

## Friends of Lenape Park Plan To Host 'Bluebird Trail Day'

CRANFORD — The Friends of Lenape Park will host a "Bluebird Trail Day" on Saturday, March 18, beginning at 7 a.m.

"Bluebird Trail Day" will start with a winter bird walk, beginning at the Lenape Park parking lot located off Kenilworth Boulevard in Cranford. Following this will be a brief introduction of the Nestbox Project and future plans for the surrounding area. Volunteers are encouraged to participate in the Nestbox Project, which will start at 10 a.m.

Participants will be asked to prepare and clean the Bluebird Nestboxes for the arrival of these birds. General maintenance and the removal of debris in the area will keep the birds coming back year after year. Bluebirds are expected to arrive in mid-March. Participants are urged to wear sturdy work boots and gloves and are invited to bring small brushes, pliers, screwdrivers, hammers and trash bags. Applications will be available for

anyone interested in becoming a Nestbox Monitor. As a Nestbox Monitor, members will check the nestboxes periodically from Saturday, April 1, through Saturday, July 1.

Friends of Lenape Park is an organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing the native biodiversity at Lenape Park, a wetland and oasis for wildlife in Union County. With the assistance of the Union County Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities, the Friends have established a bird inventory for Lenape Park. Since 2000, a total of 144 birds have fledged on the trail, including 128 Tree Swallows and 16 Bluebirds.

In case of rain, the event will be held on Sunday, March 19. For more details, please contact Friends of Lenape Park at lenapepark@aol.com, 16 South Avenue, West, Cranford 07016 or call Frank Budney at (908) 687-2169. Individuals also may visit <http://hometown.aol.com/lenapepark1/main.html>.

## Mental Illness and Jail Subject of Pilot Program

ELIZABETH — A partnership between Trinitas Hospital, the Union County Prosecutor's Office and a follow-up treatment program known as Bridgeway, Inc. aims to break the cycle of arrests and incarceration of individuals with mental illness who commit non-violent offenses.

"Too many people with mental illness who commit non-violent offenses end up in jail when what they really need is treatment," said Human Services Commissioner Kevin Ryan.

Trinitas Hospital's Behavioral Health and Psychiatry will partner with New Jersey Human Services, Division of Mental Health in a pilot program involving the Prosecutor's Office Special Offenders Unit to divert non-violent mentally ill offenders in the county from the criminal justice system under the new Jail Diversion Pilot Project (JDPP). Officials are combining clinical evaluations and case management services with training sessions for local police and municipal prosecutors.

"Non-violent, mentally ill offenders comprise up to 20 percent of the jail population in New Jersey. It is much more appropriate, in most instances, to divert these individuals into treatment where the cycle of arrest can be broken and they can get the treatment they need in order to return to society," explained James Lape, Vice President of Behavioral Health at Trinitas Hospital.

The target population for these specialized intervention services will be defendants who suffer from a persistent mental illness and who are involved with non-violent third or fourth

degree or disorderly persons offenses. To be most effective, crisis intervention and clinical assessments will begin at the earliest possible point so that informed decisions can be made regarding treatment needs before the individual enters the local jail system, according to the prosecutor's office. An individualized plan for follow-up services would then be developed, including case management, therapy, medication monitoring, substance abuse counseling and meeting housing and employment needs.

Union County Prosecutor Theodore Romankow, who testified last year before a legislative committee dealing with crimes involving citizens with specialized mental health issues, said he was happy to spearhead efforts to bring the funds to the county.

"Part of our focus will include educating municipal judges, police, public defenders and municipal prosecutors," said Mr. Romankow, who said he has made the John H. Stamler Police Academy in Scotch Plains available for this purpose.

"Many individuals charged with indictable offenses languish in the county jail or are ultimately sent to prison due to lack of awareness or understanding of their mental illness, and we have a Special Offender Unit headed up by Assistant Prosecutor Maureen O'Brien that has begun to tackle some of these difficult cases."

Many convicted of non-violent crimes such as burglary, theft or minor drug charges will be referred to Trinitas for treatment and then to Bridgeway for case management and follow-up services.



MR. MAYOR...Frenchtown Mayor Ron Sworen, center, who was raised in Westfield, visits Monday with longtime friends Horace, left, and David Corbin, publishers of *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*. Mr. Sworen's parents still live in Westfield and recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Mr. Sworen will serve as President of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors for 2006.

## NJ Libertarians Select Slate, Oppose Eminent Domain

NEW BRUNSWICK — The New Jersey Libertarian Party held its 32nd annual convention February 25 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick. Leonard Flynn, a regulatory and scientific consultant with a Doctoral degree in organic chemistry and an MBA, received the party's nomination for the United States Senate.

A resident of Morganville, Mr. Flynn is married and the father of two adult children. Also nominated were several candidates for Congress. Among them were Jay Edgar in the 4th district, Jim Conway in the 5th, Lou Jasikoff in the 11th district and Jason Scheurer in the 12th. The Libertarian county committees expect to nominate additional congressional and local candidates.

Newly elected State Chairman Ken Chazotte said, "I'm really excited that this year we've chosen to fight the growing abuse of eminent domain occurring throughout our state."

In Kelo versus City of New London, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled it was legal for the government to seize a home or business and convey it to developers if the governing body expects the action to generate greater tax revenues. As a reaction to this, many lawmakers across the nation have rushed to pass restrictions on the use of eminent domain to obtain prop-

erty that is then turned over to private developers for non-public uses.

The Libertarian Party strongly favors such restrictions. According to the Libertarian law firm that defended Kelo, currently more than 25 New Jersey towns are engaged in Eminent Domain abuses. "Obviously, these are Democrat and Republican lawmakers involved in eminent domain abuses," said Vice Chairman Jay Edgar. "I look forward to educating New Jersey citizens as to the resources they have at their disposal and why libertarian minded public officials would never engage in this type of abuse."

## WHS PTSO Seeks VP and Other Officers

WESTFIELD — The Westfield High School Parent Teacher Student Organization is seeking officers for the 2006-2007 school year, among them a vice president to attend monthly Parent Teacher Council meetings at 9:15 a.m. at the Board of Education offices. The vice president becomes president the following year. A treasurer for a two-year term and a recording secretary to take and type minutes also are sought. Those interested, including students, may contact Eileen Passananti at [eprealtor@aol.com](mailto:eprealtor@aol.com) or (908) 232-6651.

## Michael and Lottie Sworen Celebrate 60th Anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Sworen of Westfield recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. The couple was married on February 24, 1946 at the Sacred Heart Church in Dupont, Pa. Mrs. Sworen is the former Miss Lottie Ruda.

The Sworens have resided in Westfield since November of 1952. Mr. Sworen retired in 1982 from the Central New Jersey Railroad after 42 years of service. He served in the United States Army during World War II in the Pacific.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Sworen are active with Westfield Area Chapter No. 4137 of the American Association of Retired Persons. Additionally, Mrs. Sworen is vice president of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary No. 6807 in Garwood and active with the Rosary Society of the Church of St. Anne in Garwood and with the Catholic Daughters at the Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church in Westfield. Mr. Sworen is active with the Brother-

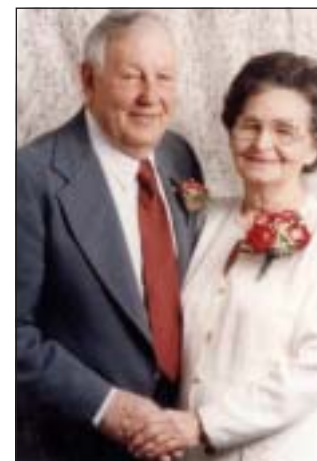
hood of Railroad Carmen and the CNJ Veterans Association, as well as with the Rahway Railroad Association.

On Sunday, February 19, the couple received a special blessing at the Church of St. Anne in Garwood during Mass. They then renewed their vows, with their children and grandchildren as witnesses. The Reverend Thomas Arminio praised them for their example of love and commitment to each other.

Afterward, the couple was feted at a luncheon reception held at Pantagis Renaissance in Scotch Plains. They were serenaded with special entertainment to help them celebrate.

The couple's four children and their spouses include Ron and his wife, Connie, of Frenchtown, N.J.; Judy Jones and her

husband, Doug, of Malvern, Pa.; Steven and his wife, Joyce, of Marysville, Wash. and Karen Hevey and her husband, Bob, of Coventry, R.I. They also have 10 grandchildren.



Michael and Lottie Sworen

## Westfield Youth Plan to Help Needy in Fairbanks, Alaska

WESTFIELD — This year, 65 teenagers supported by 20 adults from The Presbyterian Church in Westfield will travel to the other side of the country as part of the 2006 High School Youth Mission trip to Fairbanks, Alaska.

"Youth ReBuilding Hope" will help families in Fairbanks, where approximately 65 percent of the residents are part of single-parent homes. In concert with Habitat for Humanity and the Presbyterian Church of Fairbanks, the youth will work with and support disadvantaged residents, many of whom are Native American Eskimo Indians.

Youth Minister Tina McCormick noted, "Due to the distance and cost of travel, there are not very many

mission outreach programs which have the opportunity to serve such a deserving and needy community."

The youth support other mission activities including a middle school trip to help needy families in Washington, D.C. and the Agape Soup Kitchen program, now in its fifth year. The Agape program serves homemade hot meals each week in Elizabeth and provides clothing for guests of the soup kitchen. The Agape program has served over 50,000 meals and averages over 250 meals per week.

The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, since its founding in 1728, has helped others through outreach programs. For more information, please visit [www.westfieldpc.org](http://www.westfieldpc.org) or call (908) 233-0301, extension no. 61.



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