



Horace R. Corbin for The Westfield Leader

**BATTER UP...**Last Saturday morning, under blue skies and perfect temperatures, the Westfield Baseball League (WBL) ushered in Opening Day with a parade from Mindowaskin Park to Gumbert Field. Participants were treated to pins, posters and a carnival at Gumbert prior to the start of the new season. Pictured, back seat, left to right, are: WBL Vice President Gary Fox, Elizabeth Fox, Max Fusaro and WBL President Frank Fusaro. Ray D'Amato was the driver of the car and Jake Fox is the front seat passenger.

## Mountainside Voters OK \$13 Mil. BOE Budget; Perrin and Worswick Win Seats

By BETSEY BURGDORF  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**MOUNTAINSIDE** — In what proved to be very low turnout at the polls, the \$13 million operating budget was adopted by a 63 percent margin with 426 residents voting in favor and 249 voting against.

Better late than never proved to be the winning ticket for Mountainside Board of Education write-in candidate Sergeant Scot Worswick, who walked away Tuesday night claiming one of the two open seats on the board. Incumbent John Perrin walked

away with the other victory.

Board member MaryBeth Schaumburg stated, "Voter turnout was pathetic." Referring to the fact that the school board race was far from a competition, Mrs. Schaumburg continued saying, "The more contested, the higher the turnout."

A write-in candidate is required by law to obtain 10 votes at the polls on Election Day in order to be elected. Sgt. Worswick, a 22-year veteran on the Mountainside Police Department, claimed 318 votes.

Mr. Perrin, who was seeking re-

election for a third term, received 435, while past board member Linda Esemplare, who tried for a nod at reelection as a write-in candidate took 119 votes.

According to School Board Business Administrator Paul Vizzuso, Tuesday night's numbers are unofficial.

The winning candidates will be officially sworn in at the next regularly scheduled school board meeting on Tuesday, April 26, at 8 p.m. in the Media Center at Beechwood School.

At this time, officers for the new term will be elected.

## Sidewalk Replacement Program, Capital Improvements Approved by Council

By DAVID DANESE  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**WESTFIELD** — As part of its ongoing effort to, in the words of First Ward Councilman Peter Echausse, "be very aggressive on [the improvement of] roads," Town Council Tuesday night unanimously approved all three capital ordinances introduced at its March 29 meeting.

The largest of the three special ordinances appropriates \$3,043,000 for a variety of capital projects, including road improvements to Highland

Avenue and the installation of new sidewalks on Scotch Plains Avenue between South Avenue and Broad Street.

In addition to those road projects, the ordinance also calls for improvements to various public buildings, such as the municipal building, the town library, and the town's two firehouses, and for new communications and signal systems equipment for the police department.

Of the remaining two special ordinances passed at Tuesday night's

meeting, one earmarks \$261,000 for the replacement of existing curbing and construction of new curbing on Tuttle Parkway, Terrace Place, Forest Avenue, and North Euclid Avenue, in addition to various road reconstruction and storm drain installation projects.

The other calls for \$100,000 for the town's sidewalk improvement program, with half of the required money to be provided by participating property owners.

Aside from approving these capital ordinances, the council also heard pleas from a number of Northside residents for the immediate placement of crossing guards or police officers at the intersection of Prospect and Dudley Avenues and also at the intersection of Lawrence and Dudley Avenues in an effort to protect children walking to and from school.

Those pleas were spurred by last Friday's three-car accident at the intersection of Lawrence and Dudley, which occurred shortly after the end of the school day for students at the nearby Roosevelt Intermediate School.

Resident Jackie Cash's sentiment that "we were lucky this time" was

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## Ward Age-Restricted Project Hearing Tabled

By KIMBERLY BROADWELL  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**WESTFIELD** — Because of the late hour during a special meeting held on April 14, the decision from the Westfield Planning Board on an appeal from In-Town Condominium Construction Company, LLC, to construct a 35-unit age restricted building was postponed to a May 19 meeting.

The applicants, development company Ward & O'Donnell, are proposing to build a four-story building, including a parking garage, for people who are over the age of 55.

The project is set for Prospect Street, at the location where Statistical Research was housed for many years.

Testimony was heard from Domingo Diaz, architect for the project, who stated that there were some changes to the plan because of recommendations made by Blais Brancheau, Planner for the Town of Westfield.

Mr. Domingo stated that the design of the roof was modified, as well as the location of the handicapped parking space.

Traffic Engineer Elizabeth Dolen also testified on behalf of the development company stating that the width of the parking spaces for the 35 units were proposed at 8.5 feet per space and that she felt this was an adequate measurement for the site.

She noted that this measurement was in line with the standards set forth by the Institute for Traffic Engineers and that other lots in Westfield including the municipal lot across the street from the proposed site had the same width measurement.

She added that, according to her research, the age-restricted building would generate approximately 10-15 car trips per hour to the parking garage located on the lower level of the project. She stated that as much as 20 trips per hour could also be met depending on if the residents were retired or not.

Civil Engineer Michael Disko also testified on behalf of the applicants. He stated that according to plans, a 16-inch sewer line ran along the site where the parking garage is proposed.

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## HUNNICUTT, ORMSBY CARY, McCREADY WIN BOE SEATS

# Voters Defeat BOE Budget By Margin of 1,528 to 1,463

By ED COONEY  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**WESTFIELD** — For the first time in a decade, Westfield voters defeated the budget proposed by the town's board of education (BOE). The vote, which was held Tuesday, concluded with 1,528 Westfield voters against the budget and 1,463 voting in favor of it.

Incumbent Alice Hunnicutt and

newcomers Ann Ormsby Cary and Gary McCready won the three seats up for grabs on the board. Ms. Hunnicutt received 1,435 tallies, and Mr. McCready received 1,375 votes, narrowly defeating incumbent William Ziff for the third seat on the board.

Mr. Ziff received 1,368 votes. Candidate Steven Dorry received 1,039

tallies. The three winners will take their seats on the board on Tuesday, April 26, at the board's annual re-organizational meeting.

The budget defeat came as a surprise to many board members, who gathered at board member Richard Solomon's house to await the results. "I think we worked very hard to try and meet the needs of our schools," said Board President Anne Riegel. "I'm disappointed more parents didn't vote."

According to the school district's office of community relations, voter turnout rose 31 percent this year over last year.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. William Foley said he felt the failure of the budget to pass represents "a tipping point in regards to property taxes."

He added, "Given pressure on the board, the town council, and the county, people are having a problem."

At this point in the budgetary process, the 2005-2006 school budget lays in the hands of the Town Council. The board must submit the full budget to the council by today, April 21, at which point the council will look over the budget and make discretionary cuts.

The Town Council must make its recommendation by Thursday, May 19, at which point the board has 15 days to appeal any cuts to the State Board of Education.

The last time the school budget was defeated in a public election was in May of 1994. The Town Council proceeded to cut \$765,900 out of the tax levy of \$41,306,636.

The board did not appeal the council's decision.

## McDermott Resigning, Moving Out of Town

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**WESTFIELD** — Mayor Greg McDermott has officially purchased a home in Bernardsville and is expected to resign as mayor by the end of the school year. The Westfield Leader had previously reported that Mr. McDermott's Lawrence Avenue home was for sale.

Third Ward Councilman Andy Skibitsky is expected to be named by the Westfield Republican Committee to carry out the remainder of Mr. McDermott's term, which expires on December 31. The councilman was previously selected by the committee as the GOP's mayoral candidate this year.

"We are prepared to call a meeting if he (Mayor McDermott) advises us (on an official date of resignation)," said Assemblyman Jon Bramnick (R-21), the Chairman of the Westfield Republican Committee.

Assemblyman Bramnick said he expects the committee will meet, as they did in February, to appoint Councilman Skibitsky as mayor and Darielle Walsh to fill Mr. Skibitsky's Third Ward council seat. Mrs. Walsh, a former Westfield Board of Education President, is the committee's nominee for the Third Ward council seat.

"He (Mayor McDermott) indicated he had purchased a house in another community and he did not intend to finish his term," Assemblyman Bramnick said.

He said Mayor McDermott did not indicate an exact date for his departure but that the Republican Committee would meet as soon as the mayor provides an official resignation date.

Mayor McDermott has indicated he would not move until his daughter, Maggie, a senior at Westfield High School (WHS), graduates in June.

Mayor McDermott and his wife, Andrea, also have a son, Bryan, a sophomore at William & Mary College in Williamsburg, Va., and two younger daughters, Melissa, a sophomore at WHS, and Patricia, a sixth grader at Roosevelt Intermediate School.

According to the Westfield Town Code, the GOP Committee would have 15 days upon the date of Mr. McDermott's resignation to provide the full Town Council with three names to fill the mayoral vacancy. The council would have 35 days to make the appointment.

Mayor McDermott was first elected mayor in 2000 and was reelected in 2002.

Councilman Skibitsky will face former mayor Tom Jardim in the November mayoral race. Mrs. Walsh will be challenged by former councilman David Haas.



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**KEEPING THE PEACE...**Westfield Police Detective Jim McCullough keeps the streets orderly during the annual Spring Fling last Sunday in downtown Westfield.

## Resident Sentenced to Five Years For Trying to Obtain Kids for Sex

**MIAMI, Fla.** — George Clarke, 43, a former middle school math and science teacher from Westfield, was sentenced last week to five years in prison by United States District Court Judge Cecilia Altonaga, in Miami, Fla., following his conviction by a federal jury in Miami of attempting to engage in sexual relations with minors in Costa Rica, according to United States Attorney for the South-

ern District of Florida, Marcos Daniel Jimenez.

Clarke was arrested at Miami International Airport in August of 2004, when he attempted to board a plane bound for Costa Rica, authorities said.

The prosecution of Clarke stemmed from Operation Turn Around, an undercover operation led by the FBI, with the assistance of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department and coop-

eration of the United States Embassy in Costa Rica and Costa Rican law enforcement authorities.

Clarke's arrest was the result of his ongoing conversations with the undercover travel agency that was set up by the FBI, which culminated in his payment of \$1,610 for a trip to Costa Rica that would include the sexual services of two 12-year old girls, au-

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## Hike in Mountainside Municipal Budget; Tax Bill Increases Discussed by Mayor Vigilanti

By KIMBERLY BROADWELL  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**MOUNTAINSIDE** — During the Mountainside council meeting held on Tuesday evening, Mayor Robert Vigilanti introduced the borough's 2005 municipal budget. He announced that the total budget for 2005

was \$9,380,799.67, which is an increase of \$317,463 from last year.

Mayor Vigilanti noted that there were three big increases for the budget which included insurance premiums, worker's compensation insurance and fees for the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority.

He stated that other increases came from police salary and wages, police and fire retirement funds and public employee retirement.

The mayor also stated that because of mandated increases from the state and from rising insurance costs, the average Mountainside household would see a municipal increase of \$88 in their tax bill. He stated that he could not say definitively what the school board, or county portion of the tax bill would bring, but did make an estimate.

He said that based on what he could access; he thought the school board

portion would increase by \$169 per household and that the county would increase by \$206. This, the mayor noted, was an estimated increase of \$463 per household based on an average accessed home of \$160,000.

Mayor Vigilanti stated at last week's meeting that in the budget for 2004 there was \$1.8 million allotted for surplus and that only \$1.445 was replenished.

At that time, he stated, "We cannot keep taking from our surplus."

He noted, however, that a payment of \$175,000 from the school board's

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Unofficial Area School Voting Results - April 19, 2005											
Westfield	WF	Scotch Plains-Fanwood	FW	SP	SP-F	Mountainside	MS	Garwood	GW		
Alice Hunnicutt * (3yr)	1,605	Sasha Slocum (FW) * (3yr)	676			John Perrin * (3yr)	435	Gary Maher * (3yr)	246		
Ann Ormsby Cary * (3yr)	1,435	Don Parisi (SP) * (3yr)		1,575		Scot Worswick (WI) * (3yr)	318	Debbie Courtney * (2yr)	241		
Gary McCready * (3yr)	1,375	Warren McFall (SP) * (3yr)		1,124		Linda Esemplare (WI)	119	Monty Brown * (3yr)	241		
William Ziff	1,368	Trip Whitehouse (SP)		1,104				Tracey Schadewald * (2yr)	235		
Steven Dorry	1,039							Christine Guerriero (WI) * (3yr)	140		
Budget-Yes	1,463	Budget-Yes *	484	1,309	1,793	Budget-Yes *	426	Budget-Yes *	230		
Budget-No *	1,528	Budget-No	480	1,181	1,661	Budget-No	249	Budget-No	123		
Voters	2,991	Voters	964	2,490	3,454	Voters	675	Voters	353		
Registered Voters	20,441	Registered Voters	5,013	15,361	20,374	Registered Voters	4,808	Registered Voters	2,440		
Turnout	14.6%	Turnout	19.2%	16.2%	17.0%	Turnout	14.0%	Turnout	14.5%		

BOE Notes: WF elected 3 members; FW elected 1 member; SP elected 2 members; MS elected 2 members; GW elected 5 members; (WI) = write-in

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