

LD-22 Campaign: Marks and Vastine Reading Declaration of Independence

SCOTCH PLAINS — This Saturday July 4 at 1 p.m., the inaugural Community Reading of the Declaration of Independence will take place in Brookside Park located on Hetfield Avenue in Scotch Plains. All are invited. Attendees are encouraged to wear red, white and blue.

Former Scotch Plains Mayor Martin Marks and William "Bo" Vastine, Republican candidates for the New Jersey General Assembly in Legislative District 22, will host the event.

A picnic barbecue will follow the reading of the Declaration of Independence to celebrate our nation's

233rd birthday. Admission is \$40 for an adult and \$20 for children under 16.

Special guest readers include: State GOP Chairman Jay Webber, State Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean Jr., Steve Lonegan, former gubernatorial candidate; Asm. Rick Merkt, LD-25; Asw. Nancy Munoz, LD-21; Al Morgan, former New Providence mayor; New Providence Mayor John Thoms; Scotch Plains Mayor Nancy Malool and Councilwoman Mary DePaola; Mountainside GOP Chairman and Councilman, Glenn Mortimer; Garwood Councilman and Union County freeholder candidate, Anthony Sytko; Paulette Coronato, former Scotch Plains deputy mayor; Fanwood Councilman Anthony Parenti; Bill McClintock, Scotch Plains GOP municipal chairman and former Scotch Plains mayor; Joan Papen, former Scotch Plains mayor; James Foerst, GOP State Committeeman for Union County and Westfield councilman; Westfield Mayor Andrew Skibitsky; Cranford Mayor David Robinson, former mayor Bob Puhak, and Deputy Mayor Mark Smith; Victor Sordillo, GOP State Committeeman from Somerset County and Warren Township deputy mayor; Michael Illions, editor of Conservatives With Attitude website; and James Pivichny, Plainfield mayoral candidate.

For more information, contact Anthony Attanasio at (908) 930-3068 or see marksvastine2009.com.



CELEBRATING THE HONOREES...During its annual meeting June 3, the Westfield Historical Society presented awards and held its Inaugural Westfield Hall of Fame Induction ceremony. Pictured, from left to right, are: Assemblyman Jon Bramnick, Christine Glazer (Trustees' Award), Barbara Burton (President's Award), William Foley (award honoring the Westfield Foundation), Ed and Mary Orlando (Volunteer Award) and Nancy Priest, president of the Historical Society.

NFIB: Higher Income Taxes to Create Strain on NJ's Small Businesses

TRENTON — *Editor's Note: Laurie Ehlbeck, state director of the National Federation of Independent Business/New Jersey, issued the following statement on the state budget vote.*

"Raising income and payroll taxes on small business owners in the middle of a recession is only going to make our current economic climate worse. It will mean more 'Going out of Business' signs and fewer jobs here in New Jersey. Small employers historically create two out of every three new jobs, and most file their business income through their personal income tax. When supporters of this budget scheme justify their votes as a 'tax on the wealthy', what they are really doing is taxing the job creators.

"New Jersey already has the worst business tax climate in the nation, according to a recent study by the Tax

Foundation, and it's a distinction likely to grow more entrenched with today's vote to raise taxes. Coupled with a decision earlier this year to raise payroll taxes, this vote means small employers will have to pay higher taxes for every new employee they hire — that's hardly an incentive to create jobs. And despite a feeble attempt to restore property tax relief, today's vote denies any relief to businesses, which pay 25 percent of all property taxes in New Jersey.

"Reckless regard for people's money on Wall Street helped fuel the economic mess we are in today, and this plan is little more than an assault on taxpayers from the other direction. Lawmakers have declared open season on taxpayers' wallets, and the result will be a longer recession and anemic job growth for New Jersey in the months and years ahead."

Art Meets History With 25-Panel Pierce for Future River Walkway

ELIZABETH — When artist Dario Scholis first conceived of the paintings he would create for a future walkway along the Elizabeth River, he thought of all the nearby historic buildings, several pre-dating the American Revolution.

But as he started the series, he realized that it was also important to include some of the historic personalities who once lived and preached in those buildings.

The 25 panels when finished will include the Union County Courthouse, the First Presbyterian Church, Jonathan Dayton, Elias

Boudinot, along with a host of other buildings and major figures in state and federal history.

The permanent artwork is part of an overall plan for a river walk that will run from the city's downtown to the Arthur Kill. It recognizes the role the Elizabeth River played in city and state history, said Jonathan Phillips, executive director of Groundwork Elizabeth, which coordinated the project.

Elizabeth Mayor J. Christian Bollwage noted Mr. Scholis' role in designing the memorial to the six Elizabeth residents who perished in the 9/11 attacks in New York.

Gov. Corzine Signs \$29 Bil. Budget; GOP Rips Plan for Increasing Taxes

TRENTON — Governor Jon Corzine signed a \$29-billion budget on Monday following its passage along party lines last week.

While Democrats praised the budget as reducing spending in an economic downturn, their Republican counterparts ripped the spending plan for tax hikes and its impact on families. The budget was passed 44-34 in the Assembly and 22-17 in the Senate. No Republicans supported the budget.

"The budget I signed is \$1.5 billion smaller than the first budget I signed in 2006 and is \$4 billion smaller than last year's budget, yet we have expanded my administration's unequalled investment in direct property tax relief for working families — \$7 billion in four years. We have proven that government can do more with less."

In a press release, the Democratic Assembly Budget Committee said the spending plan provides property tax rebates to households earning less than \$75,000 per year; retains the property tax deduction for households earning up to \$250,000 per year; devotes more than half of state spending to property tax relief; caps tuition increases at 3 percent; increases direct college student assistance by about 10 percent, and increases school aid by \$270 million.

"This budget protects the most vulnerable members of our community," said Assemblywoman Nellie Pou (D-Passaic), chairman of the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean, Jr. (R-Westfield) disagreed. "The people of New Jersey want us in this room to find solutions. This budget fails in every single regard," he said.

Assembly Republican Whip Jon Bramnick (R-Westfield) said the spending plan "layers on more and more tax increases, and is choking the working class families as they struggle in these already difficult economic times."

"The new hikes include tax increases on cigarettes, liquor, rental cars, wines and even New Jersey Lottery winnings over \$10,000. We're actually taxing people who get lucky in this state. We're off the charts now," Mr. Bramnick said.

The budget increases the alcoholic beverage tax rate on liquor, wines, vermouth and sparkling wines by 25 percent from \$4.40 to \$5.50 on liquors and from 70 to 88 cents per gallon on wines, vermouth and sparkling wines, while the rate on certain hard cider will be increased from 12 to 15 cents a gallon.

The state cigarette tax rate will be raised by 12.5 cents per pack of 20 from \$2.58 to \$2.70 per pack.

State GOP Chairman Jay Webber said Mr. Corzine's budget produces "highest taxes for a state already crushed

by the most terrible tax burden in the country.

"The Governor's budget will raise our taxes by \$2.8 billion this year. That tax increase will only destroy more jobs and drive more New Jerseyans out of their homes. No state taxes its way to prosperity and that is an ironclad principle that Jon Corzine simply will never get," Mr. Webber said, who is also a state assemblyman. "Since 2002, the average family of four in New Jersey has seen a state tax increase of more than \$10,000; a wallop to the wallet by far the worst in the entire nation. And that does not even count the state's record-setting property taxes, which have skyrocketed 54.8 percent since 2002.

Assemblyman Joseph Cryan (D-Union), state Democratic chairman, said, "The last cut that was made in this budget was the property tax relief. And the first thing to be restored with the extra money is property tax relief, as that is the number one issue for all New Jerseyans."

Assemblyman Gary Schaer (D-Passaic), Assembly Budget Committee vice-chairman, said President Barack Obama's stimulus package would provide the state "billions of dollars, more than we have ever received in the past, in terms of the government from a percentage point of view."

Campaign Release Corzine for Governor

TRENTON — Governor Jon Corzine issued the following statement on the signing of the state budget.

"Yesterday [June 30] was one of my proudest days as Governor of this great state. Presented with the most difficult economic times that New Jersey — indeed this entire nation — has faced in generations, my Democratic colleagues in the State Legislature and I produced a balanced state budget on time and with substantial property tax relief for the working families of New Jersey.

"I'm proud to have signed a 2010 budget for New Jersey that: Returns a tax amnesty windfall to taxpayers. Remains as fiscally responsible as my other budgets. Honors our progressive values. Continues to rein in property taxes. Over four budget years, my administration has provided \$7 billion in direct property tax relief — 35 percent more than the previous four-year period and more than double the amount of the last Republican administration.

"We did this the right way — with transparency, public participation and broad input. But more important that how we did it, was what we did: We made the right choices for the working families of our state and came up with a workable budget under the most trying circumstances any of us has faced."

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