



**BETTER ACCESSIBILITY...**The Westfield "Y" has received a series of grants since 1994 from the Union County Department of Economic Development's Community Development Division which has enabled the facility to become more accessible to members with disabilities. Pictured, left to right, are: Courtney Clarke, Supervising Program Analyst for the Union County Community Development Program; Westfield First Ward Councilwoman Gail S. Vernick; Roberta Kresch, a member of the Westfield "Y"'s Board of Directors and Chairwoman of the "Y"'s Americans with Disabilities Act Committee; Lee Hale, Westfield "Y" President; William Smith, Program Development Specialist with the Union County Office for the Disabled, and Union County Freeholder Mary P. Ruotolo, Americans with Disabilities Advisory Board Liaison.

## Grants Help Westfield 'Y' Improve Accessibility

WESTFIELD - A series of grants received since 1994-1995 from the Union County Department of Economic Development's Community Development Division has enabled the Westfield "Y" to make its facility even more accessible to those with disabilities.

The first grant, for \$20,000, facilitated independent access by those with disabilities through the installation of improved lighting on the "Y" ramp, as well as new doors, including an automatic door, and a call button for anyone requiring assistance at the bottom of the ramp.

A second grant of \$11,000, received in 1995-1996, enabled the "Y" to purchase and install specially adapted exercise equipment which can be used by the disabled. This equipment included the Pro II Power Trainer for cardiovascular training, and the Biodex Cable Column for use of weights.

The grant also allowed for the purchase of four evacuation chairs to assist disabled individuals in exiting the facility in the event of a fire or other emergency.

In 1996-1997, a third grant of \$75,000 went toward part one of a two-phase project designed to bring the locker room area of the "Y" into conformance with the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act.

The funds were used for detailed architectural drawings which would result in the removal of barriers in the locker room. This renovation paved the way for construction of six companion dressing areas in which caregivers or other helpers could assist individuals with special needs.

The grant money also went toward some of the demolition work and preparation for later renovations at the site.

The fourth grant, in the amount of \$50,000, was received in 1997-1998 for the second phase of the project. This money went toward actual construction of ADA-accessible dressing rooms and a fully-accessible restroom.

"When I was on vacation in Italy, wherever I went, individuals with disabilities would have had difficulties," stated Union County Freeholder Mary P. Ruotolo.

"In the United States, we have the Americans with Disabilities Act which is meant to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to all public buildings. Here in Union County, we take that seriously," she added.

"I'd like to applaud the 'Y' in Westfield for looking to help all of their members. I'd also like to applaud the hard-working staff of the County's Division of Community Development for helping to bring this progress to fruition," concluded Freeholder Ruotolo.

## Ice Sculpting Contest Planned For 'Welcome Home' Finale

WESTFIELD - The annual "Welcome Home to Westfield" festivities will continue today, Thursday, December 17, with musicians from the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts performing in downtown stores.

Rosemary Topar will play the violin in Ann Taylor from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.; Anna Evans will play the coronet in Lancaster Ltd. from 7 to 7:30 p.m., and Donny Williams will play the string bass in Williams Sonoma, also from 7 to 7:30 p.m.

On Saturday, December 19, the Watson Highlanders Pipe Band, based in Freehold, will perform Irish, Scottish and holiday classics with bagpipes from 11 a.m. to 1

p.m. throughout the downtown.

The annual Ice Sculpting Contest will be held this Sunday, December 20, at noon in downtown Westfield. Individuals and teams will compete for prizes as they transform blocks of ice into sculptures along Quimby and Elm Streets.

The events this weekend will culminate the annual "Welcome Home to Westfield" promotions sponsored throughout December by the Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC) and the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

For further information, please call the Chamber of Commerce at (908) 233-3021, or the DWC at (908) 789-9444.

## New Program Director Joins CONTACT We Care

FANWOOD - CONTACT We Care, based in Fanwood, has announced that Iona Tomaszewsky of Westfield joined the agency in November as the Program Director overseeing the volunteer-staffed telephone hotline and crisis intervention service.

Ms. Tomaszewsky has nearly 20 years of experience providing direct clinical service to troubled adults and teenagers in Europe and the United States.

She most recently served as Vice President of Charity Projects for the American Friends of Warsaw in Poland.

A 1982 graduate of the University of Warsaw, with Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees in Clinical Psychology, Ms. Tomaszewsky also received certification as an alcohol and drug counselor in 1995.

She worked at Morristown Memorial Hospital as the Supervisor of the Chemical Dependency Unit for the Juvenile Evaluation and Treatment Services.

Ms. Tomaszewsky also worked as a therapist, dealing with psychological and psychiatric problems through the Parenting Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital in Morristown.

CONTACT We Care, a United Way agency, is a 24-hour telephone



Iona Tomaszewsky

hotline and crisis intervention service located in Union County. Trained volunteers take calls from those in need throughout Union, Somerset, Middlesex and Essex Counties.

For information about volunteering at Contact We Care, please call (908) 889-4140.



**PICTURE PERFECT...**Postcards of Mindowaskin Park are being sold by The Friends of Mindowaskin Park as a fundraiser to continue the group's work toward preservation and restoration of the park. The packet of postcards depicts eight views of the park in all seasons, and is available for \$5. They may be purchased at the following locations in town: Blindworks, the Miller-Cory House Museum, Periwinkle's Fine Gifts, Rorden Realty, The Town Book Store, and Williams Nursery. For more information, please call Postcard Chairwoman Karyn Tate at (908) 654-9671.

## Alzheimer's Support Group To Meet Today at Overlook

Overlook Hospital in Summit, in conjunction with the Northern New Jersey Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, sponsors several free

monthly support groups for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's Disease, other dementia illnesses, chronic conditions and behavior problems.

A support group meets the fourth Thursday of each month in Conference Room 1 of the Bernice and Joseph J. Negley Education and Conference Center at Overlook Hospital, 99 Beauvoir Avenue.

This month's meeting will be held today, Thursday, December 17, because of the Christmas holiday. Participants may attend a meeting from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., facilitated by Shari Isenberg-Cohen, or one from 7 to 9 p.m., facilitated by Jack Becker.

Another support group meets the second Thursday of every month between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. in Conference Room 1 with Shirley Howell, facilitator.

The regular schedule for meetings will resume on Thursday, January 28. For further information, please call Ms. Isenberg-Cohen at (908) 522-2953.

## First Night Westfield Seeks Volunteers

WESTFIELD - Organizers of First Night Westfield '99 have announced that volunteers are needed to work on New Year's Eve to man the various sites around Westfield.

Individuals interested in volunteering for two-to-three-hour slots between 6:45 and 11:45 p.m. may call the First Night Hotline at (908) 518-2983 and leave a message in Box No. 3.

Assignments will be made by the First Night volunteer committee. All volunteers will receive a First Night Westfield '99 T-shirt, which will entitle them to enter all venues when they are not working.

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