

The Nutley Sun

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Thursday, January 30, 2003

'First class town' celebrates its centennial



Staff photos by Monica Maske-Fisher

(Above) The newly renovated Nanina's-in-the-Park in Belleville was the scene of Nutley's centennial gala, which drew some 420 guests.



100th anniversary gala caps a year of celebrations of Nutley townfolk

By Monica Maske-Fisher

Nutley celebrated its centennial — and itself — at a dazzling party where some 420 black-tied and gowned townfolk dined and danced under glittering chandeliers at Nanina's-in-the-Park on Jan. 25.

The soiree, planned by a vast committee headed by Commissioner Joanne Cocchiola, was short on speeches and long on terrific dance music, delicious hors d'oeuvres and dinner, plentiful liquid refreshment, and some outstanding souvenirs.

Each couple at the \$125 a person event received a hard-cover book of photos, facts and history of Nutley from 1902 to 2002. Produced by a centennial book committee headed by Vincent Lo Curcio III, the 128-page tome covers the whole history of the town in an easy-to-read format. The book is replete with pictures of the people, places and events of the past 100 years, a number of "fun facts" and a

White Castle proposal sizzles on security issues

By Keith McManus
The White Castle saga continued at Tuesday night's Zoning Board meeting, when, after approving two other applications, the board heard testimony from a variety of witnesses.

The applicant is attempting to build a White Castle fast food restaurant at the corner of Washington and Hancox avenues. The application has met with opposition from neighbors, however, who are concerned about the traffic, noise and other disturbances that the establishment may generate.

The evening's first testimony came from Police Chief Robert DeLitta, posed White Castle local security issues. DeLitta expressed concern about the strain that calls from the White Castle could place on the Nutley Police. "It (Washington Avenue) has a transient clientele and that adds to the increased workload of the zone," said DeLitta. "Whenever there is a workload impact, there is a demand for more officers." In addition, DeLitta is concerned that the pro-Castle local security issues.

Heights police responded to approximately 400 calls per year at the restaurant, but that number has been reduced by 70 percent since the hours were cut back from 24.

DeLitta expressed concern about the strain that calls from the White Castle could place on the Nutley Police.

"Our ultimate goal is for the police to not have to visit this site," said the security firm representative. "What White Castle is doing is almost an overkill as far as security goes."

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(Above) Against the backdrop of a screen on which videos of olden days in Nutley were shown, Dan and Maria Geltrude, left, and Debbie Banks, enjoyed the evening.



(Left) Skip and Marianne Gould were among the hundreds of couples at the celebration. Mayor Peter Scarpelli called the gala-goers the "best-looking women on earth" accompanied by men dressed "sharp as tacks."

headed by Vincent DeLitta III, the 128-page tome covers the whole history of the town in an easy-to-read format. The book is replete with pictures of the people, places and events of the past 100 years, a number of "fun facts" and a series of pages devoted to a hitherto unheralded feature of the town, the doors of Nutley.

The glossy covered book, destined to become Nutley's own coffee table status symbol — and justifiably so — is available for purchase at \$30 a copy at the Department of Public Affairs and the Park ShopRite.

A special limited-edition souvenir, provided exclusively to gala-goers by Mayor Peter Scarpelli and the board of commissioners, was a silver mint coin engraved on one side with the town clock and on the other, a centennial logo.

The entertainment at the 6:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. centennial party began and ended with the music of the 18-piece Somers Dream Orchestra.

During dinner — which featured chateaubriand and stuffed shrimp — there were

(See Gala on Page 10)

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Chief Robert DeLitta, who had sent a letter to Zoning Chairman James Blanda on Oct. 23, detailing his concerns about the application.

"We have commercial use and multiple dwellings in the area," said DeLitta. "I believe residents in the area will be concerned with some of the annoyances."

Among those annoyances, DeLitta cited "lighting, loud noise, disturbances, assaults and unruly groups of individuals."

In researching the application, DeLitta contacted the police departments of other municipalities in New Jersey that have a White Castle restaurant, including Hasbrouck Heights, Greenbrook and Woodbridge. According to DeLitta, Hasbrouck

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tion, DeLitta is concerned that the proposed White Castle location, which is across from the bus station, will encourage loitering.

"I believe this location of a restaurant would turn into a hangout of sorts," said DeLitta.

Testimony on security issues was also presented by Pat Driver, a representative of West-Tech Security, the firm that would install and monitor the security system at the proposed White Castle.

According to Driver, White Castle intends to use a "voice-down" system at the restaurant, which utilizes cameras and microphones to monitor customer activity at the establishment. If incidents occur, West-Tech's regional command center in California would confront the offenders via the audio/video connection and alert police

(See Castle on Page 2)

Policy in works for vacation days

By Richard Dickon
The township commissioners are looking into making a uniform policy for

all town employees regarding the use of holdover vacation days.

At the Jan. 21 commission

meeting, Commissioner Garry Furnari brought up the topic of unused vacation days, and how long a time period an employee should be given to use them once the calendar year ends.

Township Attorney Kevin Harkins said that he had put together a temporary ordinance that would expire on June 30. He said the current rules allow employees to accumulate vacation days and hold them over for one year.

Spelling bee champion



New Chamber of Commerce president



Township of Nutley Centennial Gala



(Right) Joanne Cocchiola, who headed the committee that planned the centennial gala, proudly took to the microphone to welcome the more than 400 guests at the sold-out event at Nanina's-in-the-Park.



(Left) The brass section of Somers Dream Orchestra gave it their all in providing dancing music.



(Left) Martha Stewart's sister and mother, Kathy Evans, left, and Martha Kostyra, were among the guests at the event. Stewart sent her regrets.



(Right) The Rev. Pam