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Letters to the Editor

Making Westfield A Part Of The Solution To Climate Change

I am writing today to congratulate Dana Sullivan on her award as detailed in the February 28 edition of *The Westfield Leader*. According to the article (page 1), Dana Sullivan is one of four people in New Jersey who will get the 2019 Distinguished Service Award from the NJASBO.

As stated in the article, Dana Sullivan, who is the business administrator for the Westfield BOE, was credited for the installation of solar panels on the roofs of five of the schools in Westfield. These solar panels are now operational and are now saving Westfield \$100,000/year in energy costs as well as providing clean renewable energy for the five schools!

I think it is great that five Westfield schools have solar panels on their roofs. I would hope that this success will lead to getting more solar panels on the schools that do not have them. In addition, the schools that have large parking lots could get solar panels installed in "Y-shaped" structures designed to fit in parking lots. These could also include electric charging stations that could be used by students or teachers that drive electric cars to school in the future.

Let's continue to do our part to make Westfield a part of the solution to the climate change problem by looking for more ways to install renewable power generation systems into our infrastructure.

Walter Korfmacher
Westfield

ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ



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. Deaurate - Having a golden color
2. Gomphiasis - Looseness of the teeth
3. Daysman - An umpire or mediator
4. Pocosin - A marsh or swamp

RHOB

1. The sensation of cold
2. Resembling a rose
3. Juice
4. Saturated; soaked

XANTHOCHROUS

1. Having a yellowish complexion
2. Foreign; alien
3. Containing an overabundance of uric acid
4. Having prickly, yellowish leaves

SCHIZOTRICHIA

1. The condition of possessing a cleft palate
2. A complete break of a bone; a compound fracture
3. Splitting of the hair
4. Assuming both male and female traits in behavior

TUZ

1. A buckler; a shield
2. A lock or tuft of hair
3. The great snapping turtle
4. A vigorous or vehement scuffle

Partnerships Like C.L.E.A.R. Provide Armor to Fight Addiction

The opioid epidemic that has weaved its way into every corner of American society in recent years continues to take a massive toll in lost lives, devastated families and compromised communities. Legislators and law enforcement agencies, together with other entities dedicated to the fight against substance abuse, have implemented various strategies to combat this major public-health crisis.

While the battle against the opioid scourge indeed requires a comprehensive approach on national, state and municipal fronts, we believe local resources can be particularly pivotal in providing lifelines for those caught in the throes of addiction and their loved ones.

Among such initiatives is Union County's Community Law Enforcement Addiction Recovery (C.L.E.A.R.) Program. Launched in June of 2017, C.L.E.A.R. is a partnership between the county and Prevention Links, an organization dedicated to preventing drug, alcohol and tobacco addiction. C.L.E.A.R. enables law enforcement agencies to provide Union County residents with on-site drug addiction recovery services upon request. Since the program's inception, these services have been available at the Union County Police Department in Westfield and the Union County Sheriff's Office in Elizabeth.

Five weeks ago, the Cranford Police Department joined the county's C.L.E.A.R. program as a local site for addiction-recovery services. According to a February 13 release announcing that the department had joined the ranks of C.L.E.A.R., 12 Cranford

police officers have received advanced substance-abuse training in order to serve as facilitators for those seeking help with addiction recovery. These officers provide assistance to the person and connect him or her with a partner agency recovery coach, who is able to guide the individual to "appropriate treatment facilities and recovery support networks."

"To truly tackle this problem, those individuals facing the disease of addiction need to find their way to recovery," said Cranford Police Chief Ryan Greco in the same release. "I can only hope that by providing an additional C.L.E.A.R. Program location and expanding the program hours we will be able to assist even more people towards recovery."

We applaud the Cranford Police Department for its participation in the county C.L.E.A.R. program, and encourage other law enforcement agencies to come on board as well. It is our belief that the greater the availability of addiction-recovery services - especially on the local level - the more likely people will seek help. A municipal police department can offer struggling individuals assistance right in their hometown.

The dark saga of opioid addiction has impacted this nation as a whole, spanning our entire socio-economic spectrum, all cultures and every geographic line. We are therefore all in this battle together, and while it is far from over, partnerships within and among communities give us armor and make us that much more likely to ultimately triumph.

A Full Investigation Is Needed Into Hiring Practices at NJSDA

Two Republican state lawmakers are calling for an investigation by the NJ Legislative Select Oversight Committee into allegations of nepotism in the hiring practices at the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA), the agency responsible for funding and managing some \$11 billion in new construction, modernization and renovation of school facilities projects in the state's 31 poorest school districts known as the SDA Districts, previously called Abbott districts. The SDA was created in 2007.

According to northjersey.com (*The Record*, Bergen County), Governor Phil Murphy appointed Lizette Delgado-Polanco, the vice-chairwoman of the Democratic State Committee, last August to be in charge of the agency as its chief executive officer. Since that time the SDA has replaced 26 tenured staff with 38 employees at \$3.3 million, according to the report. The new hires are all business associates or related to Ms. Delgado-Polanco.

Remember, the SDA is the same agency where Albert J. Alvarez, who was accused of sexual assault by a former Murphy campaign staffer, served as chief of staff. Mr. Alvarez resigned from the post. He has never been charged with a crime after two different county prosecutors opted not to prosecute him.

In a letter to State Senator Loretta Weinberg and Assemblywoman Eliana Pintor Marin, co-chairs of the New Jersey Legislative Select Oversight Committee, Assemblywoman Nancy Munoz (R-21st, Summit), Holly Schepisi (R-39th, Westwood) and BettyLou DeCrocce (R-26th, Parsippany) said, "These (nepotism) allegations range from replacing tenured staff with individuals related to current Authority leadership, to a series of unplanned raises."

The news report did not just raise eyebrows among Republicans. State Senate President Stephen Sweeney, a

Democrat, called the report "disgusting" and said the SDA should be disbanded, according to an nj.com (*Star-Ledger*) report.

Assembly Minority Republican Leader Jon Bramnick (R-21st, Westfield) said, "This is another example of the Murphy administration's nepotistic culture. Time and again it becomes evident that personal relationships are more important than anything else."

Legislation sponsored by Assemblyman John J. Burzichelli (D-3rd, Gloucester) and Assemblyman Christopher P. DePhillips (R-40th, Midland Park) would abolish the SDA and transfer all its "functions, powers, and duties, and employees" to the state's Economic Development Authority (E.D.A.).

"This latest SDA hiring scandal proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Trenton needs to take an entirely new approach to our school construction dollars. The SDA has lost the trust of the people of New Jersey, and the taxpayers must be protected against further mismanagement and corrupt hiring practices," said Mr. DePhillips in a press release. "It is time for the Assembly to take up my bipartisan legislation to abolish the SDA and consolidate its functions within the E.D.A."

Assemblyman Kevin J. Rooney (R-40th, Wyckoff) said Governor Murphy "surrounds himself with cronies who have their own cronies."

We call on lawmakers of both parties to come together to investigate these charges. Government positions should be advertised in print publications, on social media, in libraries, etc., so that they are open to and can be accessed by all qualified individuals, not just to those with political connections. No agency should be cleaned out of so many employees without just cause.

This is politics at its worse in Trenton.

Ample Time to Peruse Its Pages While Dawdling In Purgatory

My characterization of the universe and our part in it clearly struck a dissonant chord with past letter writer. I am sorry that he cannot appreciate the extraordinary synthesis that the scientific method has brought to our understanding of the world we live in.

That understanding is not a "clever emotion-based argument from atheists," as he would have us believe, but is based on three centuries of scientific observation, measurement and testing that has provided a cogent and compelling narrative of life and the cosmos.

We are each free to decide for ourselves if, and how, and when, and where religious beliefs should be injected into that narrative, and to pass those views on to our children at home, or in the church, mosque or synagogue.

I did not state that I have a "moral obligation" to encourage my children to be atheists. I said that my beliefs (shared by my wife, their mother, by

the way) provide a moral foundation for my life, and for my children's life. Whatever I choose to tell my children on this topic is, in any case, my concern alone, just as what he chooses to tell his children is his.

It is certainly of no concern to our schoolteachers. This issue does not belong in any public school-based discussion of science and evolution, as he suggests it should. Religion is about faith. There can be no proof of the existence or otherwise of a deity. That which can not be tested and proved or disproved does not belong in the science class. Our courts have repeatedly declared that to try to con-mingle the two violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

I would be happy to read Dr. DeFelice's book. It appears that I will have ample time to peruse its pages while dawdling in Purgatory.

Mervyn Turner
Scotch Plains

Letter To The Editor Was A Dark And Loathsome Diatribe

It is normal and healthy to have a policy difference with an elected official and to write about it in the paper, but the letter written last week by Mr. James Kurdyla of Clark, complaining about Congressman Malinowski's remarks in opposition to the President's state of emergency declaration, was not a simple disagreement over policy. It was a dark and loathsome diatribe in which the author winks at the Congressman's Polish heritage in order to discredit him and, much worse, refers to those fleeing violence and persecution at our southern border as "human sewage."

I am appalled that *The Leader* has stooped to printing something that is so short on substance and so full of hate.

Letters to the Editor

Solar Panel Fiasco And Political Payoffs

There is no need for any tax analysis, and county personnel are perfectly competent to prepare Requests for Proposals regarding the sale of the now-closed Juvenile Detention Center facility.

The only reason that the Union County Improvement Authority (UCIA) is getting the exorbitant amount of \$325,000 for these services is that the UCIA needs cash to pay off bond debt from the solar-panel fiasco and for political payoffs.

John Bury
Kenilworth

Thank You For Tammy Lieberman

Dear Mayor Brindle and Members of the Town Council, Thank you for securing health benefits for Tammy Lieberman, widow of Westfield PD Detective Eric Lieberman.

I don't know the family personally, but I totally agree that she should be covered as any other retiree's family would be covered, in light of her husband's 27 years of protecting our community.

Congratulations on getting this done. Your efforts are most appreciated.

Tola Murphy-Baran
Westfield

Gov. Sits Around Drumthwacket For Inspiration To Create A New Tax

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy seems to be on one big continual tax bender. I seriously believe that the sits around Drumthwacket surveying the surroundings for inspiration to create a new way to tax New Jersey residents. We have too many taxes to even list here but the number has grown already this year to include a "Rain" tax and a "Parking Meter" tax.

According to Central Jersey.com, it has been reported by the Office of Legislative Services tax collections were are at 2.9 percent over last year, however, Murphy expected an increase in revenues by 7.2 at the end of the fiscal year. That increase is highly unlikely so a shortfall is expected. Murphy and company decided that was not acceptable and tuned in their collective thinking caps to taxes.

The Clean Storm Water and Flood Reduction Act affectionately known as the Rain Tax for short, has already moved through the state Senate and Assembly. It now awaits the Governor's signature to become law. The bill "authorizes the establishment of local storm water utilities and ... allow those utilities to assess fees that are based on a fair and equitable approximation of the proportionate contribution of storm water runoff from any real property." I imagine the tax could somehow be calculated based on how many square feet of impervious surfaces are present on a given property multiplied by a certain rate. Whose brain child is this one?

Assembly Bill A-5070 passed on a vote of 40-32 on February 25. Lovingly called the parking meter tax allows six municipalities to impose a tax in addition to what they are already taxing drivers to park their vehicles in their lots. Those towns are Newark, Jersey

"A zebra does not change its spots."
 Al Gore



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LD-21 includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford.	LD-22 includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark, Rahway and Linden.	12th Congressional District 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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