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Westfield News
Financial Facts Explained on Westfield Parking Economics
 By Sal Caruana
 Westfield Councilman Ward 1



ABCDICIONOPQIRSTDECEPTIONUVWXYZ

 Diction Deception

Below are four arcane words, each with four definitions - only one is correct. The others are made up. Are you sharp enough to discern this deception of diction?

If you can guess one correctly - good guess. If you get two - well-read individual. If you get three - word expert. If you get all four - you must have a lot of free time!

All words and correct definitions and come from the board game Diction Deception.

- Answers to last week's sarcane words.**
1. Rident - Laughing, smiling or grinning
 2. Anacassis - Bending backwards
 3. Pantofle - A slipper
 4. Chamade - In military usage, a signal for retreat or ceasefire

- OGDOASTICH**
1. A poem of eight lines
 2. An order of mollusks having irregularly hinged teeth
 3. A homeless person; a beggar
 4. A small piece of land surrounded by a hedge or wall

- BRAIZE**
1. Mischievous; devilish
 2. Charcoal powder or coal dust
 3. To scrape or chafe
 4. Very strong or potent; virile

- MESORHINE**
1. Having a nose of medium width
 2. A slaughterhouse for cattle
 3. In Germany, an area known as the Black Forest
 4. A large rodent of South America; the capybara

- AZYMIC**
1. Apathetic; disinterested
 2. Having no common traits; unrelated
 3. Unbalanced; unstable
 4. Pertaining to unleavened bread

Letters to the Editor

Rational Parking Policy Needed in Westfield

I wholeheartedly support local merchants such as Joe Spector and Greg Gwyn-Williams as they struggle to drag Westfield kicking and screaming into a rational parking policy. After 31 years in this area (29 in Westfield), I rarely venture into Westfield to shop anymore because of the frustration involved with parking.

Neighboring towns have constructed parking garages and have instituted consumer-friendly parking laws designed to stimulate retail trade. While I respect that Westfield residents steadfastly hold on to the community's "colonial" charm, it is time to face the facts - Westfield desperately needs more parking or it will suffer great economic distress.

Bill Gottdenker
 Mountainside

SP Book Sale Now on 'Must Go To' List

The recent book sale at the Scotch Plains Public Library was once again a big success!

As a member of the Friend's of the Library, I was pleased to chair this wonderful effort that earned over \$10,000 for the library's future projects. We received over 16,000 items in donations - and area residents were lining up to get in. Our separate children's book sale the week-end prior was another reason for this year's success. A while back, the sale brought in only a few hundred dollars, but now we are on the "must go to" list of dealers and book lovers throughout the area.

Needless to say, none of this could have occurred without the help of many dedicated volunteers. We thought publicly recognizing our volunteers would be the best way of expressing our gratitude. If we inadvertently omitted anyone or misspelled any names, we apologize.

"Friends" are grateful to: Friends president Bob Czaja, Ann Twu, John and Marianne Nolan, Marla and Tom Russo, Leslie Bass, Judy Megaro, Dave Steigerwald, Liz Trifiro (and children), Bob Nelson, Karen Woessner, Bob Lariviere, Sadie Schoss, Thana Rosohl, Cheryl Moleen, Nancy Eisenberth, Louise Boyton, Laura Schank, Arielle Zvaro, Jackie Borg, Mary Blanes, Eileen Reynolds, Bridgit Marinaro, Jazmyrn Carrington, Ellie Kramps, Cheryl Kelly, Mae Deas, Feather Foster, Mary Robinson, Peter Toth, Michelle Wyr, Laura Swidersky, Elaine Chinoy, Pat Hennessy, Alice Henderson, Mary Claire Hahn, Kathy Motyka, Sasha Friedman, Susan Frick, Eileen McCourt, Judy Joshua, Amy Landers, Joe and Chris Quarto, Joyce Marshall, Mildred Taylor, Steve Henderson, Jake and Mary Beth Cregg, Nancy Butkiewicz, Padma Marikar, Lorraine Kalucki, Mike Mulligan, Alan Solomon, Betty Vliet, Dill Gaddis and special thanks to Jeff Marks and Hollis Wang.

Special recognition needs to be given to Bob Czaja, President of Friends, who selflessly gives his time; Leslie Bass and Marla Russo, who organized volunteers, Ann Twu, who ran the children's sale, Stephen Henderson and Joe and Chris Quarto for the setup and breakdown, Judy Megaro, who created signage, and Susan Frick, who sells books all year for us online.

We are also grateful to the area residents who donated items for the sale. We are delighted to have received support from local businesses, including the press, PTA, board of education, Mayor Martin Marks and those in town hall for helping spread the word.

And finally, none of this would have been possible without the leadership of Library Director Meg Kolaya and the assistance of her staff. They were supportive and good-natured about the many calls and questions, and have made it possible for the library to grow and become a hub of community activity and resources.

I'd like to add my personal thanks. Every contribution was welcome and needed, and we hope that everyone involved comes to our June meeting as a "Friend" so we can build on this year's success.

Lori Klein
 Scotch Plains

Public Antics Don't Contribute To Good Local Governance

If last week's antics at the township council's budget meeting didn't convince people that the atmosphere in Scotch Plains has gotten truly ugly, then nothing will.

When a political party chairman who is also a candidate for local office publicly utters an obscenity not once, but twice at a meeting, is threatened with expulsion for being disruptive and then makes deliberate physical contact with his chief nemesis on his way out of the meeting, it is evidence to us of someone who needs to rein themselves in and avoid such childish behavior in the future. Richard Samuel, the township Democratic chairman who is seeking a council seat this fall, needs to learn how to control himself, especially if he is elected and expects to be a productive member of the governing body.

Unfortunately, Mr. Samuel's actions last week were not an aberration. He has disrupted other meetings since becoming party chairman after the 2006 municipal elections. His outbursts last week came when the object of much of Mr. Samuel's scorn, Mayor Martin Marks, and Democratic Councilman and mayoral candidate Kevin Glover engaged in some heated discussions about the 2008 municipal budget. A year ago, Mr. Samuel also disrupted a budget meeting by trying to come to Mr. Glover's defense during an argument between the mayor and Mr. Glover. Earlier this year at a conference meeting,

after Mr. Samuel was denied copies of documents being furnished to council members, he stood next to where Mayor Marks was sitting and said he would read those documents over the mayor's shoulder. This led to a 15-minute closed session with the council deciding to deny Mr. Samuel's request for the documents.

We've always believed that the heads of our local political parties should focus their energies on getting their candidates elected - and then getting out of the way so that those elected officials can effectively do their jobs. And this has been the case for the most part. Mr. Samuel obviously believes differently, for he has injected himself heavily in the deliberations of the township council for the past year-and-a-half. At times, he has behaved as if he is the sixth member of the five-member council, and it's had a disruptive effect on local governance.

This is as local as politics gets in our system of government. Until recently, teamwork and cooperation were the watchwords in small towns such as Scotch Plains - regardless of how many Democrats or Republicans were on the township council. It's unfortunate that the level of hostility in the township government continues to increase. Given that it's an election year, we're not confident that matters will improve. Perhaps it's up to the public to tell the partisans to cool it.

Letters to the Editor

It's Time to Discuss What's Best for Westfield And to End Name-Calling over Parking Fines

At the risk of continuing an unfortunate dispute that should be put to rest, I must respond to the letter written by the Westfield Mayor and Town Council about me in the latest [May 8] edition of *The Westfield Leader*. Some who signed the letter may be unaware of who threw the first punch.

My comments regarding Mr. Caruana were a direct response to the personal attack that he had made about me in the April 24 edition of the *Record Press*. Mr. Caruana chose to attack me because I believe that neither the Chamber of Commerce, nor the DWC, has been an advocate for the merchants on the subject of aggressive ticketing and increased parking fines. Mr. Caruana's response to my opinion was, "That's either rhetoric or it's ignorance." I was highly offended. No one likes to be called names - especially basically being called stupid.

I understand that the town council is supportive of each other. But clearly, the 85 merchants, property owners and residents who have joined me in creating the Westfield Community Action Group agree that there is something lacking.

I was on the town council for six years

and never then would anyone have been so demeaning and disrespectful to a citizen.

It is disappointing that this has degenerated into name-calling rather than discussing solutions to the overzealous parking

department and increased fines.

It's time to end personal attacks and get down to doing what's best for the town.

Norman Greco
 Westfield

Westfield Police Should Protect Children At Nursery Parade

As per usual the many nursery schools paraded through Mindowaskin Park on April 30. Hundreds of children, parents and grandparents attended, but where were the Westfield Police (located just next to the park)?

They were not crossing the children, teachers and others at East Broad Street into the park or at Mountain Avenue where many were walking their children to the event, while pushing strollers.

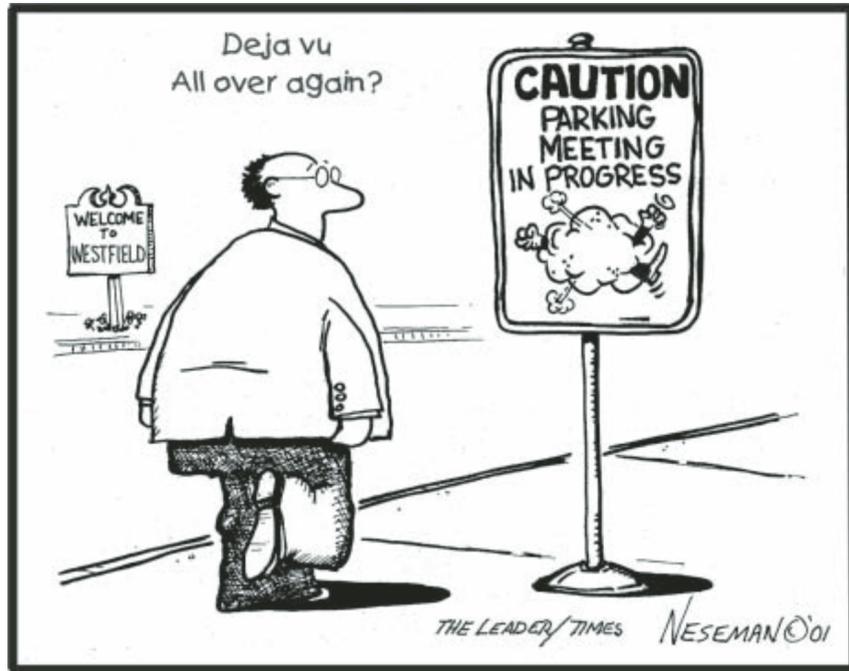
They were, as usual, chalking all the tires of the cars parked along Elmer Street and other 2-hour parking cited streets. Apparently the police are aware of the event, more chalkers were on hand, because the schools need to get special permits to participate.

This is extremely disturbing to parents of small children, who are taught that the police officers are here to protect us, with chalk sticks? Where was the police officer to get the children and other attendees to the park safely? Who knows.

This is the second year in a row that I am aware of that there were no police on hand to help out. My child is leaving the nursery school this year, but I would hope that next year someone will be on hand to help cross at the busy streets on this special day for our children.

I guess some of the parking issues are resolved, tickets are more important than our children's safety.

Olivia Cozewith
 Westfield



Your State Legislators

---LD-21---
 Sen. Thomas Kean, Jr. (R)
 203 Elm Street
 Westfield, NJ 07090
 (908)-232-3673
 Asm. Jon Bramnick (R)
 251 North Ave. West
 Westfield, NJ 07090
 (908)-232-2073
 Asm. Eric Munoz (R)
 57 Union Place, Suite 310
 Summit, NJ 07901
 (908)-918-0414

---LD-22---
 Sen. Nicholas Scutari (D)
 1514 E. Saint Georges Ave.
 Linden, NJ 07036
 (908)-587-0404
 Asw. Linda Stender (D)
 1801 East Second St.
 Scotch Plains, NJ 07076
 (908)-668-1900
 Asm. Jerry Green (D)
 17 Watchung Ave.
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LD-21 includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford.
 LD-22 includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark and Linden.

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As the public discussion of the recent proposal to increase overtime parking violations in Westfield from \$20 to \$32 continues, it appears from recent letters to the editor that the financial facts need to be better explained and more fully understood.

In 2007, the Town of Westfield issued 27,444 parking tickets of which 16,306 were for overtime parking at meters or in pay station lots. The total revenue generated from all classes of parking violations was \$660,120.

The expenses of parking enforcement were these: \$315,606 paid to the state (\$11.50 from each violation); \$415,000 paid in salaries, wages and benefits for our enforcement staff (five officers, 1.5 clerical assistants and one supervisor); \$130,000 expense allocation in court costs (25 percent of the court's annual expenses, which equal the proportion of its case load from parking violations); and \$5,000 paid in miscellaneous costs (gas, equipment and supplies). The total of all expenses was \$865,606.

As you can see, the financial result of parking enforcement in 2007 was a net loss of \$205,486. Some of our stakeholders believe that a "culture" of parking enforcement exists because the net income from parking tickets is a major source of revenue for the town. The numbers prove otherwise, and also make very clear that any possible benefit from enforcement is not in the economics of enforcement.

Where are the benefits? Enforcement encourages the turnover of parking spaces, and the benefits can be found in the improved economics for both the town and our downtown businesses that result from more turnover and higher and better utilization of our parking assets.

Specifically, the economic benefit of parking turnover to the town is in higher pay station and meter income, which was \$1,035,635 in 2007. The economic benefit for our businesses is to be found in a more efficient parking system that through enforcement encourages higher turnover, more available parking and more oppor-

tunities for shoppers to find accessible parking. This, in turn, attracts and supports larger numbers of customers and visitors to our downtown and its businesses.

The utilization statistics support the success of this strategy as well. Our 966 meter and pay station parking spaces are averaging 125,000 uses per month (1.5 million uses per year) and our system would be far less efficient or supportive of local business in an environment of meter feeding and overtime parking.

Many of our business owners understand this and at a Downtown Westfield Corporation meeting late last year some argued strongly that the town's policy of free holiday parking at meters should be for two weeks rather than four because they believed the lack of turnover they personally observed was negatively impacting their businesses at the worst possible time. This is reflective of a parking management theory called "the high costs of free parking."

In 2007, the total gain from pay station and meter income (\$1,035,000) and the loss from enforcement (\$205,000) resulted in net parking revenue of \$839,000 for the town. This income is used in the municipal budget for the benefit of all property taxpayers, including our downtown property owners, and ultimately helps to reduce potential property tax increases. So too will any increase in overtime parking fines, which last year would have impacted only 1.1 percent (16,306) of our 1.5 million uses while generating almost \$196,000 in additional revenue.

As a result of deep cuts in state aid to municipalities (\$411,000 less to Westfield in 2008) and a projected decline in other town revenues due to a changing economy, new revenue raising and cost cutting measures are urgently needed for the benefit of the town and its taxpayers if during this state-wide fiscal crisis we are to succeed in maintaining the services and programs that distinguish the outstanding quality of life in Westfield.

Sal Caruana
 Westfield Councilman

See more letters on pages 5 and 10 Letters to the Editor

HOPS to Holds Car Wash to Help Raise Money for Cancer Awareness

My name is Rob Coloney, and I am a member of Team HOPS (Helping Other People Survive), an American Cancer Society group based in Winfield Park. I am a high school senior at St. Peter's Prep in Jersey City and we are rallying to raise money for the Relay for Life this June for Roselle Park. Why? We have been directly affected by this heinous disease.

Tammy Giannobile, a deceased local schoolteacher and mother of HOPS cofounders Anthony, 18, and Daria, 15, is the reason why we care about Relay for Life and the American Cancer Society so much. Our group, composed of about 30 individuals, spends weekends planning, phoning, and raising money and awareness in any way possible. Tammy died one year ago, and in her honor, we have a few events planned in the upcoming month to continually raise awareness, money, and hope to those still battling. This disease really hit home for us, and if a group of high school kids can realize it, think of what the world can do.

Our first major event is a car wash, which will be held in Scotch Plains at the Center for Hope hospice. This will take

place on Saturday, May 10, from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. The Center for Hope is Union County's largest non-profit organization, New Jersey's largest non-profit hospice, and one of the most respected hospices in the country. My grandmother, Peggy Coloney, started this hospice in the early 1980's, with a dream that those who were terminally ill could receive healthcare without having to worry about cost.

Today, through my father's guidance (after my grandmother's passing in 2003), the center is larger than ever, and has just opened a 30-bed inpatient facility, where our car wash will be held. Tammy was a patient at the center during the final months of her battle. This truly shows how a community can join together so tremendously.

Our entire team will be there, washing cars for a minimal fee of \$6, or \$10 (includes air freshener and team Live Strong band). All proceeds go directly to the American Cancer Society. For more information, e-mail teamhops@gmail.com.

Rob Coloney
 Scotch Plains

Former Westfielder in Alaska Urges Stop to Unnecessary Fingerprinting

I'm a former resident of Westfield. I went to Tamaques, Edison Jr. High and Westfield High. I live in Anchorage and San Francisco now. I wanted to share with my hometown newspaper a disturbing development in the business community - this frightening obsession with collecting fingerprints on innocent people (Westfield residents too) has gone to new extremes.

I am leading a national movement challenging the powerful AICPA (American Institute of CPAs). They have astonishingly decided to allow a foreign data-mining company, ChoicePoint, access to tens-of-thousands of U.S. fingerprints.

Haven't we surrendered enough privacy? This obsession with collecting fingerprints of innocent people is just wrong. Accountants should not take the CPA exam until this new, risky Orwellian program is shut down.

For the first time in 121 years, the AICPA is forcing examinees to submit fingerprints "for identification purposes" - or be forever barred from the CPA exam regardless of identification presented. One candidate showed his passport, license, Social Security card - even

a birth certificate - but was prevented from testing due to insufficient identification.

Passports are sufficient identification to travel the world and enter the U.S.A. - but not to take the CPA exam?

Dr. James Wayman, director of the National Biometrics Test Center, said these systems are notoriously prone to false negatives - "I personally know someone who washed their hands during an exam break, and wasn't recognized by the scanner due to the new moisture state of their fingers."

Data-broker ChoicePoint is storing the fingerprints - the same company hit with the largest fine in Federal Trade Commission history (\$15 million) for "making false and misleading statements" about privacy policies, violating privacy rights and Federal laws. ChoicePoint sold highly confidential information of over 163,000 Americans to Nigerian criminal gangs - and recently announced its being acquired by foreign data-miner ReedElsevier.

This puts us all at risk.
 Jason Giaimo, President
 NetGainConsultants, Anchorage

Who is Responsible for Red Oaks In Downtown Westfield?

Definitely on Elm Street the town has planted fast-growing Oak trees, I believe Red Oaks. These trees grow at least two feet a year, rapidly growing to 75 or more feet tall and 40 or more feet wide. The trunks of these trees can be four or more feet in diameter at the sidewalk level.

The acorns can dent car hoods, roofs, and trucks, just like hail stones. The gypsy moth loves to eat the leaves and squirrels (and rats) love the acorns. In the fall, the leaves create a mess in the street and will clog the roof drains, especially flat commercial roofs.

Westfield does not permit buildings above 35 feet tall, downtown. It makes no sense to have trees twice that tall in downtown. Wait till they or their limbs fall down in ice or other storms. Who is going

to fix the sidewalks and curbs when they grow big? Who is going to trim them when they grow into buildings? Who is going to spray (poison) the gypsy moths? Who is going to pay for the damaged cars (and maybe people) from falling acorns and branches? Which restaurant is going to serve the rats and squirrels?

Tim Harrington
 Westfield

Reader Compliments This Is Westfield

Last week's *This Is Westfield 2008* was the best ever. It was filled with information on organizations, clubs, schools, stores, government officials and everything anyone would need to know about our town. It was particularly bright, handsome, easy to read and full of facts. *This Is Westfield* is a wonderful source for all of us in the year to come. The *Westfield Leader* is to be commended for publishing this resource. Thank you for providing this.

Fran Gold, Pres. Volunteer Board
 Miller-Cory House Museum