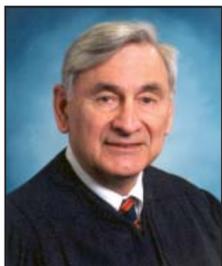


Judge Weiss to Retire From County Bench

By SUZETTE F. STALKER
Specialty Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — With his retirement from the judiciary coming at the end of this month, Judge Lawrence Weiss of the Union County Superior Court reflected fondly this week on his long tenure on the bench.



Judge Lawrence Weiss

Judge Weiss, a long-time Westfield resident and former Town Councilman, is stepping down in compliance with the state Constitution's mandate that all judges retire upon reaching age 70. He will reach this milestone birthday on Monday, July 29.

A reception will take place from noon to 2 p.m. tomorrow, Friday, July 26, in the judge's chambers on the fifth floor of the Tower Building in Elizabeth, at which time he and his wife, Linda, will greet well-wishers as he prepares to step down.

In an interview Monday with *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*, Judge Weiss summed up his years on the bench as, "one of the most rewarding experiences I have had in my entire life."

"I can honestly say I look forward every day to coming to work," he remarked. "It's intellectually challenging and the New Jersey state judiciary is considered one of the finest state judiciaries in the nation. I take a lot of pride in being a part of it."

Born in the Bronx and raised in Elizabeth, he has lived in Westfield since 1965. One of two sons of a tailor and a housewife, he graduated in 1954 from Rutgers University in New Brunswick and from Rutgers Law School in 1960. Judge Weiss' brother, Alvin, is a retired Essex County Superior Court Assignment Judge.

A United States Air Force veteran, he served a full term on the Westfield Council from 1972 to 1974, representing the Fourth Ward.

Re-elected in 1974, he was appointed to the Union County District Court on April 13, 1976 by then Governor Brendan Byrne, requiring him to leave the Town Council before the end of his second term.

Judge Weiss served as Presiding Judge of that court, now the Special Civil Part of the Superior Court. During the mid-1980s, he was Presiding Judge of the Superior Court's Criminal Division.

Judge Weiss additionally fulfilled temporary assignments in Monmouth and Middlesex counties. He has been Acting Assignment Judge of the Union County Superior Court for about seven years.

During his career, he also served on a special committee that was formed by the late New Jersey Supreme Court

Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz to establish guidelines and training for judges handling complex civil cases. He was additionally part of a separate group studying asbestos litigation.

He was pivotal in creating the Richard J. Hughes Inn of Court. Granted a charter on June 2, 1989, the organization is made up of veteran judges and senior members of the Union County Bar Association. Its function is to prepare young associates to be trial attorneys.

Judge Weiss also served for many years on the New Jersey Supreme Court's Civil Practice Committee, a group of judges and attorneys who annually review, modify and amend the Rules of Civil Procedure.

Judge Weiss first practiced law with the firm of John W. Taylor in East Orange, which served as house counsel for the Liberty Mutual Insurance Company.

He subsequently practiced as part of D'Ambrosio and Weiss in Elizabeth. The firm later evolved into a larger partnership known as Halberstadter, D'Ambrosio and Weiss. Eventually, Judge Weiss became a single practitioner in Westfield. He last practiced under the partnership of Weiss and DiRienzo before ascending to the county bench in 1976.

Judge Weiss, who received the Rutgers Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1998, has maintained close ties to his alma mater. He played basketball for the school and continues to be very involved in its athletic program. "It's a great university," he said.

The judge and his wife have two children, daughter Judy Konicov of South Orange and son Michael Weiss of East Brunswick, an assistant prosecutor in Middlesex County. They also have four grandchildren.

While he may be leaving the bench, Judge Weiss said he has no plans to retire from the practice of law that has so much been a part of his life.

He said he hopes to join a firm where he can put his experience to good use in the areas of mediation and arbitration. "It's a continuation of what a judge does in handling civil matters," he stated.

"I have been blessed because Union County has had a wealth of fine judges," Judge Weiss remarked about the peers alongside whom he has worked for more than two decades.

"There are so many of my colleagues who were fine judges," he added. "It was a privilege to serve with them on the bench and this county has been blessed to have such fine judges appointed to the bench."



Bill Sheppard for *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times*

THE NEW PUMPER...The Scotch Plains Volunteer Fire Department will be celebrating receipt of its new fire engine, shown above, at the Wetdown on Saturday, August 17. The public is invited.

Scotch Plains Fire Dept. Sets Festivities For New Pumper

By JEREMY LIPSTEIN
Specialty Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

The Scotch Plains Volunteer Fire Department (SPFD), purchased a new engine this April as part of the continuing program to update the fire engines about every 15 years.

The new engine, a 2002 Pierce Dash, will replace a 1989 Pierce Lance. The new engine will supplement the three current engines, an aerial truck, a heavy rescue truck and a brush truck. The 1989 engine will be kept at Company One as a reserve.

Plans for the new engine were in place for quite a while. It was paid for from the Scotch Plains Township budget. The engine cost about \$365,000, the average price for its type. The engine is set to hold six firemen and has a 2000 gallons per minute pumping capacity.

The engine was selected through the bidding process. The department created a bid committee to set qualifications and apparatus that were deemed necessary. The committee was made up of many firemen, officers, and Chief Jonathan Ellis. Now, the department's equipment has been almost entirely re-outfitted within the past six or seven years.

"We probably have the most current apparatus in the county," said Vinny Romano, Company One Battalion Chief.

The engine will be kept at Company Two, on the South Side of town, along with the current aerial truck.

With about 30 volunteers on call, equipped with voice pagers, the SPFD responds to 100 percent of the more than 500 calls each year. Fifteen times, the department assisted other departments out of town. The department only goes on fire calls or where the "jaws of life" are needed. Unlike non-volunteer departments, the SPFD does not go on ambulance calls.

The department will hold a

"Wetdown" barbeque on August 17, rain or shine, to welcome the new engine into the department. A large turnout from the public is hoped for. The festivities will begin at noon and will continue until 6 p.m. at Company Two, located adjacent to South Side Field. Departments from around the state will attend and display their engines and equipment along with the Scotch Plains department. Food and drinks are \$5 for the whole day. In addition, the department will sell SPFD T-shirts to help defray the cost of the celebration. For more information, see www.goleader.com/spfd.

Fire Chief to Give Talk To Historical Society

WESTFIELD — Westfield Fire Chief John Castellano will present some of the history of the Westfield Fire Department at the First Wednesday Luncheon of the Westfield Historical Society.

The luncheon will take place at noon on August 7 at B.G. Fields Restaurant, located at 560 Springfield Avenue in Westfield.

Chief Castellano will discuss how the Westfield Fire Department has met many challenges over the years through manpower, equipment and organization since its incorporation in 1883 by two representatives each from the Westfield Hook and Ladder Company, the Bucket and Engine Company and the Empire Engine Company. It became the Westfield Fire Department in 1903.

A member of the Westfield Fire Department for over 35 years, Chief Castellano has served as a fireman, Lieutenant, Captain, Deputy Chief and Chief.

As Chief, he is responsible for the complete operation of the department of full-time paid firefighters and volunteers.

He is also responsible for the maintenance of equipment, fire houses and the protection of the citizens of Westfield, along with property, schools, businesses, houses of worship and homes.

Regular attendees of the luncheon will be contacted by a telephone committee of the Society to verify their reservations. Space permitting, others may attend by calling (908) 233-2930 by noon, Monday, August 5.

Scotch Plains Recreation Events

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.

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 no. 221.

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

Junior Golf Tournaments: Held at the Scotch Hills Country Club on the following Sundays: August 4 and 18 and September 8. Please register at the Recreation Office by the Wednesday prior to each tournament.

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SCOTCH PLAINS

Volunteer Firefighters Association

WETDOWN

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17TH

12 to 6 Rain or Shine

The Scotch Plains Volunteer Firefighters Association is celebrating the delivery of our new fire truck. On hand will be our fellow firefighting brothers representing New Jersey and New York. We invite all families to join us in the festivities. Bring the kids.

Live Music by Saturday Night Fever

W.D.H.A Radio 105.5 FM

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22 oz. Mug

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FREE Giveaways

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Wetdown located at Fire Station 2, corner of Martine Avenue & Raritan Road, Scotch Plains N.J.