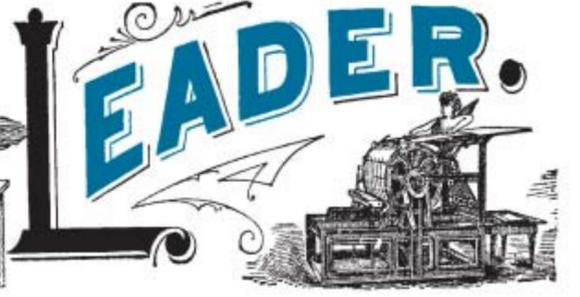




Be Kind to the Earth on Earth Day - April 22



WESTFIELD LEADER



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FIFTY CENTS



CRASHES IN WESTFIELD...Last Thursday, a Westfield woman hit a parked car on Mountain Avenue heading towards East Broad Street, pictured above, left. No serious injuries were reported. On Saturday, two cars collided on North Avenue, at Edgewood Avenue and Crossway Place. The Westfield Rescue Squad transported multiple patients with minor injuries.

WESTFIELD AND SP-F VOTERS GIVE SCHOOL BUDGETS THUMBS UP

Mountainside Voters Reject \$10.9 Million BOE Budget

BY LAUREN S. PASS Specially Written for The Westfield Leader
Voter turnout was low in all four local municipalities on Tuesday. Westfield, which has 18,856 registered voters, passed the \$65.4 million school budget 1,997 to 1,446. Westfield Superintendent Dr. William Foley said, "I am pleased that Westfield residents have supported the school budget and the resulting tax increase. We have all faced difficult decisions, balancing academic goals with even greater fiscal challenges."

Understanding of the importance of education. She added, "We will continue to work hard to provide a strong academic program to meet the learning needs of all our students. Educational excellence is an investment in the future of our students and our communities." In Mountainside, where there are 4,617 voters, 1,128 residents came out to vote. They defeated the \$10.9 million budget, 463 to 604; 161 voters did not answer the budget question. The budget will now go to the Mountainside Council for review. Mountainside's Chief School Administrator, Dr. Gerald Schaller, commented on the defeated budget to The Westfield Leader and The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood. "This will be a hard pill to swallow for our system. We've already cut 1.8 mil-

school board, which will either submit it to the state for approval, or appeal to the State Commissioner of Education in Trenton. In Westfield, incumbent and Board of Education President Arlene Gardner won re-election with 2,070 votes. Ms. Gardner has worked as Assistant Counsel to the Governor of New Jersey, and in private law practice. She has been a member of the school board since 1996. Newcomer Alice Hunnicutt was the top vote getter with 2,080. She currently serves as the director for the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network's Transition from School to Adult Life project. William Ziff, who received 1,845, also won election to a three-year term. He is an attorney with Ziff and Ziff, Esqs., with offices on Elm Street. George Kattak, a certified public

Westfield Town Council Passes Municipal Budget; Residents to See 4.5 Cent Increase

By LAUREN S. PASS Specially Written for The Westfield Leader
On Tuesday night, the Westfield Town Council held its regular public session where they approved the 2002 municipal budget. Democratic First Ward Councilman Carl Salisbury was not in attendance. The budget was passed in a six to two vote. Democratic Third Ward Councilman Kevin Walsh and Democratic Fourth Ward Councilwoman Susan Jacobson voted against it. The budget includes a 4.5 cent increase per \$100 of assessed home value. The average home will see an \$81 increase for the year. Republican Councilman Matthew Albano stated that the increase in the budget was due to an increase in operating expenses, as well as salaries. He added that there would be no reduction in any services. Prior to the meeting, Town Ad-

ministrator James Gildea stated that the Town Treasurer Liy-Huei Tsai will be doing a self-review of the town budget so that the spending plan can be put into use immediately, rather than waiting approximately two weeks for approval from Trenton. Former Republican Third Ward Councilman and Westfield resident Neil Sullivan spoke against the portion of the budget that used the sale of land, over \$500,000, to balance the budget. Mr. Sullivan stated that 2001 was supposed to be the last year that practice was used. He added that the monies should be used for recreation purposes, and that the council should look for other methods to keep the budget down. Councilman Albano responded that the money was not being used for an operating expense, but to offset the increase in Union County Improve-

ment Authority (UCIA) leasing. UCIA provides the municipality with money for capital improvement projects. Town Administrator Gildea told The Westfield Leader that the money from the sale of land has been accumulated over the years, and that it is the use of UCIA is to spread the cost of equipment over time. Mayor Gregory McDermott thanked the finance committee and Mr. Gildea for their hard work on the budget. He also stated that the residents will see improvements in the public works department this year. Clark Avenue resident Bill Risberg approached the council with regard to the discussion that took place at last week's conference session regarding religious symbols on town property. Mr. Risberg stated that he has been a resident since 1963 and that he and

his family have enjoyed the tree lighting and the arrival of Santa Claus. He went on to say that he feels the menorah lighting to be educational and that he is not offended by it. "If it ain't broke don't fix it," he told Mayor McDermott and council. He also questioned whether anyone had complained to the council in reference to the decorations. Mayor McDermott stated that no one had complained and that the debate came about in reference to the process of the town accepting gifts. Lawrence Avenue resident Ann Weimer also spoke about the holiday decorations. She said that the decorations encourage shoppers and that the loss of the tradition would have a deep effect on people, and thus should not be changed. In other business, the council

For Westfield Board of Education: Three Seats Available • Four Candidates. Marks the Winner. Arlene Gardner (Incumbent) 2,070 votes, Alice Hunnicutt 2,080 votes, William Ziff 1,845 votes, George Kattak 1,669 votes. Westfield 2002-2003 Budget: APPROVED 1,979 vote yes, 1,446 vote no.

For SP-F BOE: Three Seats Available • Three Candidates. Marks the Winner. Susan Dyckman 654 votes, Tripp Whitehouse 1,376 votes, Edward Saradaki 1,348 votes. SP-F 2002-2003 Budget: APPROVED 1,680 vote yes, 1,425 vote no. For Mountainside BOE: Two Seats Available • Two Candidates. Marks the Winner. Peter Goggi 742 votes, John Perrin 717 votes. Mtsde 2002-2003 Budget: VOTED DOWN 463 vote yes, 604 vote no.

Garbage Haulers Protest TV Stereotypes; Emphasize Honest Service to Customers

By DEBORAH MADISON Specially Written for The Westfield Leader
On the popular HBO series "The Sopranos," fictional mob boss Tony Soprano dabbles in a number of questionable business enterprises. However, the one legitimate business in which he engages is a residential garbage disposal company. Now, Italian-Americans are not alone in thinking the series unfairly stereotypes their culture. Many rubbish disposal company owners and

managers also have a gripe with the show, which they feel perpetuates an undesired reputation. "That's just in the movies," said Jerry Infantino, co-owner of Infantino Brothers Disposal in Westfield. Like all of the other major disposal company owners, he claimed no such connection currently exists between the mafia and legitimate disposal companies. However, one company owner, who wished to remain anonymous,

said there formerly was a heavy mob connection in the industry, prior to the 1970s, when the state took over and began heavily regulating the industry. In fact, many of the owners and managers complained of over-regulation by the state government since 1970. The owners are referring to regulations such as the state telling disposal companies where they must dump, rather than letting the owners

choose. It's not only the variation in dumping fees, but a matter of convenience, explained one company owner. Owners also complained about the excessive amount of required paper work; the need to record how much garbage they picked up; where they dumped it and the time it took. "The county and state did not efficiently take over the industry. For one thing, they miscalculated and overbuilt many incinerators, that are not cost effective," said one company owner. Mr. Infantino, who co-owns his business with his brother, said there were over 1,900 disposal companies in New Jersey before the state took over in 1970. Now, he said, that number has diminished to 325. "Between the numerous fees and the bigger companies buying up the smaller ones, it's tough for the smaller companies to stay in business," he stated. Infantino Brothers was started in 1945 by Mr. Infantino's father. Back then, Mr. Infantino recalled, a hauler could park a garbage truck behind someone's house and no one complained. Now, he has to pay a fee to rent parking space for his trucks. Mr. Infantino's cousin, Peter Furino, has owned RND Disposal in Westfield for over 30 years. However, he said the cousins do not consider themselves to be competitors. "There's enough garbage to go around," explained Mr. Furino. Both Infantino Brothers and RND service approximately 1,500 customers and several retail and commercial businesses. Mr. Furino explained that he is not



ON LINE FOR THE DEADLINE...Westfielders and local residents flocked to the Westfield Post Office on Monday with tax forms to meet the midnight filing deadline.

Union County Residents Oppose Plans to Develop Land Near Reservation

By FRED ROSSI Specially Written for The Westfield Leader
Last week, the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders passed a bond ordinance authorizing the acquisition of property in Summit for open space purposes and then heard pleas from several Summit residents that none of the land be set aside for potential development. The 63-acre parcel of land, which abuts the Watchung Reservation and is owned by the New Jersey American Water Company, will be purchased using some \$9 million in funds from the county's open space trust fund. After the board voted 7-0, with Freeholders Mary Ruotolo and Alexander Mirabella absent, a group of Summit residents who live near the site spoke to the board about their hope that no consideration be given to subdividing the property for development. Freeholder Chairman Lewis Mingo, Jr., without providing any details, admitted that, "consideration to subdivide is an option we do have." He emphasized that no decisions on the possibility are pending and said the main thrust of the

land purchase is to conserve open space. The Summit residents said they opposed any development because they wanted to keep open space and also to avoid what they said was a potential flooding problem in the area if any development occurred. Freeholder Daniel Sullivan pointed out that before the open space trust funds were available, the water company had been in "very serious" negotiations with developers to more fully develop their land. "We're doing everything we can to preserve open space." The Freeholder Board will introduce its 2002 budget at its April 25 meeting, with a public hearing and vote set for May 23. Mr. Sullivan told The Westfield Leader that the original \$323.9 million spending proposal put forth in January by former County Manager Michael Lapolla had been pared during budget hearings in the interim, with the operating budget cut by about \$500,000 and the capital budget sliced nearly in half. On a related matter, County Finance Director Lawrence Caroselli

PAGE INDEX table with categories: Regional, Editorial, Community, Obituary, Education, Sports, Real Estate, A&E.



**MOUNTAINSIDE MADNESS...** Local residents crowded the Mountainside Post Office, waiting to mail their tax forms on tax day, April 15. The post office was exceptionally crowded, with last-minute filers forming lines outside the door, onto the sidewalk at various times during the day.

# State Report Cards Prove Westfield, SP-F, And Mountainside Have Made the Grade

By DEBORAH MADISON  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

Each year, the New Jersey Department of Education compiles and publishes a variety of reports, which evaluate and compare data on all of New Jersey's 2,300-plus schools in dozens of key categories.

By utilizing the information from these various reports, parents and educators can evaluate how each district compares to other districts throughout the state and with the state averages.

Most recently published this year, the New Jersey School Report Cards compiled by the state Department of Education have been distributed to all of New Jersey's 618 school districts for public inspection. Reports for each school were mailed to parents in each respective school neighborhood.

Compiled annually since 1995, the Report Cards have encompassed a growing list of categories over the past seven years. The School Report Cards include statistical, financial and demographic information about each school in every district, including vocational, charter and special services schools.

Along with other data, the 2002 Report Cards included faculty and administrator levels of education, salaries and benefits, per pupil expenditures and revenues, just to name a few of the categories. The report also included demographics for each school on enrollment, disabilities, languages spoken, class size and mobility, dropout/suspension rates and computer/internet access per pupil.

Also included are mean scores for the SATs and the percentages of students scoring advanced/proficient, proficient and partially proficient for the fourth, eighth and high school proficiency assessment tests, the ESPA (Elementary School Proficiency Assessment), GEPA (Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment) and HSPT (High School Proficiency Test), respectively.

Overall, state trends from the Report Cards show that enrollments, along with spending, are increasing and class sizes are decreasing. Computer and Internet access per pupil continued to rise in 2001, along with the cost of providing this technology. The state average is now one computer for every five students, more than doubling that rate from four years ago.

The spending gap between poorer districts and wealthier districts has continued to narrow, however, higher test scores still correlated with the highest income districts. A district's spending per pupil was not as much of an indicator of higher test scores as was the District's Factor Grouping (DFG).

The DFG is a rating system, devised by the state, which rates districts based on a formula that calculates and compares districts according to a number of socioeconomic factors that have been found to have a strong correlation with educational outcomes.

The socioeconomic status of each district is calculated by a formula, which includes income, occupation and educational level of residents in each district.

The DFG rankings range from A, the lowest, to J, the highest, so that districts are grouped according to an interval of one-tenth of the total range between the highest and lowest scores. Westfield, Scotch Plains-Fanwood and Mountainside all have a designated DFG of "I" and were among the top scorers in all grade level assessments in the county.

Elizabeth, which received an "A" DFG, had the lowest scores in all three grade levels for all subjects in Union County, and along with Jersey City and Camden, exhibited some of the lowest scores in the state.

Westfield's SAT mean score for 2001 was 1,113 with a HSPT score of 96. Westfield was most closely correlated with Summit in scoring.

Scotch Plains-Fanwood tallied a mean SAT score of 1,073 and a HSPT of 88, similar in scores to Hunterdon Central.

Mountainside students, who share a high school with Berkeley Heights, scored 1,101 on their SAT's and 93 on the HSPT, similar in scoring to New Providence.

The top SAT score in the state was Milburn at 1,207. The top scoring HSPT's were Haddonfield and Mountain Lakes, both at 98, while several high schools in Essex County scored the lowest on both SAT's in the 600s to 700s and scores below 15 on the HSPT.

The highest fourth-grade assessment score in Union County for language arts was attained by Summit's Brayton Elementary School and the

highest math score in Union County was achieved by Roselle Park's Sherman Elementary School.

The highest eighth grade scores were attained by Cranford in both language and math, who came in a close second to Warren, in Somerset County, which attained the highest math score in the State for eighth grade.

Union County Vocational-Technical High School in Scotch Plains scored the highest for the county in both reading and math when compared to all other public high schools.

Typically, vocational-technical schools spend more per pupil than public schools, while charter schools tend to spend less. Vocational schools and charter schools have their own DFG ranking of V and R, respectively.

The Department of Education's website suggests that an assessment of how well a particular school is doing is to look at the last five years of scores for that school to determine whether the scores show an upward or downward trend.

Educators caution that many factors must be taken into account when evaluating a district and that test scores or money spent per pupil, alone, is not an adequate indicator of overall performance.

However, realtors often use test scores alone to price and sell houses in many of the state's best-rated districts.

There has been much controversy lately over the educational system's focus on teaching to raise test scores. The pressure on districts to keep test scores high, having a direct bearing on the value of homes, tax revenues, school budgets and administrators' salaries, has been launched as a criticism against an educational system riddled with this conflict of interest.

The New Jersey School Report Cards can be found at: <http://nj.evalsoft.com/> and the entire DFG listing can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/njed/finance/sf/dfg90.shtml>.

## W. Preservation Commission Sets Contest for Teens, Kids

WESTFIELD - The Westfield Historic Preservation Commission invites Westfield children and teenagers to enter a contest in celebration of Historic Preservation Week, May 12 to 18.

The subject of the contest is "Why Do We Want to Preserve Westfield's Architectural History?" and "What Do We Want to Preserve?" Categories for submission include essays, art and creative writing.

Three age levels will be considered: elementary school, intermediate school and high school. Special prizes will be awarded for each category and age group. All entrants will receive a token prize.

Submissions under the category of "essay" should be expository writing of any length, addressing the contest subject. Submissions under the category of art can be drawings, paintings, sculpture or any other art form. Art entries can be realistic renderings of historic buildings, monuments, or homes in Westfield. These entries can be imaginative interpretations.

Submissions under the category of creative writing should be original short stories or poetry based on some aspect of Westfield's architectural history.

For inspiration and story ideas, the commission suggests that children visit one or all of four historically interesting places in town. These sites include the mural on the rotunda in the Municipal Building, the mural in the train station, the historical society, or the murals in the post office. Contestants can use the depictions in these murals as a springboard for their own creative writing.

Simultaneous submissions to all three categories of essay, art and creative writing are permitted. Prizes will include a tour of the state capitol with Senator Richard Bagger, lunch with Westfield Mayor Gregory McDermott, books by noted local authors, Wendy and Harry Devlin, and other prizes.

All contest entries must be submitted by Wednesday, May 1, to the Westfield Historic Preservation Commission, c/o Claire Gray, 425 East Broad Street, Westfield 07090.

Winners will be announced during Historic Preservation Week and will receive their awards at the Harry

## Devlin Commendations Award Ceremony in June. The event will be televised on TV-36.

## Reservation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

told *The Times* that tax rates figures for the county's 21 municipalities that were published last week in *The Star-Ledger*, while not significantly off base, were, nevertheless, "not entirely accurate." He said the figures were based in part on last year's rates, and said that more exact tax rate estimates would be ready by the time of the county budget's introduction next week.

In other business, the Freeholders reappointed Gail Iammatteo of Scotch Plains to the Union County Vocational-Technical Board of Education Advisory Board.

Resolutions were also approved congratulating the Westfield Boy Scout Troop No. 72 on their 80th anniversary and congratulating Rabbi Kroloff of Temple Emanu-El of Westfield upon his retirement.



**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG...** A gas leak emergency was called in at approximately 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 13, on Rahway Avenue between First Street and Dorian Road, according to Westfield Patrolman Edward Maguire. According to Police Captain Daniel Kelly, the break was caused by contractors installing storm drainpipes. Portions of Rahway Avenue were closed to traffic for most of the day because of the incident and caused detours. See story on Page 19.

## WESTFIELD POLICE BLOTTER

### TUESDAY, APRIL 9

- A Boulevard resident reported the theft of approximately \$2,000 in coins and paper currency that was stored in a five-gallon plastic bottle. The incident apparently occurred as the resident was in the process of moving from Boulevard to another home in Westfield.

- A resident of Dartmoor reported the theft of jewelry valued at \$1,520 from the master bedroom. There were no signs of forced entry.

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10

- A woman reported that her wallet and its contents were stolen while she was at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield. The value of the missing items is \$70.

### THURSDAY, APRIL 11

- Ivan Clark, 23, of Roselle was arrested following a motor vehicle

stop at the South Avenue traffic circle and charged with possession of suspected cocaine. He was additionally arrested on two warrants out of Hillside, one from Elizabeth and one from Newark.

### FRIDAY, APRIL 12

- Bessie Rodriguez, 19, and a 17-year-old male juvenile, both of Plainfield, were arrested in the 900 block of South Avenue and charged with possession of under 50 grams of suspected marijuana. Rodriguez was released on her own recognizance, while the juvenile was turned over to an adult.

- Edward Singhbaba, 18, of Westfield was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest in the 300 block of North Scotch Plains Avenue, after police responded to a report of a disturbance there. Bail was to be set.

### SUNDAY, APRIL 14

- Luigi Marcianite, 20, of Elizabeth was arrested and charged with shoplifting \$121 worth of clothing from a North Avenue store. He was released on a summons.

### MONDAY, APRIL 15

- Matthew Dubberke, 24, of Cranford was arrested at Mountain Avenue and charged with driving while intoxicated. He was released to a responsible party.

### TUESDAY, APRIL 16

- The owner of a New Street business reported the theft of a computer from the premises. The interior door of the business was discovered off of its frame and a window on the back door had been smashed, police said.

## Rider University Places Parisi, Baker and Mele On Dean's List for Fall

AREA - Rider University in Lawrenceville has announced that Westfield resident Jodi Baker and Melissa Parisi and Melanie Mele of Scotch Plains were named to the fall Dean's List for the 2001-2002 academic year.

Melissa is a communications major at the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Jodi is majoring in elementary education and psychology. Melanie is focusing her studies in elementary education and communications. Both Jodi and Melanie are students in the College of Education.

## Open House Scheduled At Union Catholic HS

SCOTCH PLAINS - Union Catholic High School in Scotch Plains will hold a Spring Open House on Wednesday, May 1, at 7:30 p.m. for sixth and seventh graders and their parents.

A guided tour, academic presentation and information regarding the school's Laptop Learning Vision program will be presented.

For more information, please call the Office of Institutional Development at (908) 889-9475.

## Town Council

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

passed a resolution awarding the contract to The Atlantic Group for the redevelopment project of lots 1 and 8, and lots 3 and 3a.

Republican First Ward Councilman Peter Echausse abstained from the vote. He stated that he felt that the council was making a good choice in The Atlantic Group, but that he was unable to attend the meeting where the five companies were interviewed, and thus did not feel that he should vote.

Mayor McDermott stated that The Atlantic Group has done projects similar to Westfield's.

Democratic Councilwoman Claire Lazarowitz, Chairwoman of the Public Safety Committee stated that members of the Council attended an open house at the Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad on Sunday. She explained that members of the council, as well as Town Attorney Robert Cockren, had a tour of the facility and met with the volunteers. She went on to say that the Rescue Squad is in need of volunteer Emergency Medical Technicians and dispatchers.

Councilwoman Jacobson presented the first reading of the ordinance to change the permit fee for cleanup week from \$50 to \$65. Residents will be able to purchase the permits on-line this year. The second reading will be held at the Tuesday, April 30 meeting.

## BOE Election Results Are In

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

work Controller for Enslow Publishers, Inc.

Newcomer Tripp Whitehouse was the top vote getter with 1,376 votes. He is currently a Director of Finance for Telcordia Technologies in Piscataway. Mr. Whitehouse will be representing Scotch Plains.

Susan Dyckman, President of the Coles Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association, won the seat for Fanwood with 654 votes.

In Mountainside, incumbents Frank Goggi, who received 742 votes, and John Perrin, who received 717 votes, won their second term on the board.

Mr. Goggi resides on Ridge Drive with his wife, Carol, their 1-year old daughter and 8-year-old son. Mr. Perrin is a licensed architect and has been a resident of Mountainside for 23 years and was appointed to the board last September to fill a vacancy.

Elections in Scotch Plains, Fanwood and Mountainside were uncontested.

Bill Sheppard contributed to this article.

### Cool Plants

Nj's Largest Selection of Annuals & Perennials are almost here. New Shipments arriving daily.

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## Mountainside Boro Council Unveils Land Use Ordinance

By BILL SHEPPARD  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

MOUNTAINSIDE - The Mountainside Borough Council held its regular meeting on Tuesday evening.

After approving the minutes of the March 19 regular meeting the Mayor read a Proclamation declaring April 26 as Arbor Day in the Borough. He applauded the initiative of the students of Deerfield School and the Mountainside Lions Club for teaming up to plant a tree in celebration of Arbor Day 2002.

The council unanimously approved a resolution for the late introduction and approval of the 2002 municipal budget.

The council awarded a sanitary sewer repair contract to Jo-Med Contracting Corporation of Elizabeth totaling \$115,049.

In other business, the council appointed a pool manager and assistant managers for the upcoming 2002 season. They also gave permission for the eighth grade pool party to be held at the community pool on Wednesday, June 12, with

rain date of Thursday, June 13. There were also two tax sale certificate redemptions, totaling over \$15,000.

The first reading was held on ordinance 1047-2002, an amendment to Mountainside's Municipal Land Use Ordinance whereby a new section entitled, "Environmental Impact Statement," would be added requiring building applicants to go before the borough's Environmental Commission and possibly require the applicant's filing of a written environmental impact statement.

Ordinance 1048-2002, also had its first reading. The ordinance would amend chapter seven of the Borough Code pertaining to parking on portions of Sawmill Road and Longview Drive. The amendment would extend hours and dates of the no parking on one side of the street during the baseball season for public safety reasons.

The next meeting of the Borough Council will be on Tuesday, May 14, at 8 p.m.