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**Paul Peyton**  
 ASSIGNMENT EDITOR  
**Suzette F. Stalker**  
 COMMUNITY  
**Betsy Burgdorf**  
 EDUCATION & ARTS

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**Letters to the Editor**

**Improvement Authority Provides Background on Animal Shelter**

This is in response to the recent letter of Margaret Sur, of Del Air, Md., who questioned what the Freeholders "did" with \$6.5 million she believed to be allocated for a Union County animal shelter. There has been no bonding for an animal shelter. To correctly put the animal shelter project in perspective, I submit the following information:

In 2006, the County of Union entered into an inter-local services agreement with the Union County Improvement Authority ("UCIA"), which gave the UCIA the authority to find a site for the animal shelter, manage its construction, and issue bonds to finance it. Importantly, because of difficulties that began with locating a site, no bonds have ever been issued for an animal shelter and no bonds will be issued until there is a viable project.

Initially, the UCIA chose a site for the animal shelter in Springfield, on property leased by the county from the State of New Jersey, Department of Transportation (DOT), in Houdaille Quarry. The UCIA asked the DOT to amend the lease so that the financial investment in the animal shelter would be protected if the DOT decided it wanted its property back. Two succeeding DOT commissioners refused to agree to amend the lease. Next, the UCIA selected property, and to build on it, the UCIA would require per-

mission from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Green Acres Division. The Green Acres Division refused to consider the request.

In an ongoing search for viable property the UCIA and the county have considered several county-owned properties for the animal shelter. Acquisition of property and other fiscal issues have caused the Board of Chosen Freeholders and the administration to reorganize their priorities for necessary projects, which require bonding.

There are many of us who want a new, state-of-the-art shelter in Union County that will provide resources for unwanted and stray animals, and offer adoption services to give these animals a second chance, in addition to aiding municipalities in cost containment for mandated animal services. Based on a revisit of the county's priorities for on-going projects that require capitalization during these economic times require us to wait.

I'm assured that the animal shelter remains a priority for Union County government and there is an extraordinary interest in this project from our residents. Bonds will be issued at the proper time.

**Charlotte DeFilippo**  
 UCIA Executive Director

ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ



**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 come from the board game Diction Deception.**

**Answers to last week's arcane words.**

1. Eustomatous - Having a well-developed mouth
2. Smaragdine - Pertaining to the emerald
3. Fluctisonous - Resembling the sound of waves
4. Petard - A kind of firecracker

**KILLIGREW**

1. Cornish crow with red feet and beak
2. A small bell similar to a sleighbell
3. A traitor; turcoat
4. A lake dwelling built on an artificial island

**TUMBEKI**

1. A gipsy
2. A species of green tea from China
3. A small globular vessel of polished brass
4. A kind of Persian tobacco

**DEINOUS**

1. Balanced; stable
2. Sharpness; eagerness
3. Arrogant; haughty
4. Uselessness; of little or no value

**STRABISMUS**

1. Cross-eyed
2. Formed like a fan
3. A tendency or leaning
4. A scar or ulcer underneath the skin of sheep

**Memorial Day Calls Upon All Americans To 'Occupy Freedom'**

Remember them all Monday, Memorial Day: America's military men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their nation and its people, from the Revolutionary War to present-day conflicts. The uniforms of these fallen heroes may have changed over the centuries, along with the enemies they faced and the battlefields and seas on which they fought. All of them, however, gave their fellow human beings the same precious gift - the gift of freedom.

It was a gift the American colonists gave their families and their neighbors when they challenged the mightiest empire in the world for the right to form an independent nation. It was a gift Civil War soldiers gave to American men, women and children held in bondage. It was a gift the "Greatest Generation" of World War II gave to millions in Europe, and guaranteed for an entire world.

It was this same gift so many others carried with them to Korea, Vietnam and many other fronts throughout the world, and which American troops continue to bring to the peoples of Afghanistan and Iraq today. Even during unpopular conflicts, our military ranks never wavered in their determination to bring that gift to others who had lost their freedom, or perhaps never tasted freedom at all.

Memorial Day's origins can be traced to the 19th Century practice in various American communities of decorating the graves of Civil War soldiers. General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, inaugurated this day of remembrance with a proclamation dated May 5, 1868. The first observance took place

on May 30, 1868, when the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery were adorned with flowers. This holiday originally commemorated Civil War dead exclusively, and for many years was called Decoration Day.

New York was the first among the states to officially recognize the holiday, in 1873. By 1890 all the northern states had followed. However, southern states opted to honor their war dead on different days until after World War I, when the holiday was broadened to serve as a memorial to Americans who died in all wars.

In 1971, an act of Congress established Memorial Day as a national holiday, observed on the last Monday in May. Falling on a three-day weekend each year, Memorial Day also has become known as the unofficial kickoff to summer. We enjoy picnics, trips to the shore and other leisurely pursuits. These activities are not inappropriate, but they should not eclipse the true meaning of the holiday.

This Memorial Day, let us remember to fly our flag, a symbol of that priceless gift for which so many fought and died. Attend the parades, as a "thank you" to all American service members, living and deceased, who ensured that this gift survived. Decorate the graves of those lost in defense of their nation.

The biggest tribute we all could pay is in how we live our lives - giving as we have received with heart and faith in each other. Stop asking what you deserve. You may get it. Don't Occupy Wall Street - Occupy Freedom.

**FairTax Concept Promoted for Primary Election on June 5**

The Primary Election will take place in New Jersey on Tuesday, June 5. We have valuable information for you about where the U.S. Senate candidates from New Jersey stand on the FairTax.

On the Republican side we have: Joe Rullo, www.rulloforsenate.com, who is an unconditional FairTax supporter. Joe Rullo has pledged to co-sponsor the FairTax if elected to the Senate. Joe Rullo's web site reflects that position. Joe Rullo has pledged to run for only one term and contends that this pledge will keep him from bowing to pressure from the leadership and to the pressures of reelection. Joe Rullo believes that he then would be free to be an independent voice and co-sponsor the FairTax.

Bader Qarmout, www.bgq4nj.com, who has said he is open to the FairTax or the FlatTax, but has not committed to the FairTax.

Joe Kyrillos, www.joekyrillos.com, who has been briefed but has not committed to the FairTax.

On the Democratic side we have: Robert Menendez, www.menendezforj.com. Menendez's staff has been briefed, but Menendez has not committed to the FairTax. Menendez has no oppo-

sition in the Democratic Party.

We do not know the positions of the minor party candidates, but they will not be on the Primary ballot.

If you are a registered Republican or an unaffiliated voter, you can vote in the Republican Primary. If you are a registered Democrat, it is too late for you to change your affiliation to vote in the Republican Primary. That deadline was 55 days before the Primary Election. You can un-affiliate or re-affiliate, if you wish, now in time for the next Primary Election.

If you have not registered to vote, you need to do so for the next election. To vote, you must be a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older by the time of the election, a resident of your county for 30 days and not disqualified. You must register no later than 21 days before the next election. You can register, among other places, with your municipal or county clerk.

We hope this information will help you in exercising your most important right as an American citizen.

For more information contact John J. O'Rourke, volunteer FairTax state director, (732) 458-9271, (732) 814-7875, jorourke468@comcast.net.

**Jim Bennett**  
 Summit

**Letters to the Editor**

**Community Players Fundraiser Was A 'Huge Success'**

Mobile Meals of Westfield recently held a fundraiser on Friday, May 11 at the Westfield Community Players in Westfield for the performance of *Don't Dress for Dinner*. It was a huge success and the money that was raised will help us subsidize the 17,000 meals we deliver each year.

The evening would not have been successful without the support of many local businesses. First, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Westfield Community Players who so graciously opened up their establishment to our organization. In addition, we would like to thank the many local businesses that donated the baskets that were part of our tricky tray auction: Adlers Jewelers, the Somerset Patriots, Casa Di Pizza, the Farmhouse Store, The Giants and Jets organizations, 16 Prospect, Turning Point Restaurant, Westfield Seafood, ShopRite Liquors, ShopRite, Westfield Symphony Orchestra, Ahrrr's Coffee Roastery, Keurig, Stew Leonard's Wine in Springfield, Hynes Jewelers, Kilkenny House, Italian Pantry, Perrotti's Meats, Periwinkle's, Dryer Farms, Jay's Cycle, and Bath Junkie. We would also like to thank Ferraro's Restaurant and Buona Pizza in Westfield for the trays of food that were donated, and to Bovella's Pastry Shop for the desserts for the enjoyment of those who attended. Lastly, we would like to thank all those who attended that night and who supported our organization.

Mobile Meals is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. We have been generously supported for many years by the Westfield United Fund and also receive support from Exxon and several other area foundations. We deliver over 50 meals, Monday to Friday, to the towns of Westfield, Cranford, Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Clark, Garwood and Mountainside. With food prices and the price of packaging rising, the amount raised will help us to fray these costs.

The evening was such a success and we have been asked by the Westfield Community Players to come back next year. So, if you were unable to attend this year's performance, hopefully, you can attend next year's!

To all those who donated and attended and made this a success: Thank you!

**Mary Doyle, Board of Trustees**  
 Mobile Meals of Westfield

**Letters to the Editor**

**MS Teachers' Union Rejects BOE Offer as Unreasonable, Demands Settlement of Their Contract Now**

Since July 1, 2010, the Mountainside Education Association (MEA) has been negotiating in good faith with the Mountainside Board of Education, but there have been many bumps in the road. In the midst of negotiating, there has been turnover on the Board of Education, administrators have left our district, and leaders in our association have fallen ill. We were compelled to file for mediation due to the previous board's unwillingness to discuss negotiations items in a fair and proper manner. Unfortunately, the process was not successful because the Board of Education was unwilling to narrow down their excessive proposals as was suggested by the mediator. Several weeks later two Board members abruptly resigned their positions on the board, leaving us at a standstill. Despite all of this, and considering the fact our association members have been working under an expired contract for

almost two years, we continue to go above and beyond, devoting our time to school events and extracurricular activities.

Making matters worse, at the end of the 2010 school year the Board imposed a salary freeze for all association members for the year 2010-2011 without negotiating this in good faith or fairness. Regardless, our association members remained committed to our students and to our professional commitments.

While we were able to move forward with the newly seated board this year, the Board is still unwilling to give us a fair and reasonable salary. While we are aware of the current fiscal climate in our nation, and we, the Mountainside Education Association members, are grateful to be employed in what we consider to be an outstanding district, we can no longer sit idle without a fair contract. We have agreed to the Board's

changes in the existing contract as a compromise in an effort to settle, and have offered suggestions that will save the district money. In return, we have been offered an unreasonable salary proposal. This is not acceptable.

We want to see your tax dollars go towards your children's education rather than towards the BOE lawyers and state-appointed mediator fees. Mountainside residents please call your Board of Education members and urge them to settle the contract now.

We, the teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians, nurses, secretaries, and Child Study Team members of the Mountainside School District, will continue to provide a positive and effective learning environment for our students.

Let's Settle Now.

**Suzanne Jenks**  
 President, MEA

**Westfield Community Must Step Up When It Comes to Pedestrian Laws**

I am lucky to be writing this letter. Yesterday, May 17, I was almost killed. While walking across the North Avenue traffic circle (near the now-jinxed Lord & Taylor) with the white pedestrian logo fully lit, a quick reflex jump back prevented me from getting mowed down by, not just one, but two SUV's that were roaring through the intersection. I screamed. But neither one of them bothered to stop or give a thought to my welfare.

To make matters worse, as I froze in the middle of the intersection, I overheard a motorist who had clearly witnessed the near-miss accident while waiting for the light to change say to her car companion. "What's her problem? She doesn't even have the right of way."

I quickly turned to her, saying, "As a matter of fact, I do. You drive in this state? About time you knew the law."

OK but shaken, I finished walking safely to the sidewalk. Then, only seconds later, I watch in horror as two cars almost collided at the circle on South Avenue as the person with the right-of-way (head of the circle) had to brake on a dime for the person bearing right who not only didn't yield, he didn't even look.

That's when the real tragedy sank in for me. In the heartbeat of a few minutes, there might have been two more Westfield fatalities. Local news headlines, everybody talking about what a senseless shame, someone should do something, blah blah blah. And then, like before, nothing.

A few months ago, a woman was killed trying to cross North Avenue by Tuttle Parkway, arguably one of the most dangerous traffic areas in our town. (It's bad enough that we need paid crossing guards to escort able-bodied 13- and 14-year-old students to school). Are there plans in place to install a traffic light?? Will there ever be?

Why do we as town residents accept and endure the reckless behavior of others without voicing our outrage? And why is what little money being appropriated for road renovations being wasted? I remember the summer seven or eight years ago when most of the South Avenue circle was ripped up and we had to put up with smell of tar in the air for months.

Whatever was being done was supposed to make the traffic patterns safer.

Well here we are, years later, and everybody still drives around the circle like they own it, ignoring Yield signs and police presence. How many of those emergency sirens I hear all day long are due to some poor innocent (who had the audacity to try and walk somewhere in this town) getting hit by a late-to-pickup-my-kid from baseball practice mom in her Navigator? Or the trusting soul in his car who believes that traffic signs are going to be obeyed getting broadsided by a teen driver in an Audi who never knew you were supposed to yield the right-of-way?

Westfield is a privileged town, I get it. But I also know that we as a community have to step up, effect change and stop enabling stupidity.

**Gail Seagull**  
 Westfield

**Curmudgeon of Foul Balls, No Rational Basis**

I am responding to your (*Star-Ledger*) newspaper report over a foul ball at Union Catholic in today's (last week) paper.

The school was there before the guy (that assaulted the student). Before he purchased his home, he should have looked around and seen a school and understood that kids play ball at school.

Therefore, he had no rational basis for complaining about foul balls, and the town (Scotch Plains) should throw the book at him.

On a different level, and as a human being, he should be gratified that kids have sports to play that sharpens their collective minds and makes them better human beings (and he should applaud that effort). Would he rather have the kids hang around and get in trouble?

I would hope the entire neighborhood speaks to this curmudgeon and sets him straight.

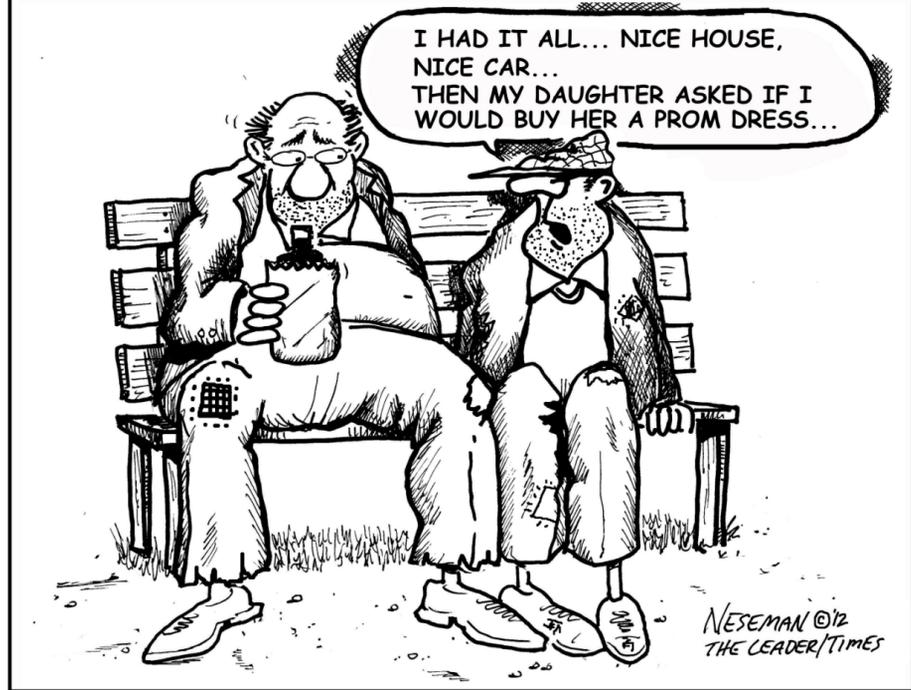
**Carl Swenson**  
 Westfield

**Letters to the Editor**

**Union County Freeholders**

Elizabeth, New Jersey  
 (908) 527-4200

**Deadlines**  
 Please be early for next week!  
 E-Mail - editor@goleader.com



**Your State Legislators**

---LD-21---  
 Sen. Thomas Kean, Jr. (R)  
 425 North Ave. E.  
 Westfield, N.J. 07090  
 (908) 232-3673  
 Asm. Jon Bramnick (R)  
 251 North Ave. West  
 Westfield, N.J. 07090  
 (908) 232-2073  
 Asm. Nancy Munoz (R)  
 57 Union Place, Suite 310  
 Summit, N.J. 07901  
 (908) 918-0414

---LD-22---  
 Sen. Nicholas Scutari (D)  
 1514 E. Saint Georges Ave.  
 Linden, N.J. 07036  
 (908) 587-0404  
 Asw. Linda Stender (D)  
 1801 East Second St.  
 Scotch Plains, N.J. 07076  
 (908) 668-1900  
 Asm. Jerry Green (D)  
 17 Watchung Ave.  
 Plainfield, N.J. 07060  
 (908) 561-5757

**7th Congressional District**  
 Representative Leonard Lance, 425 North Avenue E., Westfield, NJ 07090 (908) 518-7733

LD-21 includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford.  
 LD-22 includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark and Linden.

**E-mail**  
 senkean@njleg.org  
 sencutari@njleg.org  
 asmbramnick@njleg.org  
 aswmunoz@njleg.org  
 aswstender@njleg.org  
 asmgreen@njleg.org

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**Mary Doyle, Board of Trustees**  
 Mobile Meals of Westfield

**HAVE A SAFE HOLIDAY**



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