



PROJECT LIFESAVER...Union County Sheriff Ralph Froehlich joined Acting Governor Richard Codey at the signing of a bill that will expand programs like the Sheriff's "Project Lifesaver" statewide benefiting those suffering from Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. Pictured, from left to right, are: Front row, Morris County Sheriff Edward Rochford, Assemblyman Gordon Johnson (LD-37), Acting Governor Codey and Sheriff Froehlich, and back row, Atlantic County Sheriff James McGettigan and Union County Undersheriff Gerald Green, Jr.

Sheriff's 'Project Lifesaver' To Expand Under New Law

COUNTY — Sheriff Ralph Froehlich joined Acting Governor Richard Codey at the signing of a bill last week that will expand programs like "Project Lifesaver" statewide to benefit those suffering from Alzheimer's disease and related disorders.

Under Project Lifesaver, individuals with Alzheimer's disease, autism or other debilitating disorders are outfitted with a watch-sized transmitter that can be tracked for up to several miles if the individual is reported missing or lost.

Forrester Says Stop Newark Hockey Arena

AREA — Decrying it a waste of tax money, Republican gubernatorial candidate Doug Forrester Tuesday called for halting the proposed Newark Hockey Arena and for the launching of an investigation. Mr. Forrester also called for a federal takeover of the Newark Housing Authority as tax dollars designated for poor and working families of Newark have been mismanaged and diverted for this arena.

"This program saves lives," Sheriff Froehlich said. "Project Lifesaver can reduce the amount of time it takes to locate an individual from hours to minutes. When a loved one is lost, especially one who is suffering like this, time is critical."

Under the new law, the state Department of Law and Public Safety will set up additional programs like Project Lifesaver throughout the state.

The Union County Sheriff's Office initiated the program in March of 2003, becoming the second county in New Jersey to use it.

Board Testimony Continues On Temple Pkg. Lot Proposal

By DAVID GIALANELLA
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD—The Westfield Board of Adjustment held special meetings last Thursday and continued this Wednesday night, past press time, to review an application by Temple Emanu-El to expand its parking facilities. At Thursday's meeting, town planner Blais Brancheau suggested the board, "look beyond the letter of the law and look to the spirit of the law."

The temple, located at 756 East Broad Street, seeks a zoning "change of use" for the adjacent residential property it purchased such that it can construct a parking lot. Mr. Brancheau emphasized that this case is a unique one, and indeed the board has yet to reach a decision.

The parking lot plan had previously been denied in February, 2004 by the board. The temple sued, claiming the board had violated a federal land use act for religious institutions. Union County Judge Walter Barisonek, presiding over the case, determined the Westfield Board of Adjustment could resolve the matter, provided a public meeting was held.

Town Attorney Robert Cochren testified that he has worked closely with all parties involved to reach a "compromise" and an acceptable amended application, particularly concerning vehicular ingress and egress, and its effect on traffic and pedestrian safety.

In addition to the "change of use," the applicant seeks variances from several ordinances, particularly lot coverage. Town ordinances stipulate a maximum of 50 percent lot coverage, whereas the current plans call for 64 percent — down from the originally proposed 70 percent coverage. The lot would have a total of 121 parking spaces.

Victor Vinegra of Harbor Consultants, Inc., a Cranford engineering firm, explained that the existing two-way

driveway would be used exclusively as an exit. A new driveway would serve exclusively as an entrance. An island would divide the exit into left-hand and right-hand turn lanes.

Also proposed are a 78-foot side yard and a 50-foot rear yard, well above the 10-foot distance prescribed by ordinances, Mr. Vinegra said.

Attorney John Schmidt, who represents the applicant, listed multiple conditions to which the temple would be agreeable, such as keeping rear kitchen doors closed during evening events; keeping snowplow mounds within the confines of the lot and to not host more than 12 non-religious functions per year.

Public comments were limited to five minutes per citizen and only to questions involving current testimony. Steven Hehl, Acting Board Attorney for this case, had to remind several citizens of the time and topic limits for comment.

Betty List of 233 Jefferson Avenue asked whether police monitoring traffic flow in and out of the lot would come at the expense of the town.

Board Chairman William Heinbokel explained that, for "day-to-day" religious functions, including classes during the week, the town covers the cost of police presence, as has been the case for some time.

Mrs. List asked whether other religious institutions in Westfield are similarly covered. Mr. Heinbokel replied that this was the case at churches such as St. Helen's, Holy Trinity and the Presbyterian Church.

"But that's once a week," Mrs. List said, referring to weekly services at local churches, and adding, "this is every day."

"The functionality of the temple is not changing," said Chairman Heinbokel. He added that there is no reason to expect increased traffic in the area that would warrant greater police presence.

Several of the public raised concerns over illumination from light stanchions and headlights. Mr. Vinegra said low intensity lighting would be used, and he said that fences and 426 new plantings would shield adjacent properties from headlights.

Mr. Brancheau reminded board members that they must, "in the end, come to a balance as to whether this is better for the community-at-large." He said they must look at the purpose of existing zoning laws and decide whether they ought to apply to this case because of the unique circumstances and potential benefits of eliminating on-street parking in surrounding neighborhoods.

The board scheduled another meeting for 6:30 p.m. last night to hear public comments on the application.



MACRO-MOLECULAR MATH...Tom Weingarten, right, a graduate of Westfield High School, spoke on "A Monte Carlo Algorithm For Approximating Bayesian Inference" at Virginia Military Institute. Tom was chosen to make the presentation by the National Conference of Undergraduate Research based on his studies in computational biology at the University of Rochester. Tom is pictured above with his father, Michael Weingarten.

Freeholder Bd. Continuing Relationship With Wenzhou

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Leader and The Times

COUNTY — The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders is expected to take action tonight, April 28, concerning the continued sister city relationship with the City of Wenzhou, Province of People's Republic of China. The relationship was established in 1998.

The board will vote to issue a \$46,500 one-year contract to Albert Chu of ALC Communications, Inc. of Randolph for planning, design and consultation on international relations and business development.

Director of Economic Development James Daley said the contract is part of a diplomatic relationship between the City of Wenzhou and the county. "This is an ongoing relationship," said Mr. Daley. He noted that the county hopes to promote distributing Chinese goods within the county.

Relationships already exist with Kean University, the Vocational-Technical School and Magnet High School for training and education.

The freeholders will introduce the county's 2005 budget tonight. The county tax levy is expected to be lower than the \$217 million proposed in County Manager George Devaney's \$375 million executive budget introduced in January.

The board will vote to increase the contract to T&M Associates of Clark by \$27,000 to \$174,458. Engineering and Public Works Director Frank Dann said the state Department of Environment Protection ordered the county to conduct a wetlands analysis as part of the replacement of the Division Avenue Bridge in New Providence and Summit.

Mr. Dann said the bridge is being widened to include a sidewalk on land that had not previously been built on.

The county will again co-sponsor the July 4 fireworks display in Nomahegan Park with the Township of Cranford. The county will pay \$12,000 and Cranford, \$8,000. Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities Charles Sigmund said.

A resolution will be on tonight's agenda authorizing Mr. Devaney to execute an agreement for a \$15,000 grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission. The grant will be used to archive historical photographs of the county's parks system. The county will fund \$12,300 of the project cost.

The freeholder board will also vote to allocate \$150,000 in funds from the Union County Open Space, Recreation & Historic Preservation Trust Fund for construction of the Mattano Skateboard Park in Elizabeth.

According to the resolution, funds will be utilized for the purchase and installation of 10 skateboard/in-line skating stations from the City of Industry, Calif.-based Spohn Ranch.

A number of laudatory resolutions will also be on tonight's agenda including: proclaiming the month of May as "Older Americans' Month," designating the week of April 30 to May 8 as "Corrections Week," May 8 to May 13 as "National Nurses Week," May 6 as "National Nurses Day," May 1 to 7 as "Municipal Clerks Week," and the month of May as "Mental Illness Awareness Month."

The board will also recognize Pamela Zardecki Boright of Westfield on her upcoming retirement after 37 years as a teacher.

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On the Run EXXON

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