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Letters to the Editor

Reader Disappointed In Remarks Attributed Councilman-Elect Walsh

I was disappointed to read the comments reported in *The Westfield Leader* and *Newark Star Ledger* on November 8, 2001 attributed to a newly elected member of our Town Council. The remarks of Mr. Walsh, a three-year resident of Westfield, that "people are really sick and tired of the perceived good 'ol boy network'" are particularly unfortunate.

The negative implications of those remarks are absolutely unfair to the many distinguished men and women who have served our town. H. Emerson Thomas, Richard H. Bagger - the list is long. Westfield is a great place to live, thanks

in no small part to those members of "the good 'ol boy network" who sacrificed many hours away from their jobs and families to better our town.

I congratulate the new and returning members of our council. I thank the members who are leaving office for their long hours of service to our community. While there will no doubt be disagreements about the best course of action for Westfield, I would hope that the discourse can be positive in nature, absent the partisan tone of Mr. Walsh's remarks.

Mark Ciarrocca
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. Sejugous - In botany, having six pairs of leaflets
2. Winkle - An edible sea snail
3. Crebrous - Frequent
4. Oligidria - Deficiency in the secretion of sweat

IRRORATION

1. Being irritated or agitated
2. Trembling, quivering
3. Being moistened with dew
4. The state of being oblivious to one's surroundings; inattentive

FESTUCOUS

1. Formed of straw
2. Swarming with pestilence
3. Pitted or dented
4. Having a sticky outer coating, especially for trapping insects

UXORIOUS

1. Showy; ostentatious
2. Excruciatingly painful; unbearable
3. Pertaining to a mystical kingdom of the Himalayas
4. Excessively fond of one's wife to the point of submission

ACELDAMA

1. A place or field of bloodshed in ancient times
2. Any large stage prop in the theater which depicts the background
3. In metallurgy, the fusion of two or more metals to produce a more durable metal
4. Utter dismay; disillusion

Answers will appear in next week's issue.

Westfield Democrats' Victory Sets Up Battle Lines for Municipal Appointments

Will the Westfield Town Council reorganization meeting in January be 1997 revisited? Let's hope not. That year there was a battle between Democratic Mayor at the time, Thomas C. Jardim, and the Republican-controlled Town Council. The Democrats had their list of people they wanted appointed to key paid and volunteer posts, while Republicans had their own list. In the end, a compromise was worked out. Now the reverse has happened. Democrats have captured majority on the council, while the Republicans hold the Mayor's office.

Mayor Gregory S. McDermott has the authority to appoint the standing council committees, the Chairman of the Recreation Commission and Westfield representative to various county boards. The new Democratic majority on the council has the power to consent to these appointments or reject them. Thus, they hold some powerful cards that will force the Mayor to negotiate with them or potentially have many of his appointments rejected. Hopefully, the process won't be as ugly as 1997.

There were battle lines drawn for the town attorney, municipal judge spots along with recreation commission chairmanships.

This year we anticipate there will be battles for who will serve as town attorney, labor attorney and insurance risk manager. Acting Town Administrator Jim Gildea and Town Clerk Bernard Heeney are safe this year as they were appointed to multi-year contracts.

Town Attorney Robert Cockren, the former Westfield Republican Committee Chairman, might be in some trouble. Some Democrats have expressed discontent with him serving as Counsel to the Westfield Ward Commission which voted 3-2 to place the Cacciola Place neighborhood, a largely minority area, entirely in the heavily Republican Second Ward. There might be a pressure put on to name new chairmen on the planning board or the board of adjustment.

Labor Attorney Rick Danzer, who has served in the

post for years, became an issue last year when council Democrats questioned whether a possible conflict exists given the fact that Mr. Danzer has been employed by years by the law firm of Frank X. McDermott, the father of the current mayor.

Also, Democrats were angry when long-time insurance risk manager, Bollinger-Fowler, was replaced after decades of service to the town by Amalgamated General Agencies, AGA, a firm co-owned by former Mayor and current Union County Republican Chairman, Ronald Frigerio. AGA has had the contract the past several years.

This year we encourage both sides to work together. The Mayor needs to announce the vacancies that need to be filled early in the process. It is then up to the council to come to an agreement on which persons they wish to see serve. The key in our view is how each individual's skills match the position, not their political affiliation. Also, we would like new faces on boards and commissions so that more residents can contribute to the success of life in Westfield.

Outside of the two political parties, most Westfielders could care less whom is serving in appointed positions. They only care that they are getting the best bang for their taxpayer bucks through enhanced municipal services.

Frankly, we believe that the council should focus more on the goals they want to achieve in 2002. The Mayor will unveil his goals in his State of the Town Speech in January. It is important that both sides come together to make sure that 2002 is a productive year for Westfield and not an "us versus them" governing body.

The bottom line is what does the governing body want to achieve in the new year? A parking deck and dealing with what is expected to be a difficult budget process will be two big areas on the council's pallet this year.

The key is communication between the Mayor and council and their constituents - the people of Westfield.

Mrs. Jacobson and Mr. Walsh Must Assist, Not Resist, Mayor McDermott

As a lifelong "south side" resident of Westfield and a retired 30-year veteran of the Westfield Fire Department with an additional seven years as a volunteer firefighter, I am compelled to write to the editor.

I find Councilman-elect Kevin Walsh's comments, implying that the south side residents have been treated as second-class residents, totally inappropriate and uncalled for. The fire department responds to calls for assistance quickly and efficiently regardless of whether it's on the south side or north. The same is true of our police department, rescue squad, and town yard employees.

Of the previous four fire chiefs, three were residents of the "south side," the fourth was a resident of the north side and was instrumental in orchestrating the building of the "south side" fire house to better serve those residents. The previous police chief and town administrator, again "south side" residents. Retired State Senator Frank McDermott until recently was a "south side" resident, so guess where our current Mayor Greg McDermott spent his childhood? You got it, the "south side." Many of our previous mayors were "south side" residents and to imply that these town officials would allow their families and neighbors to be treated as second-class residents is nothing but "political BS."

As for Councilwoman-elect Susan Jacobson's remarks, "Greg is a nice guy," I agree with her completely. Greg is a nice guy; he is truly dedicated to his wife, children and to the Town of Westfield. The Mayor focuses on the betterment of Westfield and all the residents. If that means by listening he changes his mind; that does not imply he's backpedaling! As a matter of fact, Mrs. Jacobson stated in *The Westfield Leader* that she totally believes in making a decision based on what is the best interest of the town. Well Mrs. Jacobson, that is exactly what our Mayor is doing.

If you recall Mrs. Jacobson, at a

recent town council meeting, I applauded you for your dedication of time and effort to the Board of Education and to the Town of Westfield. I'm sure as President of the BOE, when you had to backtrack or backpedal some of your initial decisions when it became evident after further investigation and/or interpretation that your original decision wasn't always the correct decision, your committee understood. So before making accusations concerning one's performance sit at the table with them and learn firsthand, not second-hand, as to why changes in decisions or directions are made.

I congratulate both Mrs. Jacobson and Mr. Walsh on their election to council representing the "south side," and I hope they will assist not resist Mayor McDermott in making the correct decisions for the Town of Westfield and its decisions.

Frank Isoldi, Sr.
Westfield

Thank You Westfield, Sa-Yo-Na-Ra

有難う そして さようなら Westfield

2年前、私は家族（妻と3人の子供達）と一緒にこの町 Westfieldに日本からやって来ました。そして、12月には、もう日本に戻ろうとしています。この機会に、この町の人々に対する感謝の気持ちを伝えたいと思います。こちらに来た当初、家内も子供たちもほとんど英語を理解することが出来ませんでした。しかし、すばらしい先生方と教育システムのおかげで、子供達は喜んで学校に行き、友達と遊んだり勉強したりしています。特に、8歳の長男の英語の発音は、今まで私が数回で、友達とポケモンカードの交換の交渉も英語で問題無く出来るようになりました。家内の英語のレベルは日本にいた頃と変わりありませんが、彼もWestfieldでの生活を楽しんでいることが出来ました。親切なご近所の人達や先生方、子供の友達のご両親そして、日本食レストランのお陰で、私も素晴らしい日々を過ごすことが出来ました。彼らと飲んだり話したり、ゴルフをしたり、変わったルールのポーカーを楽しむことも出来ました。中には親切にも私に「メルロー」の発音を教えてくれた人もいました。このうち、私が「バーカウンター」で何回メルローを注文して、ミラーライトが出てくるからです。（誤解しないでください、私はミラーライトも好きです）私はこの町の人たち、そしてこの古く新しい町を懐かしく思い出します。いつの日か皆さんに会い、家族で帰って来たいと思います。最後に、私にこのメッセージを書き、機会を与えてくれた、The Westfield Leaderに感謝します。有難うございました。さようなら。

Ted Maki

Two years ago, I came here to Westfield from Japan with my family (wife and three children). Now, we are returning to Japan at the end of this year.

I would like to express our appreciation to the people in this town. When we first arrived here, my wife and children could not understand English very well. However, thanks to the good teachers and education system, our children have been really enjoying attending school to play and study with their friends.

Especially, my eight year-old son's English pronunciation is now much better than mine. He doesn't have any problem to negotiate in English to exchange Pokemon cards with his friends.

Unfortunately, my wife keeps her English level the same as when she was in Japan. But she is able to enjoy the life in Westfield thanks to our nice neighbors, teachers, parents of our children's friends, and some Japanese restaurants.

I found several good friends in Westfield especially at bars. I really enjoyed socializing and talking with them, playing golf, learning and playing poker (which has very strange local rules). Some of them also very kindly taught me how to pronounce merlot at the bar counter because, whenever I ordered merlot, I always got Miller Lite. (Please do not misunderstand, I like Miller Lite too.)

We'll miss the people in Westfield, and we'll miss this old and new town itself. Someday, we want to be back here to see you all. Lastly, I really appreciate *The Westfield Leader* for giving me this opportunity.

Thank you very much and Sa-Yo-Na-Ra (So long),
Ted Maki
Osaka/Westfield

Letters to the Editor

Councilman-Elect Walsh Thanks Third Ward Voters for Support

I write to thank the Third Ward voters who last week elected me to represent them on the Westfield Town Council. Early last spring, a former Third Ward council member shared with me his observation that Third Ward voters are "very careful" about the people they elect to represent them on the council.

Accordingly, I am humbled by my neighbors' collective vote of confidence, and I promise to work as hard at serving as I did in my door-to-door campaign.

In January 2002, I will fill the Third Ward council position currently held by Councilman Neil Sullivan. Councilman Sullivan has dedicated his time to this

community, and therefore, he should be recognized for his service to the people of Westfield.

In closing, I encourage all residents of Westfield to contact me with their ideas, suggestions, or concerns for our wonderful home town. Local government is indeed the foundation of our democracy, and each citizen's input into local affairs is crucial if our greater American democracy is to remain vibrant and flourish.

Kevin Walsh
Third Ward,
Councilman -Elect
Westfield

Politicians' Post-Election Quotes Dishearten Leader/Times Reader

I was disheartened by the quotes of the winning and losing politicians in your paper last week.

Though a registered Democrat, I believe the time and effort spent defining oneself as either a Democrat or Republican is the catalyst for clouded thinking and partisan action on most issues.

Mr. Rotter's comment, "I have two words to say, 'Democratic control'" was disappointing.

In a town as small as Westfield, I can't think of a single significant issue that would or should be paramount to one party but not to the other. Good schools, safe neighborhoods, healthy commercial districts, competent and accountable town employees, controlled taxation; these are not Republican or Democratic ideals. These are what most of us hope will continue to be nurtured in Westfield via our own and our politicians' stewardship.

If a neighborhood has an issue, the remedy of which requires town government intervention, the issue should not become a "democratic issue" just because the residents of that neighborhood usually vote democratic or even that their local councilpersons are of one party or the other. When it does, the ensuing alignment of parties turns the issue into folly!

I grew up in a town similar to Westfield. Its town charter forbids the establishment of party politics at the local level. People run on their merits and their stand on the issues. They still discuss, debate, agree and disagree. But without the burden of defining themselves or aligning themselves with a particular party they are free to vote their conscience.

Eliminate party politics altogether and the aforementioned neighborhood could be treated more impartially and objectively. In my opinion, objectivity and impartiality results in equitable solutions more times than not. It is a radical idea but one we can chose to adopt if we have the courage.

Mrs. Jacobson says she is "an independent thinker" while also saying, "now that we have control, we will be able to do some good things for Westfield." I trust the Republicans were trying to do "some good things for Westfield" as well.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "If you want to test a man's character, give him power." I appreciate our politicians who, (let me remind myself), volunteer to do this job. How about you? Will you shed your party armor and demonstrate your ability to govern as a team?

Sara Strohecker
Westfield

More Letters on Page 5

See it all on the Web! www.goleader.com



Mrs. Weinstein Thanks Voters In Fourth Ward

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the voters of the Fourth Ward for their support and encouragement over the past five years in my capacity as their council representative.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the community and I will always be grateful for that distinction. I congratulate my opponent, Susan Jacobson, and I wish her and Mr. Walsh all the best in continuing the positive efforts made in keeping Westfield the wonderful town in which it is.

Janis F. Weinstein
Councilwoman
Fourth Ward
Westfield

Tom Fuccillo Thanks Second Ward Voters Who Supported His Campaign

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the voters of the Second Ward who supported my candidacy for Town Council.

It is my hope that I honored them by running a campaign centered on my ideas for a better Westfield. I knocked on virtually every door in the ward, and I met some really wonderful people. After that experience, I truly believe Westfield deserves its reputation as one of the best towns in New Jersey.

I also want to congratulate Matt Albano and his family on his hard-fought vic-

tory. I wish him well as he serves the Second Ward for another term. I believe the new Democratic majority on the Town Council will put the campaign behind them and reach out to the Mayor and the Republican members for the good of all Westfielders.

The new Council will have to make important decisions on parking, taxes and street safety that will affect the future of our town. Only by working together can those aims be achieved.

Thomas J. Fuccillo
Westfield

Councilman Sullivan Issues Thanks, To Residents for Seven Yrs. on Council

Thank you to the thousands of Westfield residents I had the chance to meet and talk with about our community during my seven years on council. Thank you also to the many who graciously welcomed me at their door during my campaigns, especially this most recent one.

It has been an honor to serve the entire Town of Westfield, and I hope that, more often than not, when my term in office ends in December, I will have left our community in better shape than when I arrived.

I congratulate Kevin G. Walsh, and wish him well in his two years on council, and the Democratic Party and its chairman, Kenneth Rotter, which ran a strong get-out-the vote effort, which was obviously successful on Election Day.

I must express my hope that the comments expressed by Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rotter, in your newspaper and others, in the days following the election are not truly representative of their beliefs, and their plans to change our community.

This is not a time to divide the community into north and south or black and white, or long time residents vs. newer arrivals. It would be a grave mistake to

govern Westfield one ward at a time measuring the spoils that are "brought home" and building jealousies by claiming that someone elsewhere in town has more.

We are one community, not two, and not four. We must all work together in that regard, and I will continue to do what I can to build consensus and unity and resist attempts to drive divisions between members, neighborhoods, and groups within the town.

I received hundreds of phone calls, emails and letters each year from residents of this town on one issue or another, some offering advice, some asking questions, and others seeking help. I never asked what ward they lived in, or what party they belonged to or what color or religion they were. They were all from Westfield or had some connection to our community. They are all individuals deserving of respect, not voting blocs or interest groups. And that's all that mattered to me - and that's all that should matter to anyone fortunate enough to serve on council.

Neil Sullivan
Third Ward Councilman
Westfield