

Dem Voters to Decide Freeholder, Assembly, Co. Committee Races

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

REGION — Registered Democratic voters will decide a competitive Primary Election field this Tuesday, June 4, in the races for Union County Freeholder, County Surrogate, State Assembly in the 21st and 22nd Legislative Districts and for members of the Union County Democratic Committee (UCDC) in Fanwood, Cranford, Scotch Plains and Westfield.

This year's primary challenge is focused locally in Fanwood where the county Democratic organization is running candidates for the UCDC

under Column A against those aligned with Mayor Colleen Mahr under Column B.

In the race for Union County Freeholder, nine candidates running on three different slates are seeking the party's nomination for three seats on the nine-member board. Incumbent Freeholders Bette Jane Kowalski, Sergio Granados and Rebecca Williams are running on the Regular Democratic Union County Organization line. Lorraine McNeal, former Fanwood Councilman Jack Molenaar and former Roselle school board member Anthony Esposito are running under the slogan "People First

Democrats," while Plainfield Board of Education member Wilma Campbell, Alex Lospinoso, chief of staff for Linden Mayor Derek Armstead, and former Roselle Councilwoman Sylvia Turnage are running under the slogan "Democrats United For Progress."

The winners will face Republicans Peter Kane of Summit and Glenn Genband of Mountainside in the November General Election. The deadline for Independent candidates to file for state, county and municipal offices in the November General Election is 4 p.m. on June 4.

In the race for Union County Surrogate, incumbent James LaCorte of Union faces a Primary challenge from Lisa McCormick of Rahway. The winner will face Republican Peter Lijoi of Summit in November. Ms. McCormick previously ran for Union County Clerk in 2010 against long-time incumbent Joanne Rajoppi and last year challenged U.S. Senator Robert Menendez in the Primary for U.S. Senate. In the U.S. Senate race, Ms. McCormick received 10,806 votes in Union County or 35 percent of the vote. In the 2010 race against Ms. Rajoppi, she garnered 10,499 tallies or 44 percent of the vote, according to election results.

At the state level, in the 21st Legislative District, Lisa Mandelblatt of Westfield is running with Stacey Gunderman of New Providence for State Assembly. They face a challenge from Jill LaZare of Summit, who ran for State Assembly in 2013 and 2015 against incumbent Republican Assembly members Jon Bramnick of Westfield and Nancy Muñoz of Summit. She ran for State Senate in 2017 against Senate Republican Minority Leader Tom Kean Jr. of Westfield. Ms. Mandelblatt was an early candidate for Congress in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Freeholders Get Report on Need for Gateway Tunnel

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

COUNTY — The Union County Freeholders received a condensed version at last Thursday's agenda meeting of a report on the importance of construction of the Gateway rail tunnel project connecting New Jersey to New York City as prepared by the Regional Plan Association (RPA).

Nate Bottigheimer, New Jersey director of the RPA, gave a synopsis of the association's report, called "A Preventable Crisis, The Economic and Human Costs of a Hudson River Rail Tunnel Shutdown."

He said since 2002 the percentage of New Jersey residents working in the city has grown from 11 to 13 percent as a share of the New York City workforce. "So it's very important that we have strong connections across the (Hudson) River," Mr. Bottigheimer said. He said seven-eighths of the 200,000 commuters into New York are NJ Transit commuters.

He said the condition of the existing tunnel from age (it dates to 1920) and damage from Superstorm Sandy makes transportation by rail, including the Portal Bridge in Hackensack, increasingly unreliable.

"We need to have new infrastructure in place to head off an interruption of access to the city," Mr. Bottigheimer said.

At peak times, 67,000 commuters currently cross the Hudson River into the city from New Jersey. He said if one of the existing tunnels is shut for repairs, it would displace 38,000 daily Garden State commuters. Mr. Bottigheimer said around 11,000 of those commuters will opt to commute to New York by car, putting "tremendous impacts" on roads throughout Northern New Jersey.

He said 250,000 commuters will see a trip that increases by 10 minutes,



Paul Lachenauer for The Westfield Leader

PROTECTING WESTFIELD...The Westfield Police march in the town's annual Memorial Day Parade on Monday morning.

Garwood to Draft Letter to Brindle About Concerns of Ice Rink

By MICHAEL BONACCORSO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD — Borough Clerk Christina Ariemma will draft a letter to Westfield Mayor Shelley Brindle expressing residents' concerns about the possibility of the ice rink returning to Gumbert Park for a second season next winter.

Mayor Sara Todisco asked Ms. Ariemma to prepare the letter after several residents expressed concerns about the rink at the borough council's meeting last Thursday. The Westfield Town Council is scheduled to vote on

the rink's location at a meeting in June.

Mayor Todisco said the borough council is not opposed to recreation programs, but said the park is "the wrong location" for the rink. Council President Marc Lazarow, who supported the letter, said he has spoken on behalf of concerned Garwood residents at several recent meetings of the Westfield Recreation Commission.

Councilman Michael Ince said in his short time on the council, few issues have "concerned me more than this one." He pointed out that several years ago, Union County had proposed installing an ice rink at Oak Ridge Park in Clark and he urged the county government to revisit the idea, saying the Clark location would be preferable to a rink in a residential neighborhood. "I am not against hockey," Mr. Ince said. "My son played hockey."

Councilman Sean Benoit said last week that any benefits the rink brings to the community are outweighed by negative impacts, including potential lower property values and increased noise disruptions.

"I ask each of you to stand up for Garwood and your neighbors at The Pointe," Christine Spears, a resident at The Pointe located across Chestnut Street from the rink, told the council. She said owners of the rink have "absolutely no consideration" for nearby residents and local businesses. "Pointe residents endured a terrible, invasive

six months when Westfield approved a rink directly on the property line with Garwood," she said.

The rink's owners recently presented to the Westfield Recreation Commission a proposal for the rink to operate for a second season at Gumbert Park, and the proposal included music to be played during operating hours. But Ms. Spears told the borough council that the proposal did not include any mention of noise impacts from the music or traffic impacts from skaters and hockey players being dropped off, picked up or parking near the site. "How can elected [Westfield] officials approve a project without doing their due diligence?" she asked.

The proposal for the rink also included increased hours of operation and on-site food sales, which Mayor Todisco said she was opposed to.

Garwood resident Stephen Barcan told the council the rink's return should be delayed until its operator fulfills his pre-construction promise to provide reports on traffic and noise impacts. He said he did not want to merely take the operator's word that decibel levels from the rink were under the 60-decibel level promised. Another resident of The Pointe said that "whistles" and "hockey puck slaps" were consistently heard by those living near the rink during its initial season that ended in March, and accused Mayor Brindle of having "no regard for Garwood." He

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



Paul Lachenauer for The Westfield Leader

REMEMBERING OUR VETS...The wreath is presented at the start of the Westfield Memorial Day Parade in remembrance of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our nation.



Paul Lachenauer for The Westfield Leader

PHOTO OPP...Monday's Memorial Day Parade in Westfield presented many opportunities for families to take pictures of their children's pride in America. The Westfield High School Marching Blue Devils band are seen marching in the parade in the background.

Mayor Giblin Gives Update On PSE&G High-Voltage

By CHRISTINA M. HINKE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD — At the township committee's official meeting Tuesday, Mayor Patrick Giblin provided an update on PSE&G's high-voltage line project. The utility provided a statement, which Mayor Giblin read: "Over the past few weeks PSE&G has performed extensive technical analysis regarding construction of the line along the railroad (Conrail) right-of-way...the railroad is currently evaluating our potential use of the right-of-way..."

PSE&G currently is "examining whether rerouting along the right-of-way will afford us access to construction of ongoing maintenance," the statement continued. PSE&G's final decision will be made from "feedback from the railroad and analysis on access issues," according to the statement.

The township committee has asked PSE&G to reroute the proposed high-voltage power lines to along the Conrail line, so as to not be located along residential and school areas.

Deputy Mayor Ann Dooley said Governor Phil Murphy has been in contact with the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and the BPU believes the height restriction is where the challenge will be.

Commissioner Thomas Hannen, Jr. said that existing high-tension lines currently run along the Conrail line, and said he feels if PSE&G could service those lines then they could service additional lines.

The Fourth of July fireworks display this year will be held on Tuesday, July 2, instead of Thursday, July 4, on the advice of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Mayor Giblin told *The Leader*. The Firecracker Four Miler and Fun Run, sponsored by the Jaycees and held in Nomahegan Park, will continue on the morning of July 4, he said.

The township committee adopted a bond ordinance to appropriate \$6,587,000 for various public improvements, the acquisition of new, additional or replacement equipment, new technology equipment, and new

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



Christina M. Hinke for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD'S BRAVEST...The Cranford Fire Department marches in the Cranford Memorial Day Parade on Monday.

Primary Election is Tuesday, June 4

STATE -- Election polls are open Tuesday, June 4, between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. for the Primary Election.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

PAGE INDEX

Regional	2-3	Education	9, 19
Editorial	4-5	Sports	11-17
Police	18	Real Estate	11-15
Community ...	6-8, 18	Classifieds	17
Obituary	6	A&E	19-20



Congratulations to the Top Teams for the Month of April!



Deborah Citarella Team

Top Sales and Overall Top Team
908.577.0977



Sherrie Natko Team

Top Listings
908.303.8133

Westfield West

600 North Avenue West
Westfield, NJ 07090
908.233.0065
ColdwellBankerHomes.com

