



Laura Morkowitz for The Westfield Leader
GAS PRICES...Linda Stender, Democratic candidate for the 7th Congressional District, and James Clyburn, House Majority Whip, meet at Lukoil on Route 22 in Scotch Plains on Tuesday to discuss their concerns about the rising price of gasoline.

Stender: U.S. Needs to 'Stop Putting Money in Big Oil'

By LAURA MORKOWITZ
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

SCOTCH PLAINS — Democratic candidate for the 7th Congressional District Linda Stender and House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-S.C.) called for the creation of a national policy to address the issue of rising gas prices and dependency on foreign oil, Tuesday, May 27, at a Lukoil station on Route 22 East in Scotch Plains.

Mr. Clyburn said the national average for a gallon of gasoline is 2 cents shy of \$4.

"Families should not have to make the choice between food and healthcare and going to work," Mrs. Stender said.

She believes that energy costs must be lowered to help families and small businesses. One solution that has worked to lower prices in the past was to temporarily halt shipments to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR). Mr. Clyburn said that President George W. Bush has to stop filling up the SPR and instead "keep [the gas] in the marketplace."

As of Tuesday, the SPR was holding 703.9 million barrels of gasoline, which, at the market price, is more than \$90 billion worth. According to Mr. Clyburn's belief, halting the stockpiling of gasoline may help the prices in the market go down because there will be more to go around.

However, this is only a temporary solution. Mr. Clyburn said for the sake of protecting the environment and the nation, "we cannot continue on our path."

He believes that the country needs to stop being reliant on fossil fuels and instead wants to see a "smorgasbord" of sources being used.

"We feel that we can have home-

grown sources," Mr. Clyburn said referencing vegetable oil as an example that Mrs. Stender has spoken of.

Mrs. Stender also said the country has to "stop putting money in Big Oil and, instead, invest in new technologies, new resources."

Mr. Clyburn and Mrs. Stender share a common desire in distancing the United States from foreign oil.

"As long as President Bush is addicted to Big Oil, we will never wean ourselves off foreign oil, nor will we invest in the types of green technology we need to reduce gas prices," Mr. Clyburn said.

"For too many years President Bush and Republicans in Congress have protected the interests of Big Oil; it's time for new leaders with innovative ideas to come to Washington and join our efforts to change President Bush's destructive energy policies and fight for energy independence."

According to Mrs. Stender, the United States can end its dependence on foreign oil by investing in renewable energies.

"This is not something that I think can get fixed overnight because of the global economy that we live in," she said.

Mrs. Stender wrote the state's Global Warming Response Act, which, she said, created the strictest standards in the nation to curb global-warming emissions. The act mandates an 80-percent reduction of global-warming emissions levels by 2050.

"It's time to stop talking and start taking real action to increase our energy independence and make our country safer and more secure," she said.

Republicans Faceoff on Issues in Race for Congress

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arms poses the largest threat to us," Ms. Hatfield said. "China is right along with them."

The tone of the debate was for the most part civil, but with only a few days left before voters' head to the polls this Tuesday, June 3, candidates worked hard to highlight differences from each other during their responses.

Kate Whitman said during the third round of questioning that Mr. Marks, Ms. Hatfield and Mr. Lance had all voted for tax increases during their time as elected officials.

"When given the chance, every single person on this dais voted for tax increases," Ms. Whitman said.

Thomas Roughneen also criticized Mr. Marks' characterization of himself as a conservative in light of property tax increases in Scotch Plains.

"You know you also hear about your across-the-board [conservatism]," Mr. Roughneen said. "Well, sorry, Marty, over there in Scotch Plains, it's not all about the state legislators. Taxes are up almost 50 percent."

During his closing statement, Mr. Marks defended his record as an elected official in Scotch Plains and encouraged Ms. Whitman and Mr. Roughneen to seek elected office on the municipal level before criticizing the record of those who have served.

"Let me just quickly address my two colleagues to either side of me," said Mr. Marks, referring to Ms. Whitman and Mr. Roughneen. "Quite frankly, we're getting a little tired of hearing that you've never, ever raised taxes. Frankly, walk a mile in my shoes."

"Results, not excuses," said Mr. Roughneen after Mr. Marks finished his statement.

Mr. Marks said Mr. Lance and Ms. Whitman were "moderates" and accused some of the candidates of "playing fast and loose with the term conservative."

"I truly wonder why we are going back to the same names and same faces as our potential future leaders when they have failed us," Mr. Marks said.

Mr. Roughneen also criticized Mr. Lance, both for what he saw as his failure to address the state's pension issues while in the Legislature and Mr. Lance's endorsement from the Sierra Club.

"You have Leonard Lance over here being endorsed by the Sierra Club because he thinks we should have \$10 gallons of gas I guess," said Mr. Roughneen. "Whereas I think because my brother, you know, fought the war in the Middle East through the '90s when we were protecting Middle

Eastern oil, that we need to take care of ourselves."

Ms. Whitman said she was not surprised by the attacks against her because of her family name (her mother is former Governor Christine Whitman) but said that she was "the only candidate who has put out a detailed legislative agenda to get Congress working for the people."

"In contrast, my opponents have not presented detailed plans," Ms. Whitman said. "They've presented few, if any, new ideas or solutions in the past six months of campaigning."

Mr. Lance chose not to address the criticisms from his colleagues directly and instead offered praise for each of the other six Republican candidates during his closing statement. Mr. Lance said that although each candidate brings strength to the race, he has a record in Trenton that can be directly compared to Democrat nominee Linda Stender, a state assemblywoman from Fanwood.

"I have the record in contrast to Linda Stender because Linda Stender and I have been in the Legislature together, and our records could not be more starkly opposite," Mr. Lance said.

Both A.D. Amar and Mr. Young drew laughter from the crowd with their closing statements. Mr. Amar, who said that he has been classified as the "shoestring" candidate, produced a pair of shoelaces from his pocket and promised that he will bring the shoestring with him to Washington, D.C., if he is elected to Congress.

"I will use the shoestring budget on everything," Mr. Amar said. "Our governments — local, state and federal — are so wasteful, and they live so much beyond their means. They forget we can't afford them."

Mr. Young, the evening's last speaker, used his closing statement to "have a little fun" by providing a list of the top four reasons why voters should choose him. Mr. Young said he intended to provide a top 10 list, but that as a politician, he had to "get used to delivering less than what I promised."

Among the reasons, Mr. Young said that he is a direct descendant of John Adams and that there had never been a congressman named Darren. Mr. Young also said that he offered voters "the audacity of nope."

"To paraphrase Barack Obama, I offer you the audacity of nope," Mr. Young said. "Nope, that is not the responsibility of the federal government."

A full video of the debate, along with video interviews with each candidate, is available on The Leader's Times Web site at goleader.com.

FW Approves \$1.8 Million Livingston-Wilbor Purchase

By RAYNOR DENITZIO
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

FANWOOD — The Fanwood Borough Council approved a resolution last Wednesday giving the borough permission to purchase the Livingston-Wilbor property located on South Avenue for \$1.8 million. The vote occurred during a special meeting of the council, which was held after the meeting of the Fanwood Redevelopment Agency. The council also acts as the borough's redevelopment agency.

The council approved the purchase by a vote of three to two, with council members Joan Wheeler, Kathy Mitchell and Donna Dolce voting yes and council members David Valian and Bruce Walsh voting no. Councilman Anthony Parenti abstained from the vote under advice from the municipal attorney since he owns property across from the site.

"It wasn't an abstention by choice, it was because I own property too close to the site," Mr. Parenti said.

Garry Wilbor, who operates a machine shop at the site, currently owns the property. Mr. Wilbor's shop was damaged last year when a fire from an adjacent development project, the Station Mews, collapsed onto the building and has been operating in a reduced capacity since then.

Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr said that the borough was interested in the property as part of its overall redevelopment plan. Mayor Mahr said the rear portion of the property is attractive as shared parking, and that she was concerned that if the machine shop was rebuilt it would decrease property values and deter further development.

"I believe that we can sort of start to see the finish line and that's why this piece was so crucial as far as I was concerned, because it was the last parcel along South Avenue that wasn't in play," Mayor Mahr said. "If that light industrial use really

was rebuilt, I strongly believe that what you see is what Fanwood would have gotten in the end, which is a very incomplete, very broken redevelopment."

Mr. Valian, one of the council members who voted no on the resolution, said although he agreed with the reasons behind acquiring the land, he did not agree with the timing of the purchase. Mr. Valian said this was an important move for the borough and a "very, very difficult decision for the council."

"The intention is absolutely a positive thing for Fanwood, I understand that completely," Mr. Valian said. "I just didn't feel that this was the right time."

Mayor Mahr said that the total cost of the property is \$1.3 million for the land itself and \$500,000 toward the relocation of Mr. Wilbor's equipment. The borough passed a bond ordinance to fund the purchase of the property last December. Mayor Mahr also said because of the way the bond is structured, the purchase would not affect the borough's budget in 2008, 2009 or 2010.

"So, for me, the fact that we could work out this purchase without it having any impact on the municipal budget for the next three years was a great thing because we don't plan on holding on to this property," Mayor Mahr said.

Mayor Mahr said that once the purchase and sale is finalized, which she said should be within a few weeks, Mr. Wilbor will remain at the site for the next four months and pay rent to the borough as he explores his options. The mayor said the borough has had preliminary discussions with two developers about purchasing the property.

"It's important and it's exciting and I think Fanwood is really going to be better off with the light industrial use gone," Mayor Mahr said. "There's not a place for that in the downtown anymore."

Town Hears of Draining Concerns on Norman Place

By MICHAEL J. POLLACK
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Norman Place residents brought drainage issues to the town council's attention Tuesday night.

Bob Beller said because the problem has persisted since 2002 and the neighborhood's homeowners have heard limited response from the town, an association has been formed to represent the area.

"What do I have to do to get your attention," he asked the council. "Why can't we get some relief?"

As a solution to the drainage issue, the association has pushed for the street to be repaved to correct certain pitch issues.

Councilwoman Jo Ann Neylan, who chairs the council's public works committee, said, "There are many roads [in Westfield] that are in your condition or worse." She said Norman Place is not being "singled out," but because the town is in "dire straits" financially, many pavement projects, including Norman Place, are "taking a backseat." She did say that drainage issues would be addressed.

Mr. Beller, after Ms. Neylan said she understood his frustration, said, "I'm not sure you can [understand]... There's a history of this."

Town Engineer Ken Marsh said drainage was a "town-wide problem" and that the "sins of the past" have caused the problems of today, referring to the fact that certain streets, which were previously flood-prone, are extremely flat.

Mr. Marsh said he took "great issue" with Mr. Beller's assertion that the town has done nothing with Norman Place. Over the past five years, Mr. Marsh said the town has put in an inlet, extended pipe and helped a neighbor with a backyard problem.

He said the street does need to be repaved

but "didn't make the cut" due to budgetary constraints. Mr. Marsh said the town is getting prices on pipe extensions that would make the trunk sewer available to backyard drains.

Mayor Andy Skibitsky then confirmed with Mr. Marsh that within 90 days, the connection could be made, which Mr. Marsh corroborated. Mayor Skibitsky also said when the council decides which roads to repave, Norman Place would be taken "under strong consideration."

Ms. Neylan said, "It doesn't seem like anything is being done, but the wheels are in motion" on formulating a solution.

Both fourth-ward councilmen implored the Norman Place Association to keep them notified of all developments.

On a separate matter, Len Berman of Prospect Street, who has regularly attended recent meetings to voice concerns about two rundown properties on his street, thanked the council for listening to his concerns. After years of waiting, Mr. Berman said he saw signs of "progress." One home has been demolished, and one is in the process of demolition.

Developer Ralph Rapuano, Jr. will eventually construct three homes in the area. "Mr. Berman, it's always good to see your smiling face," the mayor said.

At next week's public meeting, the mayor will bestow the Westfield Civic Award upon Dr. Thomas Streko and Dr. Malcolm Schwartz for their heroic actions in February. Dr. Streko and Dr. Schwartz rushed to the aid of Michael Fitzhenry, 13, who had been hit by a car on Mountain Avenue. The boy, who has since recovered, sustained a skull fracture and a serious concussion.

The mayor has invited the entire town to take part in the evening, which begins at 8 p.m. at town hall.



Fred Rossi for The Westfield Leader
STATE OF REPAIR...Two Prospect Street properties owned by Alan Chrono, including one pictured above, are being demolished after a nearly two-year delay. The properties have been cited for property-maintenance-code violations and housed S.W.A.T. training during the time. Neighbors have continued to complain at Westfield Town Council meetings about the dilapidated states of the two homes. Once demolished, Ralph Rapuano, Jr. will develop three new homes. According to town policy, a house going through the subdivision-approval process cannot be demolished before receiving the authorization of the town.

Garwood Borough Council

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ask county, state and federal elected officials to join efforts against the Federal Aviation Administration's airspace redesign at Newark Liberty International Airport.

Mayor Dennis McCarthy said he would add his name to a letter from local mayors opposing the plan. Mr. Sytko also said that all legal action opposing the FAA would be heard as one case in the Washington D.C. circuit.

Mr. Paterson and resident Anne Leonard both expressed concern over an Alcoholic Beverage Control item on the agenda for the council's next meeting to review an application to allow Rosie's Wine Bar on North Avenue and the Station Bar and Grill on Center Street, formerly Robert's Steak House, to serve alcohol outdoors.

Ms. Leonard said her concern was that the borough's sidewalks did not have enough space to accommodate outdoor dining. Mr. Paterson also said that he was unsure if Bensi on South

Avenue was properly sectioning off its café section.

Borough Attorney Robert Renaud said the sidewalk café ordinance specifies a certain amount of space that must be between the curb and the tables.

Police Chief William Legg also said that although Bensi was in compliance the last time he checked, he would check again.

Mr. Paterson also expressed concern over a proposal to lower the age restrictions in the age-restricted portion of the Garwood Mews condominium complex on North Avenue in from 55 to 50. Mr. Paterson said he felt it was not fair to make this decision without giving more of a say to those residents already living in the development.

Mayor McCarthy said the proposal was a reaction to a request from the developers. Ms. Villaggio also said that federal law allows for a certain percentage of units within a development to have a different age restriction.



David Samsky for The Westfield Leader
CONGRATULATIONS...Westfield Firefighter Captain Michael Brennan of Fanwood, right, is congratulated by Westfield Fire Chief Dan Kelly on Monday during Captain Brennan's last day on duty prior to his retirement.

POLICE BLOTTER

Westfield
 Friday, May 23, Robert W. Carter, 52, of Westfield was arrested on an outstanding traffic warrant from Roselle after a motor vehicle stop on the 600 block of Ripley Place. He was released after posting \$58 bail.

Saturday, May 24, Andre G. Terry, 23, of East Orange was arrested on outstanding traffic warrants from Newark, with bail of \$100, and Bloomfield, with bail of \$90, following a motor vehicle stop at Windsor and Grandview Avenues. Terry was released after posting bail on both warrants.

Saturday, May 24, Dagoberto Gonzalez, 49, of Vauxhall was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated after a motor vehicle stop at Central and Myrtle Avenues. He was released on his own recognizance to a responsible individual.

Fanwood
 Wednesday, May 21, Bryan E. Green, 28, of Westfield was arrested and charged with forgery, theft by deception and conspiracy after allegedly attempting to pass various fraudulent checks at a local bank. According to police, he was transported to the Union County jail.

Friday, May 23, a resident of the 300 block of LaGrande Avenue reported that sometime between the hours of 10 p.m. on Thursday, May 22, and 8 a.m. on Friday, May 23, someone siphoned \$30 worth of gasoline from a motor vehicle that was parked in the victim's driveway.

Friday, May 23, John M. Perricone, 24, of Colonia was arrested on an outstanding Perth Amboy warrant after a motor vehicle stop on Martine Avenue.

Saturday, May 24, a resident of the 100 block of Beech Avenue reported that, sometime between the hours of 10 p.m. on Friday, May 23, and 8 a.m. on Saturday, May 24, someone siphoned \$40 worth of gasoline from a motor vehicle owned by the victim while it was parked in front of the victim's house.

Saturday, May 24, a 17-year-old Scotch Plains juvenile was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Park Avenue and charged with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, which was found in view in the vehicle.

The Union County Sheriff's Department Canine Unit was called to the scene, resulting in the arrest of a second 17-year-old Scotch Plains juvenile, who was a passenger, on charges of possession of marijuana, possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance and possession of drugs within a school zone. According to police, both juveniles were released to their parents pending a court date in the Union County Juvenile Court.

Sunday, May 25, Mario G. Comejo, 32, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was arrested on an outstanding warrant out of Newark after a motor vehicle stop on Martine Avenue.

Two Students Are Arrested After Fight Involving Gun

By SUZETTE F. STALKER
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Police arrested two 18-year-old students Thursday afternoon following a fight at Tamaques Park in Westfield during which one suspect allegedly pulled a loaded .22 caliber handgun on four schoolmates.

Captain Clifford Aucher of the Westfield Police Department told The Westfield Leader Friday that the altercation involved seven students from Union Catholic High School in Scotch Plains. According to Captain Aucher, the dispute at the park stemmed from an incident earlier that day at the high school, "involving someone being hit with a quarter."

He said the suspects met up with the victims at about 3 p.m. at the park. A physical confrontation reportedly broke out between suspect Anthony Raymond, 18, of Springfield and a 17-year-old male fellow student, during which Raymond allegedly assaulted the other student. According to police, the 17-year-old sustained minor cuts and bruises and did not require medical attention.

As other students attempted to intervene, suspect Claude Fils-Aime, 18, of

Rayhaw allegedly drew the handgun and told the other students to "back away."

Captain Aucher said the four victims, including one 18-year-old and three 17-year-old males, at that time retreated and called police. The suspects fled the scene in a 2004 Mitsubishi.

Detective Joseph Costanzo of the Westfield Police Department arrested the suspects about 10 minutes later at the intersection of Westfield Avenue and Raritan Road in Clark.

Fils-Aime was charged with possession of a weapon for unlawful purposes, unlawful possession of a weapon, aggravated assault, possession of less than 50 grams of suspected marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was released after posting \$50,000 bail.

Raymond was charged with possession of a weapon for unlawful purposes, unlawful possession of a weapon and simple assault. He was released after posting \$35,000 bail.

Captain Aucher said a 16-year-old male from Union, also a student at the high school, was with the suspects. He was not charged and was taken into protective custody by police and later released to a parent.

Mountainside BOE

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of Melanie Graff as a substitute child care worker for the 2008-2009 school year; the appointment of Sandra Diaz as speech language specialist for the summer programs and the acceptance of the resignation of Susan Marchelitis, special-education teacher, who has served the district for the past year.

At the start of the meeting, the board recognized the achievement of Amanda Radick, a first-grade student at Beechwood School.

In celebration of "School Library Media Month" in April, students in kindergarten through grade 2 were encouraged to participate in an essay contest sponsored by the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL). The topic was "Why My School Library Is Important to Me."

Amanda was one of four winners in the state. She was honored with a certificate from the BOE and will receive a state certificate from the NJASL, along with a \$25 gift certificate from Barnes & Noble.

Also on Tuesday night, the board resolved to follow the advice of its district Supervisor of Technology, Kevin Tighe, and withdraw its membership to the Union County Audiovisual Aid Commission (UCAAC) in favor of Discovery Channel's Discovery Education.

Mr. Tighe explained that with the UCAAC membership, 40,000 video clips are available to students, but 70,000 video clips are available with the Discovery Channel at a cost savings to the district of \$1,500.