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## Former Candidate Owens Says Thanks For Support of Council Campaign

We fought a good fight, we ran a good race - and we came up just a tad short in our quest for the Second Ward Town Council seat. We came closer than any challenger has yet to unseating an incumbent in this ward.

I owe many thanks to the hosts of people who worked hard to help me along and who brought us close to victory.

I am deeply appreciative of your warmth and encouragement. I also offer hearty congratulations to Rafael Betancourt for his win. I will continue to urge you on to get things done for your constituents.

I want always to serve as a friendly reminder of the importance and purpose of the enterprise at hand: producing real results for Westfield, as your party's literature proclaimed.

To the many people I met out on the campaign trail, no matter who you voted for, I thank you for your kindness and courtesy and the time you spent chatting with me as I walked the ward.

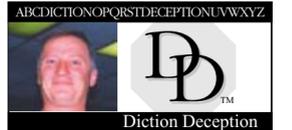
That is, of course, the real benefit of spending time running for office: you get a chance to meet new people, schmooze with neighbors, and reacquaint yourself with old friends.

It's the sort of stuff that makes you know this is really home.

Here, in brief, are a few of my favorite moments: Frank MacPherson, a former councilman, told me about his days of campaigning and how he was sustained through the long walks by apples; he then gave me an apple. Don Albright used to live across the street from me when I was growing up in Muncie, Indiana and now I've met him again, just down the street and around a couple of corners here in Ward Two, Westfield. A young couple, Manhattanites new to town, looked over my card and saw that I am a member of the Optimist Club. The husband, obviously never having heard of the Optimist Club, choked back a giggle and said, "Well, yes, I supposed you'd have to be an optimist to do what you're doing." That sums up the experience.

In politics, as in comedy - and they frequently resemble each other - timing is everything, and ours was just a bit off. This wasn't our year. But the run was fun. Thank you all.

David Owens  
Westfield



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. Plerotic - Restoring or producing anew; such as in tissue
  2. Rousant - In heraldry, designating a bird, rising as if preparing to fly
  3. Trichogenous - Producing hair
  4. Rubiginose - Rust-colored

### SPRINGAL

1. A species of South African gazelle
2. An active young man
3. Resilient; flexible
4. Pure; fresh

### TROLLOP

1. An untidy or dirty woman
2. Moving in a hopping or skipping manner
3. In mines, a troughlike drain made of wood
4. A scallop or large mollusk

### LOKE

1. The seed pod of legumes
2. A green vegetable pigment
3. Private road or lane
4. A given site or location

### THRENODY

1. A poem or stanza having eight lines and two rhymes
2. A song of lamentation; a dirge
3. Government by three men or coalition of three parties. A triumvirate
4. Characterized by three knots or nodes

## Local Governments Face Revenue Issues, Big Plans But Property Tax Saturation

While Democrats swept the freeholders' races in Union County last week, Republicans fared very well locally. Voters in Westfield, Scotch Plains and Fanwood were all treated to lively and spirited campaigns in which, once all the votes were counted, the GOP had more to smile about. Mountainside is all GOP as usual. But once the smiles fade and the election night parties become memories, local governments face a host of challenges - some particular to each community and others similar to those being confronted by most towns in New Jersey.

It doesn't matter who is in charge when it comes to property taxes, though - regardless of the rhetoric. Property taxes won't go down. The question to us is how much they will continue to go up and what other novel taxing initiatives will be imparted by governments at all levels to increase revenues? About 65 percent of property taxes pay for the public schools, and there's nothing the county or the towns can (or will) do about this. The county gets about 20 percent of the property tax, and towns get about 15 percent to run their respective operations and to service their respective debt.

Westfield Republicans regain control of the Town Council next year, after winning three of the four council seats last week. And the town government faces some hard decisions in 2003, especially about whether to build one or two parking decks, or any at all, and where to locate

those controversial, and costly, structures. Traffic safety issues discussed during the campaign will also be on the council's front burner.

Republicans in Scotch Plains are in unanimous control of the Township Council in the wake of their sweep of all three council seats last week. The GOP ran on its record of having limited property tax hikes over the past three years - whether that was real or not. Scotch Plains voters approved a non-binding referendum for a State Constitutional Convention in regards to property tax. The question is, what can the council do with that information?

Fanwood Republicans retained their 5-2 Borough Council majority. The primary issue facing the 2003 council will be the shape and breadth of the downtown revitalization effort that is just getting under way. Like its neighbors, Fanwood faces the challenge of how to pay for plans, yet keep property tax hikes to a minimum without slashing services or driving people out of town.

With victories by Keith Turner and Paul Mirabelli, Mountainside Republicans will continue their unanimous rule. They are wrestling with school construction problems and emergency services. They are looking at increasing business taxes to pay for things.

Long gone are the dot.com accounting days of the 1990s - stated surpluses, an insatiable public appetite and borrowing for every wish.

## Teen Athletes Feel Pressure To Have a Perfect Figure

The teenagers who are involved in sports have a lot of pressure on their shoulders. Not only are they expected to do well on the field or court but they are also expected to be a certain weight. Some teenagers think the only way out is to starve themselves or decide to vomit what they have eaten. If athletes decide to become anorexic or bulimic they are putting themselves at a greater risk for health problems.

The athletes particularly affected are gymnasts, long-distance runners, divers and figure skaters. Most commonly women are affected.

There was a study done in the National Collegiate Athletic Association in 1992 that found, "93 percent of the programs reporting eating disorders were in women's sports".

Eating disorders usually begin during high school. Parents and coaches need to know what the child is going through. They need to seek help or these eating disorders can lead to massive problems or even result in death.

Thomas Greene  
Westfield

## Sal Caruana Thanks Voters for Support

Thank you to all of those who gave me their confidence and support during my Council campaign. I applaud the efforts of my opponent, Mark Kuehn, who also worked hard and cares deeply about our community.

I am very grateful to have earned the opportunity to serve the First Ward and the Town of Westfield, and I look forward to returning in faithful service the trust and faith the voters have placed with me.

Sal Caruana  
Westfield

## Mark Kuehn Addresses Residents About His Concerns for Westfield

Running for Westfield Town Council has been a high point in my life. I knocked over 2,000 First Ward doors and met over 1,000 residents. Meeting and talking with these neighbors and friends gave me an incredible view into their Westfield lives as well as a perspective of Westfield back to the early 1900's. Many have become new friends. We have a great, great town to share. Yet, the landscape has changed in recent years, with new problems, as well as opportunities, at our doorstep. Commu-

nity challenges include local taxes, traffic, road and parking issues.

Taxes: Every candidate discussed ever-increasing taxes. The new Council takes office in January, as the 2003 budget process begins. The Public Works union contract also is up for re-negotiation, with the School Board budget process beginning, as well. These all bring the opportunity for the new Council to implement changes discussed and promised during the campaign period.

Traffic: I wrote in the October 24 *Leader* that, next to taxes, "traffic" is Westfield's top problem. I recommended we step back and re-organize to be more effective in our search for traffic solutions. I suggested we establish a Mayor's Traffic Advisory Task Force, much like our effective Parking Advisory Committee, with members from existing groups and residents throughout the Town, to identify effective and consistent traffic solutions. I especially recommend this before we commit to hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars on yet-unproven "traffic calming" capital projects.

Parking: I urge the Mayor, along with his new Council, to successfully complete the "Downtown Parking Reforms" he so strongly campaigned for.

Sidewalks: As I reported to *The Leader* on September 20, many of our sidewalks truly are dangerous and unsightly. I ask the Council to seriously consider tackling this problem as a single, comprehensive capital project with a set time, to complete their repair on a town-wide basis.

Lastly, Brightwood Park, a.k.a. Noel Taylor Park, deserves special comment. This 45-acre site off upper Prospect Avenue is the last significant natural acreage in our town. There are minimal town funds available for its upkeep and care, with its current condition attesting to this. As I walked the First Ward, I observed that there are literally dozens of residents that love and adore the park and would seek active involvement. There clearly is support for a non-profit organization to be formed for the purpose of protecting, preserving and maintaining the park in its natural state for generations to come. I urge the Council to consider this, as well as for residents to come forward who are interested in participating in its future oversight. I believe a private group could raise more funds, and offer more loving care, protection and oversight, than any direct Town department ever could.

In closing, I want to thank my many supporters, both with my campaign and in the voting booth. Your strong support truly helped this to be a meaningful experience. I also want to thank my opponent, Councilman-Elect, Sal Caruana, for providing an extremely exciting and challenging race. I congratulate Mr. Caruana, as well as Mayor McDermott and the other successful candidates for their victories, and I wish the Mayor and the new Council a very positive and productive 2003 term.

Mark Kuehn  
Westfield

## Betancourt Thanks WF Voters For Support In Election

Having just been re-elected as Councilman for the 2nd Ward of Westfield, I wanted to take the opportunity to give thanks.

First, I would like to thank my worthy opponent, David Owens. Mr. Owens ran a good campaign, and I like to think that together we raised voter awareness of the important issues facing our town.

Secondly, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Republican Team, Mayor Greg McDermott, Councilman-Elect Sal Caruana, Councilman-Elect Andy Skibitsky and Chris Panagos. It was an honor to be on the same slate with you. I would also like to thank the voters of Westfield, who, in exercising their franchise, reaffirmed their commitment to our community. I am inspired and humbled to have been re-elected as your councilman. I promise to reward your confidence in me with hard work and dedication in serving our town.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. Thank you Epie, Diego and Andres for your unwavering support and for the sacrifice you made in allowing me to run.

Councilman Rafael Betancourt  
Westfield

## Scotch Plains Resident Hopes Voters Remember Issues in Two Years

I was disappointed, though not surprised at the election results in Scotch Plains.

As I recall, the Republicans retook control of the Township Council after the Democratic win in 1998 mainly by excoriating the Democrats for raising taxes. I have not seen my taxes go down or even remain stable since the Republicans retook control.

## FW Democrats Thank Voters For Support

We would like to express our thanks to the resident of Fanwood who exercised their right to vote on November 5. We also congratulate Councilman Kline, Councilman Trumpp and Councilman-Elect Calamaras on their victory and wish them well in their term.

We would especially like to thank the members of the Fanwood Democratic Club, the individuals who provided financial support to our campaign efforts, and those who showed their support by displaying our lawn signs. We also thank our committee leader, Assemblywoman Linda Stender, for her time, dedication and guidance during the election season.

We conducted a vigorous campaign and made an honest effort to discuss the issues that are important to our community. Our door-to-door visits with neighbors were particularly rewarding and we thank you for expressing your support and sharing your ideas for a better Fanwood.

Despite the outcome of the election, we will continue to be concerned about cutting the cost of government, holding down property taxes, making our neighborhood safer, involving the community in the redevelopment of our downtown, improving communication and maintaining Fanwood's unique quality of life.

Tom Plante  
Jack Molenaar  
Donna Dolce  
Fanwood

## Clarification

Photo captions which appeared on Page 1 of the November 7 edition of *The Westfield Leader* were incorrectly credited to Lauren S. Pass. The caption, which was entitled, "Bittersweet," should have been credited to Elaine Vuono.

## Andy Skibitsky Thanks Third Ward Residents

I would like to thank the residents of the Third Ward for their vote of support and confidence this past Election Day. Since early this summer, I tried to reach out to as many of you as possible to earn your support, and I am deeply honored that you have entrusted me with the privilege of serving on Westfield's Town Council.

The campaign consumed a significant portion of time and energy over the past several months, and I couldn't have done it with out the support and commitment of my family and friends. Their generous guidance and assistance enabled me to keep my focus and maintain the high energy level that is necessary to run a campaign in Westfield.

Finally, I'd like to thank Claire Lazarowitz for being a worthy opponent and for her time of service on Town Council. I look forward to serving every citizen of the Third Ward in the coming years, and thanks again to everyone who contributed to my campaign and to all of those who took the time to vote on Election Day.

Andy Skibitsky  
Westfield

## Erratum

*The Westfield Leader* incorrectly labeled a caption for re-elected Mayor Gregory McDermott and Second Ward Councilman Rafael Betancourt. Mr. Betancourt appeared on the left side, while Mayor McDermott was pictured on the right.

Recent articles in *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*, citing construction and paving work being performed on Irving Avenue incorrectly labeled the road as Irving Street and Irving Place. We regret the error.

## Letters to the Editor

### WF Mayor McDermott Thanks Town, Promises Continued Progress

It is with tremendous gratitude that I thank the people of Westfield for reelecting me as their Mayor on November 5. I appreciate the confidence that this town has placed in me for another term, and I promise to continue to move forward on the progress that has already been achieved in such critical areas as downtown parking and economic development, smarter and more efficient government and pedestrian and student safety.

I'd like to thank Mr. Thomas Fucillo and all the candidates who ran for office this year in our town. Westfield is fortunate to have individuals who are interested in taking community participation to a higher level.

I'd particularly like to congratulate the fine, hard-working individuals who will be joining the Town Council for the first time: First Ward Councilman-Elect Sal Caruana and Third Ward Councilman-Elect Andy Skibitsky. I also welcome back for another term Second Ward Councilman Raphael Betancourt and Fourth Ward Councilman Larry Goldman. I look forward to working closely with the Town

### Fanwood Elected Officials Thank Voters

Councilman Stu Kline, Councilman-Elect Andy Calamaras and I wish to thank the voters of Fanwood who supported us on Election Day.

Being elected to serve on the council is an honor and a privilege bestowed on us by our residents and the electoral process. We have earned an opportunity to serve them based upon their trust. We will continue to build upon this foundation as we work with the other members of the Mayor and Council in the best interest of Fanwood and her citizenry.

David Trumpp, Councilman  
Stu Kline, Councilman  
Andy Calamaras, Councilman-Elect

Council in the years ahead.

Finally, I'd like to thank my wife, Andrea, and my children, Bryan, Maggie, Melissa and Patricia, for their love and support. I'd also like to thank my campaign team, including Assemblyman Tom Keane, Jr., Dick Trabert, Renee Trabert Heinbokel, Ray Mattes and Michele Albano for their tireless efforts.

I look forward to hearing from all of the residents I represent in the months ahead as we move forward on the issues integral to keeping Westfield a first-rate community.

Mayor Greg McDermott  
Westfield

## Resident Asks What Happened To the Dump the Deck Group

Another election has come and gone and the voice of the sane voters of Westfield is not being represented by the Mayor and the Council. In the past several weeks I received about 20 political brochures in the mail, how many did you get? The rhetoric of every politician's brochure was the same. I am concerned about high taxes, safety of our children, the traffic problem down town and pollution" but in the same breath they support the building of these decks. Does that make any sense?

Why is this small group of people so interested in building this white elephant? Are they personally making money from this project? Why can't the voters/tax payers vote on whether or not we want this? If the majority of town people vote for this deck(s), then the council can proceed with the project.

Can the citizens of Westfield sue the council to stop the insanity? If it costs \$6 million to build 300 spaces that comes out to \$20,000 per space. That is the base cost because then we have to hire more

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police, a maintenance company and what about the future loiterers (safety of our children). The whole town will eventually have to pay for this in higher taxes just so a couple of commuters could get a parking space or some kid who works for minimum wage at one of the down town stores could park closer to the store. Let's not get into the traffic problem this will cause while the decks are being built.

Has anyone taken a close look at the conditions of our schools? Do you know the PTA had to buy computers for our classes because the school budget did not have enough money.

What ever happened to the leaders of Dump the Deck and Citizens Concerned with the Preservations of Residential Westfield? How does a person contact these groups? Doesn't this town have an attorney who could represent the sane residence of Westfield and have this process stopped?

John R. Mancini  
Westfield

