

Town Billboard Policy Told For Westfield

By DEBORAH MADISON
Specially Written for The Times

The Miller Beer billboard previously displayed on the side of a retail building on the corner of Rahway Avenue and West Broad Street has been removed. The billboard, which depicted a bottle of Miller Beer as "Liquid Fun", was displayed in a lease agreement between Miller Beer and the owner of Classic Thyme, who owns the building.

When Mayor McDermott received a telephone call from a resident, who thought that the advertisement was inappropriate, especially within two blocks of three schools, the Mayor contacted the building's owner, who also agreed it was time to change the message. The billboard was removed this week, said Claire Gray, the Mayor's Assistant.

An investigation into Westfield's billboard policy, led *The Westfield Leader* to the Town's Zoning Officer, Kathleen Nevell. Ms. Nevell told *The Leader* that billboards are considered signs, and as such, fall under the Town's sign ordinance.

"A billboard is a sign and needs to meet all of the requirements for signs in the ordinance," Ms. Nevell pointed out. The Town's sign ordinance establishes strict guidelines, for the content and dimensions of all signs, Ms. Nevell told *The Westfield Leader*.

However, the only mention of billboards in the Town's 21 page sign ordinance, is a single reference on page 16, which falls under the category of "Prohibited signs and sign activities." Section 16.07 of the sign ordinance states, "any sign which is a principal use on the lot, including but not limited to billboards," and "signs which are not associated with and accessory to the use on the same lot, including but not limited to billboards," are prohibited throughout the Town of Westfield, unless otherwise permitted by this article in specific circumstances.

The specific circumstance, which

allowed the Miller Beer billboard to continue to convey the "Liquid Fun" message, came under section 16.06 of the sign ordinance, under "Lawful, pre-existing nonconforming signs." This section of the ordinance does not specifically list billboards, but it permits any non-conforming sign to remain by virtue of it being grandfathered, if it pre-existed the ordinance, Ms. Nevell said.

The beer billboard having occupied that space for many years was permitted because it was grandfathered, even though it was not in compliance with other sections of the Town's sign ordinance. Under this section of the ordinance, it is permissible to restore, repair, revise and alter a non-conforming sign or change its message, as long as it is not made more non-conforming over time. Being grandfathered, the billboard now displays the message that the space is available for another billboard advertisement.

There is a section of the sign ordinance under prohibited signs, which forbids "signs containing obscene, pornographic or lewd messages." However, "inappropriate" and "of questionable standards" are not among the prohibited messages in the sign ordinance. Luckily, the owner of the building and the Miller Beer Company agreed with the Mayor. According to Ms. Gray, a representative from Miller Beer called the Town to apologize and said that they did not realize that the billboard was in such close proximity to several schools. They also said that they are discontinuing that particular ad campaign, which has a "fun" message that seems to target young people, Ms. Gray told *The Westfield Leader*. Scotch Plains has a similar policy on prohibiting billboards, unless they are grandfathered, said Planning Board Secretary, Barbara Horev. Valerie Saunders, Zoning Officer for Mountainside told *The Westfield Leader* that there are no billboards in Mountainside and they are prohibited.

IRS Invites Residents to Take Special Enrollment Exam

SPRINGFIELD—The Internal Revenue Service invites New Jersey residents interested in representing taxpayers and practicing before the IRS to apply for the Special Enrollment Examination.

"Passing the IRS Special Enrollment Examination is a critical step in receiving designation as an Enrolled Agent," noted William Cressman, IRS spokesman.

"Enrolled agents are not required to be attorneys or certified public accountants, and they are generally unrestricted as to which taxpayers they can represent and what types of tax matters they can handle."

Enrolled agents practice in a wide range of technical topics including: Individual Income Taxes, Sole Proprietorships and Partnerships, Corporations, Fiduciaries, Estate and Gift Tax, Trusts, Ethics, Record Keeping,

Appeals, Exempt Organizations, Retirement Plans, Penalties, Research, and Collection Procedures.

"The examination covers federal taxation, tax accounting, and the preparation of tax forms for individuals and businesses," noted Cressman. "There are also questions about ethical considerations and various IRS procedures."

This year's four-part examination will be administered in Newark over a two-day period on Wednesday, September 25 and Thursday, September 26. Applications for the examination must be postmarked no later than July 31. The fee for the examination is \$55.

Information and applications for the examination can be downloaded at www.irs.gov. The IRS toll-free Forms Line is 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). For further information, email william.m.cressman@irs.gov

Scotch Plains Recreation Events

Tennis Ladders: Ladders have been formed for men's and women's singles, doubles and seniors as well. There is a \$5 registration fee. You can register at any time. The season will run through September.

Overnight Vacation Trips: Trips are sponsored by Scotch Plains, Mountainside and New Providence Recreation Departments. The trip is to Pigeon Forge, Tenn. on September 28 to October 4. For further details, contact the Recreation office at (908) 322-6700 extension number 221.

Summer Programs: Programs will include but are not limited to: Parks Program, for ages 6 to 12, to be held at Brookside, Green Forest and Farley Parks from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Monday through Friday from July 1 to August 9. The fee is \$20 per person.

Basketball Clinic: Held for boys and girls, third graders to fifth graders, will be held from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. for sixth

graders to eighth graders. All clinics will take place at Kramer Manor Courts on Mondays. The fee is \$35 for residents and \$40 for non-residents.

Senior Aerobics: Classes held on Friday's from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the Scotch Hills Country Club. The fee is \$5 for adults. Also look for the Adult Dance Program and Vhris's Stayin Alive Exer-Dance Class.

Mad Science Camp: To be held Monday through Friday, July 22 to July 26 at Jerseyland Park from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The fee is \$110 per child. Register at the recreation office.

Summer Concert Series: The Summer Concert Series presents "The Great Pretenders". The first show is Thursday, July 11, beginning with Bingo the Clown at 7 p.m. followed by The B-Street Band at 8 p.m. The following concert is on Thursday, July 18, beginning with 94% (high school students) followed by The Wiseman at 8 p.m.



SPEAKING FOR HISTORY...William Sanders is interviewed June 25 in Mountainside about his project to place portraits of George Washington in schools. NJN News Reporter Adrienne Supino conducts the interview being filmed by cameraman Tim Stollery.

Presidential Portrait Project Is Filmed In Mountainside

By HORACE CORBIN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

MOUNTAINSIDE -- Mr. William Sanders was interviewed and filmed for TV by NJN News on June 25. Mr. Sanders has been mounting a one-man campaign to hang the Presidential Portrait of George Washington in schools across the nation. He started his project in 1998 in New Jersey, which he calls the "Crossroads of the American Revolution."

Mr. Sanders hopes to replace the portraits that were put in the schools in 1932 to honor the 200th anniversary of the birth of George Washington. "These portraits no longer hang in the schools," he remarked to *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*.

He said this has placed him in a battle with the leadership of the NJEA Teachers Union ever since. "The leadership of this union does not want our children to understand the principals on which our country was founded," said Sanders. "Otherwise they wouldn't want to remove Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and the Pilgrims from the N.J. history core curriculum."

Since starting his project, Mr. Sanders has appeared on radio, television and in print throughout the U.S. He has been featured on Fox News Channels - Hannity and Colmes, Fox Wire with Rita Cosby, and Fox and Friends morning show, in addition to nine national radio shows and feature news articles in USA Today, Atlanta Journal Constitution and the Stars and Stripes.

Westfield Recreation Events

Adult Tennis Class: Held from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., Saturdays: July 13, 20, 27; August 3, 10, and 17. The fee is \$60.

Summer Tennis Tournament: Junior Tournament age categories are: 12 and under, 14 and under, 16 and under and 18 and under. Adult Tournaments are for ages 18 years and above. (Singles only) The fee is \$10 for the Junior Tournament and \$20 for the Adult Tournament. Please register by July 1, forms may be obtained at the recreation office.

Hyper Peppy Robotics: August 14 to 16, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This event is for children, ages 7 through 12 and will be held at the community room. The fee is \$100.

Mad Science: August 19 to 23 or August 26 to 30, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., for ages 5 through 8 and August 19 to 23 or August 26 to 30, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., for ages 9 and above. The event will be held at the community room. The fee is \$110 per week.

Art and Craft Sessions: Session 1: July 22 to 26; Session 2: July 29 to August 2; Session 3: August 5 to 9, Monday to Friday. (one-hour sessions) from 9 a.m. **Crafty Kids:** For ages 5 to 13, \$12 per day. Classes begin at 10:30 a.m. **Art:** For ages 4 to 8, \$45 per week. Classes begin at 12 p.m. **Art:** For ages 9 to 13, \$50 per week. Please apply by Friday, June 28.

Westfield Youth Art Expo: Awards Presentation: Friday, August 2 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Open to ages 14 to 17 years. Pieces entered must be matted with shrink-wrap and able to be hung. The entry fee is \$7. Art pieces must be dropped off by July 31, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. **Kids Art Show:** Open to ages 4 to 13 years. Pieces entered must be on 8 x 11.5 sized paper. There is no fee for the kids show.

Summer Concert Series: Mindowaskin Park, Thursday Nights from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Bring a blanket and a lawn chair.

Soccer: July 1 to 5 and July 8 to 12, in Tamaques Park, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The fee is \$45 per week.

Baseball: July 8 to 12 and July 15 to 19, for ages 8 to 12, Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The cost is \$45 per week.

Wrestling: August 5 to 9 for ages 7 to 11 and August 12 to 16 for ages 12 to 15; Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Roosevelt School Cafeteria. The fee is \$45 per week.

Football: July 22 to 26, for ages 8 to 12, from Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Tamaques Park. The fee is \$45.

Roller Hockey: July 15 to 18, July 22 to 25, July 29 to August 1, and August 12 to 15, Monday and Thursday 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., for ages 6 through 9; 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., for ages 10 to 13. The fee is \$45 per week and will be held at Tamaques Park Basketball Courts.

Bowling: June 25 to August 27, at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays for ages 5 to 15. The fee is \$9 per week.

Tennis: Weeks of July 8, 15, 22 and 29 and August 5, 12, 19, and 26. Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The fee is \$50 per week.

Summer Playground Program: Begins June 28 to August 8, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Held at local elementary schools, the neighborhood council and the Exceptional Center. Registration begins June 27 at 1 p.m. on site. The fee is \$10.

Teen Night At Memorial Park Pool: Wednesday Nights from 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., for grades 6 to 12, D.J. dancing, swimming and special events. Program begins on June 26. The fee is \$3 at the door.

For information call recreation department at (908) 789-4080 or online: www.westfieldnj.net

Senate Passes Bagger Measure On Handgun Permit Loophole

TRENTON — Juveniles with histories of weapons or explosive device related offenses would be ineligible to obtain firearms purchaser identification cards or permits to purchase handguns under legislation approved by the New Jersey State Senate on June 20.

Sponsored by Senator Richard H. Bagger (R-21), the measure, S-160, would close a loophole in the handgun permit law, which currently allows certain juveniles who have committed violent crimes to purchase handguns.

"The state's handgun permit law currently blocks juveniles who have committed gun related offenses from purchasing handguns," said Senator Bagger. "This legislation would ensure that juveniles who have committed offenses with other weapons, including explosive and destructive devices, would also be ineligible to purchase handguns."

Under current law, a person is disqualified from ever obtaining a firearms purchaser identification card or a permit to purchase a handgun if, as a juvenile, that person was adjudicated delinquent for an offense which, if committed by an adult, would constitute a crime and that offense involved the unlawful use or possession of a firearm.

This legislation would expand the scope of the disqualifying offenses, to include any offense involving the use of weapons, explosives, or destructive devices.

"I think it's clear that children have access to more information than ever before — information they are using to aid in committing violent and horrendous crimes," said Mr. Bagger.

"We have seen a number of incidents across the nation in which young people have constructed homemade bombs and devices, which were designed solely to cause injury and destroy property. In many instances, the use of those devices has resulted in tragedy," he added.

The Senator noted that the measure was designed to help protect the public from young people with a history of anti-social behavior.

"We shouldn't provide juveniles who have downloaded plans and built bombs with handgun permits as a reward for what they think is ingenuity," remarked Senator Bagger. "They are exactly the type of individuals who should not be selling or owning handguns in New Jersey."

Local Resident Wilkes Honored By County

James Wilkes, a resident of Scotch Plains, has been named the employee of the month of May by Union County.

Mr. Wilkes has been a long time resident of Union County. Prior to moving to Scotch Plains two years ago, Mr. Wilkes was a resident of Elizabeth for 32 years.

"Beginning as an average worker, James has improved his job performance well beyond what was initially expected of him. At one point James required one-on-one training. Now he is the one other workers go to when they need help," said Chairman Mingo.

Mr. Wilkes has been a County employee since April 1, 1995 and started working in the Golf Maintenance Department three years ago.



CONGRATULATIONS...James Wilkes was honored by the Union County Freeholders at a recent meeting of the board in Elizabeth. Pictured, from left to right, are: Freeholder Chairman Lewis Mingo, Jr., James Wilkes and County Manager George Devaney.

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<p>In Just A Few Summer Nights Your School-Aged Child Can Learn about Jesus on a FREE Bug Safari</p> <p>At Vacation Bible School Monday - Friday, July 15 - 19 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.</p> <p>Lessons, crafts, snack, singing, recreation</p> <p>Sponsored by The First Baptist Church: 170 Elm Street, Westfield (908) 233-2278</p>	
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<p>The Law Offices of JEFFREY J. REA Litigation • Arbitration • Mediation Construction • Design Professionals Corporate / Partnership and Business Formation Real Estate • Environmental Consumer Fraud</p> <p>Is pleased to announce: Richard L. Elbert, Esq., AIA is now Of Counsel to the firm.</p> <p>Recent relocation of our New Jersey office to: 313 South Avenue, Suite 204 Fanwood, NJ 07023 (908) 889-9550</p> <p>New York Office: 21 East 40th Street, 14th floor New York, NY 10016 (212) 557-5050</p>
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