark, said, "Our concern is that Officer Whittle was qualified and ready for the position of sergeant."

"But the city of Orange, through its negligence or whatever, did an injustice to him by waiting until the last minute to appoint him to the post," Arbuckle said. "We will use whatever means necessary to ensure this injustice is corrected."

Whittle himself said he feels betrayed by the mayor. He said Monacelli has told him, "just trust me." But, Whittle added, "How can I trust him?"

Warren Farmers' Fair gets cookin' with ox roast, antique car show

By ART CHARLTON

The farm animals were in their pens, the vegetables were arranged for judging and the ox was roasting over hickory coals as Warren County opened the 50th edition of the county Farmers' Fair yesterday.

Opening ceremonies and introduction of the candidates for queen of the fair were scheduled for last night at the fairgrounds in Harmony Township, after the \$5-a-plate ox roast dinner and antique car show.

Fair organizers expect turnout to top the 50,000 to 60,000 who usually attend, since the event has been expanded from four days to five in honor of the golden anniversary.

The fair, which runs through Saturday night, also features carnival rides, entertainment, crafts and contests, but organizers say the main emphasis continues to be on agriculture, one of the county's largest industries.

Fred Lorenzo, a member of the Warren County Fair Association board of directors, recalled that the first fair, held in Hackettstown in 1937, was much smaller than the event of today. "The only thing that we had was dairy exhibits," said Lorenzo, a long-time county agriculture agent who retired after 44 years with the county.

Warren County remains the top county in the state in terms of dairy production, Lorenzo said, but the fair has expanded from its small beginnings.

"We have everything now," Lorenzo said, with 20 classes for cows alone, plus judging for blue ribbons in hundreds of categories for livestock, produce, crafts and pets.

Admission to the fair is \$3 plus \$1 for parking, and children under 12 are admitted free. "All of the money gets returned back into the fair," said Oscar Unangst, another member of the board of directors of the nonprofit fair association.

In addition to funding the fair's expenses, such as liability insurance which costs about \$16,000 to \$18,000, Lorenzo noted the money pays for improvements to the fairgrounds. New additions this year include an arena for horse shows, a 50-by-100-foot building for dances and entertainment events, a refurbished building holding exhibits by the freeholders and other departments in county government, and paving of the roads throughout the fairgrounds, a tract of about 45 acres the fair association purchased in 1952.

Prior to that time, Lorenzo said



Marion Henkel of Blairstown pins the Best of Show ribbon on a needlepoint entry by Sherry Hoff of Belvedere at the Warren County Fair in Harmony

the fair was held at various locations in the county and even just over the county line in Hunterdon.

"We try to keep it as much agriculture as possible," said Garnett Rohrbach of Blairstown, a fair worker. "It's easy to get away and have more carnival," added Lorenzo, but he noted fair directors try to maintain the spirit of a country farmers' fair.

Other county fairs, remarked county Economic Developer and Tourism Director Anthony DePrima, "have lost the agricultural flavor to them."

While pressure always exists to expand the fair, "we don't like to go too fast," Lorenzo noted.

Despite the desire to keep the fair as agriculturally oriented as possible, some events have been added as crowd pleasers. Last year, the demolition derby made its debut and will be repeated Saturday at 8 p.m. due to its success in attracting people, while professional wrestling featuring Sgt.

Slaughter will occur at 8 tonight.

Fireworks are also being held for the first time, at 10 p.m. Friday, while a high school and grammar school wrestling tournament begins at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

One event making a reappearance after an absence of many years is a horse pulling contest at 1 p.m. Friday. "There's very few horses that are actually doing farm work today," Lorenzo said, but with the popularity of the tractor pulling contests, the horse event was added as a nod to a prior way of farming.

Other fair highlights include "Youth Day" today, with judging in the baking contest at 7 p.m. and swingtime band dance at 8 p.m.; "Farmer's Day" tomorrow with pig races in the main arena at 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. and music from the '50s and '60s at 9 p.m.; "Fair Queen Day" on Friday with the crowning of the new queen at 7 p.m.; and "Horse Show Day" on Saturday.

Somerset 4-H fair will create buzz with air show, agriculture exhibits

By JOE TYRRELL

The annual Somerset County 4-H Fair opens this morning in Bridgewater without the foreign themes of years past—when exhibits focused on France or China—but retaining its fundamental Americana.

Jessie Havens, communications director for the county 4-H office, said the lack of a cultural subject is a matter of happenstance, as association members "never got around to naming one."

Then again, the free three-day event has its own traditional flavor, supplied by the scores of youthful 4-H members who will endeavor to entertain and inform an expected 60,000 visitors.

This marks the 39th installment of the event, which again is being held at the fairgrounds in the county's North Branch Park on Milltown Road.

There also will be activity above the fairgrounds, thanks to groups like the Broken Props radio-controlled model airplane club, which will continue a 15-year tradition by putting on flight displays twice a day, from 1 to 3 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m.

The club's 15 members each have spent from about \$200 to "pushing \$2,000, that's me," on their model planes and equipment, said Craig Hampson of Bridgewater.

With that investment, they have built planes able to fly as fast as 90 miles per hour and soar "as high as you want to go until its out of sight," said Erik Zimmitti, another member from Bridgewater.

Radio-controlled planes represent the "luxury" class of model planes, which also include wire-guided planes and "free flight" ones that are essentially uncontrolled except for pattern maneuvers programmed into their engines, Hampson said.

Many group members started with model rockets, said James Hann of Bridgewater, before moving onto the



Brett Snyder of Westfield washes his horse Bandit at the Somerset County 4-H Fair in Bridgewater

more elaborate aeronautical maneuvers allowed by model planes.

Like other 4-H clubs devoted to more typically rural activities, such as animal husbandry, the model airplane club has its serious side, according to the members.

"You learn building skills, mechanics, how an airplane works," explained Hampson.

A newer feature at the fair will be freestyle bike riders, who also plan to

be airborne, at least temporarily, as they blast off ramps and flip their bicycles through stunts during performances each day.

Today's schedule also includes official opening ceremonies at 7 p.m., and the usual opportunities for cats, dogs, goats, horses and other critters to strut their collective stuff throughout the day and evening until the 10 p.m. closing time.

Elizabeth acts to limit vendors on Broad St.

By LISA PETERSON

An ordinance aimed at curbing the large number of peddlers in Elizabeth's main shopping area by establishing a moratorium on vendor licensing for 60 days, was defeated 6-0 last night because it was "too general," according to the city clerk.

But a more specific version of the ordinance was adopted by the same vote on first reading.

City Clerk John Dwyer said the "main thrust" of the original ordinance was to prohibit the issuance of licenses to all vendors and peddlers for the two-month period instead of just for merchants along a small stretch of downtown's Broad Street.

Sixth Ward Councilman Angelo Paternoster had pushed

for an ordinance to stop the "large number" of peddlers obstructing motorists and pedestrian traffic along Broad Street, but he last night encouraged the council to vote the law down as prepared since it would also affect non-targeted vendors.

He said those vendors would include peddlers who participate in Elizabeth's "mini-World's Fair" called "Septemberfest" and the regular lunchwagon vendors in other areas of the city.

Paternoster said he felt a licensing moratorium would give city officials time to determine what to do about the street vendor situation and study how other Union County municipalities with downtown shopping districts handle vendor operations.

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