



GAINING VELOCITY...Runners proceed down Centennial Avenue for the Cranford Velocity 5K race on Sunday morning. *Paul Lachenauer for The Westfield Leader*

Mr. Calcagno Recalled For Law Work, Hist. Preservation

By SUZETTE F. STALKER
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD—Attorney Andrew John Calcagno continued to be remembered by the Westfield community this week for his legal prowess, his work on behalf of 9/11 victims and for his contributions to historic preservation in the town.

A distinguished personal-injury lawyer and Westfield resident for more than 20 years, Mr. Calcagno passed away on May 20 at the age of 54. He and his wife, Regina, are the parents of three children.

Mr. Calcagno was managing partner of Calcagno & Associates, a law firm he established in 1997, representing clients in New Jersey and New York. The practice is located in Cranford. Since launching the firm, Mr. Calcagno had won numerous multi-million-dollar verdicts and settlements for clients, according to the law office's website.

His obituary noted that Mr. Calcagno had additionally "dedicated countless hours of his time pro bono for the victims of 9/11. As a result of his devotion to the victims of 9/11, Mr. Calcagno is listed as a 'hero' in a book published by Trial Lawyers Care."

This evening, June 6, Mr. Calcagno will be honored posthumously during the annual Harry Devlin Awards presentation hosted by the Westfield Historic Preservation Commission (WHPC). He will be recognized for extensive restoration work on Westfield's historic Flatiron Building, located on prop-

erty he owned at 44 Elm Street in the heart of downtown Westfield. The restoration involved removing the structure's existing façade to reveal its original cast iron columns and facilitating the return of stained-glass panels to the building, as previously reported in *The Westfield Leader*.

Last year, the Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC), the management entity of the Special Improvement District, approved what DWC Design Committee Chairwoman Peg Lockwood noted at the time was "the largest grant that we have ever recommended" in support of the renovation project. Ms. Lockwood also had commended the "fantastic job" Mr. Calcagno had done in renovating the Flatiron Building.

The awards program will take place at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Westfield Municipal Building, located at 425 East Broad Street. The public is welcome to attend the ceremony, along with a reception in the recipients' honor. Established in 1992 and culled from nominations from the community, the Devlin awards recognize "outstanding efforts in the restoration, expansion, alteration, and maintenance of older properties," as stated on the WHPC website.

The funeral for Mr. Calcagno took place last Wednesday under the direction of Dooley Colonial Funeral Home, 556 Westfield Avenue, Westfield. Further information is available at doyleycolonialfuneralhome.org.

Mountainside Begins Search For New Administrator

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

MOUNTAINSIDE — Mountainside Borough Administrator James Debbie is retiring next month after 20 years in the part-time position.

Mayor Paul Mirabelli said Mr. Debbie has been employed with the borough for 48 years.

"He's been talking about it (retiring) for a while now," Mayor Mirabelli told *The Westfield Leader*.

The borough placed a classified ad on the New Jersey League of Municipalities' website as well as *The Westfield Leader* seeking candidates for the position.

The deadline to submit an application is Friday, June 7. The administrator is responsible for a \$13-million municipal budget and 60-employee workforce.

"In addition to daily office duties and interacting with residents, the individual will fulfill human resources functions including regulatory compliance, employee benefits administration, recruitment and maintenance

of personnel files," according to the job listing.

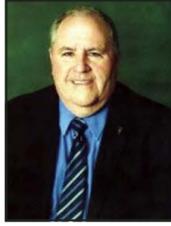
Mr. Debbie served simultaneously as police chief of a borough administrator before retiring as police chief in July of 2014.

Mr. Debbie's retirement comes at a turbulent time following an ongoing lawsuit that was filed May 11, 2018 against the borough's police department over sexual harassment allegations involving a sextoy. The Union County Prosecutor's Office concluded there was no proof that former Mountainside police chief Allan Attanasio pointed a gun at borough officers, as alleged in the lawsuit brought by five borough officers. The allegations in the suit led to the

suspension of Chief Attanasio and two lieutenants. Chief Attanasio and Detective Sergeant Andrew Huber retired last summer. Mr. Attanasio was promoted to chief in February of 2015.

Mayor Mirabelli said the borough council might use an interim administrator if a new administrator is not hired by Mr. Debbie's retirement date.

"We're looking at all of our options," Mayor Mirabelli said.



James Debbie



ACE READERS...Renee Golush, pictured left, of Westfield, and Judy Epstein of Scotch Plains flew to Paris recently with *The Westfield Leader* to shop and attend the 2019 French Open.

Mountainside Council To Oppose State's Rain Tax

By KATE BROWNE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

MOUNTAINSIDE — The borough council received an update Tuesday night from members of the Mountainside Rescue Squad on their plans to purchase a new ambulance.

After three-and-a-half years of fundraising, the new 2020 diesel four-wheel drive Ford will join the fleet in approximately six months. In addition, because of a grant from the Watts Foundation, the squad will be able to replace the 11-year-old stretcher.

On another topic, the council agreed to authorize the sale of several used cars and to apply for a New Jersey Department of Transportation State Aid Grant. In the event the grant is received, the funds will be used to repave and repair several high-volume roads in the community. Among the roads which are being considered are Long Meadow, Beechwood and Mill Lane.

Recreation Director Frank Masella reminded all residents that the Mountainside Community Pool is now open and several new membership categories are available. This year, the concession stand will be operated by Darby Road, and Mountainside Pool Club apparel will be available for sale. Mr. Masella also indicated that registration for the popular

playground summer camp program is ongoing.

Council members also agreed to include a resolution opposing the imposition of the recently enacted "rain tax" on the agenda for the Tuesday, June 18, meeting. According to Mayor Paul N. Mirabelli, in March, Governor Phil Murphy signed the "Clean Stormwater and Flood Reduction Act," also referred to as the "Rain Tax." The new law allows towns and counties to create stormwater utilities to manage contaminants, such as road salt, animal waste and pesticides, and to impose a tax on residents. Homeowners would be billed based on how much their property contributes to the stormwater runoff.

Five percent of the funds collected would be sent to the state. Supporters of the bill contend it is necessary to help towns and counties fund the infrastructure improvements needed to deal with runoff from roofs, driveways and parking lots. Critics of the new law say that New Jerseyans just cannot support yet another tax, particularly as the state has one of the highest tax rates in the country.

The council also agreed to support the upcoming food pantry collection sponsored by Foodstock, a nonprofit that collects non-perishable items for local food pantries.

Board of Health

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In other business, the Westfield Board of Health discussed amending the bylaws to allow all board members a vote at any particular meeting, whether they are an alternate or full board member. Board member Thomas O'Neill said the bylaws must clearly reflect whether or not alternate votes count even if a quorum has been met or if full board members are present.

Mr. O'Neill said the unanimous board verbal sentiment is if a board member or an alternate attends a meeting, his or her voice should be heard. Alternate board members are appointed by the mayor for various reasons, stated Mr. O'Neill.

He added that during a vote certain board members might have to recuse themselves because of a conflict of interest. During this time period, an alternate would be proposed to replace the full member as a vote, assuring a quorum can be met, stated Mr. O'Neill.

A second instance where an alternate may be needed is if a board

member is ill or on vacation, stated Mr. O'Neill.

The main concern is having the bylaws fully resolved or articulated on what votes count and what votes do not count (if any) when a contentious or close vote is decided upon, stated Mr. O'Neill. Addressing the bylaws now will eliminate any confusion in the future, he stated.

The board discussed banning flavored-vape products from stores which sell gas, food or alcohol. The ban would leave nicotine vaporizers to be sold in smoke shop settings, stated Ms. Avallone.

In addition, a revised ordinance would ban store owners from allowing customers to sample a flavored vape oil before purchase.

No official ordinances addressing vaporizer bans or products has officially been introduced by the board. The ordinances are still in the discussion stage and would need to be reviewed and implemented by the town council.

Primary

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In the race for State Assembly, Democrats Lisa Mandelblatt of Westfield and her running mate, Stacey Gunderman of New Providence, received 2,470 and 2,569 votes, respectively, to defeat Jill Lazare of Summit, who garnered 1,558. Ms. Mandelblatt and Ms. Gunderman will move on to face incumbent Republican members Jon Bramnick of Westfield and Nancy Muñoz of Summit, who were unopposed in the Primary on Tuesday, and an Independent ticket of Martin Marks of Cranford and Harry Pappas of Springfield.

In the 22nd Legislative District, Democratic incumbent Assembly members James Kennedy of Rahway, 6,588, and Linda Carter, 7,020, defeated Carlos Rivas, 4,018, and Mark Lighten, 3,616. They will face Republican Patricia Quattrocchi in November.

Rink

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February 28, 2019. The calls included four motor-vehicle complaints, 11 parking complaints and two public service complaints that lead to 10 summons being issued. There were six noise complaints and four medical calls.

In other business, Recreation Director Don Bogardus advised that the Memorial Pool opening was a great success with positive feedback on the new splash pad, the lounge chairs, and free WiFi. Director Bogardus urged residents who wish to join the pool to contact the Recreation Department. In addition, he advised the public that Heather Re-Ferratti will be promoted to assistant recreation director. Registration for the summer Playground Program is ongoing. The program will begin on Tuesday, June 25 and end on Friday, August 9 and will include new field trips and traditional events such as the camp carnival.

The commission received updates on the renovations to Kehler Field, which are on track to be completed by the end of August and thanked all of the user groups for their flexibility and cooperation during the renovations. The Commission also approved an Eagle Scout's proposal to install wooden bike racks at Tamaques Park.

Clarification

A story in the April 28 issue of *The Westfield Leader* on the municipal budget should have clarified that the Westfield Town Council appropriated \$494,000 of its \$14,511,357 surplus (as of January 1, 2019) into the 2019 municipal budget, leaving a surplus of \$9,517,357.

Westfield Council

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uled for last Thursday, Councilmen Doug Stokes and David Contract said, as PSE&G currently is evaluating the proposed route of the new high-voltage power lines to extend along the Conrail line.

Town events were announced. This Sunday on Quimby Street the Downtown Westfield Corporation will hold a fitness event with a variety of fitness activities from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Art in the Park will follow from 1 to 3 p.m. at Mindowaskin Park, where there will be artists set up at the park, as well as chalk for kids to create their own art on the sidewalk. The Farmers Market is open for the season on Saturdays and will feature live music.

Next year, the town anticipates holding a yearlong celebration, culminating in early fall, of Westfield's 300 years (1720-2020). Mayor Brindle said.

The RVL Mayors' Alliance is to hold a rally on the platform of Track 5 at the Penn Station in Newark on Tuesday, June 18, from 5 to 7 p.m. The purpose of the rally will be getting people to sign a petition to support the Alliance's mission to obtain immediate restoration of off-peak direct service, as well as reallocation of dual locomotive trains to enable peak direct service.

The town council will potentially vote on a contract to lease part of Gumbert Park to Ken Anderson to operate the Westfield Ice Rink again at the park. Mr. Anderson may be present at the meeting to present his plan, Mr. Gildea said.

Ms. Rowley had read a letter from the Borough of Garwood that was received Tuesday, stating it does not support the return of the ice rink to Gumbert Park, a park that borders the borough.

The letter noted the "negative impact to the community, businesses, traffic, and quality of life, particularly to

Garwood citizens of the Pointe and Lofts at Garwood..." The letter said negative impacts included the lighting, parking, traffic, noise, volume of visitors and calls to the Garwood Police Department.

The letter states that Mr. Anderson is seeking to operate for additional hours, have music and add a concession stand. It also said that would "compound the negative impact to the community."

Additionally, the town has raised a pride flag to celebrate LGBTQ Pride Month in June.

The town also recognized National Gun Violence Awareness Day on Friday, June 7, with members of the Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America present. On Saturday, June 8, at 9 a.m., in Nomahegan Park, there will be a walk in observance of Gun Violence Awareness Day, the members of Moms Demand Action announced.

Westfield High School (WHS) student and president of the WHS Dream Team Jamie DeDea was named the Union County Municipal Alliance Volunteer of the Year.

During public comment, Donna Canavan, a member of the tree preservation commission, said the tree ordinance will "strengthen the legacy of our trees."

Resident Greg Kasko also inquired about what he called the theft of time in the Department of Public Works, saying employees are "taking advantage of the system." Mr. Gildea said Mr. Kasko's statements are "untrue."

An investigation of the matter was performed by an outside attorney, costing the town \$4,000, Mr. Kasko said. He asked why the county prosecutor's office was not used, a service he said would not have cost the town. Mr. Gildea said the use of outside attorneys is "not uncommon."



UCC CLASS OF 2019...Union County College Applied Science graduates show off their decorated caps prior to their May 22 graduation held at Kean University. *Jennifer Glackin for The Westfield Leader*



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