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Drama Students Rehearsing For Production of *Cabaret*

97Mar02

Students of the award-winning Westfield High School Drama and Music Departments are now in rehearsal for the spring musical *Cabaret* to be performed Thursday through Saturday, March 13 to 15, at 8 p.m. in the Westfield High School auditorium, located at 550 Dorian Road.

The cast of 40 student actors are under the direction of Joseph Nierle, Westfield High School drama teacher and the recipient of the Paper Mill Playhouse's 1996 "Outstanding Director" award; Lorinda Santos Haver, named "Outstanding Choreographer," and James Beil, nominated for "Outstanding Musical Direction."

Veteran actors include Charlie Irwin, who plays the emcee; Jesse Blumberg, portraying Cliff Bradshaw; Robyn Lee is Sally Bowles, Anne Brummel plays Fraulein Schneider, Matt Greenlaw is Herr Schultz, Cecily Schaefer has the part of Fraulein Kost and Josh Silverstein is Ernst Ludwig.

The Kit Kat Girls, Megan Brenan, Allie Feldman, Nikki Hester, Corinne Liebrich, Kate Mortenson and Rebecca Wilhelms, are rehearsing some of the Bob Fosse dance numbers, while the familiar songs of *Cabaret*, "Money, Money, Money" and others ring through the auditorium. Stage Manager for the production is Coleen Donovan.

Tickets are now on sale and may be purchased from any of the cast members or by calling 789-4549 after 3 p.m.

From Photo: "Learning Their Steps"...Rehearsing a Bob Fosse dance number for the Westfield High School spring musical *Cabaret*, left to right, are: Choreographer Lorinda Santos Haver and Allie Feldman, Megan Brenan, Charlie Irwin (hidden), Becca Wilhelms, Rachel Rosenblum (hidden), Corinne Liebrich and Krissy Del Duca. Daily rehearsals began in January and performances will be given on Thursday through Saturday, March 13 to 15, at 8 p.m. The Broadway-caliber show will have reserved seating for all three performances. For program advertisements and ticket information, please call 789-4549.

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Scotch Plains Mayor Credits Business and Professional Association With Rebuilding Downtown 97mar27

Mayor Irene T. Schmidt was the guest speaker last Friday at the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association's annual dinner dance at Snuffy's Pantagis. In her address, Mrs. Schmidt thanked the association for the opportunity to speak at the event, which benefits the organization's Downtown Beautification Program, although she likened it to "preaching to the choir" in terms of the organization's proven dedication to the community.

"You are here tonight because you have already made a commitment. A commitment to play a major role in our proud community of involved people," the Mayor told an audience of nearly 60 people. "Your role is unique because you are planning and rebuilding a major part of community life in Scotch Plains, and also protecting your livelihood."

Recalling the era before shopping malls, the Mayor noted that "small downtowns were the community centers around which people structured their lives, interacted with neighbors and established the quality of life to which they aspired." She added that even today "downtowns are often the environment in which you earn your living and provide essential goods and services to your neighbors.

"If there is a perceived crisis in downtowns today, it stems from the fact that the original downtown centers developed around the horse and pedestrian," the Mayor explained.

"Shopping malls and strip malls developed around the automobile. As we became more mobile, we drifted away from our hometown/downtown roots. We were drawn to the car, to the highway and to the mall," she continued.

Mrs. Schmidt told how, when she was a young mother in Scotch Plains, the family only had one car, so she depended on the stores in her local downtown to provide her with the things she needed. She recalled how she shopped for all her children's clothes at the Stork Fair on Park Avenue, where she said she enjoyed the "personal service" as well as the availability of high-quality merchandise.

She reminisced about how once, when she was living in Fanwood, the assistant to the owner of Stork Fair came to her home with a selection of three raincoats when her daughter, Francie, didn't have a raincoat to

wear to school and Mrs. Schmidt did not have a car to get to the store. The assistant, Dennis Pedicini, and his mother later became the owners of the store.

"We know what life has become as a result of malls," the Mayor commented. "We have also seen the evolution in our thinking and way of life. Women who previously might have been entranced by the huge variety of goods in malls and who may at some point in their lives stayed at home, probably enjoyed a day out at the mall."

She maintained, however, that the perception of malls has changed as shopping centers have become "massive, impersonal and traffic clogged." She also noted that "women do not have time today. They value their personal time and do not find malls stimulating or desirable."

Invoking Yankee baseball legend Yogi Berra's phrase that "it's so crowded, nobody goes there anymore," the Mayor remarked that people are now looking for ways in which to simplify their busy lives. She said people "want to shop in a friendly atmosphere where they can purchase their needs without the necessity of an all-day 'outing.'"

"You can key in this idea with the emphasis on health and exercise in our lives," Mrs. Schmidt observed. "Most people would rather spend their personal time playing golf, biking or participating in their children's sport. They need a pleasant place to shop."

She described the downtown as "the heart of the community" which needs to be planned and nurtured.

"An active and thriving central business district creates a source of community pride, creates a positive identity and a sense of place, while supporting local property values," the Mayor said. "However, to accomplish this, we will need an active partnership, representing concerned citizens and local government and most of all, you, business owners and property owners."

"I am so proud of the dedication and energy which is being generated by the Business and Professional Association," Mrs. Schmidt continued. "You have had a vision and determination to work together in accomplishing more in a few short years than has been accomplished over the last 25 years or more."

The Mayor, who argued that "small, quaint towns" are now being favored over the congested environment of malls, reported that the first meeting of Scotch Plains' Downtown Development Committee went "very well." Among the key points highlighted by the meeting, Mrs. Schmidt said, was that service is the competitive edge. She said that the committee's major goals include physical revitalization of the township, as well as marketing and streetscape improvements.

"My personal goals are to better manage the traffic through our main street. I have already expressed my concerns to Police Chief Thomas O'Brien and he has responded in a very positive manner as to the work that the department is planning in conjunction with the county to help with the traffic problem," Mrs. Schmidt explained.

The Mayor said she has arranged for Scotch Plains to join Downtown New Jersey, a networking of small downtowns, and has spoken to the Mayor of Watchung and a Councilman from North Plainfield concerning the prospect of regional meetings with the county, "so that we can have a unified voice before the Department of Transportation with regard to the mediation of the serious traffic generated through our towns as a result of the Route No. 22 expansion and some of the expansion in Berkeley Heights.

"We are not against development," she emphasized. "We do, however, have to make our concerns known regarding the traffic problem."

The Mayor reported that she will be "working hard" to achieve buried underground utilities and to provide attractive street lamps. "I will be needing your help here," she said. "Some ideas here could incorporate signage which would be easily visible from the street."

She said she intends to work with the Downtown Development Committee and the governing body "to achieve adequate and efficient parking."

Mrs. Schmidt wrapped up her speech by reiterating the importance of personal attention which customers enjoy in their local downtown. The Mayor described how several weeks ago, she and her granddaughter, Jennifer, participated with the Girl Scouts in Purple Ribbon Day, during which youngsters adorned the township with purple ribbons as a way to promote awareness of the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse.

Along their route on East Second Street, Mrs. Schmidt said she and the Girl Scouts came upon Seymour's Antiques. When the proprietor, Seymour Stein, learned what the children were doing for the township, he brought out a basket of assorted old and decorated thimbles as presents for the girls.

"I am certain many of the young ladies had no idea what a thimble was used for but they were so delighted to be presented with such a lovely little surprise. I know Jennifer was quite intrigued with her gift and we had to go home and immediately find a sewing project which kept her busy for some time.

"You don't find this kind of kindness at a mall," she concluded.





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Westfield Planning Board Report, Week 3/10-3/16

by Anna Murray, 97Mar20

On Tuesday evening the Westfield Planning Board convened for its regularly scheduled meeting. The first order of business was not an agenda item, but a review of Westfield streets under consideration for partial or total vacation. Charles H. Brandt, town attorney, presented the following streets for proposed vacation: Clarence Street, Whittier Avenue, Roosevelt Street, Coddling Road and Midvale Way. Later he briefly explained the particulars regarding each applicants request for vacation. Applicants making vacation requests are, primarily, hoping to do construction on their adjacent properties. Adding a portion to their lots would bring the property size into conformance with the town Land Ordinance.

"The ultimate decision as whether or not these streets will be vacated will be made by the Town Council at its March 25th meeting," explained acting Chairman Robert L. Newell. "Mr. Brandt is asking the Planning Board, in light of its planning expertise, to advise the town council of its recommendation as to whether or not the proposed vacations are consistent with the town's master plan."

Many of the audience members were citizens concerned by the proposed Clarence Street subdivision. The application to subdivide a single lot and combine it with the vacated portion of Clarence Street creating four new lots, was the last scheduled item on the agenda.

One audience member asked if the portion of Clarence Street proposed for vacation was protected by its possible status as a wetland. Town engineer and Board Secretary Kenneth B. Marsh, had earlier excused himself from deliberations, however he did address the wetland issue. "There is no official designation of Clarence Street as a wetland," stated Mr. Marsh. "There are however, indications that wetlands might be present."

Board member Gary T. Hall suggested that the board delay recommendation on the Clarence Street vacation until further investigation was done on its status as a wetland. Further the expense of such an investigation was deemed to be the responsibility of the applicant. The actual application for the Clarence Street subdivision was scheduled to be carried over to the April 7th meeting.

The board also chose to delay a recommendation on Whittier Avenue until hearing the application for subdivision. Similarly, this application will be carried over to the April 7th meeting. The board did recommend the vacation of all or portions of Coddington Road, Midvale Way and Roosevelt Street.

The first application to come before the board was put forth by Drs. Ian and Paul Langer DDS. of 140 St. Paul Street. The applicants were seeking site plan approval changing the use of the premises from residential to offices. The applicants also sought variances for pre-existing, non-conforming conditions involving side-yard setback, lot size, frontage and improvements coverage.

The smaller lot size poses problems specific to the requirements put forth by the American Disabilities Act. Presenting the plans for the alterations to the Langer offices was Ms. Barbara Vincentson, architect for the applicants. Ms. Vincentson's plans included a covered lift which would transport handicapped individuals from the driveway to the primary entrance located at the front of the building.

The street, while zoned for professional user still maintains a distinctly residential character. (currently there are five residential homes on St. Paul Street and six professional buildings with residences. Ms. Vincentson stated throughout her testimony that all plans and alterations were consistent with the neighborhood, keeping its residential integrity intact.

Richard Elbert of St. Paul Street, had concerns with the proposed plans. The applicants plan to have the front porch enclosed by glass and replace the single door at the front entrance with double doors. "An open porch is consistent with the other buildings in the neighborhood. No other property has double doors at the primary entrance," observed Mr. Elbert. "further, one of the 30 foot sycamore trees in the front of the property is to be cut down. I think we should save that tree. Lastly, the proposed outside lighting will cause glare into residents homes after dark. I would hope this would somehow be addressed."

Ms. Vincentson stated that in redoing the driveway the root system of the tree would be so severely damaged that it would inevitably die. However, she noted, her client would be willing to plant a similar, albeit less mature, tree.

The board granted site approval and all variances to the applicant with the following conditions: a similar tree, 8 to 10 feet in stature, replace the felled sycamore; the front door be changed from double to single; a curb cut be placed in the front drive to aid the handicapped; appropriate shrubbery be planted to shield the handicap lift from view; and a timer be placed on the exterior lighting system with lights to be shut off after 9 p.m.

The board granted site approval and variances to the Journeyman Title Agency Inc., of 918 South Avenue. The applicant also sought a waiver for the curbing, striping and paving of the driveway required by the town Land Use Ordinance. The applicant stated that at the current time paving the driveway would cause undo hardship. Approvals of site plan, variances and waivers were granted with the condition the driveway be paved curbed and striped within a time period not to exceed two years.

Also carried over to the April 7th meeting were the following applications: Kelley and Lawson, minor subdivision Edgar Road; and the estate of Roosalie Pleninger, minor subdivision 315 Jefferson Avenue.



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Westfield Fire Department 97mar16

monday, march 10

- One hundred block of Elmer Street -- power line down.
- One hundred block of Mohawk Terrace -- structure fire.
- One hundred block of Mohawk Terrace -- kitchen fire.

tuesday, march 11

- Two hundred block of Lamberts Mill Road -- smoke scare.
- Two hundred block of Prospect Street -- carbon monoxide detector activation.
- Two hundred block of Welch Way -- power line down.
- One hundred block of Elm Street -- unintentional alarm.

wednesday, march 12

- Two hundred block of Prospect Street -- carbon monoxide detector activation.
- Four hundred block of North Avenue, West -- automobile accident.
- Five hundred block of Alden Avenue -- water condition.

thursday, march 13

- One hundred block of Cacciola Place -- structure fire.
- One hundred block of Cacciola Place -- structure fire.
- Five hundred block of Colonial Avenue -- smoke scare.

friday, march 14

- Two hundred block of Clark Street -- system malfunction.
- Six hundred block of Benson Place -- vehicle fire.

- Seventeen hundred block of Grandview Avenue -- good intent call.
- Six hundred block of Willow Grove Road -- good intent call.
- Two hundred block of Sinclair Place -- power line down.

saturday, march 15

- Twelve hundred block of Boulevard -- water condition.
- Two hundred block of East Broad Street -- elevator rescue.
- Seven hundred block of Austin Street -- water condition.
- Three hundred block of Baker Avenue -- unintentional alarm.

sunday, march 16

- Four hundred block of First Street -- carbon monoxide detector activation.
- Six hundred block of Norman Place -- lock out.
- Three hundred block of South Avenue, West -- service call.
- One hundred block of Kent Place -- carbon monoxide detector activation.
- Three hundred block of West Dudley Avenue -- automobile accident.
- Nine hundred block of Coolidge Street -- smoke scare.



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Legislators Launch Reelection Campaign in District No. 22

Senate President Donald T. DiFrancesco, Assemblyman Alan M. Augustine and Assemblyman Richard H. Bagger kicked off "Campaign '97" on March 12, at L'Affaire restaurant in Mountainside. The legislators announced their intention to run for reelection to legislative office this November.

The District No. 22 delegation is elected by and represents the people of Berkeley Heights, Chatham Township, Clark, Cranford, Dunellen, Fanwood, Garwood, Green Brook, Long Hill Township, Mountainside, New Providence, North Plainfield, Scotch Plains, Warren Township, Watchung, Westfield and Winfield

Senator DiFrancesco, a lifelong resident of Scotch Plains, has served in the New Jersey Senate since 1979 and was first elected by his colleagues to serve as the presiding officer of the Senate in 1992.

Assemblyman Richard Bagger resides in Westfield and has served in the New Jersey Assembly since 1992.

Assemblyman Augustine of Scotch Plains also has served in the New Jersey Assembly since 1992.



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"SINGING GOLD", The Royal Chord Company Quartet, 36th novice quartet gold medalist. (left to right: Alan Manning, tenor; Chuck Mears, lead; Scott Ward, bass, and Alan Winkler, baritone).

Rahway Valley Jerseyaires Host Annual Quarter Contest

The Rahway Valley Jerseyaires Chorus of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc. hosted its 36th Annual Novice Quartet Contest on February 22 at Roosevelt Intermediate School in Westfield.

Thirteen quartets, from 11 choruses and four states, in the Mid-Atlantic District singing society, competed in the contest.

The Jerseyaires meet in the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm Street, Westfield, every Monday evening at 7:30 p.m.

"Men of all ages are invited to sing the good old songs," said Richard Haig, President of the Rahway Valley Chapter.

The Rahway Valley Chapter's funding was made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Department of State through a grant administered by the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.



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Westfield Hosts Indoor Lacrosse Tournament

An indoor lacrosse invitational was held at the Peddie School in Hightstown on March 8 and 9. Westfield Lacrosse Club seventh- and eighth-grade A Team, coached by John Flood and Bruce Simone, hosted the event that drew teams from New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia.

After two days of fierce competition in the converted Peddie hockey rink, the Braddock Road Youth Club from Virginia took first place in the championship game against Ridgewood, with a final score of 18-16. Ridgewood finished second with the Westfield team placing third in a field of six teams.

Westfield won the tourney's first game, 13-9, against the Potomac A team from Maryland. John Henry Flood displayed an aggressive attack scoring four goals. Additional goals were won by attackmen Chris Dodge, Matt Hall, Rob Larsen, Jacob Dupont, Mike Farley, Brad Gillen, Glen Hurley, Conner Mulvey, and Brendan Molloy -- all with one goal each. Superior team play was demonstrated by Conner Mulvey and Matt Simone with numerous assists and strategy setups for shots on goal.

Virginia won against Westfield by a slim score of 9-7. Scoring for the Blue were Conner Mulvey with five goals, with Dodge and Hall scoring one goal each.

The third game pitted Westfield against Montclair-Delbarton. Westfield won the game, 15-6, led by the scoring of Hurley with three goals, Dodge and John Graham with two each, and Farley, Hall, Gillen, Dupont, Mulvey, Molloy and Greg Elliott with one goal each.

Westfield won the fourth game, 14-9, against the Maryland B Team. Unbeatable teamwork was demonstrated by Farley who assisted Tom Wade in scoring five goals. Aggressive attack man Dodge also scored five goals, assisted by Hurley and Farley. Additional goals were scored by Elliott with two, Jack Kane and Farley with one each.

Westfield's final tournament game was lost to Ridgewood with a score of 7-6. A fierce attack was launched by the Ridgewood team forcing the Blue onto the defensive for most of the game.

Goal tenders Tim Mansfield and Dan Morrissey had stellar performance on defense in all tournament games.

The Westfield A team won the outdoor season opener against Madison at home on March 15 by a final score of 10-2.



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Nine Home Burglaries Reported Over Weekend

Police Conduct Surveillance Of Targeted Areas; Authorities Believe Incidents May Be Related

by Suzette Staulker, 97Mar20

Authorities are investigating nine home burglaries which occurred last weekend in Westfield, in which money and valuables were taken while the homeowners were away. The incidents, which may be related, are the latest of approximately 24 break-ins which have occurred in town since the beginning of the year, according to police.

Lieutenant Bernard F. Tracy of the Westfield Police Department's Detective Bureau confirmed that the most recent burglaries occurred this past Friday, and Saturday. Two of the incidents took place on Shackamaxon Drive, while the others occurred on Hazel, Boynton and Lawrence Avenues, Clark Street, Seneca, Effingham and Norman Places. Items taken during the robberies included "mostly jewelry and money," he said.

Several other burglaries took place between March 10 and March 13 on Alden and Irving Avenues, on Cedar Street and on Frazee Court, but law enforcement officials do not feel there are strong similarities between these and the later incidents, according to Lieutenant Tracy. He noted, for example, that the weekday burglaries occurred during the afternoon, while the ones last weekend happened in the evening.

Because the latest burglaries all took place during a two-day period and some within close proximity to one another, Lieutenant Tracy said there was "a good possibility" the incidents are related. He added that the burglaries also had certain things in common, such as pillowcases having apparently been used to gather up valuables, as well as signs of forced entry. The lieutenant said in most of the instances, entry was gained either through windows or through side or rear doors.

Lieutenant Tracy said that a male suspect was seen exiting a home shortly before 9 p.m. on Lawrence Avenue on March 15 wearing a royal blue backpack which matched the description of one taken during an earlier incident on Shackamaxon Drive.

The suspect was described as being 5 feet, 8 inches tall and having a medium build, of unknown race, and wearing black clothing and a

black ski cap, according to police. Westfield police and a K-9 unit supplied by the Union County Sheriff's Office tracked the suspect to Highland Avenue, where it is believed he escaped in a car he had waiting for him.

Police are also investigating a report of a "suspicious vehicle" which was seen in the 800 block of Shackamaxon Drive on March 15, occupied by a white woman, possibly in her 40s, with red hair. The car was described as red, an older model, possibly a Ford Taurus, "which was not in very good condition," Lieutenant Tracy said.

"The Westfield Police Department requests the assistance of our citizens in reporting any suspicious people, vehicles or activity that they think is unusual," Lieutenant Tracy noted. He added that a group of Westfield detectives, in plainclothes and unmarked cars, have been "saturating" the areas where the incidents occurred, in order to respond as quickly as possible to any reports of criminal activity.



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69th Annual Academy Awards

Popcorn™

Movie Review by Michael Goldberger



The world's most famous winners and losers will be identified at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles this Monday night, March 24, as the 69th annual Academy Awards are presented. Certain predictions can be ventured with certainty. Some, not so certain.

In the certain category, Hollywood's biggest evening of the year will be witnessed by a greater worldwide television audience than ever before (it had better for the \$830,000 per 30 second-spot the network will be charging advertisers). Host Billy Crystal will do his funnyman best given the unwieldy nature of this Herculean assignment. Production numbers will be overlong. As will be the show itself. And they won't screen hardly enough vintage film clips to please the true cinema buffs in our midst.

Also for sure, at least one presenter (most likely a woman) will wear a dress that's just too, too, too. Sporting a foreign accent, some bearded winner (most likely a man) of an obscure category will bring all his friends up for the acceptance speech and drone on forever. And for all the complaining about what a lousy show it is, and how it's all such a bunch of vainglorious decadence, there's hardly one film fan among us wouldn't give his eyeteeth to imbibe some of that glittering nonsense. That's for certain.

Less certain is who will win what. Which brings us to the task at hand. The annual humbling of the film critic. Practically as old a tradition as the Academy Awards itself is the curious custom that asks the movie reviewer to metamorphose from would-be pundit to handicapper.

"If you think you know so much, then tell us who's going to win," is the implied taunt.

If your unassuming auditor does well in his picks, it's Hooray For Hollywood. All is well in Filmdom. The 'system' rewards fairly. But should the opposite hold true, then it's as bad as when Casey struck out. For there is no glitteratti in Mudville. All the world loves a winner--- but not someone who can't predict the Oscars. And to the loser go no spoils. But, alas, the show must go on.

Thus, with those cheery thoughts in mind, and without further ado, here are my picks and why:

Best Picture: *The English Patient*. Suddenly the common man has turned highbrow. All sorts of folks liked this obscure but artistically detailed work. Go figure. I'd of preferred *Shine* for top honors.

Best Actor: Geoffrey Rush (for *Shine*). Tom Cruise is too young to get his second Oscar; Fiennes's effort in *The English Patient* can be dismissed as a costume role; Woody Harrelson is at dead center of an unpopular success; and if Billy Bob Thornton wins it'll be like reelecting Jimmy Carter.

Best Actress: Francis McDormand (for *Fargo*). Simply because she was the absolute best.

Best Supporting Actor: Cuba Gooding, Jr. (for *Jerry Maguire*). Talk about horse races. Gooding ("Show me the money!") balanced Cruise to really make *Jerry Maguire* work. But either Macy or Woods would be just as deserving, and Armin-Mueller-Stahl was no slouch either.

Best Supporting Actress: Lauren Bacall (for *The Mirror Has Two Faces*). If they drag Betty all the way out to Hollywood and then don't pick her, they'll have Bogie to answer to. Besides, just who is Marianne Jean-Baptiste?

Best Director: Anthony Minghella (for *The English Patient*). If he can achieve overnight success with such an unlikely product, then why not pick him for a mini sweep of the evening?

Best Foreign Film: *Kolya* (from the Czech Republic). Czechoslovakia winning this category is as common an occurrence as Miss Mississippi taking the Miss America crown.

Best Original Screenplay: Ethan and Joel Coen for *Fargo*. Because this film deserves more than just a best actress award.

Best Adapted Screenplay: Anthony Minghella (for *The English Patient*). It's going to be that kind of a night.

Best Art Direction: *Evita*. It ought to win something.

Cinematography: *The English Patient*. Stunning good looks.....

Costume: *The English Patient*.with clothes to match. Banana Republic stock should rise.

Sound: *Independence Day*. Everything blown up real good.

Sound Effects Editing: *The Ghost And The Darkness*. It just sounds good.

Original Musical or Comedy Score: *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Wasn't this category specifically devised so that someone else could win it along with Disney every year?

Original Dramatic Score: Gabriel Yared (for *The English Patient*). Appropriately haunting.

Original Song: "You Must Love Me" (from *Evita*). Say what you will. Madonna did it justice.

Documentary Feature: *When We Were Kings*. This poor guy Gast has been working on it since 1974. Have a heart.

Documentary Short Subject: *An Essay On Matisse*. Because my childhood friend, Kenneth Mandel, is one of the producers. Really.

Film Editing: *Fargo*. Best flow of all.

Makeup: *The Nutty Professor*. Did you get a load of this guy?

Animated Short Film: *La Salla*. It just feels right.

Live Action Short Film: *Esposados*. Predicting a Latin sweep of the smaller categories.

Visual Effects: *Independence Day*. Best fireworks since Bill told Hillary she ought to take a lower profile.

Enjoy the awards. And remember, as the evening wears on, as you grow sleepy and doze off ... I got them all right, I got them all right!



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Scotch Plains Council Tables Vote On Zoning Amendment

by Jeanne Whitney, 97-03-13

The Scotch Plains Council decided Tuesday to table for two weeks a final vote on a zoning code amendment defining townhouses and building heights while attorneys consider the changes in light of the Council On Affordable Housing (COAH) regulations. Councilwoman Joan Papen said the Planning Board asked for the additional time to review the amendment.

Officials said certain township properties will be affected by the changes if developers seek to build multiple-family housing that includes 20 percent low-to-moderate income units. Neighboring residents of such properties are said to object to the amendment. The township council did, however, unanimously adopt on Tuesday a related affordable housing code change from last year that corrected a "clerical error."

In other action, the council appropriated \$37,500 from last year's Community Development Fund for playground equipment in Farley Park. The improvements will meet standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Township Municipal Manager Thomas E. Atkins said federal grants for these types of projects have dried up due to changes in Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements.

In moving ahead with the \$1.7 million capital improvement project approved last year to upgrade the township sewerage system on the south side, the council authorized the Mayor and clerk to contract with Killam Associates for the design of the pumping stations and sanitary sewers. Fees for the professional services and preliminary plans could run about 10 percent of the total cost, officials said. The south side system connects with the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority. Officials have said the work on the pumping stations will take about two years to complete.

On a separate matter, the council agreed to the purchase of two 1997 Chevrolet model pickup trucks through state contracts for the township Departments of Public Works and Parks and Recreation. The township will also lease and buy five new Ford model police cars under a two-year state contract. The cars are purchased at the end of a one-year lease, officials added, while Mrs. Papen called the plan "cost effective."

A bid to buy chemicals and related supplies for the Scotch Hills golf club was rejected by the council without explanation. New bids will be accepted Monday, March 24, officials said.

The council okayed a special use permit for Fagioli Restaurant on Park Avenue for sidewalk dining. Owner Giovanni Zini agreed to limit seating to eight.

Councilman William F. McClintock, Jr., said the Suburban Municipal Joint Insurance Fund (JIF) -- of which Scotch Plains is a member -- had the best safety record of any JIF in the state.

A figure-eight, one-mile loop through the township was approved by the council for the Sunday, May 18, Freddie Spencer Memorial Bicycle Race. Mr. Spencer, a township resident who was a world class bicyclist in the 1920s and 1930s, is Councilwoman Papen's father.

"In those days, you wore a special glove on your hand and stopped the bike by grabbing the wheel," Mrs. Papen explained. The 10-, 20-, 25- and 40-mile fundraiser races end at the Municipal Building.

In other business, the council recognized both the Scotch Plains Volunteer Rescue Squad for 60 years of service and the Music Department at the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, which has been in existence for more than 50 years.

The council noted that the Rescue Squad has answered over 60,000 calls for help over the years, with some volunteers having served for 40 and 47 years. Mr. McClintock thanked the squad for "outstanding service to the community."

Vincent Turturiello, who heads the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Music Department, credited the community with "realizing the importance of the arts." He said 40 percent of the 1,070 students at the high school are involved in the music program, which includes three concert bands, a marching band, two jazz bands, four choirs, a barbershop quartet and a percussion ensemble. The council noted the "superior" ratings the music groups often garner at competitions.

The council named March 11 as Sister Percylee Hart Day after the Principal of Union Catholic High School received this year's Catholic Secondary Education Award from the National Catholic Educational Association.



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Inaction Forseen for the SID and Westfield Main Street Program

Investigative Report, Part II

Subject: Investigative Report Part1 Main Street - SID

Date: 97-03-17

From: LeaderI@aol.com

To: goleader@aol.com

Dear Horace,

Great concept and medium! Your MainStreet-SID article on the Web site is right on focus and perspective. The correction that should be noted is that you state that the "MainStreet is asking for a bridge loan or grant from Town of approximately \$30,000 to keep it alive until taxes can be collected in the summer." The reality is that our SID board has requested the bridge loan to enable the SID to start it's programs and begin action.

The first budget that the SID proposed had a request for an outright grant from the Town in the amount of \$25,000. That request was an official one made in writing to the Mayor, separate from the SID budget document. The Council rejected that request. The reason cited was that "seven different Council persons had seven different reasons."

The concept behind the SID grant request was that the Town for the last four years had a line item in the municipal budget entitled "downtown revitalization." The Council since Rich Bagger was Mayor has cooperated and supported the "MainStreet approach" to downtown revitalization. It had been the former Mayors and Council persons who were not ready for a SID. They were the ones who pushed for the establishment and development of the "volunteer MainStreet program," rather than the immediate introduction of a SID program back in 1992.

Many of us who were appointed to the Westfield Downtown Committee at that time and were "downtown stake holders," pushed for the immediate implementation of a SID. We were told by the "political powers," that "Westfield needed this "MainStreet" introduction to the concept of Downtown management, before they would politically support the concept of a SID. For three years the town assisted by funding the MainStreet program at \$25,000 per year. This

supplemented the \$200,000 + raised from the volunteer pledges from the residents and business owners.

The last year 1996, the request was made again for \$25,000 by MainStreet but the Council only approved \$12,500 and placed restrictions on use of the funds. The Council's explanation was that they were expecting the SID to be in business early in 1996. The reality was that the Council stalled on the establishment of the SID. The SID board was only enabled by the Town Council in the late Spring of '96 and the SID board appointed in Sept. '96.

Here we are now, over two years after the SID Advisory group went to work. The Chamber of Commerce and it's programs weakened to a state of almost having no program. MainStreet put in the position of being without the ability to raise volunteer pledges because everyone is waiting for the SID to take over.

There is at the current time no active downtown program currently delivering the programs or services required by the SID district or the community. This even though the SID is finally established by ordinance, by-laws in place, and incorporation certificate filed, however the SID still has no funds! The process and programs for downtown revitalization require funding. The SID budget has now been separated from the full municipal budget process.

We are expecting, and have been told that the Council will hear our latest revised budget request this week at it's conference session. They plan to put same before the public Council session on March 25th if they agree to it in conference. The soonest that we can expect any funding is probably mid April. That is however only if the Council approves our loan request and the SID budget as proposed. They could still bounce the budget back to the SID board, and or make line item "suggestions" or changes to the budget. This of course would further set back real funding of the SID program and further delay the SID ability to function and the process of downtown revitalization and improvement.

Please help us and get our Council to step up to the responsibility that they have accepted that of taking action! Enough talk! Enough politics! Let's get to work! The SID board is ready to do it's job. Please encourage the Council to provide us with the funds so that we can implement the SID program.

Regards,

**Joe Spector
SID Chairman
Downtown Westfield Corp.**

**Subj: Re: Main Street and SID, Leader on the Net Today
Date: 97-03-13
From: COMPASS1@aol.com**

To: GOLEADER@aol.com

Horace,

Attached is a letter I'm snailmailing in the morning to my councilmen and to the mayor. I'm also E-mailing it to the mayor. Don Weill, who was on the Save the Rialto committee, called me tonight about his concerns, too. I sense that a groundswell is developing to push and prod these folks to the bargaining table. We have to do something.

AtlanTec will send a similar letter to all of our public officials, probably tomorrow.

Regards,

David Owens
700 St. Marks Avenue
Westfield, NJ 07090

March 14, 1997

Mayor Thomas C. Jardim
220 Ross Place
Westfield, NJ 07090

Councilman James Gruba
356 Wychwood Road
Westfield, NJ 07090

Councilman Matthew Albano
828 East Broad Street
Westfield, NJ 07090

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to urge you to find constructive common ground in your current discussions of a Special Improvement District in Westfield. Please vote to approve interim funding for the S.I.D. and then please vote in favor of the regular S.I.D. budget that is also before you.

I am disturbed by the petty politics that have consumed this issue. Discussion has seemingly not centered on matters of principle or policy, but has degenerated into a turf battle. If this destructive trend continues, whatever turf the winner takes is likely to be barren. You do our town no service by pursuing the present course.

Speaking from my recent experience in working with the spontaneously organized ad hoc group that worked to preserve the Rialto Theater, I must say that our group's efforts could not have succeeded without the cooperation and support of the Westfield Main Street program of the

Westfield Downtown Committee. We need such an organization under the banner of an S.I.D. if Westfield is to restore and sustain a healthy central business district. Without a budget, there can be no discussion or negotiation on the other substantive matters pertaining to the S.I.D.

Please find ways to conciliate and compromise in order to resolve this issue. You need to find a means to unite rather than divide your efforts if ours is to remain a healthy, viable community. The first step in the process should be to settle on a budget.

Sincerely yours,

David Owens

cc: Horace Corbin, Westfield Leader

Editors Note: Investigative Report Part III will be published within the week. It is this paper's hope that as the Investigative Reports accumulate, it does not challenge this writer's knowledge of Roman Numerals.



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Division of Motor Vehicles Westfield Inspection Station Closing

by Jeanne Whitney - 97Mar15

The long-debated state plan to farm out operation of Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) automobile inspection stations to private companies includes the possible closing of the Westfield office on South Avenue, East. State officials have estimated that the move -- which would affect at least 11 and perhaps as many as 24 of the 45 local offices and four regional offices in the system -- will save \$6.2 million per year. A request for bids from private companies to operate the system was put out by the state two weeks ago.

Labor unions representing state motor vehicle inspectors have vowed to fight the privatization of the stations. Officials estimate 150 workers will lose their jobs under the plan's budget. Workers have accused Governor Christine Todd Whitman's administration of pursuing the plan in order to provide jobs for Republicans.

A state appeals court gave workers the go-ahead last month to sue the state over the privatizing. Plainfield and Somerville inspection stations are also on the state hit list for closing, according to the plan.

The state has delayed action on the plan for the past two years but now faces a loss of federal highway funding if more stringent federal clean air measures are not implemented. A need to upgrade inspection equipment to monitor automobile emissions and close stations has been tied in with the privatization plan.

Newly-appointed State Transportation Commissioner John J. Haley, Jr., has said he wants to take advantage of new technology to streamline the DMV system that handles 10 million transactions per year. Along with the introduction of service "kiosks" in shopping malls and computer chip "smart card" licenses, renewals for vehicle inspections and registrations would be for two years rather than annually. Licenses would be valid for five years instead of four, according to the proposals.

The local Westfield inspection station handles 150,000 cases a year, according to 19-year veteran Inspection Supervisor Robert Bennett. "We do an inspection about every minute-and-a-half or two minutes," he said. Inspections under the new plan will run about two minutes longer. The pace and volume at the Westfield station is particularly high, officials say.

Mr. Bennett, who works six days a week at the station, said the station has two lanes to handle inspections but only enough employees to keep one lane open. The local station is now down to five employees from 10.

The station uses a lot the size of a football field on Windsor Avenue behind the station to queue up waiting cars. A state Department of Transportation spokesman has said the Westfield office has serious "stacking and congestion problems." Signs indicate the lot is also used for driver's license tests. Local officials say under the privatization plan, the state would provide the facility for inspection stations, however, staff would no longer be state employees.

Inspectors say their job is not easy. Customers often become irate when vehicles fail the tests, according to inspection station staffers.

Currently, inspections are free at state stations while private garages charge \$20 to \$30. Privatized stations would not be allowed to charge inspection fees, according to the plan.

Recently, a study of a Wayne state-run station that uses upgraded automobile inspection equipment revealed problems that could further delay compliance with federal pollution mandates and privatization of local offices. The new equipment uses higher standards in measuring emissions from vehicle tailpipes and evaporative fumes from gas tanks. The tests run about one-and-a-half minutes longer than the old tests. Vehicles made after 1980 will be subject to the more stringent standards, according to the plan.



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Donnell Carr Is Top Choice For Westfield Council Seat

By PAUL J. PEYTON for The Westfield Leader 97Mar13

The Westfield Democratic Committee Monday night named Donnell Carr as its top choice to fill the unexpired Fourth Ward seat of James Hely on the Town Council. Mr. Hely, an 11-year incumbent, resigned March 3 after citing an increase on his time due to family and business reasons.

Mr. Carr, a resident of Hort Street, has been active in town for many years, although not actively involved in the local Democratic Party.

As required by the Town Charter, the Democratic Party has submitted three names for consideration to the entire Town Council. The other two names put forward by the committee were Rosemary Millet of Norgate and Madeleine Korfmacher of Hazel Avenue.

The council as a whole will name Mr. Hely's successor from the three names submitted. Republicans have a 5-4 majority on the governing body. Mr. Carr has indicated he will seek election in November as Mr. Hely's term was to expire at the end of the year.

It was the unanimous decision of the committee that Mr. Carr be put forward as its first choice to fill the council seat, according to Democratic Committee Chairman Lawrence A. Goldman, who also serves as Fourth Ward Councilman.

When reached Tuesday night, Mr. Carr admitted in the past he has not been enthusiastic about running for the council. He said though, he decided this time around that he might bring "something to the table."

"He was appointed because of his involvement in community activities and because we thought he would have something to contribute to the Town Council," Mr. Goldman explained.

Mr. Carr, who has lived in town for 15 years, is the founder and former President of Concerned African-American Parents (CAAP), a member of the Echo Lake Church of Christ, the Board of Directors of the United Fund of Westfield and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Westfield.

A former Board of Education candidate, Mr. Carr also serves on the

Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee. He was just reappointed to that annual post in January by Mayor Thomas C. Jardim.

"I think he was a great choice," said Mayor Jardim, referring to Mr. Carr as "a voice of reason."

"He has a good heart and is just a good guy," the Mayor added, noting that he had first met Mr. Carr prior to announcing his Mayoral bid.

The father of two children, Mr. Carr is employed as an electrical engineer. He served in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) and in the United States Air Force in the Vietnam War, reaching the title of Captain. He has degrees from Oxford and Rutgers universities.

Ms. Millet and Ms. Korfmacher have lived in town for nine years and five years, respectively. Both have long been active in the local Democratic Party. Ms. Millet serves as one of the two Westfield representatives on the Union County Air Traffic Noise Advisory Board.



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Westfield Board of Education Candidate Field Includes Six Persons Seeking Three Seats

By PAUL J. PEYTON for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Four more candidates jumped into the Westfield Board of Education race, two of them just before Monday's deadline for nomination petitions. With the new candidates, the field is set with six persons, including two incumbents, seeking three available seats on the nine-member board.

Joining incumbent Dr. B. Carol Molnar of Wychwood Road and former school board member Thomas Taylor of Madison Avenue, are Patrick Keenoy of Harrow Road, Mark Kabakow of Orenda Circle, and Michael Kessler of Park Street. A last minute surprise was the apparent change of heart of incumbent Michael P. Madaras.

Mr. Keenoy has spent his career in the education field and now serves as the Director of Special Services in the East Brunswick school system. He has lived in town since 1979. His son attended Jefferson Elementary School and is now a freshman at Westfield High School.

The candidate has served on the Board of Directors of the Westfield Baseball League and has coached baseball, basketball and soccer. He is a former Assistant Cub Scout Master at Jefferson School.

He said he decided to run for the school board because of issues such as the change in the state funding mechanism which will mean less funds for towns like Westfield and the "drug culture" kids are forced to deal with in today's society.

Mr. Keenoy said Westfield has a number of challenges it is facing including the technology bond referendum proposed for the fall.

Mr. Keenoy has been a teacher, guidance counselor and school psychologist.

He said it is important for the local school board to find a balance between spending on education programs while not delivering a big hit on taxpayers.

Mr. Kabakow is a product of the Westfield public schools, graduating from Westfield High School in 1979. The candidate bought a home in

the town three years ago.

Among the issues that got him into the race is redistricting. His 5-year-old son has been pre-registered for Kindergarten in the fall at Franklin School. However, under the proposed redistricting plan, his son is now slated to attend Wilson School.

"I will be driving car pool in the fall. I want to know where I will be taking my son," he said.

The candidate is also concerned over the crossing guards and the overall safety of kids crossing dangerous roads such as Mountain and Lawrence Avenues due to redistricting of students. Mr. Kabakow said he is also concerned over the "upswing" in student population.

The candidate operates a financial consulting firm called the Expansion Finance Group of Westfield in which he serves as President. The firm helps businesses borrow money, in such areas as the bond market, in order to finance their future.

"I have only the purest of reasons for running for the school board," he said.

Mr. Madaras said he did a "180-degree turn" from just a week ago by deciding to seek reelection after all. The candidate said he changed his mind after numerous persons asked him to reconsider his decision.

"I decided to leave it up to citizens" on whether or not he should serve another term, he explained.

In addition to redistricting and the technological improvement plan, Mr. Madaras has said he is very interested in Superintendent of Schools, Dr. William J. Foley's proposal for strategic planning.

He said it is important in a district with as many diverse views as Westfield, that citizens be given more input as to how the district spends their tax dollars.

Mr. Madaras is employed as Vice President/Financial Consultant with Smith Barney in New York City. He currently chairs the Long Range Planning Committee on the board which is working with Dr. Foley in developing the redistricting plan.

Officials have said redistricting is necessary due to the six additional classrooms currently under construction at the Jefferson and Wilson Schools.

Mr. Madaras has two sons who are fourth graders at Tamaques School. He said that during the past three years Westfield's curriculum standards have been strengthened as the district's potential is beginning

to be realized.

Mr. Kessler has resided in town since 1991 and has three children currently in the school system at McKinley, Edison Intermediate and Westfield High School.

The candidate is employed as a manager in the Comptroller's Department at Lucent Technologies in Warren in the area of internal and external financial reporting.

The candidate served on the district's Budget Task Force and is now in his second year on the Parent-Teacher Council (PTC) Legislative Committee and is also serving his first term as Recording Secretary for the PTC Council.

Dr. Molnar, who announced her reelection bid last week, is seeking a fourth term on the board. A native Westfielder, she is an attorney with practices in New York and New Jersey. Her two daughters attended the local school system.

Mr. Taylor, who became the first candidate in the race when he announced earlier this month, is also an attorney with an office in Paterson. He previously served on the board from 1984 to 1987, when he served on the Staff Relations Committee and co-chaired a committee that worked on the selection process to hire former Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Mark C. Smith.

His two children are also products of the local school system, as is the candidate who graduated from the high school in 1968.

Board Vice President John M. Toriello has opted not to seek another term.



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Westfield Board of Adjustment: Car Rental Agency's Request to Sell Cars Postponed Until April

by Anna Murray for The Westfield Leader, 97Mar12

The Westfield Board of Adjustment held its regularly scheduled meeting on Monday evening, with an unusually light agenda, which was curtailed even further when four applicants made the decision to postpone their hearings until the April meeting.

After discussion with the board, the applicants chose either to make their plans more conforming to the Westfield Land Use Ordinance, or provide additional information to buttress their testimony. Regular business was transacted despite the fact that four members were not in attendance.

The application of Westfield Car Rental of South Avenue, West, to sell used automobiles at its facility, contrary to the town's Land Use Ordinance, will be on the agenda of the board's next meeting on Monday, April 14. Also postponed was the application of Westfield Food Service Corp., owners of the Westfield Diner on North Avenue, to erect a free-standing sign also contrary to the town ordinance. This would be an addition to an existing wall sign. Under the town ordinance a second sign is not permitted unless the zoning board grants a variance.

The first application heard by the board was that of Ronald and Gwen Brachman of Nancy Way who sought permission to build a kitchen addition and deck imposing a side yard violation of 13.42 feet against the town ordinance requirement of 15 feet. Owing to the fact that the total violation equaled one and a half feet and was a minor extension of an already non-conforming side yard, the board granted a variance.

Robert J. and Jennie Jordan of Maryland Street requested a variance to square off the rear of their house and construct a bed and bath on the main floor.

"We need this due to my wife's handicap," Mr. Jordan explained to the board. "It is getting more and more difficult for her to climb the stairs."

Again, under the side yard setback requirement, 8.18 feet against the required 10 feet, the board determined the change was a minor extension of an already non-conforming side yard and thus approved the variance.

Jon and Debbie Skolnick of Nancy Way sought to expand and erect a second-story addition to their garage. The side yard setback requested in this case was 12 feet, 6 inches, which was under the town requirement of 15 feet. The board approved the variance for the second floor.

The last appeal to the board was made by John Ciufio of Marlboro Street. Mr. Ciufio sought to build an addition which would incur a minimum side yard violation of 8.9 feet against the ordinance requirement of 10 feet, The plans presented to the board exceeded the minimum distance from principal to accessory structure.

In this case, the town ordinance required 10 feet while Mr. Ciufio proposed four feet. The latter violation is incurred when the new addition brings the house into closer proximity with the garage.

Zoning Official Jeremiah P. O'Neil was not in attendance, but Vice Chairman G. Graydon Curtis, who served as Acting Chairman for the meeting, relayed a discussion he had earlier with Mr. O'Neil regarding this article of the ordinance.

"The 10-foot separation was based on fire safety requirements rather than aesthetics," said Mr. Curtis. "According to Jerry, with the new stringent fire code requirements, gasoline containers and other potentially flammable items are more effectively stored or disposed."

Mr. Ciufio offered installing fire code sheet rock in his garage to conform with the law. The board granted the variance with the stipulation that Mr. Ciufio agree to any recommendation the town zoning official might make concerning the fire safety of the garage.



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Westfield High School Hockey Blue Devils Gain Needed Experience on the Ice

By **DAVID B. CORBIN** Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Although very young and very new, the Westfield High School boys hockey team through the guidance of Head Coach Brian LaFontaine became more exciting and competitive on the ice this season. With the skating presence of senior forward Derek Fisher and the stiff competition, the young Blue Devils picked up valuable experience.

Fisher, the team Captain, inspired and impressed the Blue Devils with his skillful skating and his physical playing techniques. In addition, Fisher led the team in scoring, slapping in 29 goals and adding 12 assists.

For his efforts, Fisher was recognized by opposing coaches and was selected to the First Team of the National B Conference of New Jersey. Only six players were named to the First Team and six to the Second Team.

Westfield High School will lose only three seniors to graduation this year and will produce an experienced team of 10 seniors next season.

Along with Fisher, goalie Bryan Graye and forward Wayne Pai will be graduating. Pai had two goals and one assist and Graye played gallantly as goalie.

Other strong influences on the Blue Devils were juniors Bryan Gates, Brendan Hickey and Christian Fagan, and sophomore Ronnie Kashlak.

Gates scored five goals and had 11 assists for 16 total points while Hickey had five goals and three assists. Fagin targeted four goals and set up four assists.

Kashlak may possibly be a candidate to follow Fisher's skate tracks. With a very impressive season, Kashlak was second on the team in scoring, flicking in 22 goals and passing off 19 assists.

Sophomore forward Josh Falcone scored three goals and had three assists as sophomore Dan Marer added three goals. Junior Brad Schwartz and sophomore Kevin Anton supplied one goal and two assists

each. **Junior Matt Hanas contributed three assists and junior Eric Schoenberg added one assist.**

The remainder of the Blue Devils roster are: juniors Erik Kolb, Steve Wlazlo, Brian Garrison and Ian Wolkoff, and freshman Derek Lartuad.

As a team, the Blue Devils totaled 75 goals and 61 assists and look forward to adding many more goals and assists next year.

FIRST TEAM ALL-AREA ...Senior Derek Fisher amassed 29 goals and 12 assists for the Westfield High School hockey team this season and was named to the First Team of the National B Conference of New Jersey. Only six players were named to the first team.

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP...After the Blue Devils' game against Bayonne High School on February 20, the players of both teams put aside the heat of competition and met at center ice to congratulate each other for a game well played. Bayonne High School defeated Westfield High School, 6-1.



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The Westfield Main Street Program Faces Struggle For Survival, Funding and Jurisdictional Power

Michelle Picou
of Westfield Main Street
Program

After 4 Years of Success, Main Street Faces Funding and Jurisdictional Struggles with Town Council, SID and the Chamber of Commerce

Investigative Report, Part I by Horace Corbin (97-03-11)

The Westfield Downtown Committee, Inc. has conducted what is reported to be one of the nation's best Main Street Programs here in town over the last four years. The Program is headed by Robert Newell, President and Michelle Picou, Executive Director. Without tax dollars to date, approximately \$400,000 of funding has been applied to programs in Westfield gathered from local donations, fund raising and gifts.

According to Mr. Newell, Main Street's plan was to develop credibility with a list of accomplishments employing volunteer help and private funds. Then, a Special Improvement District (a N.J. State Program) was to be formed in conjunction with Main Street's on-going oversight such that tax revenue could be obtained to carry the program forward. Approximately 300 volunteers have participated in Westfield Main Street programs to date according to Michelle Picou, Executive Director. The State of New Jersey has granted the Main Street program \$60,000 in transition funds until the SID organization can be completed.

Last Fall, the Special Improvement District (SID) was formed by vote of the Town Council. Mr. Joe Specter serves as Chairman. Although several months later than anticipated, the Council will vote soon on approving the Tax assessment to be levied on local businesses to fund the SID (and presumably Main Street) over the next several years. A yearly budget and tax assessment of about \$250,000 has been presented.

However, the funding and the future existence of the Main Street Program appears in doubt as debate has arisen as to the need for continuance of Main Street from some opposition groups and public officials. Also, the State's grant of \$60,000 has become exhausted due to the delays. Main Street is asking for a bridge loan or grant from the

Town of approximately \$30,000 to keep it alive until taxes can be collected in the summer.

The debate occurring over taxes, funding, the legislation and who's in control is complex; involving the Town Council, the SID, the Chamber of Commerce and others. The very existence and efficacy of the SID may be in jeopardy. The details of this debate will be presented in Part II of this investigative report within the week. Undoubtedly, there are many valid arguments from all sides.

What is Main Street? The easiest way to learn more is to explore the hyperlinks to the Internet which follow. See what Kingsport, Tennessee has to say about Main Street. Just click below.

<http://www.tricon.net/Comm/dka/pg1-2.html>

About The Downtown Kingsport Association

The Main Street Approach

DKA operates under the guidelines of the Tennessee Main Street Program whose purpose is to stimulate quality downtown economic development in Tennessee communities through a self-help, comprehensive revitalization process based upon the National Main Street Center's four point approach to downtown revitalization. The four-points stressed in the program are outlined in chart below.

MAIN STREET'S FOUR POINT APPROACH

Organization - Establish a cooperative partnership among downtown groups and individuals.

Promotion - Create a positive image of downtown for residents, shoppers, visitors, and investors.

Design - Enhance the visual qualities of downtown that make it a unique place to shop, work, or live.

Economic Restructuring - Develop a diversified economic base while retaining and strengthening existing businesses.

What Makes Downtown Important?

There are four major reasons why downtown is important.

1. Downtown is an area that needs to be protected for investment reasons. Private sector investment - banks, businesses, and commercial properties - represents investment that has already been made in the central business district. City investment is in the form of sewers, sidewalks, streets, alleys, and water lines. It is the obligation of the city and private citizens to protect downtown to see that the tax base stays strong.

2. Downtown is an incubator for new businesses. Starting and overhead costs are often

too high in shopping centers for new merchants. Downtown, where the overhead is lower, is the logical place for beginning businesses. It is up to downtown merchants and officials to see that the area remains viable shopping district that will afford opportunities for new growth.

3. The rehabilitation of downtown is an incentive for attracting community-wide investment. When industry leaders look at a community as a possible location, the officials examine many aspects, among which are availability of industrial parks, adequate airport facilities, land, water, and utilities. They inquire about the tax rate, prevailing wage scale, school system, available housing, and quality of life. Included in the examination of quality of life is interest in downtown - is it alive and viable, or does it represent local disinterest and failure?

4. Downtown is a symbol of civic pride or the lack of it. If a community is proud of its home place (as symbolized in downtown), it will show in its appearance.

Other Internet References about Main Street Towns:

<http://www.phoenix.w1.com/franklin/dfa/mainst.htm>

Main Street Towns

The National Main Street Program is administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Following are some of the more than 1,200 towns across America which participate in this program designed to revitalize America's historic downtowns.

Main Street Franklin, Tennessee

Main Street Kingsport, Tennessee

Main Street LaGrange, Texas

Main Street Manhattan, Kansas

Main Street Menomonie, Wisconsin

Main Street Quincy

Main Street Wildwood, New Jersey

-----State Main Street Programs

Arizona Main Street Program

North Carolina Main Street Program

Wisconsin Main Street Program

For information on The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, see its' Mission Statement:

<http://www.xscom.com/rak/chamberofcomm.html>

According to the Mayor, businesses and residents of Westfield have much to gain or lose over the next several years from the outcome of the current deliberations. A consensus with all working together along with good decisions and judgment is the sought after outcome.

[Letter from Main Street President](#)

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Edison and Roosevelt Honor Rolls Named (97Mar11)

EDISON SCHOOL:

The names of 183 students who earned Honor Roll standing during the second marking period at the Edison Intermediate School in Westfield were announced last week.

In the seventh grade, 26 students, or 14.53 percent of the 179-member class, were named to the Distinguished Honor Roll, which requires an "A" in all major academic subjects and no grade below a "B" in any minor subjects.

Seventy-four students, or 41.34 percent of the class, were named to the Honor Roll, which requires an "A" or "B" in all subjects, major or minor.

In the eighth grade, 27 students, or 16.77 percent of the 161-member class, were named to the Distinguished Honor Roll, and 56 students, or 34.78 percent of the class, were named to the Honor Roll.

Seventh grade distinguished honor roll:

Sasha Bartolf, Mara Judd

Priya Bhasin, Yuka Kawano

Charles Benisch, Aaron L. Klinger

Sara L. Bobertz, Steven Krakauer

Ashley A. Carr, Alex Leong

Michael Charmatz, David Louie

Valerie Chu, Martta McGlynn

Maureen Cooke, Sara McGovern

Robert Daurio, Rosanne Palatucci

Daniel DeSerio, Anura Patil

Amy Beth Early, Devin Power

Daniel Finestein, Jessica Ann Speir

Katherine Hild, Joanna G. Todaro

Seventh grade honor roll:

Christy Abdelmessieh, Jennifer A. Lamont

Jessica Alice, Matthew Leiz

John Edward Alvaro, John S. Leonardis

W. Matthew Andzel, Kathryn Logan

Rachel Bavolar, Anthony Lund

Megan V. Beck ,Christopher Mackay

Casey Benson, Timothy Mansfield

Moa T. Biftu, James McKeon, 3rd

Alicia Bilheimer, Nehal L. Mehta

Samantha Bourque,-Trieff Ryan Miller

James Bridgeman, Roxane Nassipour

Erica Cenci, Julee Noguchi

Charles Chaung, Caroline L. Page-Katz

Bryan Clancy, Brett Picaro

Moriah H. Cohen, Andrew K. Pidkameny

Erin Corbett, Andrew Pilecki

Bryan Cordes, Alexandra Pino

Jacquelyn Cusimano, Kristen Pollock

Nicole DiFabio, Laura Pregonzer

Tara A. Dowling, Christopher Quackenbush

Carrie M. Durr, Erin E. Reed

Robert Freundlich, Scott Satkin

Katherine A. Gilrain, Elizabeth Schaffer

Bethany Goldman, Rory Schulman

Elyse F. Goldweitz, Christine F. Schultz

Alvalro Guerra, Bree Sherry

Megan Hein, Adam Sigal

Elizabeth A. Horan, Shaun Simone

Joseph Hubbard, Michael C. Sofka

Karen Huskey, Alyse Squillace

Suanne Hutchinson, Rosemary Topar

Nicole Infantino, Jessica R. Tyminski

Hannah G. Israelow, Andrea Waksman

Katie Jenkins, Thomas Weingarten

Daniel R. Kagan, Christopher Wintringham

Leah Kaplow, Emily Yudkovitz

Kirsten Kolb, David Zorn

Eighth grade, distinguished honor roll:

Rachel Ackerman, Kate Onishi

Kevin Buckland, Elizabeth Ottoson

Emilie Cobert, Jacob Rosenstein

Jenna Davino, Gavin Shulman

Eleanor Hodara, Samuel Sobel

Rachael Horowitz, Joseph Swingle

Alexander Leger, Lauren Talbot

Anne Loughlin, Daniel Weinberg

Shawn McCabe, Kristina Williams

Breigh Ann Menza, Stephen Wilson

Kristin Messina, Christina Yang

Conner Mulvee, Allen Yu

Denise O'Connor, Peter Yu

Erik Zimak

Eighth grade honor roll:

Megan Albertson, Mark Kolvites

Kerri Anness, Joseph Kukis

Laura Avdey, Evan Lee

Mark Basch, Kelly Masterson

Ellen Debra Bernstein, Molly McDermott

Steven Block, Scott Mehorter

Rebecca Brachman, Jonathan Miller

Scott Brewster, Douglas Minarik

Mari Nicole Candelore, Rachel Mooney

Timothy Carroll, David Napiorski

Elisa Cognetti, Andrew Osborn

Jessica Cohen, Kristen Ostrega

Lauren Coltrera, Ellyn Parness

Salvatore Curro, Joanna Richardson

Kathleen Czap, Megan Rodd

Katherine Dobson, Joshua Rogers

Kevin Doyle, Shana Rubin

Tyne Duffy, Travis Russo

Brian Dyke, Christian Santomauro

Robyn Ehrlich, Michael Sawicki

Sara Elizabeth Euwer, Danielle Schlar

Adam Feinberg, Christine Schwebel

James Finn, Ariana R. Siemoneit

Jennifer Miles Fowler, Pieter VanCort

Erin Gibbons, Jenifer Wilson

Edward Hogan, 3rd - Vincent Wilt

Jessica Johnson, Tamara Yellin

Timothy Kelman, Mun Ling Yeow

Roosevelt Honor Roll:

The names of 165 students who earned Honor Roll standing during the second marking period at the Roosevelt Intermediate School in Westfield were announced last week.

In the seventh grade, 17 students, or 10.56 percent of the 161-member class, were named to the Distinguished Honor Roll, which requires an "A" in all major academic subjects and no grade below a "B" in any minor subjects.

Fifty-three students, or 32.92 percent of the class, were named to the Honor Roll, which requires an "A" or "B" in all subjects, major or minor.

In the eighth grade, 32 students, or 17.58 percent of the 182-member class, were named to the Distinguished Honor Roll, and 63 students, or 34.62 percent of the class, were named to the Honor Roll.

Seventh grade distinguished honor roll:

Erin E. Cockren, Shannon E. Kunath

Kevin J. Cutro, Megan A. Lesko

James M. Donovan, Matthew K. Lowenstein

Alexander Fetissoff, Elizabeth Madresh

Christopher Gismondi, Erin M. McClellan

Daniel L. Hertz, Megan McGowan

Angela Y. Kim, Molly Orbach

Simon P. King, Jeremy Owens

Benjamin P. Ruskin

Seventh grade honor roll:

Joshua M. Bengal, Michael MacKechnie

Alexandra S. Brill, Katie Massenzio

Sarah A. Burke, Theresa B. Murphy

Michael Charney, Ashley Nemec

Matthew D. Chazanow, Neil Owens

Neil Ciemniecki, Megan Pakenheim

Tara Christakos, Lisa K. Paul

Kathleen Dura, Elizabeth A. Perrella

Heather B. Fishberg, Sarah E. Printz

Bret Fleming, Michael Quintanilla

Christopher Freisen, Gregory Ralph

Pamela Fried, Christine Romano

Jonathon Gerson, Jennifer Rosenblum

Elizabeth B. Heisler, Sarah E. Round

Sarah Heitner, Elisabeth P. Salemme

Elizabeth V. Imbert, Daniel B. Seeger

David A. Kane Margaret M. Smith

Alan E. Kantz, Elisabeth Spinnato

Michael A. Kazazis, Rebecca M. Swenson

Christine Kolenut, Anthony Tomasso

Nikhil Koparkar, Charles P. Tortorello

Michael Duffy, Lau Melanie L. Totams

Nathalie Levey, Marie B. Tracy

Brian J. Levy, Pieter W. Van Iperen

Joshua Ludmer, Rachel Wagner

Jeffrey P. Luker, Stuart J. Yates

Miriam Zichlin

Eighth Grade distinguished honor roll:

Jacob D. Albertson, Jessica E. Meylor

David A. Bhasin, Julie M. Muroff

Jessica A. Bowers, Andrew Olsen

Julie Cleaves, Jessica Orleanski

Brianne Cobuzzi, Jessica L. Patterson

Ushma Dedhiya, Jennifer Phillips

Ian D. Federgreen, Daniel R. Ramage

Bett Friedman, Richard R. Rowe

David P. Geenberg, Gregory I. Sherman

Lianna M. Kong, Randi Siegel

Lisa E. Krieger, Carolyn F. Singer

Brendan Maher, Jeffrey Tabachnick

Daniel R. Maus, Sheil J. Tamboli

Victoria McCabe, Katherine Trimble

Christopher McClellan, Jill Veltri

Eileen McKeever, Margaret Wei

Eighth grade honor roll:

Marisa Anthony, Sean M. Lewis

Timothy C. Athony, Andrew Lin

Ingrid Arnold, Amy E. Lombard

Heather R. Berk, Shannon Look

Jennifer Bernstein, Charles S. Maffey

Samantha H. Black, Ryan MacDonald

Brian W. Bottini, John W. Merriman

Margaret Brautigam, Evan J. Molloy

Megan H. Brown, Rachel E. Moloshok

John O. Carpenter, Caroline Grace Moore

Christina Dacosta, Erin O'Brien

Charles Dodge, Brian P. O'Neill

William Donohue, Patricia A. Oslislo

James G. Fleming, Joseph I. Petrsonic

John Henry Flood, Julie E. Phelan

Bradley S. Gillin, Edward Pizzi

Cheryl Gordon, Brian Raiff

Daniel P. Gruen, M. Frances Re

Clifford J. Haldeman, Edward J. Reagan

Matthew T. Hall, Meryl L. Roche

Kerry Hart, Ricardo Roig

Nichole A. Herttua, Alexander Rothschild

Robert Hwang, Farryl Scher

David V. Imbert, Christopher W. Schwarz

Kevin M. Johnson, Matthew J. Seagull

Victoria L. Joyce, Rebecca Sierra Shulman

David King, Matthew Simone

Allison D. Klass, Elizabeth A. Sweeney

Jennifer M. Korecky, Elizabeth E. Tabachnik

Kelly Ann Lane, Thomas F. Wade

Jonathan B. Lau, Kelly Wanca

Ki Bong Yang



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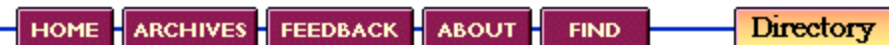
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Wish Granted

Last year's wish for a snowless winter now as appealing as a hairless cat.

The silence and surprise of an early morning white blanket broken by commuter tires making wakes of March slush.

Three yellow DPW trucks ready and five workers with shovels expectantly surround the town circle like a wagon train.

A hulking plow bullies melting snow off the road, sparks and scrapes the bare asphalt as water runs to the side in rivulets.

Ellyn Matthews, Westfield, New Jersey

From: ellyn@andromeda.rutgers.edu

To the editor of the Westfield Leader:

I don't know if you routinely publish poems, but as I was coming through town this morning (March 10, 1997). I couldn't help but put to words the what I saw as I came through the underpass by the World War I monument.



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Subj: Rialto Theater
Date: 97-03-04 13:07:24 EST
From: COMPASS1@aol.com

To: GOLEADER, goleader@worldnet.att.net

To the Editor:

Our community's recent concern over the fate of the Rialto Theater is settling down with the purchase of the building by theater operator CJM Entertainment. Now that it appears our initial objective has been achieved, those of us who were active on the Save the Rialto subcommittee of Westfield MainStreet want to take the opportunity to thank all of the many citizens who lent their support to our efforts.

More than 250 people wrote letters, made phone calls and otherwise volunteered to help rescue an important part of our town's cultural and commercial life. Our committee was the result of an overwhelming and spontaneous reaction to the possible demise of the theater.

While it has been wonderfully gratifying to have friends and neighbors offer their thanks for saving the theater, those thanks are due to all of you who lent a hand. And we still have a job to do. We must support Jesse Sayegh of CJM Entertainment and help him succeed in his plans to restore the Rialto and turn it into a local showpiece.

The first thing we can do is to let him know what we want and expect in our local theater. The other thing we have to do is simply patronize the place; it's time to put our money where our mouth is. Only that will truly save the Rialto.

One sixth grade girl in my neighborhood has remarked wryly that having demonstrated in front of the theater with her classmates to save it, the Rialto is now showing three R-rated movies that most sixth grade girls aren't permitted to see. She and her classmates can now write to Jesse Sayegh to suggest the kind of movies they would like to have him program at the Rialto. Her reaction also reflects that of many Westfield parents who above all else want this town to have a safe, clean, convenient movie theater where they and especially their children can enjoy the diversion of a good (and appropriate) movie.

So it behooves us to communicate with the new owner to give him an accurate idea of what kind of theater this town will support. Anyone

interested in conveying their suggestions to Mr. Sayegh can write to him at CJM Entertainment, 25 Kinnelon Road, Kinnelon, NJ 07405. I'm sure he will appreciate hearing from all of us.

Sincerely yours,

David Owens Chairman Save the Rialto Committee



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Council Approves Naming Tamaques Field in Albert Moeller's Memory; Appointments Announced for Mayoral Commissions

By PAUL J. PEYTON

Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

Six Past Commanders of the Martin Wallberg Post No. 3, American Legion, were on hand Tuesday night to hear the Town Council approve a resolution honoring the late Albert J. Moeller, who was instrumental in the success of Westfield's American Legion baseball program for some 35 years. A plaque will be erected in his memory in Tamaques Park in the vicinity of the baseball field.

Mr. Moeller, who died on December 15 at the age of 78, will be remembered by having a baseball field named after him at Tamaques Park. A plaque will be placed on a rock in the park honoring him. A ceremony will be held later this year.

Born in Jersey City, he moved to Westfield in 1951, working for Hallmark Greeting Cards for 45 years before retiring as Regional Vice President in 1983.

Mr. Moeller had been a life member and Past Commander of the Martin Wallberg Post. He also served as Service Officer, Membership Chairman and Baseball Team Manager. He was also National Vice Commander of the American Legion and Commander of the state and Union County American Legion organization.

Fourth Ward Councilman Lawrence A. Goldman said Mr. Moeller exemplified the importance of the "spirit of voluntarism in Westfield." He said it was a "great gesture" on the part of the council to honor Mr. Moeller.

Charles Townsend, a Past Commander of the American Legion, told the

council that Mr. Moeller had "dedicated his life to baseball." The American Legion was also represented by Past Commanders Fred Molchow, Harry Powers, Richard Koski, Sam Fiorina, and current Vice Commander Robert Tinenmin.

Among those persons who played for Mr. Moeller was former Los Angeles Dodgers catcher and New York Mets Manager, Jeff Torborg.

Mr. Torborg wrote a letter to the council, a copy of which was obtained by *The Westfield Leader*, in which he stated that Mr. Moeller "meant so much to Westfield, especially to those ballplayers who were fortunate enough to play for the Martin Wallberg Post No. 3 team."

Mr. Torborg, who grew up on First Street, played for Mr. Moeller and legendary Westfield High School football coach Jeff Freeman, who ran the American Legion baseball team. Over the four years Mr. Torborg played on that team, they won three Union County championships.

"Tamaques Park will never be the same without Al's shrill piercing voice, which he could have used for public address announcements without a loudspeaker, exhorting a young player with 'atta baby'," Mr. Torborg explained in his letter.

He said the plaque will help Westfielders remember a man who "did so much for so many."

The idea for the dedication of the park came from Arthur C. Fried who first contacted Councilman Goldman about his request in January. The resolution was sponsored by Second Ward Councilman Matthew P. Albano, Chairman of the Building and Town Property Committee.

First Ward Councilman Norman N. Greco, a former American Legion baseball player himself some 40 years ago, said "it is people like Al" who made the difference in the success of baseball leagues in Westfield.

Councilman Greco played on the first American Legion team as well as in the Little League program which was launched in town in the early 1950s.

In other business, Mayor Thomas C. Jardim announced that ad hoc commissions he formed on municipal budget review, through service to New York City on New Jersey Transit's Raritan Valley line, and on the town's solid waste disposal system, will meet for the first time in March.

The Westfield Expenditure and Review Commission (WERC) will meet this Monday, March 3, at 7:30 p.m.; the Westfield Solid Waste Advisory Commission will meet Thursday, March 13, at 8 p.m., while the Raritan Valley Commuter Advisory Commission will meet Monday, March 10, at 7:30 p.m. All meetings will be held at the Municipal Building.

William F. Brennan, a former Town Council candidate, will head up the WERC as well as coordinate the work of the other two commissions.

Serving on WERC will be Maury Acker of Roanoke Road, Thomas Tweedie of Stoneleigh Park, former Mayor H. Emerson Thomas of Cowperthwaite Place; Kate Wertheimer of Nottingham Place; Robert Steitz of Bradford Avenue; Nicholas Ponzio of Harrison Avenue; Jeff Scheininger of Woodmere Drive; Monica Barrow of Roger Drive; Peter Echausse of Tuttle Parkway; David Haas of Shackamaxon Drive, and Fred Tompkins of Grove Street.

The Raritan Valley Committee will include Eric Garrielson of Prospect Street; Richard Aichele of Harrison Avenue; Cecilie Lofters of Woodland Avenue; Melissa Stanton of Cory Place; Christopher Dorman of Dudley Court; Joseph DiProspero of Kimball Avenue; Janice Karlen and Jon Tainow, both of Summit Avenue; David Judd of Leigh Drive; Elyse Webber-Sacks of Knollwood Terrace; Neil Grandstrand of Embree Crescent; Richard Andreski of Warren Street; John C. Leshar of Birch Avenue, and Michael Albano of South Avenue, West.

Named to the Solid Waste Committee are Ronnie Kaufman of Edgewood Avenue; Claudia Cuca of Montauk Drive; former Mayor Raymond W. Stone of Ripley Avenue; Richard Friedman of Carleton Road; Beth A. Tanzosh of Trinity Place; Joan Buhrendorf of Bradford Avenue, and William Kravec of Coolidge Street.

Mayor Jardim said anyone interested in either of the three commissions is invited to attend these meetings.

During the public portion of the meeting, several residents of Linden Avenue addressed the council over a recent letter concerning a tax assessment for improvements to their street.

Donald Curry said the February 5-dated letter from Town Engineer Kenneth B. Marsh noted that the proposed assessment has been set at \$21 per square foot of frontage area for repaving of the street. Mr. Curry, who said he is opposed to the assessment, noted that the street is used by parents dropping off and picking up their children at the Wilson Elementary School.

He said he would like the town to apply for state grants for repairs on the street. Mr. Curry, a four-year resident, noted that the street has not been repaved in over 30 years.

Resident Ann Harris, a 30-year resident of the street, noted that the road's shoulder is in poor condition and that there are many potholes throughout the street. She said the town has said it would pave the road in the past but only if Belgium block curbing was added, which residents rejected.

"It is the general consensus (of Linden Avenue residents) that the maintaining of streets is the town's responsibility and not the residents responsibility," she said.

Second Ward Councilman James J. Gruba, Chairman of the Finance Committee, said that over the past 10 budgets, 23 streets in town were paved, with 18 paved through assessments on property owners with five paved with state funding. He said, based on the concerns of residents on the street, perhaps the council should take another look at improvements on the street.

Third Ward Councilman John J. Walsh, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, explained that he would ask the council to review its policy on how street improvements are paid for, including the tax assessment process. Mayor Jardim agreed that a "comprehensive" look needs be done at the town's road improvement policy.

Mr. Marsh noted that if the council opts to include Linden Avenue on its list of road projects to be submitted to the state for its Transportation Trust Fund grant, a decision must be made this spring since the list must be submitted to the state by June.

He said Department of Transportation officials announce which projects will be funded in November. Thus, if approved, Linden Avenue would be a 1998 capital project.

Neil Koop of Linden Avenue noted that in 1942 he paid annual property taxes of \$352 and now pays \$9,000. He questioned why homeowners should have to foot the bill for improvements when the road is heavily used by motorists.

On another issue, Anthony M. LaPorta of North Chestnut Street, a former councilman and Mayoral contender, spoke of his continued opposition to the town's Special Improvement District (SID).

He said he has a "serious problem" with the \$226,000 budget approved by the SID board, noting that based on this figure, the SID might be looking to spend in excess of \$1 million over the course of the next four years.

"I don't think we are going to see much in terms of improvements" as result of approval of the SID budget, he told the council. Mr. LaPorta suggested that the SID board would better serve downtown landlords and merchants if it were an elected board chosen by the downtown community.

He said if the council approves the SID budget in April, it would in essence be giving a non-elected body the power to tax properties within the SID. Mr. LaPorta said at best the SID budget should be significantly slashed, recommending that permission be given for the SID board to

use the Municipal Building as its headquarters, thus eliminating the cost for rent and utilities.

Town Attorney Charles H. Brandt explained that state laws regarding SID are very specific in that such boards must be appointed.

Mayor Jardim described the SID as a kind of "neighborhood association with dues." He said once the final budget is adopted, following a separate hearing the same night as the town budget is adopted, the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce, merchants, landlords and residents must all embrace the SID projects if the entity is to be a success.

The council will meet next Wednesday, March 5, at 8 p.m. The change was approved by the governing body in an effort to allow residents to attend both Board of Education and council meetings. The council and school board hold their meetings on Tuesday nights.

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James Hely Resigns After 11 Years on Town Council

By PAUL J. PEYTON *Specially Written for The Westfield Leader*

After 11 years of service, seven-term Fourth Ward Councilman James Hely resigned Monday from the Town Council, citing family obligations as his reason. The resignation took effect immediately. His council seat expires at the end of the year.

Under the Town Charter, the Westfield Democratic Town Committee has 15 days, which in this case is Tuesday, March 18, to submit the names of three prospective successors for consideration by the full council. The Democratic Committee is chaired by Fourth Ward Councilman Lawrence A. Goldman.

Mr. Goldman said he expects to present the three names to the council next week with the new council member scheduled to be sworn in at the Tuesday, March 25 meeting.

This process was last faced by the governing body early in 1996 when Republican Michael E. Panagos, also representing the Fourth Ward, resigned. He was replaced by former Councilwoman Janis Fried Weinstein who subsequently was defeated this past November by Mr. Goldman.

Republican Kenneth L. MacRitchie stepped down at the end of 1994 and was replaced by Neil F. Sullivan, Jr. in the Third Ward.

Councilman Goldman said the committee will be meeting this Monday night, March 10. He said he plans to have the three names by the time the council meets on March 18.

Among the questions to be asked of possible candidates for the seat will be whether they are willing to seek the office in this year's election.

Councilman Goldman said he expects the process to go smoothly and without "a partisan fight" as was the case this past January of Mayor Thomas C. Jardim's appointments.

Learning from the January stalemate, Mayor Jardim said he wants the process of finding a replacement to move relatively quickly.

Councilman Hely, who served as the lone Democrat on the council in 1995 and 1996, said in his letter to council members and Mayor Jardim he "would like to take a sabbatical, but the Westfield Town Charter does not provide for this."

"Therefore, I am going to resign from my Town Council seat as of the date of this letter," he stated.

Councilman Hely first ran for office when he challenged Republican Ronald Frigerio in the 1984 Mayoral race. He was elected to the governing body the following year after being unopposed in the November election.

According to Town Clerk Joy Vreeland, Mr. Hely defeated Republicans Gerard Barton in 1987 and Steven Garfinkel in 1991. He was unopposed in 1989, 1993 and 1995.

Mr. Hely said his main reason for not seeking an eighth consecutive term was that he needs to take some time off in order to explore prospective colleges with his wife and oldest daughter, a high school junior.

Mr. Hely also noted that his other two children "will be at the same stage in the not too distant future."

When contacted by *The Leader*, Councilman Hely said he had "mixed feelings" about resigning. When asked if he had considered finishing out his term, Mr. Hely said he did not think staying on would be fair to either political party, stating that he did not want to be a "lame duck" on the council.

In his letter he noted that the Hely family, four generations of which have gone through the local school system, "can never adequately repay the community for the benefits and education" they received in town. He commended those persons who seek office to the council or Board of Education.

"For me, it has been extremely fulfilling," he said, noting the caliber of people who presently serve in town government "is quite high."

"Also, the employees of the town, from top to bottom, impressed me as being honest, dedicated public servants whom we all benefit from," Mr. Hely explained.

Mayor Jardim said he looked towards the outgoing councilman as "sort of my mentor" on the governing body. He said he considered Mr. Hely a "voice of moderation" on the council and that he was "going to miss him."

Councilman Sullivan said he will miss Mr. Hely's presence and leadership on the council "tremendously." He said, in response to Mr. Hely's letter, that "I think he has his priorities in life" in the proper perspective.

Councilman Sullivan said Mr. Hely has a good understanding of how town government should work.

Mr. Goldman added that he and Mr. Hely have been friends for years and that he had hoped to serve with him longer than two months.

He added that Mr. Hely's decision did not surprise him in that the departing councilman indicated earlier in the year that he was leaning in the direction of

resigning.

Councilman Goldman said he believes the recent death of Mr. Hely's law partner, Jac B. Weiseman, may have contributed to his decision.

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"TIGHT WAIST AND WRIST" ...Jamil Johnson of Colonia High School attempts to control Frank Thorne of the Raiders with a tight waist and wrist control maneuver during his 215-pound class bout. Thorne gave Johnson about all he could handle as Johnson won a hard-fought 11-6 decision. The Raiders defeated Colonia, 58-19, in Scotch Plains on February 20.

Raiders Beat Colonia, 58-19; Lose to J. P. Stevens, 32-30

By DAVID B. CORBIN *for The Westfield Leader and The Times*

The Raider wrestling team hosted Colonia High School and J. P. Stevens on February 20 and came up with a big win and came down with a heart-breaking loss.

Against Colonia, it appeared the Raiders were going to have a slow start as 103-pounder David Loewinger found himself on the verge of being the victim of a technical fall. Being behind 11-2, Loewinger found his opportunity when he caught Rob Feline of Colonia off balance, reversed him and rolled him to his back to score a third-period fall.

At 119, Lee Loewinger met a very tough Nick Cilento and was taken down several times and tilted to his back a few times as Cilento registered a 16-4 majority decision.

After Tony Melendez received a forfeit at 125, Antenor Petitfrere blazed like a ball of fire as he immediately scored a takedown on Rich Dzuiban of Colonia at the 130-pound class. Petitfrere engineered a few more takedowns, an escape and a three-point near fall to win a convincing, 11-2 majority decision.

Raider Josh Hetzel recorded a come-from-behind fall over Tim O'Rorke in 3:47 at the 152-pound class.

At the 215-pound class, although he lost an 11-6 decision to talented Jimil Johnson, Frank Thorne of the Raiders dished out some physical punishment of his own and served notice to Johnson that he was in for a battle.

The final bout of the match ended with heavyweight Jim Feeley easily finishing off

Kevin Thompson in 1:59.

The match with J. P. Stevens had several close bouts, all ending in favor of J. P. Stevens which allowed them to eke out a narrow 32-30 victory.

The deciding match came at the 125-pound class when Rudy Valentino won a 6-4 overtime decision over Tony Melendez of the Raiders which gave three team points to J. P. Stevens instead of to Scotch Plains-Fanwood.

J.P. Stevens lifted its record to 12-7 and Colonia High School dropped to 7-9. The split set Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School's record at 9-5-2.

TERMINOLOGY:

d.-Won by decision-3 team points

p.-Won by pin-6 team points

md.-Major decision-4 team points

tf.-Technical fall-5 team points

Scotch Plains -Fanwood 58, Colonia 19

WEIGHT BREAKDOWN:

103: -- Dave Loewinger (SPF) p. Rob Feline, 4:59

112: -- Chris Salerno (C) p. Charlie Tripet, :55

119: -- Nick Cilento (SPF) md. Lee Loewinger, 16-4

125: -- Tony Melendez (SPF) won by forfeit

130: -- Antenor Petitfrere (SPF) md. Rich Dzuiban, 11-2

135: -- Jeff DiPillo (C) p. Mike Gabel, 3:41

140: -- Luke Cerchio (SPF) won by forfeit

145: -- James Gulya (SPF) won by forfeit

152: -- Josh Hetzel (SPF) p. Tim O'Rorke, 3:47

160: -- Josh Ricca (SPF) won by forfeit

171: -- Steve Drown (SPF) won by forfeit

189: -- Tony Zardecki (SPF) won by forfeit

215: -- Jimil Johnson (C) d. Frank Thorne, 11-6

Hwt: -- Jim Feeley (SPF) p. Shawn Dowe, :52

J. P. Stevens 32, Scotch Plains-Fanwood 30

WEIGHT BREAKDOWN:

103: -- Rich Reba (JP) p. Dave Loewinger, 5:14

112: -- Charlie Tripet (SPF) d. Jim Georgallis, 15-8

119: -- Lee Loewinger (SPF) d. Andy Reina, 13-6

125: -- Rudy Valentino (JP) d. Tony Melendez, 6-4 in overtime

130: -- Lorenzo Miceli (JP) d. Antenor Petitfrere, 9-5

135: -- Randy Reina (JP) p. Mike Grabel, :24

140: -- Luke Cerchio (SPF) p. Jason Steingart, 4:44

145: -- Jarrod Shaw (JP) d. James Gulya, 6-2

152: -- Josh Hetzel (SPF) d. Peter Yoo, 11-4

160: -- Ryan Rocco (JP) p. Josh Ricca, 2:36

171: -- Steve Drown (SPF) d. Lou Riggi, 5-2

189: -- Tony Zardecki (SPF) p. Jai Park, 2:42

215: -- Marino Hwang (JP) p. Frank Thorne, :39

Hwt: -- Jim Feeley (SPF) p. Kevin Thompson, 1:59

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IT CAME FROM ABOVE ...Blue Devil Amy Williams, No. 20, and Nicole DeSantis, front, keep Kate Vanderheyden of the Raiders away. In this County Tournament game at Cranford High on Feb. 17, SPlains-Fanwood won 39-29 to advance to the next round.

Bethea and Defense Lifts Raiders Past Devils, 39-29 Score

By DAVID B. CORBIN *for The Westfield Leader and The Times*

They came to play well, and play well they did at Cranford High School, as the Scotch Plains-Fanwood girls basketball team ousted eighth-seeded Westfield High School from the Union County Tournament by a score of 39-29 on February 17.

Raider Co-Captain Kim Bethea got things rolling immediately as she scored 11 of her game-high 16 points in the first half. The Raiders took an 11-8 first-quarter lead and went to work defensively in the second quarter, holding the Blue Devils to only three points while adding an additional 11 points.

With a 22-11 first half lead, the Raiders continued their defensive control in the third quarter by yielding only four points while picking up eight more points.

Sophomore Niki McCoy sank 10 points for the Raiders and Co-Captain Melissa Hicks added nine points. Junior Kate Vanderheyden and Sophomore Krista Hicks contributed two points each to the winning cause.

Scotch Plains-Fanwood raided the boards, out-rebounding the Blue Devils 45-29. Vanderheyden gathered 13 rebounds and Bowers grabbed 10 while Niki McCoy pulled down nine and Bethea collected eight. Melissa Hicks had five rebounds.

The Raiders spread the assists around as Vanderheyden contributed six while Bethea and Bowers added four apiece. Melissa Hicks set up three assists and Krista Hicks had two.

The Blue Devils were unable to get it going offensively as they hit less than 28 per cent

of their two-point field goal attempts and missed all 12 of their three-point attempts. From the foul line, Westfield sank only seven of 14 shots.

Senior Amy Williams led the Blue Devils in scoring, sinking nine points, and sophomore Liz McKeon hit for eight points. Jenn Kempf had six points while Nicole DeSantis, Megan Devitt and Vicky Nusse added two points apiece.

Williams led the Blue Devils with 10 rebounds followed by McKeon who pulled down five and DeSantis who grabbed four.

Williams led the Blue Devils in steals, swiping six, and McKeon stole five while Nusse grabbed three.

"I'm very proud of the way the girls played against Westfield. We were tired of reading in the paper about how they should have beaten us the first time, about their foul trouble, their poor shooting and all the players not being there," stated Raider Head Coach Brian Homm.

"Well, they got their chance and we came out and still stuck it to them. We played defense like nobody's business and humbled them. I could not be more pleased with our team's effort," added Homm.

"Kate Vanderheyden and Christine Bowers did an outstanding job under the boards. They were much bigger than us, but we seemed to come up with most of the rebounds," Homm said. "The senior leadership of Kim Bethea and Melissa Hicks was outstanding. They guided us the whole way."

Westfield slipped to 13-8 while Scotch Plains-Fanwood lifted its record above the .500 mark to 10-9 and advanced to meet first-seeded Elizabeth High School on February 20.

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TEACHERS, TAXES, TECHNOLOGY ARE FOCUS OF BUDGET 97Feb27

School Board Introduces \$50.5 Million Budget for 1997-1998; The Lowest Percentage Increase in 15 Years

By ANNA MURRAY - *Specially Written for The Westfield Leader*

The Westfield Board of Education on Tuesday introduced its tentative 1997-1998 school budget of \$50,527,495, representing a 0.95 percentage increase over last year's spending plan, the lowest increase the school district has seen in 15 years.

The percentage increase equals \$0.059 in the tax rate per \$100 of a home's assessed value, or a 2.47 percent increase in the amount to be raised through local taxes.

In describing the budget development process, Dr. William J. Foley, Superintendent of Schools, announced, "Teachers, taxes, and technology, that is what this budget is all about."

"We've developed a budget with one of the lowest tax increases while still adding six new elementary and three new high school positions, and we've included over \$800,000 to provide adequate technology in our schools," he continued.

"I am confident that we've come up with the best compromise to deal with high property taxes, increased enrollment and the need for improved technology," the Superintendent added.

"We are proud of our efforts to keep the increase down, especially in light of the fact we've had a 2.1 percent increase in enrollment and only 5.8 percent of our revenues come from the state," said board Budget/Finance Committee Chairman John M. Toriello.

In addition to the enrollment jump, capital outlays from the budget were needed to fund the district's 12 new classrooms in lieu of proceeds from the failed construction bond.

Assistant Superintendent for Business and Board Secretary Dr. Robert C. Rader, reflecting on the small amount of state funding, remarked that "the new funding legislation from the state made it almost impossible to do a new budget. The rules on calculation and regulation are at best difficult to follow and illogical.

"The rules changed every day. Just today we were required to download new budget software from the state into the system," he observed.

Before considering any specific budgetary needs of the district, Dr. Rader first had to determine into which state- regulated "thorough and efficient" (T and E) level Westfield would be categorized. This level represents the state's definition of what a district needs to execute a "thorough and efficient" delivery of the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

"The T and E is not based on any real analysis. It is quite arbitrary," said Mr. Toriello. "The state took an average of what the 30 neediest districts are spending to establish a T and E level."

Calculations from that formula indicate that Westfield is spending \$2,052 more per pupil than the state deems necessary.

"Obviously what the state deems necessary and what a Westfield parent has come to expect of our school system are incongruent," said Finance Committee member Ginger L. Hardwick.

As the meeting progressed, Dr. Rader got specific with exactly where budget dollars are designated to be spent. Of the total budget expenditures, 51.9 percent is earmarked for instruction. Included under the instruction umbrella are: regular teacher salaries, supplies, regular purchase orders, special education, athletics and summer school.

Instructional support, which includes libraries, school administration, health, staff training, child study teams, speech classes and media, account for 16 percent of the total 1997-1998 budget. Accounting for 26 percent of the budget are Administrative Support expenditures.

Dr. Rader mentioned the following efforts as key in keeping these costs down: reduction in health benefits and administrative salaries; the elimination of one administrative position; two secretarial positions, and a reduction in the expected district surplus or free balance.

Also included among administrative support expenditures are: transportation, liability insurance, and utilities. Smaller expenditures include debt service, 1.2 percent; capital outlays, 3.8 percent, and special revenue, 1.2 percent.

Included in this year's revised state funding legislation is a cap on the district's free balance of budget surplus. In the past, Westfield's free balance was maintained at a healthy 7 or 8 percent of the year's total budget, according to the school board.

"Our schools are old," said Dr. Rader. "We have 100-year-old buildings to maintain. Boilers go, roofs leak...we need to put dollars aside for these and other reasons."

The new state law requires a cap of 6 percent of the total budget on the district's free balance. To avoid state penalties, the Finance Committee allocated \$275,000 of free balance originally slated for projects in 1998.

Therefore, the replacement of the Franklin Elementary School roof, and the replacement of windows at Tamaques Elementary School, both projects that have already been started, will be completed and paid for this year.

Keith S. Hertell, a member of the Finance Committee, outlined how budget dollars will reinforce the school board's commitment to technology in the district. At the elementary level, \$140,002 will be spent on library automation. On the intermediate level, \$299,342 will be spent on computers, laser disc players, and teaching materials for geography, science and mathematics.

At Westfield High School, \$182,500 will be spent on mathematic resource center computers, humanities pilots, Internet and online access, as well as an interactive television classroom. The amount to be spent district-wide on staff training will be \$69,615, and \$115,000 has been allocated for the internal network.

Ms. Hardwick elaborated upon one state edict to the district that she and other board members found most troubling.

"In a unified and already lean budget, we've been told to separate line items, artificially, that the state says does not directly affect curriculum core content," she said.

"Voters will be asked to first vote 'yes' or 'no' on the budget and then 'yes' or 'no' on these separated items. The danger exists that the voter will deem these items as fluff and nothing could be further from the truth," said Ms. Hardwick.

Westfield is required to break out \$1,594,505 from the school budget into a separate question on the Tuesday, April 15, ballot. That number is based on a formula specific to the district T and E level.

The Finance Committee chose items that would not interfere with the district's ability to open schools in September or would not disrupt successful ongoing programs.

Programs that do not directly affect core curriculum, such as the primary enrichment program and Westfield High School programs, new middle school sports, capital outlay projects and library automation, are among those listed on the second question.

If the second question is voted down on April 15, it will be forwarded to the Westfield Town Council. There, line items, or part of the line items, will be approved or slashed. There is no second chance for appeal, and state law dictates the item could not be re-budgeted, or funded the following year.

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Popcorn™

Movie Review by Michael Goldberger

"Absolute Power"

[3 Popcorns](#)

(1-Poor 2-Fair 3-Good 4-Excellent)



After an expressive day of sketching at the art museum, sixtyish but spry Luther Whitney (Clint Eastwood) goes back to his modest home and prepares dinner for one. Among the elegant accouterments accompanying this ritualistic repast are a good bottle of wine and a napkin ring.

Thusly, screenwriter William Goldman gives us a teasing glimpse into just what kind of a hairpin we're dealing with here. He is a dashing fiction. A romantic throwback to a bygone era when second-story men weren't simply content to loot. Back when robbery required personality and gentlemen cat burglars aspired to decidedly picaresque ideals.

But alas, dapper Luther Whitney lives in the cruel and crass present when we meet him, and the turn of events that embroils him in the derring-do that comprises *Absolute Power* doesn't allow much room for that honor-among-thieves stuff. Attempting a discreet withdrawal at the supposedly empty home of Washington, D.C.'s resident king maker (Walter Sullivan, astutely played by E.G. Marshall), the stakes are suddenly raised when he runs into some major league rats.

Whilst politely pilfering the most bounteous safe this side of Fort Knox, which just so happens to be located behind a two-way mirror, Luther suddenly becomes the invisible witness to a heinous crime. As it turns out, Walter's young wife didn't take off with influential hubby. Instead, she stayed home to betray her spouse with none other than you know who, played by Gene Hackman. To Luther's horror, he is dramatically compromised when the sordid affair goes awry. What to do, what to do?

At first blush, the burglar decides to preserve life and limb by taking it on the lam. But, you see, he is made of sterner stuff. A little while later he catches the chief creep on the tube as he sorrowfully describes his sadness at Mr. Sullivan's tragic loss. Luther's emotions demand a recount. He will stay and right this wrong.

Because Eastwood is so stylishly gallant as an actor, and so attuned to pace and perception as a director, most viewers will be out of the moviehouse and in the cafe before realizing just how much contrivance they've allowed the handsome gent to get away with. This filmic phenomenon he perpetrates has scientific as well as artistic reasons to explain it. But the express version, sans the critical gobbledygook, puts it all on one word: charm. Lots of it. Clint makes sure author David Baldacci's charismatic crook possesses plenty of quixotic panache. Just like the colorfully laconic protagonists Dashiell Hammet and Raymond Chandler used to spawn.

A cat-and-mouse game ensues when the evil-doers realize they've been spied. In addition, Eastwood's beguiling scenario also manifests shoot-em-up tendencies, hints that it wouldn't mind being a bit of a thriller, and intimates that it has cornered a modicum of political savvy. But the intrigue level as translated from Mr. Baldacci's original prose by cinema scribe Goldman is only fair, held together by Clint and a fairly good supporting cast.

Scott Glenn is tops among the secondary, full of stolid, craggy-faced expression as Secret Service Officer Bill Burton. And Ed Harris is convincing enough as detective Seth Frank, who incidentally shows interest in Luther's estranged daughter (Laura Linney as Kate). In yet another side-bar, Mr. Whitney is trying to resurrect a relationship with dear daughter that has steadily deteriorated since Mom's death. Neither sub-plot rises above filler status.

Less credible but cynically appropriate is Judy Davis as Gloria Russell, President Alan Richmond's chief of staff. In her best three-piece-suit demeanor, callous Gloria is at the forefront of the combination cover-up/manhunt. Less authoritative and unfortunately lacking in dimension, Gene Hackman as the indecorous chief executive is still suitable for this film's limited purposes.

Which brings us back to Clint. It's his film, literally and figuratively. He's the linchpin in an entertaining but otherwise incomplete script that depends on its superstar for cogency. Following success as a middle-aged sex symbol in *The Bridges of Madison County*, Clint has vaulted right to the senior circuit. A virile, sagacious and sensitive soul for all generations. In *Absolute Power*, Mr. Eastwood's dashing anti-hero even kids about going to AARP meetings. More power to him.

* * * * *

Absolute Power, rated R, is a Castle Rock Entertainment release directed by Clint Eastwood and stars Clint Eastwood, Scott Glenn, and Judy Davis. Running time: 121 minutes

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Freeholders Introduce Ordinances to Create Union County's First Magnet High School

By PAUL J. PEYTON for *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times*

Following an impassioned plea by Union County Vocational Technical Schools Superintendent Dr. Thomas J. Bistocchi, the Democratic-controlled Board of Chosen Freeholders unanimously introduced ordinances last Thursday to authorize the spending of \$5.1 million to create the county's first magnet high school for intense study of science, mathematics and technology. The project entails renovating an existing 53,000-square-foot building on the vocational-technical schools' campus.

The schools' Board of School Estimate approved the project the night before the Freeholders' meeting. Republican Freeholder Edwin H. Force asked if the board was obligated to approve the expenditure since the Board of School Estimate had certified its approval. Assistant County Counsel Jeremiah O'Dwyer said the board was now required to raise the funds based on this Board of School Estimate's action.

The Democrats, while saying they fully supported the magnet school concept, were a bit miffed about the total cost of the project. Just last September the four Democrats on the board at the time refused to yield by adding the one additional vote the Republican majority needed to move the project forward.

The Democrats, who took the majority after sweeping the Republicans on Election Day, said back in the fall that they were concerned about the overall spending of millions of dollars proposed under several capital projects endorsed by the Republicans.

Last week, however, the new majority decided in the end to support the school which will occupy an existing building which has been vacant for some 10 years. The building was previously utilized by Union County College.

During the roll call vote on the first of the related ordinances, the three Republicans on the board decided to pass on their votes until Freeholder Walter D. McNeil, Jr. had issued his tally.

A total of \$3.5 million will be utilized to convert the building into a magnet school. An additional \$1.77 million will be appropriated for the acquisition of and installation of computers, software, furnishings and communications network systems, designs and renovations, including the renovation of the vocational-technical schools' technology building in Scotch Plains. Also included in this cost is various interior renovations and improvements and the purchase of furnishings and equipment.

A total of \$350,000 will be appropriated for the replacement of electrical equipment and machinery for the vocational-technical school.

Democratic Freeholder Nicholas P. Scutari said, after hearing the \$5.1 million proposal, that he envisioned a new building would be constructed, rather than renovating an existing structure, as is the case. He said the money could perhaps be better used to improve educational programs for the individual school districts which would reach a much wider range of students.

Dr. Bistocchi explained that the building which will be utilized was constructed in the mid-1960s. He said the magnet school will create "a tremendous learning environment" for students.

He explained that all bids for the project have been accepted although no contracts have been signed pending the outcome of action by the Freeholders. Among the bids accepted are general construction, \$1,955,950; sprinkler system, \$123,000; plumbing, \$337,000; heating and air conditioning system, \$1,232,714; electrical \$558,000, and built-in laboratory equipment, \$155,000, for a total of \$4,361,714.

Another \$339,000 is for equipment including a T1 line which will enable the school to provide access to the Internet. He said this will be the "forerunner" to a campus-wide network. Architectural fees have been placed at \$349,119.

Dr. Bistocchi said the magnet school would be headed by a curriculum director at a salary in the high \$50,000 bracket. He said discipline problems, failure and student boredom would not be tolerated in the school. He said he has two applicants (one woman and one man) in mind for the post, both under 30 years of age.

Democratic Freeholder McNeil, Chairman of the board's Finance Committee, asked Dr. Bistocchi whether the project could have been done in a less expensive manner. He said the board has other projects pending, such as improvements at the county college (which have been approved) and at the county's juvenile detention center, and thus is concerned over the total cost.

Dr. Bistocchi said a new high-tech building would cost \$150 per square foot. He said there is not another building on campus or a way to create a magnet school less expensively than the proposed plan.

In defending the vocational-technical schools' program in general, he told the board that by increasing enrollment, per pupil costs over the past several years have dropped from \$20,000 to \$14,000. He said enrollment has increased from 400 to the current 700 figure. He also noted the vocational-technical schools' board has presented two consecutive budgets with increases of less than 1 percent.

Dr. Bistocchi said, in a response to an inquiry by Democratic Freeholder Donald Goncalves, the per pupil cost is expected to decline a little bit lower before reaching a plateau.

The school, which is set to open this fall and will have an initial freshman class of 65 students, has already received 132 applications from students throughout the county.

The school, which will be complete with grades 9 through 12 by the year 2000, will have a maximum enrollment of approximately 300 students.

"This is not a school for every kid. This is a school for a couple hundred kids who want to take a challenge," said Dr. Bistocchi, noting that no other school system in the county has such an intensive program in its curriculum.

He explained that Middlesex and Sussex Counties both have planned to open magnet schools two years from now while the Morris County Vocational School is planning to open such a program in the 1998-1999 school year. Salem County also is considering such a school. Dr. Bistocchi said Bergen County has a magnet school, while Monmouth County has three.

Dr. Bistocchi promised the board that two years from now 10 students will apply for every one opening at the school.

"This will be the finest academic high school, public or private, in this county," he told the board, in responding to an inquiry by Freeholder Scutari over how the school will rank among other high schools.

He explained that unlike the vocational-technical programs where students spend half the day learning a vocation and the rest of the day in their home district, the magnet school will be a complete full-day program with no study periods and a short lunch recess.

"The last thing this county needs is another comprehensive high school," Dr. Bistocchi said, noting that a high school that challenges students is what the county needs.

Democratic Freeholder Carol I. Cohen questioned Dr. Bistocchi as to the transportation costs for students attending the magnet school. He said each student's home district would be responsible for this cost although several districts may want to pool together to lower the overall expense.

Following the magnet school discussion and during the public portion of the meeting, Nancy Glynn of Scotch Plains said she wanted the name of each of the sharpshooters, currently participating in the county's deer management plan, to be put on a bulletin board in the Watchung Reservation. She said county counsel has told that her request cannot be done.

She thanked Freeholders Linda d. Stender, Chairwoman of the board, and Freeholder Henry W. Kurz for voting against the deer hunt the last time it came before the board.

Margaret Cook of Fanwood asked each board member to state his or her position on the hunt.

The Freeholders said they support the program in absence of a viable alternative, noting that imuneocontraception has yet to be approved by the federal government and still is not lawful in the state. This process involves injecting the deer once and then finding the same doe and injecting it with the drug again.

Freeholder Kurz said a second alternative, currently being studied by a Rutgers University professor, involves a single injection which will cause the doe to abort its fetus. The problem, he explained, is that there is no way to tell where the doe will deliver the fetus. He said the overpopulation of deer is cutting off the food supply to smaller animals.

Freeholder Edwin H. Force, a Republican, noted that the deer hunt has not been an easy decision for board members. He said without another solution at this time the county must control the deer population. He said county officials have continually received calls from towns throughout the county that have been faced with deer venturing into their communities.

Under appointments, the board reappointed Dr. Jerome Feder and Rosemary Millet of Westfield to the Union County Air Traffic Noise Advisory Board. The terms are for two years commencing on December 31 of next year.

Sal Antonelli of Westfield, a local realtor and real estate appraiser, was appointed to the Union County Parks and Recreation Board. He currently serves on the Westfield Recreation Commission.

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Green Brook Flood Control Project Presented by United States Army Corps

by Jeanne Whitney for *The Westfield Leader and The Times*

At long last, Union County got an up-close look at the proposed Green Brook Flood Control project on Monday thanks to a presentation in Scotch Plains by the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the state Department of Environmental Protection. The \$362 million project -- of which nearly three-quarters is to be funded by the federal government -- seeks to control flooding of the Green Brook Sub-Basin and Raritan River area including portions of Union, Somerset and Middlesex counties.

Of the project's other one-quarter or \$97 million in construction costs, the Army Corps estimates that \$73 million will be paid by the state and \$24 million would be split among the three counties over the 12-year construction period. Costs for ongoing maintenance of the levees, dams, channels, pipes and detention basins after the project is complete would also be shared by the state and counties, with each county responsible for an estimated \$330,000 a year, while the state pays \$1 million annually, according to the Army Corps.

Union County Freeholder Chairwoman Linda d. Stender has asked for an extension of the March 7 deadline for county input on the project, saying, "The stakes are high. We want to be a full partner in the whole process. We know that the environmental impact is going to be significant. There would also be an impact on the budget."

Ms. Stender said the Freeholders will seek a second opinion from engineering consultants before making any decisions about the project. Andrew Miller, a spokesman for the Army Corps, estimates that if all the players gave the green light on the project, work could begin on the project a year from now.

However, several member communities in Union and Middlesex Counties have objected to the project. In Berkeley Heights, where portions of two dry detention basins would be created in the Watchung Reservation, residents have questioned what benefits, if any, the project provides to Berkeley Heights. According to the plan, the two basins are only one aspect of a three-pronged tactic that will store flood water from the Watchung Mountains for gradual release into the lower portion of the floodplain. Parts of the two basins -- designated as Sky Top and Oak Way -- are also in Scotch Plains Township and the Borough of Watchung. The two basins include a 41- to 45-foot high earthen dam and will cover 11 acres of the 1,920 acres that make up the reservation. The basins would not be started until the third year of construction and would take three years to complete.

Residents of South Plainfield have also voiced objection to the proposed levees and floodwalls intended for the area along the Bound Brook section of the waterways.

The plans for the Stony Brook and Lower Portion that are primarily in Middlesex and Somerset Counties will seek to deepen and widen channels of the existing rivers, add earthen levees or concrete walls along the banks, install pumping stations for runoff water and add movable floodgates across roads. Clean-up and containment of eight hazardous waste sites is also included in the plan.

Seventy million dollars worth of land "buy-outs," according to the Army Corps, are also necessary for construction of the project and in order to minimize the possibility of costly damage and losses in high-risk areas in the future.

In fact, the purchasing of property or "buy-outs" in the 10-year floodplain area to discourage and eventually eliminate development in those high-risk areas is the solution advocated by the Sierra Club, an opponent of the Green Brook project. According to Anne Troop, Sierra Club Union County Conservation Chairwoman, she sees the Green Brook project as costly overkill since it proposes to build against a 150-year flood event. "Houses can also be raised above the flooding rivers," Ms. Troop says, for half the cost of the Green Brook measures. Ms. Troop also cited Tulsa, Oklahoma's repeated struggle with flood management resulting in the purchase of vast amounts of floodplain property along the Arkansas River for use as public parks.

Under the Army Corps plan, which has already cost \$24 million in study and design, Union County would be protected against flooding from a storm that happens once in 25 years. The ranking as 10, 25, 100 or 150-year events denotes the severity of the storm and flood damage and the probability of how often it happens. Somerset County would receive protection against a 150-year flood.

The origins of the Green Brook project lay in the August 1973 storm and severe flooding that left six people dead, 34 injured and more than 1,000 evacuated from the area. There was an estimated \$80 million in property damage. More recently, flooding and damage resulted from heavy snow storms in January 1996 and a nor'easter last October. The Green Brook Flood Control Commission says there have been severe flooding problems in the area at least since the early part of this century, if not earlier. The commission, made up of 13 member towns in the affected area, was formed under state law in 1974 to look at flood control solutions. Berkeley Heights resigned from the group 13 years ago, according to the commission.

A Scotch Plains resident who said he enjoys living next to the Watchung Reservation calls it a tough choice to make over the prospect of the two detention basins in the reservation. "But I imagine if you own property that gets flooded, this project looks pretty good."

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Editorial - 97Mar02

Army Corps of Engineers Should Extend Deadline for Comments on Flood Project

This past Monday night Union County residents had their first opportunity to hear of plans by the Army Corps of Engineers in regard to their \$362 million Green Brook Flood Control Project. As for the impact on Union County, the plans include construction of a 1,120-foot-long and 41-foot-high detention basin in the Watchung Reservation in Berkeley Heights and Scotch Plains. A second flood basin is proposed for Watchung and Berkeley Heights.

The project will receive \$265 million in funding from the federal government, \$73 million from the state, and \$24 million to be paid collectively by Union, Middlesex and Somerset Counties over the course of the 12-year project.

Construction of the detention basins has been proposed as a solution to holding back water from the Watchung Mountains which is causing flooding in Scotch Plains, Plainfield and North Plainfield after heavy rains. The overall project is in response to the devastating flooding for more than a century, the worst being the one in 1973 which killed six persons and injured 36 while causing \$80 million in damages.

Monday's meeting almost did not occur as Union County was not included among those counties to host a public hearing. However, Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders Chairwoman Linda d. Stender of Fanwood sent a letter to the Army Corps and Freeholder Henry W. Kurz spoke to a representative of the Corps at a previous hearing on holding a similar hearing in this county.

Mrs. Stender has asked for the Friday, March 7, deadline for public comments to be extended, perhaps by 90 days, to give the Freeholders and public time to obtain additional information regarding the massive project. We would like to point out that each of the three county governments must approve the project in order for it to move forward.

At the present time it seems doubtful Union County Freeholders will support the plans. Freeholder Stender has said she would like an engineer to review the Army Corps plans before the board takes any official action regarding the proposal. We feel such a delay is not too much to ask, given the scope of the project.

The Sierra Club has announced its opposition to the project over concerns which have been addressed over the impact the project will have on the ecological system in the reservation.

We ask that the Freeholders continue to act cautiously regarding this proposal by not acting until each member has a full understanding of the project including the pros and cons for Union County. The Watchung Reservation is a treasure for the county which must be preserved for generations to come.

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The Future of Main Street Investigative Report Part III 97mar30

**"Sensing That Things aren't Right, We Squabble
But Can We Identify Why?"**

Editorial

by: Horace Corbin, Publisher

For the last nine months, our downtown business development initiatives have stalled in debate between the principle players; Main Street, the Special Improvement District (SID), the Chamber of Commerce, and the Town Council. Strong feelings and anxiety have developed as the parties sense that things aren't quite right. Each, of course has their own perspective. We're inching forward toward approval of the SID budget next month under an uneasy truce.

In the background, forces are at work to squelch the Main Street Program. Counter forces are at work to clip the wings of the Chamber of Commerce. Meanwhile, Town government is nervously dealing out the cards. SID is scrambling in the center, trying to figure out how to do their upcoming job. Hundreds of volunteers are on the sidelines asking what to do, which way to go, and with whom. Businesses see more taxes coming. To avoid all out battle, which none wants; concessions, compromises and realignment are occurring over issues of power, control, and spending.

No smiling faces can be seen.

This editorial has been delayed for several days in the mind of this writer; although, it is plausible to acclaim that the circumstances are the result of petty bickering, selfish interests, short sighted business views, power plays and personality clashes. It makes for a good story. But it can't be told that way because, it isn't true. There are too many good leaders, good organizations and good people involved. All have the basic desire; "Making Westfield The Best That It Can Be - While Providing for Their Own Survival and Well Being".

Our newspaper is in the center of the communication network, interacting with hundreds of people from the town at our office, conducting thousands of local business transactions, reporting on meetings, receiving E-mail, Faxes and Telephone calls and interacting on the Internet. In this maze are the clues for unraveling the Downtown Business Development Dilemma - "But where is it?, If we could only see

it!"

Several unrelated events this week stirred me to believing I see part of it - like being clobbered by Newton's apple. It's still fuzzy, but it's quickly coming into focus. It needs to be refined by those with greater expertise and knowledge of the subject than I. Still, the essence can be portrayed by describing some recent events and postulating a summary for those on the firing line to consider - then, perhaps they can carry forward.

The events were;

- a. The Westfield Post Office saves the day.
- b. The Banana Republic is coming.
- c. Spring brings shoppers, but downtown is inundated with trash.

Westfield Post Office Saves the Day:

Our newspaper experienced one of our most feared events this Thursday morning at 2-3 a.m.; the printing press seized during the run, scrambling everything including the mailing labels and sorting of bundles. Everyone jumped into action, independently acting as best they could in compensation - the biggest need was to get the papers to the post offices by 4 a.m.

I arrived at the Westfield Post Office, our largest point of departure, at 7 a.m. to see how bad the situation was. The counter man confirmed my fears. Many of the papers arrived without mailing labels and the carrier route bundles were largely unsorted. I asked if I could inspect the scope of the mess. He looked at me calmly, then said, "Oh, they're already out with the carriers on the way for delivery. Everyone did the best they could. Expect some phone calls because the crew is not sure that they will be able to fix everything". Then he handed me a bundle of papers saved for us as an example of what happened. I was too stunned and relieved to say anything but thank you.

One of the postal workers stopped in our office Saturday morning during his time off. He said he was sorry to interrupt, but could we give him the date of our annual "This is Westfield" mailing - they want to get ready.

There's something very important here. The US Postal Service is the largest business in the world with more regulations, bureaucracy and union agreements than anyone. Do you know that in Westfield, the Postal Workers collect and distribute tons of food each year for the poor. They won't accept money donations so as to be absolutely clear that there are no questions introduced about the validity of their volunteer work. I thank them again (and Scotch Plains too).

The Banana Republic (BR) is coming:

By way of third party, this newspaper received a copy of a letter from the President of the Banana Republic (part of Gap, Inc.) addressed to Westfield Main Street. It congratulated Main Street on their fine work on "Save the Rialto" and on other Westfield projects; and, in part due to Main Street recruiting, they are pleased to announce their decision to open a store in Westfield.

The Gap and Gap Junior enjoy success in the downtown Westfield business district. As national retailers, they can be good business partners and add value to our community. Now, here comes the Banana Republic. So why is there anxiety, particularly in view of their cooperation on "Save the Rialto". We'll address our view of this in the summary of this editorial.

Spring brings shoppers, but downtown is inundated with trash:

Good Friday was a wonderful spring day. So was most of Saturday. As hoped, many shoppers (families, kids, out of towners) visited downtown. It was nice. Our coffee shops and deli's refreshed them during their stroll. Our trash receptacles filled and overflowed to the streets. Microbes, equally happy with the day and the feast, joined in the frolic - contributing in their own odiferous way.

I interrupted writing this article to put our office trash receptacles and spare trash bags out on Quimby and Elm Streets. Most of the local shops did not have suitable trash receptacles to assist. They did, however, have suitable words for the trash pickup planning. We located the major microbe colonies and bagged them. Fortunately, a thunderstorm at 5 p.m. Saturday dispersed the crowd and washed debris to the storm sewers. Now, it's another nice day on Easter Sunday, downtown here on Quimby and Elm.

Summary:

1. Westfield needs more businesses with dedication as demonstrated by our Post Office, in that their people and management care and participate in the infrastructure of our society - not coerced, just understand and the moves are natural.

2. The Chamber of Commerce has a good point. Their members will be taxed by the SID. Some of this money will be shuffled to the marketing efforts of Main Street, upon which national retailers move in. Rents go up and threaten to put some Chamber members out of business. Many Chamber businesses sponsor local clubs, societies, advertise in our newspaper, buy Rescue Squad tickets and many other things; at a cost but of vital important to our town. Ask a national retailer for this support and you get "sorry, we're a big company and it's corporate policy not to.....". Are they bigger than the Post Office? The largest

retailer in our town is very prosperous, Lord and Taylor. Where do they stand on community and infrastructure support?

3. Main Street has a good point. We need a selected mix of national retailers along with the local proprietorships so as to be attractive to area shoppers and to fill our vacancies.

4. SID has a good point. As our business booms, how do we deal with the trash?

Westfield has an opportunity to define the Downtown Business Template embracing the needs of the Community, guiding desired national businesses into the fold, and empowering our volunteers (a true strength). It's smart business for national and local firms to understand and to participate.

With minor adjustment to what we have in-place, Town government, the SID, Main Street, The Chamber of Commerce, good National Retailers and local proprietorships can work together.

What do you think?



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