

## Cranford/Garwood/Area News

# Garwood BOE Approves \$8.4-Mil. Tentative Budget

By CHRISTINA M. HINKE  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**GARWOOD** – The Garwood Board of Education approved Tuesday a tentative budget for the 2012-2013 school year totaling \$8,439,831, which includes a general fund of \$7,682,554 and special revenues of \$134,160, with \$7,250,529 to be raised in taxes.

Taxes would be raised 2 percent, said Janine Murray, the board's business administrator. A public hearing to discuss the budget will be held Thursday, March 29, at 7:30 p.m. at the Lincoln School.

The proposed budget represents an increase of \$262,226 in tax levy and a \$461,342 hike in spending for the budget.

Since the district moved its election to November, and the budget is at the 2-percent cap, the budget will not be voted on by the public. BOE Finance Committee Chairwoman Sue Groning said the district "would not lose anything," such as staff and services, with the budget as it stands.

Cranford's Brookside Place School's first grade class told a

story and sang a song they wrote with their teacher, Donna Schlencker and Principal Michael Klimko, at the start of the meeting to emote their thankfulness to the Garwood Board of Education. Cranford Superintendent Gayle Carrick and Mary Venditti, president of the Cranford Board of Education, thanked the board for allowing Brookside to use Garwood's Washington School for 104 days while Brookside was renovated after the destruction caused by Hurricane Irene.

Washington School has been closed and this month was leased to the Westfield Area "Y" for five years. The "Y" has yet to open the new facility.

From September to December there were three suspensions, as well as three incidents of bullying in the district, said Superintendent Teresa Quigley in her report. From the February 21 through March 20, there were six reports of bullying, four were considered normal and two were considered bullying, she said.

Negotiations Committee Chairman John Sullivan said the Garwood Education Association and the board of education are discussing salary guides. The teacher's association and the district have reached an agreement, however, the contract has yet to be ratified. "A tentative agreement is reached; we are going back and forth on salary guides," Mr. Sullivan said.

"It's the last detail that needs to be addressed before both parties ratify the agreement," said board attorney John Geppert, who said the ratification of the contract is "imminent."

## Local Knights Schedule Semi-Annual Fish Fry

**GARWOOD** – The Garwood Knights of Columbus will have their semiannual Fish Fry event on Friday, March 30, from 6 to 8 p.m. at their council hall. Catered by Thistles, the dinner will include French fries, coleslaw, dessert and coffee. Advance tickets are \$12 for adults and \$10 for children under 12. Tickets at the door will be \$15. Participants may dine in or take out their meals.

Tickets can be purchased weekdays after 4 p.m. at the council hall, located at 37 South Avenue in Garwood, opposite PathMark. On weekends, individuals are asked to call (908) 789-9809 first after 2:30 p.m. Parking is available behind the Knights hall off of Willow Avenue. Advance tickets are strongly recommended. For more information, call (908) 789-9809 after 4 p.m.



Christina Hinke for The Westfield Leader

**SPECIAL THANKS...**Cranford's Brookside Place School first graders told a story and sang a song they wrote along with their teacher, Donna Schlencker, and Principal Michael Klimko, at the start of the Garwood Board of Education meeting to emote their thankfulness to the board for letting them use Washington School for 104 days while Brookside was renovated after the destruction caused by Hurricane Irene.

# GW Planning Bd. OK's Home Addition on Walnut

By DELL SIMEONE

Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

**GARWOOD** — The borough's planning board last Wednesday night approved a home kitchen extension for a home on Walnut Avenue.

Craig and Sonja Gibson of 312 Walnut Avenue, whose property is a non-conforming 61-by-90-foot lot, said they intend to add a 12-foot by 16-foot extension to their kitchen. The extension will be 23.5 feet from the property line and the neighbor's side yard. The home has a front-yard setback of 29.9 feet. They presented photos of the yard to the board.

Mr. Gibson said he was creating living space for his growing family. Responding to a question of conformity to the neighborhood by Mayor Patricia Quattrochi, Mr. Gibson assured the board that the addition would be even or

match up with the other homes on the block. Mr. Gibson said to reconfigure the inside of the home, so the extension would fit within code, would be too expensive and entail moving a staircase, and, therefore, be a hardship for he and his wife.

Mary Ware of Third Avenue, a neighbor of the Gibsons, spoke in favor of the addition. "I'm interested in young people staying in Garwood," she said.

Board member William Nierstedt said, "I'm not indifferent to their situation, I have children myself, but we have a non-conforming lot depth. Anything less than 25 feet from the property line I can't support. I have problems with the backyard."

Board chairman Robert Pender commented, "We have to look at what's good for Garwood as well." He added, "We want families to stay in Garwood, especially families that care for their homes."

Board member Donald Frazier added, "In order to support the application, as submitted, conditions should be placed on the rear yard setback being no less than 23.6 feet from the property line."

The application was approved with that stipulation. Mr. Nierstedt voted against the measure. The next planning board meeting will be Wednesday, March 28, 7:30 p.m., at the Garwood Municipal Building, located at 403 South Avenue.

## Dietician Joins Staff At Garwood ShopRite

**GARWOOD** – Heather Marino, a registered dietitian (RD), has joined The ShopRite of Garwood to operate the store's new in-store dietitian service. She will offer customers nutritional information and guidance to help influence better food choices.

## UC GOP to Hold Convention Saturday

**CRANFORD** — The Union County Republican Committee will hold its convention this Saturday at the Orange Avenue in Cranford. Candidates will be selected for or be supported for U.S. Senate, Congress and the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders. The convention begins at 9 a.m.