

## Parent Says Victoria's Secret Promotes Sexuality and Doesn't Belong in Westfield

I am a resident and concerned parent and citizen in this town. My family has enjoyed living here for the past 10 years. Our town is a beautiful community - a place where you want to raise your children, a place where you can instill, good morals and values.

Living in Westfield is wonderful. Westfield has an old town feeling in which you walk down the street and are able to greet and see your neighbors and shop owners by name. However, Victoria's Secret has come to town.

I have shopped at Victoria's Secret in the malls. I like their merchandise and I believe they have quality products, however Victoria's Secret does not belong in Westfield.

I am a mother of three children: Lauren, 13, Jimmy, 11, and Ian, 10. Karen and Jimmy attend Roosevelt Intermediate School. When Lauren and Jimmy walk home from school they pass by Victoria's Secret. My children do not need to see sexy lingerie promoted in the window.

At this point, while I am writing this letter, there are see-through thongs, bras in the many windows in the front of the store. My daughter doesn't need to be influenced by these items to think she should dress this way (therefore promoting sex at a young age) and my son

doesn't need to be lead to believe this is how women should dress (therefore again promoting sex at a very young age).

Years ago, (approximately 5) there was a "Foundation" store in town next to Epstein's Bootery. This store had bras and girdles in the window, but it did not promote sexuality. They were the type of garments anyone's grandmother wore.

Victoria's Secret is promoting sexuality and it is wrong for our children in this community. I do not want my daughter and sons to be influenced by this insensitive, money-grabbing store.

During the fall season *The Westfield Leader* and Roosevelt Intermediate School presented articles in their respective papers about Victoria's Secret and complied with the articles and toned down their storefront.

Well, it's almost Valentines Day and apparently the smack on the fingers has worn off. I don't think the store belongs in town and if I gather a bunch of friends (many in number) and picket the store, I will do it. Please help keep this a sweet old town. Victoria's Secret isn't shown on "Ed" TV is it?

Michelle Hefferman  
Westfield

## Column on Tribute to Firefighters Described as Missing the Point

Whether Michelle H. LePoidevin is misleading or merely misinformed, her column on the proposed New York Firefighters statue certainly misses the mark.

For starters, she seems to be inaccurate regarding the story itself. According to news reports in several other papers, the statue was actually commissioned (privately and at no expense to the American taxpayer) to represent a cultural cross-section of firemen.

The real "small, loud group of individuals with delicate egos" are therefore the ones calling for "historic accuracy," not those concerned with multicultural inclusion. It seems that Ms. LePoidevin's "censorship" is on the other foot.

Further, in comparing this non-existent, "politically correct" outcry to the calmer acceptance of the statue depicting the flag raising at Iwo Jima, she writes, "We were much more sensible then and willing to reflect the truths before us."

Of course, she neglects the "truth" that the armed forces were still segregated during World War II. Even had some of the white soldiers raising the flag been inclined to hold up the works and switch places with an African-American colleague, as Ms. LePoidevin so

flippantly suggests, there wasn't likely to have been such a replacement near at hand. They were off fighting and dying in their own, separate units.

There is one lamentable fact that Ms. LePoidevin gets right: 94 percent of the New York Fire Department is Caucasian. Or, in other words, only 6 percent are non-white. And, of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives, a dozen were black and another 12, Hispanic. Twenty-four heroes. And this time, they died side-by-side with their Caucasian comrades. That seems to be history worth commemorating.

In the end, it is ironic that on the same day of this column, *The Leader* also ran an article that mentions the town's recent Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration. Thanks to "a small, loud group of individuals with delicate egos," that included Dr. King, we have actually come more to our senses in the past half-century.

Perhaps it's time for all of our public celebrations to more accurately reflect the proud truth of who we really are as one united nation.

Larry Durst  
Westfield

## Mottley, Messina Receive Gray Foundation Awards

WESTFIELD - Westfield High School graduates Laura Mottley and Kristen Messina were awarded scholarship grants by the Gray Family Foundation for academic achievement and community service.

Laura, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Mottley of Westfield, is a senior at Loyola College in Maryland. She is majoring in elementary education with a concentration in special education. She is currently in the intern phase of her student teaching at a Professional Development School in Glen Burnie, Md.

This fall, Laura was recognized by the Loyola Scholarship Committee for her academic excellence and leadership. She was also one of four volunteer counselors selected

to represent the Mid-Hudson Valley Camp for Children with Cancer at the Children's Oncology Conference in San Diego, Calif.

Laura plans to return to the camp next summer to implement ideas presented at the conference. She is also looking forward to graduating in May.

Kristen, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Messina, is a liberal arts student at Fairfield University in Connecticut. She has achieved an "A+" in economics, while carrying 17 credits.

Employed in the school's chemistry lab, Kristen still volunteers with Habitat for Humanity and enjoys playing rugby.

The Gray Family Foundation coordinates with the Education Committee of the Woman's Club of Westfield in the selection of these recipients.



Kristen Messina



Laura Mottley

## Letters to the Editor

### Expansion of Temple Parking Lot Would Threaten Property Values

We are writing this letter to express our concern over expansion of non-residential entities located within residentially zoned areas in the Town of Westfield. Specifically, we are referring to the negotiation by Temple Emanu-El to purchase the property located at 750 East Broad Street for use as either a parking lot or for potential expansion of their existing facility.

To date, this concern has been championed by a group of residents whose property is close to the Temple. Obviously, many members of this group are facing an imminent and direct threat to their property values, quality of life and safety.

Although it would be very easy to dismiss this group's concerns to the "not in my backyard" syndrome, the reality is this purchase has broader implications for all residential property owners in Westfield.

Should a non-residential entity, situated completely within a residentially zoned area, be allowed to purchase an

adjoining property, remove all the trees, raze the existing structure, and pave it over?

How this question is addressed in the future will either uphold the value this town has always placed on maintaining safe and comfortable residential neighborhoods or set a dangerous precedent that threatens all property values in Westfield.

The United Neighbors to Investigate Temple Expansion (UNITE) have successfully arranged for an informational meeting to be held with representatives from Temple Emanu-El on February 10 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Municipal Building.

All Westfield residents interested in finding out more about this issue that could potentially change the way we think about our real estate investments in this town should attend this meeting.

Scott and Anne Laird  
Westfield

### Reader Lauds Westfield Lawsuit, Calls Republicans Scurrilous

Two of the more captivating and defining characteristics of the Westfield Republican Party were once again abundantly put on display at last week's Council meeting:

First, whether it's mounting a scurrilous whispering campaign concerning the residency of a victorious Democratic candidate or complaining that the victors are acting like, well... victors, the Republican minority just can't seem to resist tampering with the electoral process. Certainly, their transparent little attempt to use gerrymandering as a means to marginalize the votes of Westfield's African-American voters is another sterling example of their disdain for free elections (unless, of course, they happen to win them, an increasingly rare event).

Second, whenever the bright light of publicity happens to illuminate a particularly inane and distasteful bit of chicanery, Westfield Republicans (unlike other politicians who, when caught with

their pants down, generally have the good sense to slink off into obscurity), actually go on the attack! While the lack of a viable defense often prompts the lesser lights of the criminal defense bar to resort to offensive assaults upon the character of their clients' victims, I very much doubt that Westfielders will be taken in by the same sort of tactic. While being a Westfield Republican means never having to say you're sorry, the sensible citizens of Westfield know cheap political trickery when they see it.

The actions taken by the duly elected government of this town to assist in blocking politically motivated redistricting, notwithstanding the Republicans' sleazy attempt to portray those actions as a waste of money, honor one of the highest and most noble principles of our nation - the right to have one's vote counted. We are fortunate to be represented by these men and women.

Robert J. Ratner, Esq.  
Westfield

### Council's Decision Reflects Effort To Address A Social Injustice

Regarding the resolution by the (majority Democrat) Town Council to intercede on behalf of the plaintiff's case against the Ward Commission, it is quite probable that a political problem - created by the Ward Commission - requires, in part, a political solution.

The proposed council solution - intercession - incorporates a greater cause - that of a social responsibility to redress an injustice done to the plaintiffs.

Opponents to the council's resolution base their passionate opposition solely (it appears) on the money factor. They claim that their taxes should not be used to resolve a political issue, which happens in this case to be inseparably tied to a social injustice.

In fact, the costs involved to redress and the social injustice are the obverse and reverse of the same coin.

What bothers me is the failure of these opponents to acknowledge the human factor, as they, so far, have shown little concern for the aggrieved. They even suggest that the aggrieved (and their intercessors) should bear all legal costs and that government should have no role in determining the outcome of this case.

Indeed, it appears that they do not

consider that the plaintiffs are really part of the same community. While one can accept their lack of understanding, one finds it difficult to accept the far worse attitude of benign indifference.

The Democrats are right in their decision to take the high ground and side with the aggrieved citizens, whom they serve.

By doing so, they show a moral courage that is lacking in most political leaders and, in a true sense, they act out the meaning of the great Lebanese writer, Kahlil Gibran, who wrote, "One hour devoted to mourning and lamenting the stolen equality of the weak is nobler than a century filled with greed and usurpation." To the Democrats, this is the hour.

One can only hope that those who so emotionally oppose the actions of the council will come to understand the human dimension of this issue and reach beyond the limits placed by their party affiliation. While politics are involved in this emotional contest, the greater part of the council's action was justice, not politics. The real issue is people, not money.

Donnell Carr  
Westfield



READING IS FUNDAMENTAL...Evergreen Elementary School students in Scotch Plains explored the books available at a recent book fair at the school. The pupils were replenishing their libraries after putting their reading skills to good use in a read-a-thon to benefit the New York City Police and Fire Widows' and Children's Fund. Students obtained sponsors, who gave donations or pledges for each minute or hour a student read at home. During the 12-day activity, which was open to all students in kindergarten through fifth grade, the readers tallied 149 hours of reading and raised \$1,301.70.

Paid Bulletin Board Service

## Westfield Area Attracts Broad Group of Home Buyers

Westfield and the surrounding areas are unique communities. It's evident when you live here and even more evident when you work in real estate. There is a large group of buyers that come right from the community. In short, people like the area so much that when they move it's usually within the community. You see this with young couples moving to larger homes for their expanding families and older couples that are ready to downsize. So the immediate area is a very important source for buyers.

Many of us have also experienced, however, the "sticker shock" of area real estate prices. While we are happy with the "high" prices when we are selling, we are also concerned that the rise in home prices over the last few years means a smaller pool of buyers. So what about it? Should we be concerned with the "high prices" that we read about?

"The fact is that the buyer market for this area is much broader than you may think. Many of the buyers from outside the area that we see do not find the prices at all intimidating," stated Niki Fry of the Weichert Westfield office. "In fact, they feel that the prices reflect the value of the homes and the community. Simply put, this area attracts buyers from a large geographical market; both inside and outside of the state," explained Ms. Fry. "Of course, since Weichert sells more residential real estate than any other firm in the state of New Jersey, it's

possible that we are in a unique position to see this development as it relates to our local area," added Fry. "We are frequently in touch with other offices in the state, to mention our relocation work coming into New Jer-



Niki Fry, sales representative with the Westfield office of Weichert Realtors, says Westfield area attracts buyers from a broad market.

sey, so we get a lot of feedback about Westfield and the surrounding communities."

Weichert Westfield is one of 200 Weichert offices, including its national headquarters, in New Jersey alone. The local Westfield office, one of the top offices in the state, is located at 185 Elm Street where you can reach Niki at 854-7777 or via her email at nrywest@aol.com.

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