

Lance Holds Roundtable On Tourette Syndrome

By DELL SIMEONE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

MOUNTAINSIDE – A roundtable discussion on Tourette Syndrome was hosted by Rep. Leonard Lance (R-7th) last Friday afternoon at the Mountainside Library. Present were two youngsters who have Tourette Syndrome and their mothers, a mother of a child whose 14-year-old son has a spectrum disorder, her 16-year-old son who volunteers to help other children with disorders, and Faith Rice of the New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome in Somerville.

Mr. Lance has co-sponsored the Collaborative Academic Research Efforts (CARE) for Tourette Syndrome Act, introduced by Rep. Albio Sires (D-8th) as bill H.R. 146 in January. Rep. Lance said, "I am proud to lend my support for CARE. This bipartisan legislation is crucial in fostering advocacy and awareness of Tourette Syndrome."

"Congressman Lance has been a supporter for at least 10 years. He has been very helpful. I thank you for your confidence in our vision," Ms. Rice said. The legislation would amend the Public Health Service bill to expand the programs of the National Institute of Health (NIH) with respect to Tourette Syndrome. The disorder is often misdiagnosed and misunderstood. It is an inherited neurological spectrum disorder that affects one in 100 children and adults, and is characterized by vocal sounds and movements known as tics.

Ms. Rice said five years ago the New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome partnered with Rutgers University to collect DNA for research needed on the disorder. She also said that about 60 percent of the children with the disorder have Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).

South Plainfield musician and high school senior Corey Singer, who has Tourette Syndrome, advocates for his disorder. Jill Pavel, Corey's mom, said, "I am proud of my child, I have to be an advocate for him."

"I really want to be able to be involved. Beside Tourette, I have Asperger Syndrome and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), but, I'm incredibly happy. I grow more aware of the tics. I'm not ashamed of who I am, I'm proud," he said. Cory said he would like to see more education about the disorder, especially in school and with teachers. He will be one of 16 youngsters featured on the Bravo New Series "The Kandi Factory" on Tuesday, May 21, at 10 p.m.

Josh Tapper, a 12-year-old student at the Terrill Middle School in Scotch Plains, was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome when he was 7, said his mother, Susan Klapper. "I didn't know

anything about it," she said. She said Josh has become this own advocate. After reading a book in school about the disorder, Josh told his class, "I have Tourette." "That encouraged me," he said.

Ms. Tapper said, "It's important that teachers know about it. Before they weren't too cooperative." Josh is active and enjoys cooking. He goes to cooking camp and to space camp. "It's very important that the school understands. Going into middle school and high school, make sure you have somebody to go to," Ms. Pavel said.

Anne Burke of Summit, and her son, Thomas, a 16-year-old junior at Seton Hall Prep in West Orange, attended Mr. Lance's forum.

"We don't have Tourette in the family, but my son Stephen, who is 14, is a special needs child. He has cerebral palsy, OCD and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)," Ms. Burke explained. "I'm in the PTTA of the Horizon School in Livingston. Any research that is done will be helpful."

Ms. Rice added, "Do you know the number of people with Tourette in Mendham? One in 73." Ms. Burke responded, "Those people have the ability to seek diagnosis and get treatment. The people in Newark don't have the means to do that. This collaborative effort is critical." Her son, Thomas, 16, volunteers at Hwang Karate in Springfield.

"I assist special needs kids with basic karate moves and general behavior," Thomas said.

Ms. Burke said she went to the fire department with a diagram of her house to show where Stephen's room is. She told the firemen, "Just because he is non-verbal does not mean he is not cognitive of what is going on."

Ms. Pavel responded, "That is often a misconception people have." Ms. Burke added, "We have set up I.D. cards for the kids on the bus which identify their disorders."

Rep. Lance said, "In education, it is significant that we have individual education plans (IEP) in New Jersey. Many other states don't have that." He said to the assembled guests, "I admire your courage, especially the young people. It's always good to put a face on the cause." He also said, "I want to thank my colleague, in the New Jersey Assembly, and now in the House of Representatives, Albio Sires, for introducing this legislation."

Those who wish to know more information on the disorder may call the New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome at (908)-575-7350. For those who wish to know more about the legislation, call Mr. Lance's office at (908) 518-7751.



SHARING HER STORY... Holocaust survivor Vera Woolf recently visited fifth-grade students at Franklin School in Westfield to talk about her family's experiences, including their escape from Austria in 1939. She brought historical newspaper clippings and visual aids to help illustrate the struggles of the time period, enhancing the classes' study of the Holocaust and World War II. The event was sponsored by the Franklin PTO Cultural Arts Committee.

Dr. Weiss, Ex.-Kean President Dies; Led College for 20 Yrs.

UNION – Dr. Nathan Weiss, who served as president of Kean College of New Jersey, now Kean University, for 20 years has died at the age of 90.

Joining Newark State College Department of History and Social Sciences in 1961, he became a full professor and department chair in 1967 and president in 1969, according to his obituary published in the April 16 in *The Press of Atlantic City*. He led the university until 1989 and retired as a faculty member in 1999.

During his tenure, the college was transformed from a teachers college to a multi-purpose institution, becoming the second largest state college at the time of his retirement. He presided over the name change from Newark State College to Kean College and the purchase of the Pingry School property, which has become an academic and performance center for the campus.

The University recognized his contributions in 1998 by naming its graduate division the Nathan Weiss Graduate College.

A commemoration program celebrating the life of Nathan Weiss will be held at 2 p.m. this Saturday, April 27, on the East Campus of Kean University in Enlow Recital Hall, 215 North Avenue, Hillside, N.J. A military burial and private interment was held at the State of New Jersey's Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Wrightstown, N.J.

UCC Pres. Elected to Coll. Presidents Board

CRANFORD – Union County College President Margaret McMenamin has been elected as a board member to the Presidents Academy Executive Committee (PAEC) of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

She will serve as the northern region representative for a three-year term, from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2016. The Presidents Academy Executive Committee was created by the AACC Board of Directors to advise the AACC president and chief executive officer and AACC Board of Directors on professional development training for CEOs.

The PAEC serves in an advisory capacity to the AACC president and CEO in planning the Summer Institute and provides special sessions for presidents at the AACC annual convention and at the Association of Community College Trustees' Annual Congress. In addition to service on this national committee, President McMenamin is a board member for the National Junior College Athletic Association.

DWC Discusses Girls' Night Out, Security for 5K Run

By DOMINIC A. LAGANO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD – The Board of Directors of the Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC), the management entity of the Special Improvement District (SID), discussed the success of last Thursday's Girls' Night Out event at its meeting Monday night.

DWC Executive Director Sherry Cronin said Girls' Night Out "was a major, major event for us."

"We had 1,773 women register for the event and we had a lot who came who did not register," Ms. Cronin stated.

Ms. Cronin said participants came from 153 towns across New Jersey, which accounts for over 27 percent of the total 566 towns in New Jersey. The participants also came from four other states: New York, Pennsylvania, Colorado and Hawaii. Thirty-three percent of the participants hailed from Westfield, while 26 percent came from the five towns surrounding Westfield – Clark, Cranford, Fanwood, Mountainside and Scotch Plains, accounting for a total of 59 percent. Scotch Plains had the second highest registrants outside of Westfield.

Of the first 1,000 online registrants, 92 percent checked in at the DWC booth the night of the event, while 27 percent of the first 1,200 registrants checked in the night of the event. A total of 64 percent of all who pre-registered checked in at the DWC booth.

Ms. Cronin stated she was not sure how many people attended who did not register for the event, but said in the following days "many people" reported to her that they had attended.

Ms. Cronin also provided a brief

report on the Downtown Westfield 5K Run and Pizza Extravaganza scheduled for Wednesday, July 24, at 7 p.m.

"The 5K event is rolling along," Ms. Cronin stated. "We've gotten a number of sponsor requests in the last two weeks and we're well above what we expected to be from a budget perspective...and we already have a number of people that have registered to run."

In light of the recent terrorist bombings at the Boston Marathon, Ms. Cronin stated there might be security changes at Westfield's event. "I'm sure we are going to have a committee meeting regarding security and if there's anything we need to change this year...clear bags or something like that in the downtown...we're going to need to talk to the chief of police just to make sure we're doing everything we need to do to make sure the event is safe."

Entrants can find information for registration at the DWC's website, located at WestfieldToday.com.

At the start of the meeting, the board announced that Shawn Hanna has been chosen to replace recently deceased board member Lee Hale, who served in the capacity of board treasurer. Mr. Hanna was previously serving on the board as special appointee of Westfield Mayor Andy Skibitsky. Stephanie Walsh will now assume those duties.

The board next approved a grant for Bridgette's Irish Cottage, located at 15 East Broad Street, a new retailer in town specializing in Irish food, clothing and accessories. The DWC often provides grants to new businesses to offset some of the start-up costs involved.

The DWC's next board of directors meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 20, at 7:30 p.m. The DWC office is located at 105 Elm Street.

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