

McCain, Clinton Win New Jersey Pres. Primary

By RAYNOR DENITZIO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

AREA — On a night that saw U.S. Senator John McCain pad his delegate lead with wins in California and New York, and Senator Hillary Clinton and Senator Barack Obama split states and delegates, Sen. McCain and Sen. Clinton were victorious in New Jersey. Thirty-seven percent or 99,481 of Union County's 263,756 registered voters participated in the Presidential Primary.

The total delegate count, as of press deadline yesterday, for the Democratic Presidential nomination had Sen. Clinton with a 900-824 edge over Sen. Obama, according to realclearpolitics.com. A total of 2,205 delegates are needed for the party's nomination.

Sen. McCain had a lead of 604-224 over former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee had 187 delegates. A total of 1,192 delegates are needed for the GOP nomination.

Sen. McCain nearly doubled Mr. Romney's vote total, taking 55 percent of the vote and earning all 52 of New Jersey's delegates in the "winner-take-all" Republican primary. Sen. Clinton's victory took 54 percent of the vote, compared with 44 percent for Sen. Obama. Under the Democratic primary rules, New Jersey's delegates will be distributed in proportion to these percentages.

On the Democratic side, Sen. Obama won Westfield over Sen. Clinton, 2,515-2,296; Scotch Plains, 2,015-1,597; and Fanwood, 675-536. Sen. Clinton won Mountainside, 441-370; and Garwood, 298-140.

For the GOP, Sen. McCain won Westfield with 1,880 votes to Mr. Romney's 972 tallies and Mr. Huckabee's 124 ballots. The results in Mountainside were Sen. McCain, 453; Mr. Romney, 325; Mr. Huckabee, 47. Sen. McCain took Scotch Plains with 1,193 tallies to Mr. Romney's 560 and Mr. Huckabee's 127. Fanwood voters gave Sen. McCain 393 votes, Mr. Romney 249 tallies and Mr. Huckabee 45 votes. Sen. McCain won Garwood with 145 votes to 68 tallies for Mr. Romney and 31 votes for Mr. Huckabee.

According to election results, turnouts were 41 percent in Westfield, 38 percent in Mountainside, 39 percent in Scotch Plains, 41 percent in Fanwood and 29 percent in Garwood.

Neither result produced much surprise

from local party leaders. Phil Morin, chairman of the Union County Republican Committee, said he felt Sen. McCain benefited from the support of former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, who dropped his presidential bid last week.

"The Senator's biggest competition was Mayor Giuliani, and once he got out of the race, all those voters probably went to Senator McCain," Mr. Morin said. "It was expected to be a strong victory, and it was."

Although he was not surprised by Sen. Clinton's victory, Assemblyman Joe Cryan, (LD-20, Union), chairman of the Democratic State Committee, said he was pleased with the voter turnout. More than one-million voters cast their ballots in the Democratic primary, and Assemblyman Cryan said he believes this is an indicator of the party's strength.

"The one surprise for us was the amount of turnout," Assemblyman Cryan said. "They'll be over a million, or close to, that voted today. That's the largest in history. That was really good news for the party."

With nearly 60 percent of New Jersey's voters not registered with either major political party (including almost 142,000 voters in Union County alone), appealing to unaffiliated voters was a key strategy on both sides.

For Republicans, Mr. Morin said that their strategy boiled down to reaching out to unaffiliated voters "more than anything, just to remind them of the fact that there [was] a presidential primary on February 5."

With New Jersey, a semi-open primary, there was some confusion over the ability of unaffiliated voters to participate. Although voters needed to be a party member to participate in Tuesday's primaries, unaffiliated voters had the option of declaring their party affiliation that day.

"A lot of what we've been doing is simply getting out the word to unaffiliated voters that they can vote in the primary," said Kimberly Allen, a spokesperson for the Obama campaign. "That's a big key in reaching them."

A total of 121,748 votes were cast in Union County, according to the county website. Sen. McCain won handily, taking 57 percent of the vote compared with 29 percent for Mr. Romney. On the Democratic side, Sen. Obama carried the county by three points over Sen. Clinton, 51 to 48 percent, respectively.

Paul J. Peyton contributed to this report.



FOR A GOOD CAUSE...More than 900 inches or 75 feet of hair was cut on Sunday from 90 donors at Guillotine Salon and Spa in Westfield as part of Jill Pate's Girl Scout Gold Award to donate hair to Locks of Love. Locks of Love provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children under the age of 18 suffering from loss of hair due to medical conditions and/or treatments.

POLICE BLOTTER

Westfield

Sunday, January 27, Terrance Nelson, 27, of Elizabeth was arrested on an outstanding warrant from Elizabeth following a motor-vehicle stop at South Avenue and Hort Street. He was released after posting \$500 bail.

Monday, January 28, Sybil Darby, 42, of Westfield was arrested at Plainfield police headquarters on an outstanding Westfield warrant. She was unable to post \$355 bail and later was transported to the Union County jail pending a court appearance.

Tuesday, January 29, Paul Flores, 26, of North Plainfield was arrested at Westfield police headquarters on a Westfield warrant. He was released after posting \$99 bail.

Tuesday, January 29, Lorie Mortarulo, 40, of Westfield was arrested on the 600 block of Cumberland Street and charged with theft by deception, theft of a credit card, use of a stolen credit card and possession of crack cocaine. Bail on these charges was \$2,500.

Mortarulo also was held on a shoplifting charge out of Watchung, with bail of \$2,000, and a Bridgewater warrant, with bail of \$968. She was committed to the Union County jail in lieu of bail.

Scotch Plains

Friday, February 1, an employee of a Route 22 business reported that someone painted graffiti on the side of a school.

Saturday, February 2, Michael Cornacchia, 18, of Scotch Plains and Timothy Leischer, 18, also of Scotch Plains, were arrested and charged with possession of marijuana after police reported to a report of individuals urinating on the front lawn of a residence.

According to police, were transported to headquarters where they were processed and released.

Saturday, February 2, a resident of Ramapo Way reported that someone obtained his debit card information without authorization and withdrew several hundred dollars from his account.

Sunday, February 3, a resident of Swans Mill Road reported being assaulted by a friend in the parking lot of her apartment complex. According to police, the victim does not know why the friend punched her.

Sunday, February 3, Frederick Bryant, 51, of Plainfield was arrested and charged with obstruction of justice after police said he attempted to hide under her dashboard to avoid talking to an officer who pulled her over for a traffic violation. According to police, Bryant was transported to police headquarters where he was processed and released after posting bail.

Sunday, February 3, Brian Goeke, 28, of Trenton was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct after police said he attempted to push a police officer and yelled obscenities after being stopped for a motor-vehicle violation.

Fanwood

Wednesday, January 30, a South Avenue business owner reported that a disgruntled patron smashed the glass front door of his business. According to police, the individual has been identified and charges are pending.

Sometime between Thursday, January 31 at 9 p.m. and 7 a.m. Friday, February 1, a business on South Avenue reported that someone broke into the soda machine outside the business and stole and unknown amount of change from the machine.

Friday, February 1, Fritzner F. Estiverne, 35, of Edison, was arrested on an outstanding Fanwood warrant after a motor-vehicle stop.

Friday, February 1, Dena Verrico, 20, of Morristown was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated (DWI) after being stopped for erratic driving and driving with severe damage to her vehicle on Russell Road. According to police, she was transported to headquarters where

she was processed and released.

Friday, February 1, Heriberto Lopez, 27, of Newark was arrested for an outstanding Bloomfield warrant after a motor-vehicle stop on Terrill Road.

Saturday, February 2, Peter J. Kowal, 21, of Rahway was arrested and charged with DWI, possession of marijuana, possession of a controlled dangerous substance (CDS) in a vehicle, and possession of an open container of alcohol in a vehicle after a motor-vehicle stop for erratic driving on Portland Avenue.

Jeremy W. Hall, 21, of Roselle, a passenger in the vehicle was arrested and charged with possession of marijuana and having an open container of alcohol in a vehicle. Regustin Montesdeoca, 20, of Woodbridge, a passenger in the vehicle, was arrested and charged with possession of marijuana, possession of an open container of alcohol in a vehicle, as well as possession of alcohol under the age of 21. All three individuals were processed and released to a responsible adult.

Saturday, February 2, Anthony L. Ball, 51, of Garwood was arrested on outstanding warrants out of East Orange, Westfield, and Newark after a motor-vehicle stop on South Avenue. According to police, he was also charged with possession of heroin, possession of a CDS, possession of a CDS paraphernalia and hindering apprehension. Ball is being held on \$12,000 bail after being transported to the Union County jail, police said.

Sunday, February 3, Brian Fitzgerald, 27, of Fanwood was arrested and charged with DWI after a motor-vehicle stop. According to police, he was transported to headquarters where he was processed and released to a responsible adult.

Monday, February 4, Charles G. Diggs, 44, of Plainfield was arrested and charged with DWI after a motor-vehicle stop on Terrill Road. According to police, he was transported to headquarters where he was processed and released to a responsible adult.

Monday, February 4, Chukwudi N. Nwosu, 27, of Orange was arrested for an outstanding Orange warrant after a motor-vehicle stop.

Monday, February 4, Charone S. Shivers, 4, of Plainfield was arrested on an outstanding Fanwood warrant after a motor-vehicle stop.

Friday, February 1, a resident of Sunny Slope Drive reported that someone broke into his vehicle and attempted to steal the radio. According to police, another vehicle parked unlocked in the driveway was also rummaged through and the radio was pulled out from its original position but not removed.

Friday, February 1, Altarese K. Wilson, 31, of Newark, was arrested at the Bergen County jail for an outstanding Mountainside warrant in the amount of \$900.

Saturday, February 2, Sara J. Garcia-Maury, 47, of Paterson, was arrested for driving with a suspended license after being stopped for failure to observe a traffic signal. She was also charged with an outstanding warrant out of Newark in the amount of \$531.

Saturday, February 2, Jorge L. Lopez-Ramirez, 33, of Plainfield was arrested for an outstanding warrant out of Cranford in the amount of \$100.

Sunday, February 3, Adham El-Sherbeini, 21, of Westfield, was arrested for an outstanding warrant out of Mountainside in the amount of \$839. He was transported to headquarters by the Roselle Police Department.

Sunday, February 3, a resident of Stony Brook Lane reported that as the Giants went in for what would be the winning touchdown in a 17-14 win over the 18-0 New England Patriots in Super Bowl XLII, he jumped off the couch in amazement and injured his right knee. According to police, he was transported to Overlook Hospital by the Rescue Squad.

Corzine / NJ Fiscal Crisis

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funded liabilities adds up to a debt of \$45,000 per household, the Governor reported.

The Governor said his proposed non-profit, public benefit corporation (PBC) would manage the day-to-day operations of the toll roads, but not own the roads. The PBC would pay \$40 billion to the state now for the right to all of the highway tolls over the next 75 years.

The Governor said \$16 billion of the \$40 billion from the PBC would immediately be spent to reduce bonded debt (currently \$32 billion), with the remainder spent to expand highways and for construction of a second commuter rail tunnel under the Hudson River, as well as fixing bridges and resurfacing roadways.

The new PBC would have its own independent, non-political board of directors, with oversight by the attorney general and a citizens' oversight board, the Governor explained.

Members of the audience raised concerns regarding oversight of the revenues to ensure that the PBC does not become another bankrupt entity like the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation (SCC). The Governor acknowledged that the state has no way to account for where the \$8 billion of the SCC funds went.

The Governor said, "There is no general obligation...there's no moral obligation on the part of the State of New Jersey for the debt of the PBC."

Governor Corzine also promised a frequent-driver program to offset the burden of the proposed toll increases on small businesses and frequent commuters.

The Governor said that toll rates in New Jersey have not kept pace with inflation. He also said average tolls in New Jersey are considerably lower than the average toll costs of driving on major highways in other states.

He said other options to his plan would be an across-the-board, 20-percent increase in income tax, a 30-per-

cent increase in sales tax or a 45- to 50-cent gas tax on every gallon of gasoline. Along with this, he said annual spending cuts of \$2.5 billion would be necessary in addition to denying \$2.5 billion in increases in this year's budget.

The Governor said he believed these other options were bad for the economy and could damage the ability of government to adequately provide services. He repeated his statement from his State of the State address, "Pigs will fly over the Statehouse before there's a realistic level of new taxes or spending cuts that can fix this mess."

Members of the public suggested raising fees and taxes, raising the gasoline tax or a graduated state income tax to replace the property tax system.

Several citizens criticized the Governor for not adequately responding to their attempts to contact his office, but now claiming his office was open to suggestions and input from citizens.

One audience member stated that this proposal sounded like a done deal, despite the Governor's request for other suggestions to solve the state's fiscal problems.

In his presentation, the Governor said that the average trip on the Turnpike currently costs \$1.21. Under the proposed schedule, that same trip would increase to \$2.05 in 2010, \$3.46 by 2014, \$5.84 by 2018, \$9.86 by 2022 and \$12.50 by 2033, plus the cost of inflation.

Breaking down the projected revenues that the toll increases will generate, the Governor outlined the proceeds as follows: \$10 billion to eliminate existing debt on the toll roads and to create the appropriate bond reserves; \$4 billion in a capital reserve for toll road improvements and road-widening; an upfront payment in the range of \$18 to \$24 billion to reduce state debt and fund transportation improvements.

This town hall-style meeting was the sixth of the Governor's scheduled 21 appearances — one for each county.

Land-use Taskforce

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'starter home' a thing of the past."

The report also specified that outward expansion of the size and scale of typical homes has "pushed development beyond acceptable limits — even though, most often, it occurs within the maximum allowances of our existing ordinances."

Therefore, in order to address the issue of expansion, the committee focused its attention on potential amendments to the land-use ordinance, the principal tool that defines the amount of land required and how large a house can be within each residential zone.

Specifically, the committee recommended the following changes.

Implementing a "sliding-scale model" to determine height — This proposal would mandate that homes could range from a maximum of 32 feet in an RS-6 zone to 35 feet in an RS-40 zone. (RS stands for residential single-family, and the number correlates to area; for example, a house in an RS-6 zone would have a minimum lot area of 6,000 square feet.)

"Wide lot, tall house. Narrow lot, shorter house," Mr. Heinbokel summarized, repeating a line from last week.

Introducing a 22-foot maximum-eave-height limitation — Mr. Heinbokel identified roof height as "the most important element in establishing a vertical scale." Mr. Heinbokel said, "By establishing a maximum height at which the leading edge of the roof begins, our intent was to lower the perceived height of the roof."

A 25-foot limitation on the length of any continuous building wall adjacent to a side-yard property line — Mr. Heinbokel said the intent is to "enhance the visual appeal of structures by requiring surface variation," thereby "minimizing the monolithic look of excessively large walls."

Mr. Heinbokel called this measure "one of the more important elements" of the taskforce's report.

Simplifying Floor Area Ratio (FAR) — Last week, Mr. Heinbokel deemed FAR "an area of great controversy." He said the taskforce worked to simplify FAR, which takes into account the "volume of living space that covers a lot." Mr. Heinbokel said what had existed before was "too difficult to understand and calculate." FAR did not count unheated two- and three-car attached garages or unheated attic space, which "inflates the bulk of a structure."

The group worked to eliminate the various exemptions and rework FAR to measure from the exterior, not interior, walls of structures.

Lowering the number of allowable stories from three to 2.5 — The group also "redefined" the maximum number of stories, currently set at three. The group decided to reduce the permitted number of stories to "2.5" in all residential zones. The "half-story," by new definition, would have a floor area that is less than or equal to one-third of the gross floor area of the floor below.

Increasing the role of the Architectural Review Board — Because land-use law specifically grants "exclusive authority" to the planning board and board of adjustment in planning and zoning matters, the role of the architectural-review board was rendered "advisory" in capacity. However, the taskforce recommends expanding the role of the architectural-review board to allow for the voluntary review of all submitted building plans. The board would make recommendations for design changes that help encourage building proportions that

are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Acting Mayor Mark Ciarracca called the report "impressive" and said the results would "maintain the character of the town in a way that is workable and balanced."

During the subsequent question-and-answer session, Westfield resident Paris Takonis asked the taskforce when the recommendations would be finalized. Code Review and Town Property Committee Chairman Jim Foerst estimated between March and April 2008.

Mr. Takonis then asked if the new rules would apply to people who obtained building permits recently.

Town Attorney Robert Cockren said, to date, the group had not addressed circumstances such as these; however, he said that those who currently have building permits and approved plans would "probably be grand-fathered in" under the former land-use rules. However, he recommended that the new rules apply in situations where owners currently have permits and construction has not begun, and owners wait for an extended period of time. He said there must be a safeguard against those who wish to "warehouse" a permit and then seek to be absolved of new restrictions.

Reached after the meeting, Mr. Foerst said the "gray issue" of how and when to apply the new standards to upcoming redevelopment would be a "major part of discussion in the Code Review Committee."

Jacque Brevard, representing WECARE (Westfielders Concerned About Responsible Development), read a written statement to the council. She said WECARE is "encouraged that, through these recommendations, we will begin to see visible changes in our neighborhoods and our community as a whole. For some neighborhoods, these recommendations come too late. For others, these recommendations can have a positive, long-term impact on neighborhoods that are subject to change through [principles] that reflect responsible development."

She added, "We do not view this report as the final product; rather, we see it as a solid foundation to build upon in the future."

The public may continue to weigh in on the policy recommendations until February 26 by e-mailing landuse@westfieldnj.gov. Following that period, the land-use taskforce will consider all comments and conduct a follow-up report at another public meeting before the recommendations reach the Code Review Committee.

In a separate matter, last week, Finance Committee Chairman Sal Caruana gave an update on how new tax caps affect the town.

In 2008, municipal-tax increases are capped at 4 percent. The 2007 tax levy came in at \$21 million; factoring in the new cap, Westfield can only raise that figure by a maximum of \$810,000 in 2008.

"Pensions are not part of the formula," Mr. Caruana said. "However, the RVSA (Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority) and the library increases are part of it."

Those two items alone will represent a \$510,000 spike this year. When subtracting that figure from the \$810,000 cap and factoring in other necessities, Mr. Caruana said the town only has a "\$250,000 cushion" with which to work.

"Two-thirds of that 4 percent will be taken up by two items that we don't control," he said.

Gateway Chamber Honors Companies of the Year

By RAYNOR DENITZIO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

ELIZABETH — "At my age, when people invite you to a dinner, it's usually not to honor you as a small-business [owner], it's a retirement dinner," Eric Segal said. "I ain't retiring, so thank you."

Mr. Segal, founder of Security Business Solutions, spoke on January 29 at the Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce's annual dinner meeting. His company, founded in 2002, was named the chamber's Small Business of the Year.

"He (Segal) has committed so much of himself to this organization," said James Coyle, Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce president. "I'm really honored to be able to present him with the Small Business of the Year Award."

The 96th installment of the meeting, held at the Newark Airport Hotel in Elizabeth, honored two other businesses. Wine Library was named Medium-sized Business of the Year, and Verizon was named Large Business of the Year.

"It's their commitment to support the chamber and their activities to the larger regional community," said Mr. Coyle of the basis of the awards.

Founder Sasha Vaynerchuk and his son, Gary, accepted the award on behalf of the Wine Library. With both a store in Springfield and a website, Wine Library is able to reach customers throughout the country with its selection of liquors and wines.

Additionally, Gary, who serves as the company's director of operations, maintains a vlog (video blog) of his wine reviews on the Wine Library TV website.

Mr. Vaynerchuk thanked the employees of Wine Library for their contributions to

the company during his acceptance speech.

"Without them (the Wine Library family) it would not be possible to receive this award tonight," Mr. Vaynerchuk said.

The Large Business of the Year Award was presented to Verizon.

"Verizon, everyday, is about helping families find financial stability by providing jobs and opportunities for employment throughout the state," said James Home Jr., chief executive officer of the United Way of Greater Union County.

Verizon employs more than 18,000 people in the state, and its FiOS TV initiative created more than 1,000 jobs in New Jersey.

The company's Access New Jersey program also provides schools and public libraries with special Internet service rates and free equipment, as well as video-portable services.


Sam Delgado, vice president of External Affairs for Verizon New Jersey, accepted the award on behalf of the company.

Each fall, the board of directors for the chamber selects a dinner committee. This committee plans the dinner and determines the honorees for the year.


The chamber was in negotiations with Democratic Presidential candidate Barack Obama to serve as the event's keynote speaker, but Mr. Obama was unable to attend due to campaign commitments.


The Elizabeth Board of Education received complimentary airline tickets courtesy of Continental Airlines for winning the contest.


The Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce represents more than 1,800 members, spanning Union, Essex, Middlesex and Somerset counties.




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Gatehouse Deliberations

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with partial removal of a wall along Ms. Marsella's property.

Town Engineer Kenneth Marsh said he would make the final decision to remove any plantings, if he deemed it unsafe.

Some members of the public whispered in detest of uprooting plant life. Dennis Hudacsko, a planner testifying for the opponents, also came before the board again. He presented drawings to the board showing his mathematical methods of determining the rear property line and the property as a corner lot with frontage on East Broad Street, totaling 17.98 square feet.

In his previous testimony, he disagreed with the applicant's planner Elizabeth McKenzie's statement of the property only having frontage on Wychwood Road, which she said had a frontage of 300 feet.

He also reiterated his statement of Wychwood being identified as a historic site within Westfield's master plan.

The applicant's attorney tried to disprove that the area is historic with photographs of new or redeveloped homes that are of different styles of the home originally built for Wychwood. His pic-

tures showed homes of Craftsman, Spanish, Machine Age and other styles.

Mr. Hudacsko said it is "a small bearing" on the significance of the intent of the original Wychwood development.

Builder and brother of Ms. Marsella, Frank Marsella, said there were 30 new homes added to the initial 287 homes in Wychwood since 1938.

Betty List, of the Westfield Historic Preservation Commission, is expected to make comments at the next board meeting. She voiced her protest in a letter to the editor in *The Westfield Leader's* December 21, 2006 edition: "Westfield's rich, diverse historic architecture helps to define the character of our community and has attracted many new homeowners to our beautiful town. Subdividing — and worse yet, demolishing — some of our landmark properties can only result in irreplaceable loss for everyone."

The public hearing on the application will occur at the Monday, March 3, meeting at 7:30 p.m. All members of the public can make comments regarding this case. The board plans to vote at that time.