

**The Westfield Leader** The Scotch Plains - Fanwood  
**TIMES** Since 1959

Legal Newspaper for the County of Union, New Jersey  
 and for Westfield, Mountainside, Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Cranford and Garwood

Members of:  
 New Jersey Press Association • National Newspaper Association • Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Scotch Plains Business & Professional Association • Fanwood Business & Professional Association

Periodicals - Postage Paid at Rahway, New Jersey

P.O. Box 250 • 251 North Avenue, West  
 Westfield, N.J. 07091

Tele: (908) 232-4407 • E-mail: editor@goleader.com • Web: www.goleader.com • Fax: (908) 232-0473

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the offices of the newspapers at  
 P. O. Box 250, Westfield, New Jersey 07091

Published every Thursday by Watchung Communications, Inc.

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One-year - \$36 • Two-year - \$68 • Three-year - \$99

## See Why Our Libraries Can Be Portals to Endless Possibilities

Within our very own communities are hubs of myriad knowledge, countless inspirations and state-of-the-art technology. They educate us, stir our imaginations, nurture our talents, build social connections and link us with critical resources. What are they? Our local libraries, of course.

This year, National Library Week begins Sunday, April 7, and continues through Friday, April 13. Begun in 1958, this week-long observance is sponsored every April by the American Library Association to highlight the important roles of libraries, their staffs and patrons.

Participants in National Library Week include public, school, academic and special libraries across the United States, according to the Association's website, ala.org. The theme for this year's celebration, "Libraries=Strong Communities," is one we feel aptly defines the vibrant relationship between the towns within our coverage area and their libraries.

In addition to their extensive collection of books, periodicals and audio-visual materials, the municipal libraries of Westfield, Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Mountainside, Cranford and Garwood consistently offer on a year-round basis a diverse array of programs for people of all ages, interests and abilities.

These programs collectively run the gamut from summer and winter reading activities, story times and book clubs to concerts and film festivals; art exhibits and craft workshops to health and financial education seminars; career networking sessions to technology instruction. Options are available for

visitors from infants through senior citizens, including those with special needs.

Beyond these many offerings, our libraries provide free public access to computers that enable individuals to connect with the Internet for research, to complete homework assignments or to pursue job leads. Libraries also have served as an oasis for communities during challenging times, such as the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy in the autumn of 2012, when they became a safe haven for those without power or just seeking a place to regain some sense of normalcy.

National Library Week includes days specifically honoring people and programs that promote libraries and literacy, among them National Library Workers Day, celebrated this year on April 9. Libraries, whether public, school or part of some other entity, would not exist without the many individuals who maintain their operations and generate financial support.

The libraries that serve our area function as effectively and creatively as they do through the efforts of many dedicated employees and volunteers. A special nod goes out to the Friends of the Library groups within our communities, whose fund-raising endeavors, notably book sales, support library programming, materials and other services.

We additionally need to acknowledge patrons whose participation in library programs and utilization of library resources help these institutions to retain their vitality. In celebration of National Library Week, we encourage everyone to check out all their library has to offer. They likely will find many reasons to return.

## PSE&G's New Route for 69-kV Line Still Presents Safety Issues

PSE&G has changed the proposed route of its controversial 69,000-volt transmission line as it passes from Cranford, through Westfield, and Fanwood. Originally, the line was supposed to zig-zag along a 2.1-mile stretch on the south side of town. Now we believe, the plan is to go straight down South Avenue, also known as Route 28, a state road.

Residents in Westfield have been extremely vocal in their opposition to the PSE&G plan, fearing safety issues if the line, which will sit on top of 65-foot-high utility poles, was to come down during a storm. Would our firefighters need additional training to address their safety concerns? Is there an additional danger to having lines that are nearly four times the voltage of the existing lines going through a busy thoroughfare like South Avenue?

PSE&G has agreed to hold a public workshop at Edison Intermediate School next Wednesday, April 10, at 7 p.m., where their representatives will be available to answer questions. We encourage residents to attend this session.

In addition to Westfield, we are seeking information from PSE&G on the route that will be used for the transmission line as it passes through Garwood from the Cranford substation as well as from Westfield to Fanwood. Also, will PSE&G, in fact, be placing a substation at 750 Walnut Avenue in Cranford? Hartz Mountain Industries currently is before the Cranford Planning Board seeking to have

the property rezoned as commercial with plans to build 905 apartments.

With the thousands of multi-housing units being constructed in Union County, there clearly is going to be the need for an expanded power grid. And, of course, the utility wants to avoid a repeat of the large-scale power outages that occurred during Superstorm Sandy.

PSE&G, in our view, should have held well-publicized public meetings well before it began to seek removal of over a hundred neighborhood trees. Seeing the strong opposition in Westfield, they went back to the drawing board.

Why the rush to get these lines installed? Is this new route PSE&G's final plan? Is this a consequence of the "Affordable Housing" projects?

While this plan still makes residents uneasy, we do thank town and state officials for reaching out to PSE&G about residents' concerns and, at the very least, getting this project stopped until residents and the town can have the questions answered.

We question why PSE&G opted to initially go through local residential streets and near a school and the town pool in the first place. Did they feel it was easier to deal with local zoning rather than state laws, given that South Avenue is a state road?

We encourage the region's mayors, Senator Tom Kean, Jr. and Assemblyman Jon Bramnick to continue to work in finding the best and safest solution for the region before work resumes on this project.

## Letters to the Editor

### Governor Murphy, Restore Funding To The Homestead Rebate

It seems politicians in Trenton are determined to drive everyone out of New Jersey. You can't read the news without learning about some new tax out of Trenton.

Just last week, Governor Murphy signed the "rain tax" into law giving counties and municipalities the ability to impose taxes on churches, nonprofits, residents, and businesses for stormwater runoff based on the size of their patios, parking lots, driveways and roofs.

Trenton is also considering imposing a "parking tax" on top of what residents already pay to park at public and private facilities in order to fund projects to improve pedestrian access to mass transit. You mean to tell me Trenton can't find the money to improve access to mass transit in a \$38.6-billion budget now? We need a new tax, really?

Let's also not forget the proposed millionaire's tax that will drive more wealth, businesses, and jobs out of New Jersey, leaving middle-class taxpayers to pick up the tab for state spending.

Scotch Plains is being forced to pay \$218,000 more to the state this year to cover the state's pension deficit. While Scotch Plains residents are being forced to send more to Trenton,

the state is cutting critical property tax relief programs like the homestead rebate and senior freeze.

According to an analysis on NJ101.5.com, 12 years ago, \$1 of every \$15 spent in the state budget went towards property tax relief in the form of homestead rebates. Today it represents just \$1 of every \$135. Benefits are 58 percent less today than in 2007. Income qualification limits have been lowered even while incomes rose with inflation causing more people to lose eligibility for property tax relief programs.

Overall, Scotch Plains residents have seen a 22.3 percent cut in tax rebates in the last three years and a 9 percent decrease in senior freeze benefits. While average property tax bills are up 29 percent since 2007.

So where's the property tax relief in this year's state budget as promised? It seems Scotch Plains makes, only for Trenton to take.

I call on Governor Phil Murphy and the State Legislature to immediately restore funding to the homestead rebate and all property tax relief programs. Scotch Plains and all state taxpayers desperately need relief. Restore rebates now!

Mayor Alexander Smith  
 Scotch Plains

### The First 100 Days Goals in Garwood For Mayor And Council

In the weeks leading up to 2018 elections, Councilman Michael Ince, Councilman Sean Benoit, and I defined a very clear 100 days pledge. As marked last week, we have accomplished what we set out to do in the first 100 days in office in just 78 days!

Some actions were implemented right away, such as extending the public comment time during council meetings from three to five minutes. The first-ever Citizens' Advisory Panel was established at the reorganization meeting in January, and this volunteer group has already met five times.

After much research and planning, the bipartisan council unanimously adopted a social media policy in February. The official "Garwood Borough - Government" Facebook page was launched, and we encourage you to follow it for regular updates about town news and events. Additionally, a joint committee with two board of education members, two planning board members, Councilman Russ Graham, and myself was established to increase collaboration and to ensure a stronger line of communication among our entities. This joint committee, which will meet every quarter, held their first meeting on March 19, and we are all excited to be working together regularly.

Lastly, a new "Community Spirit Award" program was announced, and all are welcome to nominate someone they feel exemplifies Garwood's

"small town with a big heart" motto. At the council meeting last week, the inaugural award was presented along with a framed print of the historic Aeolian castle building, which was drawn by a local resident.

While these accomplishments are certainly significant, I am proud to say our group has done so much other work. There is no stopping our progress as we continue to bring optimism, strong work ethic, and teamwork to local government. The Council has introduced the second lowest tax increase in the last 18 years, which also maintains all municipal services, doubles the amount set aside for capital purchases, and anticipates the hiring of a deputy municipal clerk as we prepare for the impending retirement of our current borough administrator/clerk. Also, more community events have been planned, including a Touch-a-Truck program and Bingo Night as part of a Local Government Week initiative. You can find the complete list of events on www.garwood.org. Additionally, the council unanimously supported the purchase of a new street sweeper to replace the 1990 sweeper that is no longer operable. We are all looking forward to seeing it hit the streets when it arrives this fall.

Together, we can — and we will — make a stronger Garwood.

Sara Todisco  
 Garwood Mayor

### Was My Article On Abortion A Screed; Roe V. Wade?

Much of Mr. Cantilli's response to my letter regarding a proposal on a compromised approach to abortion has, in fact, little to do with my letter. In the latter, I proposed that the use of a video, instead of just mere words, is a much more effective way to create a national debate. The video would feature a hooded doctor performing a surgical abortion on a baby just before birth and circulated, particularly to the Democratic New York State Legislature, who support late abortion, along with their families.

In my letter, I proposed that abortion be limited to less than eight weeks. The proposal was solely meant to stimulate counter proposals, which point he entirely missed and, instead, responded with a rambling, incoherent flight of ideas. What is his position? Speak up, Mr. Cantilli!

He claims my article is a screed, which it is not. His reference to Roe v. Wade and his statement that most neuroscientists agree that the fetus does not feel pain before six months, have nothing to do with my article. Also, where did he get his information? Let's not forget that such fetuses cannot speak and neither can their brain waves!

Let's look at his claim that many women aren't aware that they're pregnant before eight weeks. What does he mean by many? What are the numbers? Yes, to some degree, it is unquestionably true. Before completing my NIH fellowship as an endocrinologist, I was in charge of an Accident Ward which today is called an Emergency Room. One busy night, a woman, screaming with severe abdominal pain, entered our unit. My initial impression was some type of life-threatening peritonitis. I immediately started an intravenous infusion fearing that she might go into shock. If the latter occurs, the veins collapse, and it becomes extremely difficult to insert a

needle which is necessary to deliver life-saving drugs such as antibiotics and anti-shock ones. While performing a physical examination, she suddenly sat up and gasped my forearms pleading, "Doctor, please give me something for my pain. Please, doctor, please!" Then it dawned on me that she was in labor. After I delivered the baby, she, incredulous and in tears, exclaimed, "Doctor, where did this come from? I can't believe it. I didn't know I was pregnant!"

Frankly speaking, no one knows when and what percentage of women definitely know that they're pregnant. But, there's also the suspicion of pregnancy. It's not uncommon that even before the first missed period after conception women experience early hints such as breast tenderness and nausea. It's important to note that over the counter pregnancy tests are positive at that early point. Women are far more educated today, and after the first missed period, which is about two weeks after conception, "many" will visit the over-the-counter section of their local pharmacies.

And finally, Mr. Cantilli, called the video a scare tactic. Of course it's scary, but it reflects reality which is indeed sometimes brutal and which must be confronted and not avoided.

His type of emotional, progressive, liberal scatter-brained thinking is becoming alarmingly rampant in our country. It's as if these folks are, as within our universities, attempting to create a general society of snowflakes with safe havens in order to avoid the "scary" real world. And, as with my atheist scientist colleague, Mervyn Turner, who may someday be headed to Purgatory, I would suggest he take courses on how to think with one's brain instead of with one's hormones.

Stephen DeFelice, M.D.  
 Westfield



ABCDIJKLMNOPQRSTUDEFLECTIONUVWXYZ  
 Diction Deception

Below are four arcane words, each with four definitions — only one is correct. The others are made up. Are you sharp enough to discern this deception of diction?

If you can guess one correctly — good guess. If you get two — well-read individual. If you get three — word expert. If you get all four — You must have a lot of free time!

All words and correct definitions come from the board game Diction Deception.

Answers to last week's arcane words.

1. Vibex — Discolored spot or blotch of the skin due to a subcutaneous effusion of blood
2. Giallolino — Naples yellow pigment
3. Trigo — Wheat
4. Geniculate — To form joints or bend like a joint

#### CYSTALGIA

1. Painful swelling of the mammary glands
2. Pain in the bladder
3. Bunyons
4. Pain and swelling of the lymph nodes

#### RONDACHE

1. A small circular shield carried by medieval foot soldiers
2. Any large stage prop in the theater which depicts the background
3. Moving in a hopping or skipping manner
4. Envy; resentment

#### CYNEGETICS

1. Hunting with dogs
2. The study of the Brythonic Celtic languages that includes Welsh, Breton and Cornish
3. Pertaining to swans or the study of swans
4. Study of diseases or inflammations of the throat or windpipe

#### ANGEKOK

1. A fencing master
2. A chiropractor
3. An Eskimo medicine man
4. An interpreter, translator

## Letters to the Editor

### Councilman Mortimer Not To Seek Re-election

I am currently serving my 7th term on the Mountainside Borough Council; however, I will not be seeking re-election this year. I have enjoyed my over two decades on the council and have felt that our governing body has run the town extremely well. When I was first elected to council, we had among the lowest effective tax rates in the county and that is still true. Despite housing bubbles, Mountainside's properties continue to appreciate over the long term.

As a governing body, we were one of the most proactive towns in the entire state in addressing the affordable-housing situation as dictated by our State Supreme Court. Since we dealt with the situation early on, we have the lowest housing density requirement in the state. Decisions on how to proceed with this matter were debated and researched at length, and due to that hard work the requirements imposed on Mountainside are much more favorable than those of our neighbors. We have many other accomplishments too numerous to list in a short press release.

Before finalizing my decision not to seek re-election I had a long conversation with Donna Pacifico who will replace me on the Republican ticket. We discussed the issues affecting the town and the commitment that is necessary to be a successful councilperson. There is no doubt in my mind that Donna is up to the challenge. What I feel is most important, however, is that she has Mountainside's interests first. The Democratic opponents of the last few years have been largely financed by outside interests. When the Union County Democrats finance a local campaign, they expect something in return. This is evident with what is going on in Berkeley Heights right now. Donna is all about Mountainside and in the end that is what matters.

I fully endorse the ticket of Mirabelli for mayor and Dierkes and Pacifico for council. I will work to the best of my ability to make sure they are elected. The stakes are very high this year. The State Democrats would like county control of local schools. It is my firm belief that this is a recipe for disaster, and the Republican ticket agrees with me.

I will not be stepping down from council until my term ends, and expect to continue to serve on committees and boards as long as the Mayor will have me.

I would like to thank my wife, Joanne, for being there with me for 17 of my years on council. I would also like to thank all of those I served with, especially Mayor Vigilanti and Councilman Werner Schon who are no longer with us. Both of them served as excellent role models and mentors, and I hope that I have lived up to their high standards.

To all the residents of Mountainside I thank you, for it has been a great ride and a fantastic learning experience.

Glenn Mortimer  
 Mountainside



<b>State LD-21</b> Sen. Thomas Kean, Jr. (R) 425 North Ave. E. Westfield, N.J. 07090 (908) 232-3673 Asm. Jon Bramnick (R) 251 North Ave. West Westfield, N.J. 07090 (908) 232-2073 Asm. Nancy Munoz (R) 57 Union Place, Suite 310 Summit, N.J. 07901 (908) 918-0414	<b>State LD-22</b> Sen. Nicholas Scutari (D) 1514 E. Saint Georges Ave. Linden, N.J. 07036 (908) 587-0404 Asm. Jim Kennedy (D) 34 E. Cherry St. Rahway, N.J. 07065 (732) 943-2660 Asw. Linda Carter (D) 200 West 2nd St., Suite 102 Plainfield, N.J. 07060 (908) 561-5757	<b>7th Congressional District</b> Representative Tom Malinowski (D) 58 East Main St, Somerville, N.J. 08876 (908) 547-3307 [Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford are in the 7th Congressional District]
<b>LD-21</b> includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford.	<b>LD-22</b> includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark, Rahway and Linden.	<b>12th Congressional District</b> Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D) 850 Bear Tavern Road, Suite 201, Ewing, N.J. 08628 (609) 883-0026 [Fanwood, Plainfield and most of Scotch Plains are in the 12th Congressional District]
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