



RESCUE 9-1-1...Westfield firefighters gather in front of HealthCare America on South Avenue on July 11 as a Union County HazMat team enters and later exits the building. Three contractors suffered carbon monoxide poisoning after working a gasoline-driven power washer to remove mold in the building. For full story see page one. Fred Lecomte for The Westfield Leader

Quiet-Zone

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

have been problems on the FRA's end. We have submitted paperwork - traffic counts that must come from the railroad or the DOT - twice to the FRA, and they say it has been lost. We now have done everything we're supposed to do."

Mr. Flatau said Westfield had submitted a notice for the establishment of a new quiet zone in September 2005, but that he "can't tell if they've made the necessary safety improvements."

He said Westfield "put the cart before the horse" by submitting a notice before all safety upgrades were in place.

He added, "If the inventory was submitted, it can take two to three months to reflect the changes online. However, (not receiving the inventory) wouldn't prevent Westfield from using the calculator to get its risk index."

Angie Lundberg, a spokesperson

with Rep. Ferguson's Washington office, said, "We have received assurances that the FRA has received the city's data and will report back to the city...The FRA, now that they have the data, will get back to the town at the end of the month."

She added, "The next step is to work with Conrail. At that point, it could take (several months). We have reached out to Conrail to see if they're interested in sitting down with Mike (Ferguson) to get everybody on the same page. Mike has expressed hope they could expedite the process and move it along as safely as possible."

Mr. Flatau, in response to statements made by Mr. Ferguson's office, said, "If we dropped the ball, we'll work with (the town) and the congressman and Conrail to achieve the establishment of the quiet zone. I'm confident that there is nothing else on our part that is impeding them from going forward."



LEGISLATION SIGNED...Governor Jon Corzine, center, signs the Global Response Act, during a bill signing ceremony held at the Meadowlands on July 6. The bill signing culminated with kickoff of the worldwide Live Earth concert, the regional event of which was held at Giants Stadium. At right is Assemblywoman Linda Stender of Fanwood, the primary sponsor of the legislation in the Assembly.

Cranford Township Comm.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Michael Plick said. "There is a serious crunch with funding."

He said the township decided to allocate money towards smaller items, since there was not enough money to complete the Orchard Brook project.

"I agree it's a serious issue," he said. Last month the township said they would revisit Orchard Brook again during 2008 budget meetings.

A majority of the floor was given to the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life proposal to hold the event in Cranford for the first time.

The event begins at sunset marking the time cancer was diagnosed. Around 1 a.m., just as a teammate rounding a lap on the track may be exhausted, so was the cancer patient at this point in their treatment, Ms. Murano said. The sun rising marks the end of treatment, and morning symbolizes a new beginning, she said.

Ms. Murano proposed the township advocate a spring 2008 Relay for Life by organizing a committee of volunteers to champion the program. She said there are 55 people in Union County diagnosed with cancer every week. Last year's Relay for Life, held in Roselle Park, raised \$170,000 for research, education, advocacy, patient services and other programs benefit-

ing those affected by cancer.

Further discussions regarding the draft bid specifications for a cell phone tower atop the Cranford parking garage were resolved.

Township Attorney Carl R. Woodward, 3rd agreed to increase the minimum bid to \$2,400 and add on a 3 percent yearly increase for the cell tower contract. He said an open bid should be legally advertised in August.

The board concurred with Cranford Health Inspector Warren Hehl's proposal to continue the town's annual bulk pick-up rate at \$95 per permit. Mr. Hehl said that the charge currently paid by residents' leaves the township in the dark, stating it costs \$10 for printing permits, stickers and brochures.

Other resident grievances included curb drop-offs of the *Suburban News* and the *Star-Ledger* supplements, the overnight ringing of the Presbyterian Church bell tower, and fee increases of senior programs offered at the community center.

Resolutions were not accomplished in the evening's workshop meeting, but officials agreed to examine each complaint.

UN Chad Ambassador Exempted From Taxes

By EBONY MCQUEEN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

MOUNTAINSIDE — Borough officials Tuesday night announced that the United Nations ambassador of Chad has purchased property at 1253 Deerfield Court in Mountainside as his official residence, making the property exempt from real estate taxes.

As long as he owns the home, the property will remain on the tax-exempt list, borough officials said at Tuesday night's council meeting.

The government of Chad made the request, and the deputy regional director of the United States notified the borough.

"I like the way the United Nations can tell municipalities that all of their delegates are tax exempt," Mayor Robert Vigilanti.

Borough Tax Collector Patricia Scherer told *The Westfield Leader* yesterday that taxes paid on the property last year were \$7,300.

In other council business, due to state delays in the budgeting process, officials said the borough was unable to finalize and mail tax bills to real estate owners. As a result of this, the August 1 due date has been extended to the 25th calendar day of the month that the borough mails the bills.

Councilman Paul Mirabelli was appointed as designee to the planning board in the mayor's absence.

In official borough business, the governing body approved a solution to refund Hoff Brothers Plumbing and Excavating LLC the remaining balance of deposited funds, in the amount of \$500 for the road opening permit at 287 Ravens Wood. Another resolution was approved to refund Digital Color Concepts Inc. the remainder of their deposited funds for a road-opening permit at 256 Sheffield Street for \$5,000.

Borough Engineer Mike Disko has been authorized to advertise for bids on the borough's street pothole repair contract, but the bids are not to exceed the amount of \$25,000.

"Public works is doing a nice job on the smaller potholes," Mayor Vigilanti said.

Three bids were received on June 28, the return date for bids on the contract for "paving improvements on Rising

Way and Rodman Lane." The contract was awarded to the lowest bidder, Jenicar Builders Contractors Co. Inc., in the amount of \$153,151.

Brittany Bumpus was appointed as full-time assistant in the borough's finance department at annual salary of \$32,500. Ms. Bumpus' term began on July 2. A vacancy for a recreation secretary/pool bookkeeper has been filled by Karen Bandics. Ms. Bandics' term went into effect July 9 at a combined salary of \$32,000.

Officials announced the Greening Union County grant initiative, a program aimed at helping save on energy costs as well as lowering air pollution. Every tree purchased by the borough will be matched by Union County, officials said. The initiative includes installation and one-year maintenance of the trees. The borough will be requesting a total of four trees, with two being paid for by Union County.

"The trees that we will plant in front of homes are more ornamental than the trees here in our (Watchung) reservation," Mayor Vigilanti said.

The council approved a resolution to oppose the sale of state assets, such as the New Jersey Turnpike, due to increasing the unaffordability of New Jersey for business owners and residents.

At the start of Tuesday night's borough meeting, Mayor Vigilanti congratulated Thomas and Peter DeJenne on attaining the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in boy scouting.

"Very few percent of our boy scouts achieve this rank," said Mayor Vigilanti. "It says an awful lot about an individual's character."

Other awards for the night included certificates to the Deerfield Elementary School and Governor Livingston High School girls' softball teams. The Deerfield girls' presentation was postponed until September due to a night game.

The Governor Livingston girls' softball, which was the 2007 Mountain Valley conference champions and Central Jersey Group II champions, was presented with certificates for their 27-1 record.

The meeting concluded with the council's executive session to discuss two litigations and a contract.

Fanwood Borough Abandons TDR Program

By MICHELLE BUCCOLA
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

FANWOOD — "We heard your concerns and realized the impact of this program did not fit the community's vision," said Mayor Colleen Mahr, as she explained to both the planning board and the public why the borough council has decided to withdraw the public discussion of the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program from a special meeting Monday night.

This reflection came after the June 18 board meeting, during which residents were given the opportunity to voice their opinions on the specific details of the program. Many residents spoke out against the program, citing increased traffic, lack of parking and overcrowding of the school system as imminent consequences based upon the amount of potential development of the South Avenue Corridor sparked by TDR.

The goal of the TDR program was to protect the Historic District while simultaneously sparking the redevelopment of the South Avenue corridor. The program would have allowed property owners in the Fanwood Historic District, the sending area, to relinquish development rights, like tearing down or altering the facade of their homes, in order to receive credits. Proceeds of these transactions would be used to restore and/or maintain the historic characteristics of the property.

Property owners in the receiving area, the South Avenue Corridor, could use the credits purchased to further develop their property in ways that are otherwise outside of current allow-

ances. For instance, the current ordinance only allows for residential units on the second floor of buildings in the receiving area, but a property owner could use credits to build residential units on a third floor.

At the June 18 meeting, board chairman Gregory Cummings estimated that if all opportunity for the purchase of credits was exhausted, this could result in an additional 242 housing units in the South Avenue Corridor, a number that many borough residents were uncomfortable with.

As she continued to explain the council's decision to indefinitely suspend further discussion on this matter, Mayor Mahr said that the borough would pursue other ways to both preserve the Historic District and promote development of the downtown area.

She referred back to the visioning meetings held early on in the TDR process, in which all borough residents were invited to participate through numerous mailings, and both print and television notices.

"We had about 50 participants in the visioning meetings out of our roughly two thousand households," she said. "The professional planners were very impressed with the turnout."

Ms. Mahr said that during these visioning sessions, residents expressed interest in redeveloping the downtown area, and seemed willing to accept some rise in density.

Mr. Cummings also informed the public of a sign-up sheet for those residents who would like to be notified when the board would be discussing development of the South Avenue corridor in the future.

Additionally, Mayor Mahr has asked the borough's Historic Preservation Commission to look into other alternatives to the TDR program. The commission could recommend enforcing the current local ordinance, which does have specific design requirements. This would put the commission in a more regulatory role.

"A lot of time, effort, and money were put into [TDR]," the mayor said. "We won't want to abandon these goals completely."

Elizabeth Weich-Kolts of Fourth Street, who voiced her opposition to TDR at the June 18 hearing, thanked Mayor Mahr and the board for their work on this initiative.

"I did some research since the last meeting, and it's very clear how much work went into this," she said. "I want to thank all of you for your efforts."

The next regular meeting of the planning board will be held on Wednesday, July 25 at 7:30 p.m.

POLICE BLOTTER

Westfield

Tuesday, July 10, Christine Campoverde, 42, of Carlstadt was arrested at East Broad and Prospect Streets during the investigation of a motor vehicle accident and charged with driving while intoxicated (DWI). No injuries were reported as a result of the accident. Campoverde was released to a responsible individual.

Thursday, July 12, Morgan Stellwagen, 20, and William O'Sullivan, 19, both of Mountainside, and Logan Streit, 18, of Westfield were arrested and charged with possession of less than 50 grams of suspected marijuana after being stopped for motor vehicle violations at South and Central Avenues. Each of the men was released with a summons.

Thursday, July 12, a resident of the 100 block of Harrison Avenue reported that three of the four tires on his motor vehicle were cut with an unknown sharp instrument while the vehicle was parked in front of his house.

Thursday, July 12, Bryan Dewitt, 19, of Scotch Plains was arrested at Westfield police headquarters pursuant to a Westfield criminal warrant. He was processed and released after posting \$500 bail.

Thursday, July 12, Walter Saxon, 51, of Plainfield was arrested at the Union County jail in Elizabeth pursuant to a Westfield traffic warrant with \$200 bail. He was transported to Westfield police headquarters, processed and held pending a court appearance later that day.

Thursday, July 12, Jason Sporer, 30, of North Plainfield was arrested on a no-bail Irvington warrant at an East Broad Street business. The arrest occurred after police responded to a report of a dispute.

Friday, July 13, Jason Crutchfield, 27, of Roselle was arrested at North Avenue and Charles Street on outstanding traffic warrants from Elizabeth and Roselle, with bail amounts of \$150 and \$335, respectively. He was released on his own recognizance by authorities in both those communities.

Friday, July 13, the owner of a business located on the 400 block of North Avenue, East, reported the theft of \$400 worth of scrap metal from the exterior of the premises. The scrap metal consisted of radiators and tire rims, police said.

Friday, July 13, after being stopped for motor vehicle violations, Virgilio Angeles Mendoza, 52, of Monmouth Junction was arrested at Central and Lenox Avenues on an Edison criminal warrant with bail set at \$5,000. He was turned over to Edison authorities.

Saturday, July 14, David Rudnicki, 29, of Plainfield was arrested at North Plainfield police headquarters on two Westfield criminal warrants. He was held in lieu of a total of \$600 bail.

Saturday, July 14, Acsani Odior, Jr., 19, of North Plainfield was arrested on a no-bail warrant out of North Plainfield. He had been stopped for a motor vehicle violation on the 600 block of North Avenue, West. Following his arrest, he was turned over to North Plainfield police.

Saturday, July 14, two local residents, one from Westfield and the other from Mountainside, reported that someone keyed the paint on their respective motor vehicles. The incidents occurred in the parking lot of a business on the 400 block of North Avenue, West.

Saturday, July 14, David Silverman, 22, of Randallstown, Md. was arrested during a traffic stop on North Avenue near St. Paul Street on a Montville traffic warrant. He was released after posting \$444 bail.

Fanwood

Tuesday, July 10, Ghassan Tadros, 44, of Plainfield was arrested for numerous outstanding Jersey City warrants after a motor vehicle stop in the 300 block of LaGrande Avenue.

Thursday, July 12, Rodney L. Harris, 58, of Plainfield was arrested on outstanding warrants out of Fanwood, Scotch Plains and Plainfield after a field investigation.

Friday, July 13, Andre R. Newborn, 32, of Plainfield was arrested on an outstanding Elizabeth warrant after a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue.

Saturday, July 14, Arielle Y. Chandler, 23, of Plainfield was arrested for an outstanding Greenbrook warrant after a motor vehicle stop. According to police, she was also charged with possession of a controlled dangerous substance (CDS) and hindering apprehension after providing police with a false identity. She was processed and released, police said.

Sunday, July 15, Quinten L. Kithcart, 39, of Atlanta, GA was arrested on outstanding warrants out of East Orange and Woodbridge after a motor vehicle stop on Martine Avenue.

Scotch Plains

Monday, July 9, a resident of Myrtle Avenue reported that someone had made several harassing phone calls to her over the past few weeks at all hours of the day and night.

Thursday, July 12, a resident of Sky Top Drive reported that someone removed a set of golf clubs valued at \$1,400 from the inside of his vehicle.

Saturday, July 14, Jasper McIntosh, 36, of Plainfield was arrested on an outstanding warrant after a motor vehicle stop.

Sunday, July 15, Jeff Bergo, 20, of Plainfield was arrested and charged with possession of drug paraphernalia after being stopped for suspicious activity.

Sunday, July 15, Kenneth Jones, 46, of Plainfield was arrested for an outstanding warrant after being stopped for a motor vehicle violation.

Sunday, July 15, a patron of Martine Avenue reported that someone stole his briefcase containing several personal items from the inside of his vehicle.

Mountainside

Friday, July 13, Arnetta M. Reed, 27, of Monmouth Junction, was arrested and charged with possession of prescription medication, as well as being under the influence of the prescription drug Xanax. Police responded to a call from Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH) with a report of a disorderly female, police said.

The arrest followed a motor vehicle stop in Westfield, in which the woman's driver was pulled over for a traffic violation and arrested for an outstanding warrant. Westfield police took Reed, who was a passenger in the vehicle, to the CSH, where her child was staying overnight. Police said she was belligerent over her husband's arrest and became verbally abusive to the staff of the hospital. While being processed, police said Reed became unconscious and was transported to Overlook Hospital, where she was admitted into the intensive care unit.

Friday, July 13, a resident of Fox Trail reported that someone entered her car while it was parked in her garage and rummaged through the car taking a cell phone valued at \$80. According to police, a neighbor reported seeing a white, male approximately 20 years of age wearing a white t-shirt, gray sweat pants and no shoes running from the driveway. The man entered a gray sedan driven by an unidentified suspect, police said. The Scotch Plains Police Department reported two similar burglaries in their town occurring on the same day.

Friday, July 13, Bruce D. Terpe, 39, of Mountainside was arrested and charged with driving with a suspended license after a motor vehicle stop.

Sunday, July 15, Jaime F. Aguirre, 35, of Newark was arrested and charged with driving with a suspended license after being stopped for an equipment violation.

Car Thefts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In a bid to enter South Avenue eastbound from the lot, Okpych lost control of the car and traveled around in a near circular motion, striking a utility pole. Captain DiStefano told *The Leader* yesterday.

He said Okpych sustained "very minor injuries," which he added could have come from the previous accident, and refused medical attention. The vehicle sustained a cracked windshield and heavy frontal damage from striking the pole, according to the captain. Through an ensuing investigation, Okpych was linked to both the Westfield and Garwood incidents,

Captain DiStefano said.

In connection with the Westfield case, Okpych was charged with theft of a motor vehicle, burglary of a motor vehicle, criminal mischief, possession of burglary tools and leaving the scene of an accident with injuries. Chief Parizeau said. Bail on these charges was set at \$30,000.

The Garwood charges included burglary and theft of a motor vehicle and possession of burglary tools, identified as two screwdrivers, according to Captain DiStefano. Bail was set at \$25,000. The suspect was being held at the Union County jail.



REMEMBERING... Memorials honor Konstantinos "Dean" Potouridis and Paul Carbone, the two young men killed in the July 11 motor-vehicle accident on Route 22 outside of Hall and Fuhs Truck Cetner.



NO SOUP FOR YOU...A film crew spent a summer morning shooting a restaurant scene for a Campbell's Soup commercial on Elm Street. Georgia Mierswa for The Westfield Leader