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## STRAIGHT ON! "Homeland Security," Washington To Westfield!

By **BILL SHEPPARD**  
*Specialty Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times*

Congressman Mike Ferguson R. District 22 met with Westfield Police Chief Bernard Tracy last week to discuss Homeland Security issues. The two agreed that since September 11, there has been significant progress in law enforcement communication and cooperation on the federal, state and local levels.

Questions remained as to whether this opinion shared by others in law enforcement and has cooperation and communication really improved over the past year since the tragic events of September 11.

The *Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood* contacted law enforcement agencies and experienced personnel on the federal, state, and county levels since the meeting between Congressman Ferguson and Chief Tracy. We solicited their input on the subject.

Union County Sheriff Ralph Froehlich, a 44-year veteran of law enforcement, told the *Leader/Times*, "at every meeting I've participated in on Homeland Security and counter terrorism, all (federal, state, county and local law enforcement) readily admitted that there were turf issues in the past," he said candidly.

"Turf issues were a horrible deterrent, a terrible rock in the roadway to good law enforcement."

The sheriff agreed with Chief Tracy and Congressman Ferguson, characterizing the progress to date as "Great" since 9/11 — "A significant step in the right direction. I also agree with them that a lot of infrastructure work needs to be done."

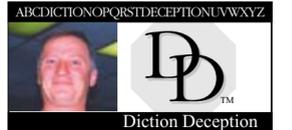
The sheriff cited one example to the *Leader/Times*. "A Homeland Security issue that needs to be addressed is incident response with our school children and their parents. If an incident should happen during school hours, there needs to be a plan developed for evacuation, transportation and communication between all parties under all scenarios. School Superintendents and principals will need to be put into the loop on plans we all make for various incident responses during school hours."

Sheriff Froehlich was quick to point out that, "A lot of work still needs to be done, yes, but we will do it together, elected officials, first responders, and citizens. It's just that simple."

Next, the *Leader/Times* talked with Roger Shatzkin, the spokesperson for NJ Office of Counter Terrorism. The State Office, headed by Assistant Attorney General Kathym Flicker, is the official liaison for New Jersey to Governor Ridge's Office of Homeland Security at the White House.

"New Jersey has approximately 522 police departments that send and receive information, leads and incident reports through county coordinators to the State Office of Counter Terrorism. Mr. Shatzkin told the *Leader/Times* in a telephone interview, "We believe New Jersey is ahead of the curve when it comes to law enforcement counter terrorism communication and cooperation. That has been our (federal, state, local) collective game plan." Beginning in July (the first month of operation), a weekly update, *InfoShare Weekly*, has been distributed to law enforcement agencies throughout the state."

When asked by the *Leader/Times* if the communication of intelligence information is a two-way street, Mr. Shatzkin responded, "Absolutely, we received, ana-



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. Ouzel — The European blackbird
2. Lugubrious — Excessive grief; very sad
3. Lallation — Imperfect pronunciation of the letter "R" making it sound like "L"
4. Dextiotropic — Turning or turned to the right

**TITUBATE**

1. To stumble or stagger
2. To tickle or stimulate pleasantly
3. To make or look smart; to dress up
4. Existing in title or name only; nominal

**INSTAURATION**

1. Blowing or breathing into or on
2. To stud or adorn with stars
3. Brief exposure to radiation
4. Renewal or restoration

**MINIATE**

1. To diminish in importance
2. To tunnel
3. To paint with red lead
4. To condense without altering the meaning or effect

**PERKIN**

1. A kind of weak cider
2. A closely woven cotton cloth, used for sheets
3. The common European partridge
4. An expert; specifically, a skilled theologian used as a consultant

**Answers will appear in next week's issue.**

### Superintendent Calls Article Inaccurate

Lauren Pass's lead article in your newspaper, comparing contracts between Westfield and Scotch Plains, is both inaccurate and confusing. She lists the \$9,000 stipend to retiring Westfield administrators as a monthly stipend.

On the contrary, the \$9,000 stipend is a one-time benefit extended to administrators who retire between June 30 and September 1 for consulting services to the district.

Ms. Pass's statement concerning benefits that Westfield administrators are eligible to receive after 25 years is misleading. All teachers and administrators in the State of New Jersey, including Scotch Plains, receive health benefits after 25 years of service. This benefit was approved by the legislature back in 1988.

**Dr. William K. Foley**  
Westfield School Superintendent  
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**Editor's note:** The \$9,000 per month consulting stipend should have read as a one-time fee. We regret the error.

## The Political Season is Upon Us and We Urge The Public to Support The Rite

For many of us, it feels like the year really begins in September, when the kids return to school and commuting traffic returns to the normal hectic level. Labor Day is here and the "summer" is over.

September marks the start in earnest of political campaigning. Everything to date by the candidates has been preliminary. The candidates, party chairs and campaign organizers have all their plans, funding and schemes in place.

This is a good thing. Our area has traditionally been active in the political process. Most citizens get involved, several candidates run for the available offices, many supporters work behind the scenes and most of you celebrate this phenomenon of democracy by voting.

For those that have recently moved into the area and for others that may have drifted away from the process over the last few years, we urge you to get involved or at least pay attention. There are many things going on.

Your congressman, Mike Ferguson (R), is up for reelection. He faces a challenge from a well-funded newcomer, Tim Carden (D), who chose to locate his campaign headquarters right here in downtown Westfield. This race should see national attention as both parties struggle to wrest control of congress. The fate hinges on the outcome of just a few congressional elections. Congressional races have people-to-people contact opportunities, and the public should take advantage of this by talking to the candidates. You might be pleasantly surprised.

New Jersey's contest for U.S. Senate is an exciting event as incumbent, Senator Robert Torricelli (D), is on the ropes over ethics issues. But "The Torch"; as he is sometimes called, is a tough survivor and is heavily funded. Challenger and political newcomer, Doug Forrester (R), has yet to reveal his positions on issues — choosing instead to blast "The Torch" as the favored campaign strategy of the moment.

Mr. Forrester has garnered strong support from the state Republican organization, including having popular former Governor Tom Kean as his campaign chairman. They think he has a chance to win. This is interesting locally as Tom Kean, Jr. of Westfield is a state assemblyman. Voters have less of a chance meeting candidates for U.S. Senate on a person-to-person basis. We believe Doug Forrester will venture into our area to meet voters one-on-one due to the influence of Tom Kean and Tom Kean, Jr. We're not sure whether Senator Torricelli will do the same. He's welcome, of course; and we hope he does.

But, as "all politics is local," this area has much to look forward to given the spirited municipal races anticipated in Westfield, Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

In Mountainside, there are no contested races. It's "fait d'accompli."

The Freeholder races may be more competitive this year as spending and taxes in Union County seem to have risen above the "radar screen." The Republicans hope that they will obtain at least one "watchdog" seat. It has been 9-0 Democrats in Elizabeth since 1995. The incumbent Democrats will focus more on the benefits of their programs of the past and reach out to their base of superior urban voter registration.

We will be talking to all of the candidates to report their stances on the issues. We will provide them space in our newspapers each week until the election so that they can present their campaign messages. We request that you write us and tell us of the issues that you'd like to hear about.

Our newspapers are also working with The League of Women Voters to sponsor candidate forums on local TV in Westfield, Fanwood and Scotch Plains. Plans are nearly complete, and the party representatives and candidates are ready to go. These programs will be produced in mid-October and will "air" from then through to the election on November 5.

We will publish our special election issue the week prior to the election. Additional information will be posted on our website for your reference — [www.goleader.com](http://www.goleader.com).

Hopefully, everyone will get to see where the candidates stand on local issues important to all, such as taxes, salaries, budgets, parking decks, ballfields and land development. Nationally, we expect to hear about homeland security and where the candidates stand on the "war on terror"; especially since a war with Iraq appears to be on the front burner. You should expect to hear about the economy, corporate fraud, social security, health care, insurance and campaign finance reform.

Many candidates will strive to keep it a clean campaign. Some will hit below the belt and lay blame for past problems on others. We prefer the positive but understand the frenzy to win. We'd like to see the issues addressed with more candor and less pandering to the polls. Of course, sometimes it's a lot more fun and interesting when the rhetoric loosens up, and the gloves come off. We're sure it's going to happen, and we'll keep you informed.

After all is said and done, let's remember that we all want the best for our town, county, state and country; often we just see different ways of getting there. Here at *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*, we wish all the candidates luck, and may the best candidate for the job win in November.

It's the start of "silly season", and we're looking forward to it.

## A History of Labor Day and What it Means To Us Today

"All other holidays are in a more or less degree connected with conflicts and battles of man's prowess over man, of strife and discord for greed and power, of glories achieved by one nation over another. Labor Day...is devoted to no man, living or dead, to no sect, race, or nation," said Samuel Gompers, founder and longtime president of the American Federation of Labor.

The first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City, in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union.

Through the years, the nation gave increasing emphasis to Labor Day. The first governmental recognition came through municipal ordinances passed during 1885 and 1886. From them developed the movement to secure state legislation. The first state bill was introduced into the New York legislature, but the first

to become law was passed by Oregon on February 21, 1887. By 1894, 23 other states had adopted the holiday in honor of workers, and on June 28 of that year, Congress passed an act making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories.

Though Labor Day addresses by leading union officials, industrialists, educators, clerics and government officials are given wide coverage in newspapers, radio, and television; as we people tend to spend more time enjoying the day off and planning our picnics.

Though there are not as many of the kinds of laborers that Labor Day was originally designed to relieve, the holiday should remain as a tribute to those who gave so much more to the foundation of our country than they realized.



### WF Resident Disagrees With Pen & Ink Column

Perhaps the next time Ms. LePoidevin puts her pen and ink to paper she should take a moment to recognize that America was ideologically founded on the principle that men and woman of various religions and ethnic backgrounds can coexist in a single nation. "Teaching 9/11: Will Children Learn Truth or Liberal 'P.C.' Distortions?" published in your August 22 issue, was appalling in its xenophobic commentary and unwillingness to praise tolerance.

The September 11 attacks were an attack on humanity, not exclusively on America, and Ms. LePoidevin obviously has no comprehension of that. The National Education Association should be praised for its objective of teaching children to have 360 degree awareness; that is, an understanding of the tragedy from all perspectives.

This is not at all to say that America should be blamed for the 9/11 attacks; no action in history has ever warranted such a violent, horrific crime. However, it is imperative that American youth do not walk away from this event with a sense of "patriotism" so strong that it inhibits the production of global understanding.

In the words of Benjamin Franklin, "Those who are content to sacrifice freedom for safety will have neither." Emotional freedom is what this nation's children really need, and the desire of Ms. LePoidevin and others to restrict it for the sake of a "pro-American" mindset will lead us towards disgrace.

Jenise Morgan  
Westfield

### SP-F BOE Member Disagrees With Editorial

I share your opinion that the Board of Education erred when it opted to approve a scaled down version of the "Field of Dreams" project including two baseball fields rather than three. I am hopeful that my colleagues will reconsider this decision and I am confident that the project will move forward in one form or another in the best interest of our communities.

However, I disagree with the use of the terms "lack of unity" and "11th hour acrimony" in your editorial of August 22. These phrases create a false impression that the school board opposes the project, which of course, it does not. Moreover, the word "acrimony" suggests bitterness or animosity. No such animosity exists between the board and the borough or township councils. All three bodies have worked together on shared services projects for nearly two years. Our elected officials have developed excellent working relationships and respect each others opinions. They are committed to continue to work together on the "Field of Dreams" and other shared projects to benefit the borough, the township and the school district.

Thomas M. Russo  
Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education