

MEET THE CANDIDATES
Anthony Parenti
Candidate for Fanwood Council

Traffic, traffic, traffic – too much traffic. That's the common complaint while driving in the great Garden State. So what's new? History tells us that even Julius Caesar had traffic problems. In fact, traffic was so bad that he issued an order prohibiting wagons in the Roman central business district for 10 hours after sunrise.

The first traffic signs appeared about 3,000 B.C. Inscribed stones marked the trade route across Persia, Arabia and Afghanistan. When the Romans built their 50,000-mile network of roads linking the empire, stone arched bridges placed in the road guided travelers to their destination.

The ancient Romans also were the first to come up with one-way streets. The narrow winding streets of Rome caused chariots to come so close that the wheels got scuffed. Roman "traffic engineers" solved the problem by proclaiming that traffic must proceed in one direction only. The first speed limit sign in the United States was installed in Newport, R.I. in, after a horseman ran down a child in the street. It was the first and only such sign until 1757, when the City of Boston decided it was a good idea and began posting speed signs. Citizens were so alarmed that even as late as 1896, England had a law prohibiting power-propelled vehicles from traveling more than 4 mph. In fact, the British were so afraid that the law also required a man to walk in front of

the vehicle carrying a flag. Was it the high speeds of modern highways that caused the regulation, "slower traffic keep right?" Not really. Shortly after New York posted its first speed limit of 10 mph at the turn of the century, they also posted signs directing slow traffic to stay near the curb. Some drivers, feeling 10 mph was a little too fast, traveled at a lower and, what they thought, a safer speed. Everything is relative.

Ever wonder why the British drive on the left side? It began when horse riders were watchful for robbers. As they passed, they kept to the left so their sword or pistol arm was on the same side the potential danger was riding. Garrett Augustus Morgan, an African-American inventor and businessman, invented the first traffic signal. After witnessing a collision between an automobile and a horse-drawn carriage he was convinced that something should be done to improve traffic safety.

While other inventors experimented with traffic signals, Morgan was the first to apply for and acquire a U.S. patent, which was granted on November 20, 1923. So, ever since ancient times people have been looking to "make things better" by moving traffic efficiently and safely.

So when you're jammed up in traffic, beset by frustration, impatient and angry, remember there is nothing new about your predicament. Sit back, relax, and keep on motoring.



ON THE STUMP... Westfield Second Ward Councilwoman JoAnn Neylan discusses local issues with resident Joseph Alfano, center, and State Senator Tom Kean Jr. (LD-21, Westfield) as the two officials campaigned in second-ward neighborhoods.

MEET THE CANDIDATES
Ralph Froehlich, Candidate
For Reelection, Union County Sheriff

The Union County Sheriff's Labor Assistance Program (SLAP) that puts minor criminal offenders to work instead of serving jail time has logged more than 580,000 labor hours in the last 10 years saving county taxpayers \$16.3 million, announced Union County Sheriff Ralph Froehlich.

The 14-year-old program is essentially a supervised public work program for people who have received mandatory sentences in municipal and superior courts. This joint effort by the Union County Sheriff's Office and the courts allows some minor, non-violent offenders to work off their sentence and avoid jail time. Sheriff's Officers have directed SLAP details in all 21 Union County municipalities. These details vary and may involve roadside cleanup, public golf course or park maintenance, painting of municipal buildings or other community-oriented projects.

"This program so far has been an outstanding success," said Sheriff Froehlich. "And I am confident it will continue to be an outstanding success

because it is so positive in many ways." During the last decade, SLAP participants have logged 583,297 supervised labor hours. At \$13 per hour, the minimum wage with benefits, the labor hours mean the county received \$7,583,286 worth of work.

From 1997 to 2006, SLAP participants worked 79,237 daily assignments instead of spending those days in the county jail. Since incarceration in the jail costs the county upwards of \$110 per day, per inmate, SLAP saved the county another \$8,716,070. Thus SLAP has saved Union County \$16,299,356 over the last ten years.

The offender benefits also because he or she is able to keep their job and remain at home with family instead of experiencing an unproductive period of incarceration. It also serves as a deterrent to future criminal behavior.

"The violator pays his debt to society while doing a productive job for the county rather than being jailed at the taxpayers' expense," Sheriff Froehlich said. "It is a win/win program."

MEET THE CANDIDATES
Assemblyman Eric Munoz
Candidate for Reelection, LD-21

Legislation sponsored by Assemblyman Eric Munoz (LD-21) that establishes the Asperger's Syndrome Pilot Initiative in the Department of Human Services was signed into law September 12 by Governor Jon Corzine. State Senator Tom Kean, Jr. (LD-21) sponsored the bill.

"It is crucial that we make a wide range of services available to persons diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome," Mr. Munoz said. "This legislation will provide housing, counseling, educational and employment opportunities specialized to fit the needs of persons with Asperger's."

The legislation, A-2291, seeks to provide vocational, educational and social training services to individuals with Asperger's Syndrome through community-based service sites that offer these support, guidance and education.

The bill's aims include social-skills training, supported employment, housing support and psychiatric services for the treatment of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and other neurological disorders.

The Governor also signed into law four other pieces of legislation on which Mr. Munoz served as co-sponsor:

A-4054 – Making changes concerning Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism, including expanding the council and requiring progress reports to the legislature and governor.

A-4055 – Providing for instruction in autism and other developmental disabilities awareness and methods of teaching students with autism and other developmental disabilities for candidates for teaching certificates and current teachers and paraprofessionals.

A-4056 – Establishing an early intervention program in the Department of Health and Senior Services to conduct activities addressing the specific needs of children with autism spectrum disorders and their families.

A-4057 – Establishing the New Jersey Adults with Autism Task Force.

As a physician, Mr. Munoz said he is concerned about the health and well-being of those suffering from developmental disabilities. "Awareness and education are two of our greatest tools in healthcare today and I'm confident these new laws will go a long way in expanding knowledge about these conditions and providing help to these individuals and their families," he said.

MEET THE CANDIDATES
Daniel Sullivan, Candidate for
Reelection, Union County Freeholder

Keeping a bridge safe and fit for traffic is an endless process of inspection, maintenance, and repair. It's expensive, too. But it's got to be done. In Union County, there is no way around it: we are responsible for 407 bridges, ranging in size from five feet long to major spans of up to 240 feet.

The collapse of the Interstate 35 West Bridge in Minneapolis underscores the need to invest in bridge safety. As investigators work to determine what happened, one thing is clear. Whatever the cause – flaws in the original design, undetected or unaddressed deterioration, an ongoing reconstruction project, or a combination of these – the result was a terrible tragedy.

Over the years, Union County residents have understood the need for a long-term program of preventive care. One of the most important actions came in 1999, when county voters helped to approve the statewide \$500 million Bridge Bond Act.

Union County put its \$12 million share of the bond money to good use. Among our bridges, 130 are considered to be major spans of 20 feet long or more, and they are covered by state and federal inspection requirements. In 1999, 22 of these bridges were rated structurally deficient. Now, after a reconstruction program totaling approximately \$30 million in federal, state, and county funds, we are down to only six, and work is underway on these.

A structurally deficient rating means that the bridge needs attention in a timely manner, before problem areas worsen and require more costly work in the future. That's exactly what the Bond Act was meant to address and, thanks to Union County residents, it's working.

In the very rare cases when inspectors find a serious problem, the bridge is closed immediately. That eliminates all danger to the public until the bridge is either repaired or replaced.

There is a good reason why bridge closings are rare in Union County. The county and state keep careful

watch over all of our major bridges through a regulated two-year inspection program. And, though not required by state or federal law, county residents support a budget that includes regular inspections of 277 bridges under the 20-foot limit.

All 407 county bridges also get regular care. Our crews fill potholes, cut back vegetation, and sweep away grit and salt after winter. Our bridges all cross waterways, and our crews must clear fallen trees, branches and other waterborne debris after storms. None of this is "marching-band" material, but it prevents tragedy.

Union County has not added more numbers to its bridges in many years. Today's county residents are not in the business of expansion, only of caring for a completed system that we inherited from the generations before us.

I am proud to say that the people of Union County take their stewardship role seriously. The next generation will know that we made the right investments and we paid attention, day in and day out, to preserve a safe and sound infrastructure for the future.

MEET THE CANDIDATES
Patricia Quattrocchi
Candidate for Union County Freeholder

It appears that the ugliest government building in Union County is soon to have a sibling that could possibly nudge the Froehlich monstrosity, on North Avenue East in Westfield, out of first place and into second, much like when mom brings home a newborn bumping big brother out of the limelight. Artist's renderings show that the new construction, which will house county vehicles and office space, unfortunately bears a striking family resemblance to its big brother, neither one fitting into the ambiance of charming downtown Westfield.

Coming before the Westfield Planning Board in early September, Noel Musial, president of the Musial Group of Mountaintop, the county's favorite architect, spoke at length about how the building would be different than the existing garages and the doomed Venneri building on North Avenue, which will be demolished for, what appears to be, additional parking.

The new buildings will be energy smart, which is certainly a good thing, having for instance solar panels on the roof for heating, but also up there will be rooftop parking at the second floor level. The office building will have yet a third floor which, according to the rendering, will have those porthole windows just like "Big Brother." So upon completion, there will be the original Queen Mary and what looks like a barge towing a flush deck for your cruising pleasure. Whoever decided on the style of these buildings ought to be keel hauled.

Though Westfield residents send more of their tax dollars to the county for its operation than they keep to run the town, they have no say as to what will be built on county-owned property within the town, as the presentation to the planning board was a

courtesy at best. It has been reported in all of the local weekly papers that planning board members were a bit taken back by the magnitude of the buildings but were assured by Musial that some of their concerns will be addressed by planting shrubbery. It could just be speculation but will they be bringing in giant redwoods to hide this miserable looking building from sight?

The county contends that they want to be "good neighbors" and appear to think that, by announcing that they are using a lot of recycled materials in the construction, they will be able to get on Westfielders' good side and glean acceptance for the project; like that would make it more visually appealing. However, if they were good neighbors they would have given more consideration to the hard work that officials have put into the planning and guidance of suitable construction styles appropriate for their town. Further, good neighbors are sensitive to the trials and tribulations of those in residence near to them, so one would think that the county would recall the well publicized parking garage issue which had brother fighting brother in Westfield. To quote former mayor Garland "Bud" Boothe, "this just doesn't do it."

The bottom line is that Westfield, paying some of the highest taxes in the county, doesn't seem to matter to the freeholder board as they surge forward awarding no bid contracts to political contributors like The Musial Group and Joseph Jingoli and Sons, who are also on board with the project. Looks as though they are thumbing their noses at the good taste and sensibility of the town's residents while blatantly picking their pockets and telling them "we are connected to you."

MEET THE CANDIDATES
Candidates for Reelection, LD20
Senator Ray Lesniak
Asm. Joe Cryan and Asm. Neil Cohen

This year the State Legislature enacted unprecedented property tax reforms for homeowners and tenants. In fact, one-half of this year's budget went to property tax relief, including \$2 billion for homeowner rebates alone. Rebates for tenants quadrupled under this year's budget.

The Legislature also enacted tough measures to combat waste by establishing the State Office of the Comptroller. Additionally, no new taxes were established and no existing taxes were increased. To curtail local taxes, this year's budget enacts a 4 percent property tax levy cap on school, local, and county governments and further requires voter approval in order to exceed that cap.

The first wave of rebate checks was

mailed in late July; the second wave of checks, totaling approximately \$1.1 billion, was mailed last Friday.

Homeowners and tenants who filed for the Homestead Rebate should have received their check this week or earlier. The average rebate for homeowners was approximately \$1,000; that's three times the amount the average resident received last year.

The deadline to apply for the homestead rebate and senior freeze has been extended to October 31. If you have not yet applied, we encourage you to do so. If you need assistance filling for your rebate, please call our property tax relief hotline at 1-888-411-2890. Our trained staff has already helped hundreds of residents get the rebates they deserve.

Union County GOP Committee to Hold Mini Golf Event at Hyatt Hills

CLARK – The Republican Committee of Union County has set Sunday, September 23, as the new date for its annual family miniature-golf tournament, which was rained out earlier this summer.

The event will be held from 3 to 6 p.m. at Hyatt Hills Golf Course in Clark. Senator Tom Kean Jr. and Assemblymen Jon Bramnick and Eric Munoz (LD-21), who represent a large portion of Union County, will host the event. The tournament will benefit the Union County Republican candidates for sheriff and freeholder.

"Those who had purchased tickets for the previous date are all set," said event chairman Christine Nugent of Westfield. She said anyone who was not able to make the original day is invited to attend.

The cost is \$45 per person, \$15 for children under 12 and \$100 per family. The cost includes golf, beverages, a traditional family barbeque and prizes. The Hyatt Hills Golf Complex is located at 1300 Raritan Road in Clark. Play will commence at 3 p.m.

For more information or to make reservations, contact the Union County Republican Committee at (908) 789-0200. "Event and Hole" sponsorships are also available and include a free family admission.

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MEET THE CANDIDATES
Linda Stender, Candidate
For Reelection, Assemblywoman (LD-22)

Linda Stender, assemblywoman and candidate for Congress in New Jersey's seventh congressional district, last week released the following statement in response to Congressman Mike Ferguson's "failure to stand up and fight for a change in direction in Iraq."

"General Petraeus delivered President Bush's report on the status of Iraq before Congress and put forth a plan to keep American soldiers in Iraq for up to 10 more years. I was disappointed to learn that Congressman Ferguson endorsed this new plan, and still refuses to support an endeavor to begin

a redeployment of American troops. "Under the Petraeus' plan, we would still have the same number of troops in Iraq in the summer of 2008, as we did at the start of this year. New Jersey families have been outspoken in their impatience for a change in direction in Iraq and desire for a responsible withdrawal of American soldiers.

"Our brave soldiers are being sent to referee a religious civil war without a plan to win the peace. They have done their part, now it is time for the Iraqis to stand up and fight for their own freedom, their own independence."

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(908) 232-7797
 Drs. Thrower and Bullek would like to take this opportunity to welcome Dr. David M. Deramo in joining their practice as of August 6, 2007.
 Dr. Deramo specializes in complex surgery of the shoulder and knee including arthroscopy and knee replacement surgery.
We pride ourselves in providing specialty orthopedic care.