

Scarpone, Wells to be inducted into hall of fame

The Point Pleasant Foundation for Excellence in Education will induct five new members into the Point Pleasant High School Hall of Fame at the ninth annual hall of fame dinner, scheduled for Friday, March 10 at the Crystal Point Yacht Club.

Alumni of Point Pleasant Borough School being honored as a result of their extraordinary achievements include Robert Wells, class of 1971 and Frank Scarpone, class of 1972. This year's list of honorees also includes Jim Hibbs, class of 1966 and Robert Henkel, class 1991. This year's Community Service Award Winners are John "Jack" Watson and the late Loren MacIver. Both Mr. Watson and Mr. MacIver were nominated for their leadership and lifetime commitment to education, children and volunteer services. This week the foundation is

highlighting the accomplishments of Robert Wells and Frank Scarpone, two men whose decisions to remain part of the community throughout their lives has consistently contributed to the quality and caliber of life in the Point Pleasant area for over 30 years.

Mr. Scarpone attended Point Pleasant Borough schools from kindergarten through high school graduation in 1972. He was involved in JV soccer and played trumpet in the pep, stage, marching, and concert bands.

Beginning in 1972, from Arnold Avenue to Bridge Avenue, Mr. Scarpone's commitment to excellence, his ability to think globally while operating locally, his sense of community and his respect for others has given Point Pleasant a respected professional talent who connected the giant dreams of local families with their hometown bank for over three decades. He began his career with OceanFirst Bank as a teller at the Point Pleasant Beach office. Over the next 34 years, he developed an extensive career with OceanFirst as the bank grew from a hometown mutual savings and loan into the full-service, publicly owned commercial bank that it is today.

Mr. Scarpone is a graduate of the American Institute of Banking and the Institute of Financial Education, where he also served as an instructor. He completed training at the Leadership Development Institute in New Hampshire and has received licensures from the New Jersey Department of

Banking and Insurance and from the New Jersey Real Estate Commission. Throughout his career, he has served in many capacities in the retail lending areas, but has remained, by choice, in the position of management and business development serving the community at large. Today, Mr. Scarpone is an assistant vice president and business development officer in the Point Pleasant and northern Brick areas with the OceanFirst Bank. He currently manages two Point Pleasant offices on Bridge Avenue and Route 88, and supervises a staff of 27. He has been named branch manager of the year four times and top salesperson of the year three times, since this program was initiated in 1999. He particularly enjoys the customer interaction that the job requires and is actively involved with the community. His efforts on behalf of the residents of Point Pleasant have resulted in positive and timeless contributions that have always made a difference. At present, Mr. Scarpone is serving as President of the Point Pleasant Borough Rotary and president of the chamber of commerce.

In 2000, Mr. Scarpone was named rotarian of the year. He received the Presidential Citation from Rotary District 7500 in 2002, and was named a Paul Harris Fellow in 2003. He is also President of the endowment and emergency fund of the Point Pleasant Presbyterian Church. He has served as both a deacon and an elder of the congregation, and has been

involved with the religious life of the church since childhood.

Mr. Scarpone continues to live in Point Pleasant, where he and his wife Celishia, raised their two children. Their son, David, is a second-grade teacher at the Nellie Bennett School in Point Pleasant and lives in Brick with his wife Angela. Their daughter, Amanda, is an account executive with Rowland Communications in Manhattan and reviews off-Broadway plays for BroadwayWorld.com.

Honoree Robert Wells, class of 1971, arrived in Point Pleasant in the sixth grade. In high school, he was on the football team for three years and a member of the wrestling program. His commitment to volunteer service, which stayed with him throughout his adult life, earned him the honor as senior of the year for the Key Club.

After graduation in 1971, he started to work full time as an automobile mechanic, however, his lifelong dream was to become a police officer in Point Pleasant. During the time he was working as a mechanic, he continued to follow his aspirations by taking every police test that came along. In 1977, he got his first taste of police work when he was hired as a special officer in Point Pleasant Beach. He worked a 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. shift five days a week during the summer months, while concurrently working fulltime position a mechanic.

In 1979, he sold his automotive business and took a full-time job with the Point Pleasant Borough Police Department.

Mr. Wells graduated from the New Jersey State Police

Academy, municipal class. In 1982, he was assigned to the detective bureau, and in the years to follow he attended numerous training courses including criminal investigation, interview and interrogation techniques, basic narcotics investigation, interview and interrogation techniques, crime scene investigation, photography, latent fingerprint investigation, arson investigation and more.

One of his most personally rewarding schools to attend was DARE Officer Training. In the mid-'90s, while still assigned to the detective bureau, Mr. Wells took over the Point Pleasant Police DARE Program. For five years, he taught the DARE Program in Ocean Road and Nellie Bennett schools and then on to Memorial Middle School for three more years. He served as the Police Department Juvenile Officer from 1994 until 2004, and was promoted to sergeant in 2000. In 2004, he was named detective bureau commander where he works presently. In July 2004, he coordinated the police department's new summer youth camp for 11- and 12-year-olds and he also reactivated the Police Explorer Program for high school students.

During his time as a police officer, he earned many awards. To name a few, Mr. Wells is the proud recipient of the Paul Harris Award from the Point Pleasant Rotary for his work with the youth in our community; Police Officer of the Year Award presented by the Point Pleasant VFW; and the 2005 First Responder of the Year Award for

the rescue of a man in the Point Pleasant Canal in December, 2004. Mr. Wells married Linda Garey in 1972. In 1976, the couple's first son, Robert, was born and in 1978, their second son, Richard, was born. Both sons are graduates of Point Pleasant Borough High School and have pursued careers in law enforcement. Richard blessed the family with three grandchildren: Christopher, born December 28, 1999, who tragically died at 4 months old of SIDS creating the lowest, saddest and most devastating time for Mr. Wells and his family. Two years later, Matthew was born, followed by Jenna. Although never to take the place of Christopher, Mr. Wells enjoys his grandchildren for all the joy and blessings they bring. "The Borough of Point Pleasant has been my home, and the police department my job for most of my adult life," Mr. Wells wrote in a note to the foundation committee. "They have given me so much, and I can only hope I have met their expectations of me."

The community is invited to join the foundation to honor and thank Mr. Wells and Mr. Scarpone for exceeding the expectations of an entire community throughout their lives. Cocktails and hor d'oeuvres will begin at 6:30 p.m. Dinner and the evening's hall of fame program will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$45 per person. For Ticket information, call Pat Daw at 732-899-5938.