



Linda Stender

Assemblywoman Stender Keeps Residents Informed

Linda Stender is a freshman member of the New Jersey General Assembly representing the 22nd Legislative District. There will be a monthly column regarding updates in the State Assembly.

As an elected official I believe that the people we represent should be kept well informed of what the assembly is doing. I think it is important to maintain an open line of communication.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has helped me throughout my years in office, and to introduce myself to my new constituents. I'm a lifelong resident of Scotch Plains and Fanwood. I served on the Fanwood Borough Council from 1988 through 1990 and was elected to a four-year term as Mayor in 1991. I was also a member of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders from 1994-2002, serving as Chairman of the Board in 1997. I resigned from the Board of Freeholders this year after taking the oath of office in the General Assembly.

I am frequently asked if I like being an Assemblywoman. The answer is yes. However, these first few months have certainly been a time of engaging transition. Issues are the same and politics is never dull, but the process is significantly different from serving as a member of a local or county governing body. The job of local and county level officials is to set policies and budgets, and to deliver services directly to constituents in accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey. As a member of the legislature my job is to formulate and enact the laws that govern our state. The chapter in social studies class titled, 'How a Bill Becomes a Law', has vividly come to life. It is an interesting and demanding process.

As a member of the New Jersey General Assembly, I am serving on three committees: Transportation, Environment and Solid Waste, where I serve as Vice Chairman, and Tourism and Gaming. In these first few months in Trenton we have heard testimony and discussed issues such as the budget, Internet gambling, historical preservation, the current drought, the deteriorating condition of our roads and bridges, and EZ-pass.

With regards to the condition of our roadways, I believe money should be spent fixing our existing roads and bridges before expanding into new projects. Although it may be

Father Hummel and Schering Plough To Receive Prevention Links Awards

By BILL SHEPPARD
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

UNION COUNTY—Diane Litterer, Executive Director of Prevention Links, Union County substance abuse prevention agency, announced the recipients of two prestigious awards this week. The Alan M. Augustine Prevention Award will be given to Father Donald Hummel of Scotch Plains and the Prevention Links Corporate Award will be given to Schering Plough, Inc. of Kenilworth.

"It is a thrill to be able to honor Father Hummel and Schering Plough.

They both have been strong community supporters of substance abuse prevention education and of the mission of our agency," Ms. Litterer said.

Father Donald Hummel, the first recipient of the Alan M. Augustine Award, the pastor of St. Bartholomew of the Apostle Church in Scotch Plains, is nationally recognized as a long-time advocate of substance abuse prevention awareness as well as youth enrichment programs. As National Chaplain for the Catholic Committee on Scouting, Rev. Hummel also remains active in the local Patriots Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Serving the local community as a counselor, Reverend Hummel is the chaplain for the Westfield Police Department, the John Stamler Police Academy in Scotch Plains, and the Scotch Plains Fire department.

As coordinator of the Priests' Health Committee for the Archdiocese of Newark with Archbishop Meyers, he actively participates in the Congregational Assistance Program (CAP) sponsored by Prevention Links. Father Hummel recently became a certified Pastoral Addictions Counselor-Level II and has a Masters Certification as a Police Chaplain.

Reverend Hummel told The Westfield Leader and The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood, "With all the many people involved in prevention and recovery efforts in our communities, I am deeply honored to receive this award. The fact that it is named in memory of Alan Augustine profoundly humbles me as he was the quintessential example of public service."

The Alan Augustine Prevention Award has been named to memorialize the former Assemblyman from the 22nd Legislative District. He was elected to the Assembly in December 1992 where he served until his retirement in March 2001. Prior to that position, he served 20 years on the Scotch Plains Township Council and was a member of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Alan

Augustine was a strong advocate, both personally and legislatively, for substance abuse issues. He made a commitment to help make Union County a healthier place to live. He served as honorary Chairperson for the Union County Coalition for the Prevention of Substance Abuse, an autonomous arm of Prevention Links. He was instrumental in organizing the Mayor's Charity Gala, a non-partisan affair celebrating Scotch Plains. Proceeds were donated to the Scotch Plains/Fanwood Municipal Alliance, to support programs and raise awareness about substance abuse issues.

Prevention Links will present its Corporate Award to Schering Plough for its commitment to guiding, caring, and giving back to local communities. Schering Plough, located in Kenilworth, is a leading research-based company involved in the discovery, development, manufacturing, and marketing of pharmaceutical products worldwide. Some of the public health initiatives that Schering Plough sponsors with ongoing community based programs and public health information include Caucus, NJ, Cerebral Palsy League, Hope, Inc., DARE, Daytop New Jersey, Mental Health Association of NJ, NJ Network, Plainfield Health Center, St. Barnabas Health Care System Foundation, and St. Jude's Children Research Hospital.

Following September 11, Schering Plough provided funding, products, and health services for many who were affected. Later in 2001, Schering Plough hosted an open forum on bioterrorism for the community to discuss issues with experts in the public health field.

The awards will be presented on May 5th at a Sunday brunch fundraiser onboard the Spirit of New Jersey. The Ship is scheduled to depart from Weehawken at 11:30 a.m. and return by 2 p.m. Those wishing to attend this special cruise should contact Sandy Springer at (731) 381-4100 for ticket information.

Another Letter to the Editor

Reader Disagrees With Position Of Munoz On Autism, Vaccination

While Assemblyman Munoz could be applauded for calling attention to Autism, his recent letter (April 18, 2002) does a grave disservice to parents and children. In his letter he states that most believe that the recent rise in cases of Autism is "caused by the over vaccination of infants".

Recent reviews of the scientific data by the National Academy of Science - Institute of Medicine and other national and international medical organizations have failed to find credible evidence supporting a link between vaccination and Autism.

On the other hand, this statement from Assemblyman Munoz could lead to both unnecessary worry by parents and to a rise in preventable childhood diseases. Dr. Munoz should realize that his role as physician, assemblyman, and recent appointee to a National Institutes of Health Council lend his statement significant,

but apparently undeserved, credibility.
Bruce Johnson
Westfield, NJ



PLANTING WILD SEEDS...On Saturday, April 20, at 10:00 a.m., wildflower seeds were planted in a one-acre area adjacent to the Fanwood Nature Center. The work was done by Nina Daniels*, Linda Talcott, Tyler, Amanda and Linda Nguyen, Clayton Pierce* and Don Rowbotham. Also helping but not pictured were Peter Vanderheyden*, Denise Rowbotham and Dean Talcott*. *Indicates members of the Environmental Commission. To visit the area, go 1 block south on Terrill Road from LaGrande Avenue. Turn left onto Cray Terrace and go to the overhead power lines. Park in the street and walk up the gravel drive. Blooming of the wildflowers can be expected in June. Different flowers will appear into the fall. Please remember that the flowers belong to all of us and should not be picked. Any group that would like to help place wood chips on the trails (on any dates) can call Dean Talcott at (908) 322-6577 and make arrangements.

Ms. Erdos Appointed Head Of N.J. Consumers Division

TRENTON - Governor James E. McGreevey has nominated Reni Erdos to be Director of the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs.

If confirmed by the Senate, Ms. Erdos will become the ninth director in Consumer Affairs' 31-year history. Consumer Affairs, one of 10 divisions in the Department of Law and Public Safety, is responsible for enforcing the State's Consumer Fraud Act and overseeing 41 professional licensing boards and advisory committees that regulate the activities of more than 80 professions and occupations, including accountants, cosmetologists, physicians, optometrists, home inspectors, nurses, plumbers and funeral directors.

Ms. Erdos, a Scotch Plains resident, is currently the Executive Director of the New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology. She is also an assistant county counsel in the Union County Counsel's Office and an adjunct faculty member at Seton Hall University Law School where she has taught legislation and consumer law.

Prior to joining the New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology, she worked at the Consumer Affairs Division from 1992 until 1995 as its legislative liaison to the Office of the Attorney General. She has also worked

as the executive director of Consumer Affairs' New Jersey State Board of Pharmacy from 1981 to 1982.

"Reni Erdos is exceptionally qualified to lead our efforts to protect New Jersey consumers," McGreevey said. "She has worked at Consumer Affairs and has extensive experience teaching legislation and consumer law. Most importantly, Reni is exceedingly familiar with the issues confronting Consumer Affairs as a law enforcement and regulatory agency. She will bring a strong sense of professionalism and expertise to the job."

"I am honored that Governor McGreevey has nominated me for this important position," Erdos said. "Since its creation in 1971, Consumer Affairs has earned a reputation as a tough defender of consumers' rights. If confirmed, I will work to continue that tradition and serve New Jersey consumers by seeing to it that they are treated fairly and dealt with honestly in the marketplace."

Erdos earned her law degree from Seton Hall University Law School in 1992 and has an undergraduate degree in Zoology/Physiology from Hunter College in New York. She has two grown children, a daughter, Jennifer, and a son, Jordan.



Just another stay-at-home mom.

She's had a successful 50-year marriage, raised three children and helped run the family business. Now, she wants to remain in the comfort of her own home. Patient Care can help. Since 1975, our compassionate staff has provided the in-home support services the elderly need to live as fully and independently as possible.

For more information and a free nursing assessment, call 908-654-5656.



Hourly and Live-In Certified Home Health Aides • Companions • Nurse Visits
24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week • www.patientcare.com • 120 Elm Street, Westfield
ACCREDITED BY JCAHO

Westfield Street Fair

"SpringFest"
Sunday, April 28
11am - 5 pm

Food • Entertainment
Crafts • Family Fun
Petting Zoo • Pony Rides

Event Sponsor

Comcast

Entertainment co-sponsors

Fleet

Promotional Sponsor

PNC • PRINT TECH

Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce
105 Elm Street • Westfield
908-654-1400 • 908-233-3021

At Meadow Lakes, You Don't Retire, You Blossom.

Meadow Lakes is the only full-service retirement community in New Jersey with over 103 acres of natural beauty.

Visit today to experience springtime at Meadow Lakes and learn more about our Cottage Homes, now under construction (only 5 still available)!

Call 1-609-426-6876 today to learn more!

Meadow Lakes
A FULL-SERVICE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY
300 Meadow Lakes • Hightstown, NJ 08520 • www.phsnet.org

Affiliated with Presbyterian Homes & Services, Inc., a not-for-profit, non-sectarian corporation.