

## WF's Goal is to Provide An Excellent Education Regardless of Enrollment

On March 9, Margaret Dolan, superintendent of Westfield Schools, gave a detailed analysis of projected enrollment for 2010-2011. The takeaway from the presentation is that the size of the student population will remain the same, but the grade totals will be different.

Westfield High School will experience the largest change in population. There are enough classrooms at the high school for the growing population. That work was done years ago with the 2000 bond. The building was designed to house 2,000-plus students. The administration, the school board and the taxpayers made a very wise decision a decade ago. The high school also has a strong administrative team, led by Principal Peter Renwick.

Projected enrollments at the high school for the next eight years are: 2010-2011: 1,842; 2011-2012: 1,894; 2012-2013: 1,936; 2013-2014: 1,996; 2014-2015: 2,072; 2015-2016: 2,061; 2016-17: 2,118, and 2017-18: 2,111.

The growing enrollment offers a unique opportunity to look at the high school from a different perspective. Conversation about how to connect with students and deliver curriculum and address different concerns/questions of both staff and students is a daily occurrence. Asking these questions is part of providing a strong program. But all of those questions occur within the structure that currently exists. The really interesting questions are about different ways to "organize" the high school with a 20-percent increase in

the enrollment over the next five years.

Would an advisor system be a good option? Should the students be divided into academies or "houses" to provide an opportunity to meet other students more easily? The process to start a club is fairly easy now, but should it be different? With growing high school enrollment, is there a need for more activities or more opportunities within the same activities or both? Should orientation be different? The transition program is strong, but can a class of 550 be accommodated under this model? What do other high schools of similar size and academic rigor do differently? How are they organized? What about sports teams? What about the fine arts? What about the curriculum offerings?

I don't know the answer to these questions, but I want to participate in the analysis. I believe finding the answers will be a collaborative process: administrators, staff, parents, board of education members and students will all have to be involved. I bring a working knowledge of the district, having sat on the board for seven years, yet I am able to take a "fresh" look at the high school since our son just started last fall and our daughter is still in middle school.

The goal is to provide an excellent education to each and every student, whether the enrollment is 1,800 or 2,100. I am asking for your vote on April 20.

**Julia Walker**  
Westfield BOE Candidate

## Stan Alpert Named to Barron's 'Top 1,000 Financial Advisors'

NEW YORK, N.Y. — Morgan Stanley Smith Barney has announced that Stan Alpert, a Senior Vice President, Financial Advisor in the firm's Short Hills office, has been named to Barron's annual list of America's Top 1,000 Advisors: 2010 State-by-State. The "Barron's Top 1,000 Advisors" is a select group of individuals that is screened on a number of criteria. Among factors the survey takes into consideration are assets under management, revenue produced for the firm and quality of service provided to clients. "I am extremely proud that Stan Alpert is representing Morgan Stanley Smith Barney on this list," commented Jeffrey Crystal, Complex Manager of Morgan Stanley Smith Barney's Short Hills office. "This listing recognizes an elite group of financial professionals who are dedicated to providing clients with exceptional wealth management services."


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agement and wealth management services. The firm's employees serve clients worldwide including corporations, governments, institutions and individuals from more than 1,200 offices in 37 countries. For further information about Morgan Stanley, please visit [morganstanley.com](http://morganstanley.com). (Source: Barron's "Top 1,000 Advisors," February 20, 2010, as identified by Barron's magazine, using quantitative and qualitative criteria and selected from a pool of over 4,000 nominations). Advisors in the Top 1,000 Financial Advisors have a minimum of seven years of financial services experience. Qualitative factors include, but are not limited to, compliance record, interviews with senior management and philanthropic work. Investment performance is not a criterion. The rating may not be representative of any one client's experience and is not indicative of the financial advisor's future performance.

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WL 03/18/10

## Letters to the Editor

### Keeping Community Informed, Involved Is Key to Successful Schools

It is with great pride that I announce my candidacy for the Mountainside Board of Education. I feel it is important for me to undertake this endeavor to continue the excellent educational environment in Mountainside and help foster the relationships that exist between the board and the borough.

I bring with me vast experience working with boards of education in the design and renovation of public schools. I have seen first-hand how working together in cooperation benefits us all. That is the belief I will bring with me to the board of education if I am elected. Keeping the community informed and involved is the key to a successful school system.

I grew up in Springfield and attended Jonathan Dayton Regional High School, where I met my wife, Jeanie Perrotta. I graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a degree in Architecture. I am a project architect at The Musial Group in Mountainside and have been employed there for 14 years.

Jeanie is a fourth grade teacher in Roselle Park. We have two children, Sabrina, age 8, and Jimmy, age 6. We settled in Mountainside because of the close-knit nature and the special opportunity it grants us to be near my family in Springfield and Jeanie's here in town. Jeanie and her family have lived in Mountainside for 40 years, and I feel that these deep roots in the community will offer me special insight into what has made this borough a special place from its beginning. I believe whole-heartedly in small towns and the nurturing environment that they provide their residents.

I have served on the Mountainside Planning/Zoning Board and currently the Construction Board of Appeals. I enjoy coaching my children and yours in PAL Soccer, Mountainside Recreation Basketball and Youth Baseball. I frequently assist my wife at community functions, including the PTA Fall Festival. This year, I have the privilege of being a class parent in Jimmy's kindergarten class.

The Beechwood School holds a special place for me because I was the project architect for the renovations several years back. It will be an honor for me that candidates' night will be held in the Beechwood library that I designed. As an architect involved in the design and construction of public schools, I have spent countless hours working with superintendents and business administrators and appearing before boards of education to help make their educational goals a reality. I have seen how boards of education function and interact with the community. As a project architect, my role dur-

ing design and construction is that of manager, coordinating the work of the contractor with the needs of the owner.

I invite you all to come to Candidates' Night on March 24. I welcome the opportunity to speak to any person or group and would love to hear any concerns they may have.

Thank you for your all of your support and encouragement.

**James Ruban, Jr.**  
Mountainside BOE Candidate

### WF Can't Lose Site of Issues That Affect Our Children Every Day

This past week, I officially became the only new candidate running against three long-term board of education members in the April 20 election. As I have said in previous letters and statements, I am running to help meet the challenges the board of education is going to face if we are to maintain our tradition of excellence. These issues range from the very complex, soon-to-be-mandated cuts in state aid, to the very basic changes that are occurring within our own guidance department.

The recent resignation of WHS guidance director Colleen White, who assumed the position only last August, should be of great concern to our current board of education. Ms. White's resignation makes her the school district's third guidance director in three years. Clearly, something is not right here, and serious questions have to be asked about what went wrong and, more importantly, what can be done going forward.

The job description for guidance director, as I understand it, is to oversee all guidance services for the Westfield school district as well as the high school guidance department. During the past week, I spoke to many parents, and several expressed concern with the lack of stability in our guidance department. Some parents have even resorted to hiring guidance counselors from other towns to make sure their kids get the help they need with course selection and college planning. We can do better than that.

According to the American School Counselors Association (ASCA), the primary goal of a school counseling program is to "enhance student learning through student development." I believe the goal of school guidance counseling should be to encourage students' emotional and academic growth — to teach them how to understand themselves and the ever-changing world around them. The first step in that process is continuity in the guidance department.

Westfield has a long history of wonderful and caring guidance counselors. There are excellent men and women in all our schools who are supportive and helpful to our children every day. But it is this candidate's opinion that we need to get in front of our guidance department problem now — before we have a high school with more than 2,000 students and no one offering effective guidance leadership.

In the coming weeks, we will, no doubt, be discussing budgets cuts and updates from Trenton on state aid for Westfield that could impact us for years to come. I have the financial background and experience to work through that. But, at the same time, we can't lose site of the ongoing issues that are affecting our children every day. Guidance is just one such issue. We need to get it fixed. And we need to get it fixed soon.

I look forward to discussing my views with you in the coming weeks. Please feel free to contact me with your comments or specific issues you would like to see addressed at [slateronboard@gmail.com](mailto:slateronboard@gmail.com) or on Facebook at Slater on Board 2010 (search under "Groups").

### Family Law Attorneys To Present Free Divorce Seminars

WESTFIELD — Dulinski & Black, LLP will present two free divorce informational seminars on Tuesday, March 23, at 7 p.m. and again on Saturday, March 27, at 1 p.m. The seminars will be held at the law firm, located at 226 St. Paul Street in Westfield. Light refreshments will be served.

The seminars will cover topics such as retaining an attorney, alimony, child custody, support and parenting time, equitable distribution, arbitration, mediation and attorney's fees. The informational seminars are free; however, registration is required as space is limited. Please call (908) 233-7400 to reserve your space or to schedule a private free consultation.

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## POLICE BLOTTER

**Westfield**  
Monday, March 8, Joseph Lockhart, 33, of Linden was arrested at the Essex County jail on contempt of court warrants from multiple municipalities. They included warrants from Westfield, in the amount of \$1,500; Linden, in the amount of \$1,200; Roselle, in the amount of \$500, and Plainfield, in the amount of \$800. He was committed to the Union County jail in lieu of bail.

Wednesday, March 10, Santos Perez, Jr., 29, of Jersey City was arrested at First Street and Trinity Place and charged with hindering his own apprehension after allegedly falsely identifying himself to police. He was committed to the Union County jail in lieu of \$1,500 bail.

Thursday, March 11, a 14-year-old male reported that another male juvenile assaulted him as he walked home along the 800 block of Railway Avenue. The victim, who police said was punched, refused medical attention. No arrest had been made at press time.

Monday, March 15, John Byrnes, 27, of Sewaren was arrested at Boulevard and Ross Place on a Woodbridge contempt of court warrant. He was released after posting \$250 bail.

**Fanwood**  
Tuesday, March 2, a bicycle valued at \$200 was stolen from the A&P on South Avenue while the victim was in the store for approximately 20 minutes. The incident is under investigation.

Thursday, March 4, Jojo Thomas, 27, of Scotch Plains was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated (DWI) after an officer observed him sleeping behind the wheel of his motor vehicle at the traffic light at the corner of Martine and Midway Avenues. According to police, the officer witnessed Thomas sit through several red-light cycles without moving, at which time the officer initiated a motor vehicle stop. Thomas was transported to police headquarters, processed and released.

Friday, March 5, Erick Torain, 40, of Swedesboro was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on LaGrande Avenue for allegedly driving with a suspended license, as well as on an outstanding warrant out of East Brunswick. He was transported to police headquarters, processed and released after posting bail.

Friday, March 5, Corey Hewitt, 24, of Plainfield was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue on an outstanding Plainfield warrant in the amount of \$150. He was transported to police headquarters, processed and released.

Sunday, March 7, Lashon Alston, 33, of Plainfield was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Terrill Road on an outstanding warrant out of Cranford. According to police, he was transported to police headquarters, processed and turned over to the Cranford Police Department for failure to make bail.

Sunday, March 7, Cheryl Fzabo, 31, of Clark was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Martine Avenue on an outstanding warrant out of Florham Park in the amount of \$165. She was transported to police headquarters, processed and released.

Thursday, March 11, a resident of the 60 block of Locust Avenue reported that, on several occasions, someone dumped loose trash on his lawn and at his curbside. According to police, there was no damage to his property.

**Scotch Plains**  
Saturday, March 13, Ellen Makiely, 49, of Fanwood was arrested and charged with DWI after a motor vehicle stop, at which time the officer smelled the strong odor of alcohol. He was transported to police headquarters, processed and released.

Saturday, March 13, Oluwakemi Campbell, 20, of Staten Island, N.Y. was arrested on an outstanding warrant after a motor vehicle stop. She was transported to police headquarters, processed and released.

Sunday, March 14, Cornell Davenport, 48, of Newark was arrested and charged with DWI after a motor vehicle stop, at which time the officer smelled the strong odor of alcohol. He was transported to police headquarters, processed and released.

Sunday, March 14, a resident of Concord Road reported that she left her credit card at a store and when she returned, it was missing. She also reported that someone had made several hundred dollars worth of purchases without her authorization.

Sunday, March 14, a resident of Evergreen Avenue reported that someone entered his motor vehicle while it was parked in front of his house and removed his cell phone and iPod, valued at \$400.

Sunday, March 14, a resident of Raritan Road reported that someone damaged his motor vehicle while it was parked in his driveway.

**Mountainside**  
Tuesday, March 9, a resident came into police headquarters to report that she was the victim of ATM fraud after receiving a fraud alert from the Bank of America. According to police, \$1,650 was fraudulently withdrawn from her account before the bank froze the account. A new card was issued and the compromised check card was cancelled.

Tuesday, March 9, a resident came into police headquarters to report that he was the victim of ATM fraud after his card was declined at a restaurant. According to police, he contacted Bank of America and was advised his account was frozen due to fraudulent activity in which someone withdrew \$1,012 from his account.

Tuesday, March 9, a resident came into police headquarters to report that he was the victim of ATM fraud after receiving a fraud alert from Bank of America. According to police, a total of \$1,189 was fraudulently withdrawn from his account on several different occasions before the bank froze the account. The compromised check card was cancelled.

Tuesday, March 9, a resident came into police headquarters to report that she was the victim of ATM fraud after receiving a fraud alert from Bank of America. According to police, a total of \$1,806 was fraudulently withdrawn from her account on several different occasions before the bank froze the account. A new card was issued and the compromised check card was cancelled.

Tuesday, March 9, a resident came into police headquarters to surrender six 12-gauge shotguns for destruction. According to police, the items were placed in evidence bags and turned over to the detective bureau.

Tuesday, March 9, a resident came into police headquarters to report that she was the victim of ATM fraud after receiving a fraud alert from Bank of America. According to police, a total of \$806 was fraudulently withdrawn from her account on two different occasions before the bank froze the account. A new card was issued and the compromised check card was cancelled.

Tuesday, March 9, a resident came into police headquarters to report that she was the victim of ATM fraud after receiving a fraud alert from Bank of America. According to police, \$483 was fraudulently withdrawn from her account. When a second attempt was made to withdraw the same amount, it exceeded the daily limit, at which time the bank froze the card. A new card was issued and the compro-

missed check card was cancelled.  
Tuesday, March 9, a patron at a Route 22 restaurant reported that someone smashed the passenger side window of his mother's car while he was inside the restaurant. According to police, an iPod valued at \$400 was removed. It was determined the scene was contaminated by the victim when he entered the motor vehicle, so no further evidence could be obtained.

Wednesday, March 10, Abdul McKenzie, 23, of Newark was picked up at the Newark Police Department and charged with an outstanding warrant out of Mountainside. He was processed and released after posting bail.

Wednesday, March 10, an attendant at a Route 22 gas station reported that a Hispanic male, driving a red Ford Explorer, came into the gas station and ordered \$30 worth of gas. According to police, the attendant was suspicious of the suspect because of the way he parked his vehicle on an angle facing Route 22, so the attendant wrote down the license plate and a telephone number that he obtained from a "for sale" sign in the window of the vehicle. After receiving the gas, the suspect did flee the scene without paying and the attendant notified police. The incident is under investigation.

Wednesday, March 10, a resident reported to police that he was the victim of ATM fraud after being notified by Bank of America of suspicious withdrawals totaling \$1,000. According to police, the victim has been in contact with the bank, and the matter was turned over to the detective bureau as part of an ongoing investigation into ATM fraud that occurred at Bank of America in the preceding weeks.

Wednesday, March 10, a patron of a Route 22 storage facility reported that he was removing items from his storage unit and overheard a conversation between a white male and a black male, both dressed in suits and ties. According to police, one of the men told the other to "put it back," while the other responded "he won't miss it; he has plenty." On two separate occasions, the victim reported hearing a coin hit the ground and one of the men state, "Yeah, I like this," according to police. When the victim got home, he looked inside a box that had been cut open with a pen and realized that a 1993 Morgan Silver dollar, valued at \$500, was missing.

Wednesday, March 10, a resident came into police headquarters to report that she was the victim of ATM fraud after receiving a fraud alert from Bank of America. According to police, a total of \$866 was fraudulently withdrawn from her account on two different occasions. The incident was turned over to the detective bureau as part of an ongoing fraud investigation, police said.

Wednesday, March 10, a patron at a Route 22 movie theater reported that after seeing a movie there, he realized he had left his wallet behind. According to police, a subsequent search failed to locate the wallet, and all credit cards were cancelled.

Friday, March 12, a resident came into police headquarters to report that he was the victim of ATM fraud. According to police, a total of \$1,792 was fraudulently withdrawn from his account on four separate occasions. The victim stated that he did not remember using the Mountainside branch of Bank of America since Christmas time, but does use the branch located in Westfield, police reported.

Friday, March 12, a resident came into police headquarters to report fraudulent activity involving his Bank of America account. According to police, the victim reported that a total of \$505 was fraudulently withdrawn from his account. The compromised card was cancelled and replaced, and Bank of America credited the funds to his account, authorities reported.

Saturday, March 13, a resident of Ledgewood Court reported that her garbage can, described as large and black, went missing sometime overnight. According to police, she put her garbage out around midnight and when she looked outside at 7:45 a.m., the can was missing.

Saturday, March 13, a resident reported that he was the victim of ATM fraud. According to police, a total of \$1,506 was fraudulently removed from his account at Bank of America on three separate occasions.

Saturday, March 13, police responded to the report of a tree that had fallen on a motor vehicle in the vicinity of Fox Trail and Deer Path, causing extreme damage to the vehicle. According to police, the tree belonged to the victim and no one was home at the time the tree fell.

Saturday, March 13, police responded to a report of a tree that fell on a residence on Puddingstone Road. According to police, a large tree fell on the left side of the home and a large branch was observed protruding into the living room. The fire department responded and cut the tree off of the roof and placed a tarp as a temporary barrier until the homeowner could repair the damage.

Sunday, March 14, an officer on routine patrol heard a transmission from Scotch Plains police headquarters at 11:44 p.m. regarding a vehicle that had fled a motor vehicle stop and was heading towards Mountainside. According to police, the driver of the vehicle was said to have turned off the vehicle's lights to further avoid apprehension. The officer positioned himself in the third west-to-east U-turn so that he could have a clear view of both directions on Route 22 and also block traffic from entering the roadway and possibly into the path of the suspect.

The officer observed the suspect's vehicle, described as an older model, blue, two-door Ford Probe with white lettering or graphics near the driver's side door, police reported. The officer then activated his emergency lights and attempted to catch up to the suspect, who was thought to be traveling at approximately 90 mph, but lost sight of the vehicle at the Springfield/Union border.

### Officer Who Left Gun Won't Face Charges

WESTFIELD — A Borough of Chatham police officer who last fall allegedly left a loaded .45-caliber firearm in a backpack on a town street will not face charges in Westfield, authorities confirmed this week. Police found Sergeant Roy George, 34, of Clark intoxicated on Elm Street late in the evening last October 12. His backpack was found in front of a Sinclair Place home.

Westfield Police Captain Clifford Aucher told *The Westfield Leader* Tuesday that Officer George will not face charges in Westfield, noting, "there's no criminal charge for losing a gun." Chatham referred the matter to the Morris County Prosecutor's Office, which reviewed it and sent it back to the borough. A hearing on the case is scheduled for later this month.

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