



THRILLER...Hillcrest Avenue in Westfield was the backdrop for *Unholy*, a thriller filmed by Westfield native Sam Freeman, who serves as the movie's executive producer and writer. Pictured, center, actress Adrienne Barbeau rehearses her lines with a fellow actor. The movie is expected to be released in the summer. See story on Page 20.

Mr. Kelly Begins Tenure As New Town Fire Chief

By PAUL PEYTON
Specially Written for The Times

WESTFIELD — Westfield's fire department is now under new leadership Tuesday with the swearing-in of Dan Kelly as the new fire chief.

A Westfielder for most of his life since 1960 — he lived in Summit for three years when he first got married — Chief Kelly has been a town firefighter for 25 years, serving under four chiefs during his tenure.

He was appointed a volunteer with the department in the fall of 1978 following his graduation from Westfield High School. He credits his father, who is still an active member of the Westfield Fire Department, for his interest in joining the department.

"I developed an interest in the fire service from his (his father's) participation as a volunteer firefighter in the community," he said.

His grandfather served for a brief time as a chief of a volunteer department in the Pittsburgh suburbs before his grandparents moved to New Jersey.

Chief Kelly joined the department as a full-time, paid member in August of 1981. He ascended to lieutenant in August 1990, captain in November 1999 and, most recently, deputy chief, in May 2003.

"I think any officer's goal is to aspire to the office of chief," said Chief Kelly.

Since joining the department, Chief Kelly worked for four chiefs.

"I am fortunate that I've had the opportunity to work under different chiefs so that I could experience four different management styles," he said.

Among his goals and objectives in leading the department forward, Chief Kelly plans to increase public education in fire and life safety programs in the town and develop more advanced programs for the town firefighters.

"I'm fortunate that I have a very young department. There has been a lot of retirements in the last three years," he said. "I have a young core of very aggressive officers."

Although Westfield sees about a dozen major fires a year, Chief Kelly said the department has been experiencing a jump in calls to the department. In addition, mutual aid to communities in Union County has been on the rise as well, he said.

"One of the other challenges the department faces right now is the interoperability with other agencies with some of the new standards and guidelines that are coming down from the Department of Homeland Security," said Chief Kelly.

He said this requires extra training not only per Homeland Security

guidelines but also through standards set forth by the National Fire Protection Association and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Fire Safety.

When Chief Kelly was a child, he and his mother were rescued by Westfield firefighters from their apartment above the old *Westfield Leader* building. He said that the fire, which started in *The Leader's* printing presses, was quickly extinguished. However, firefighters evacuated their apartment as a precaution.

"The memory of firefighters taking us out of the building stays with me today as if it just happened," he said.

Chief Kelly is an investigator with Union County Fire Investigation Task Force. He was first assigned to the task force in January of 1998. He has been the chapter chairman of the Westfield/Mountainside American Red Cross since September 2002. Prior to that, he was the past disaster chairman of the chapter from September 2000 to September 2002.

Among professional associations, Chief Kelly has been a member of the International Association of Arson Investigators since 1998; the National Association of Fire Investigators since 2000; New Jersey Fire Prevention and Protection Association since 2000.

In terms of fire training, Chief Kelly has completed courses at the National Fire Academy of the United States Fire Administration in Maryland, the Bergen County Police & Fire Academy, and the Chubb Loss Control Division. He has completed code enforcement courses at Essex County College and Middlesex County Fire Academy, and completed courses in fire science at Union County College in Cranford.

He has also attended numerous courses given by the New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management and completed fire investigation studies with the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice Academy. Chief Kelly has also taken continuing education courses in code enforcement and emergency management at Rutgers University. He also has taken courses at the Union County Police Academy in Scotch Plains.

The chief has been trained in fire prevention and investigation, emergency response to terrorism, fire fighting tactics, emergency medical procedures, arson investigation and dealing with hazardous materials.

The chief has been trained in fire prevention and investigation, emergency response to terrorism, fire fighting tactics, emergency medical procedures, arson investigation and dealing with hazardous materials.

The chief has been trained in fire prevention and investigation, emergency response to terrorism, fire fighting tactics, emergency medical procedures, arson investigation and dealing with hazardous materials.

He said this requires extra training not only per Homeland Security

Caruana, Skibitsky Vie for GOP Mayoral Nod; Committee to Meet In Two Weeks

By PAUL PEYTON
Specially Written for The Times

WESTFIELD — Westfield Councilmen Sal Caruana and Andy Skibitsky officially announced this week that they would vie for the local Republican Party nomination for mayor.

"I've asked that my name be considered among others for the office of mayor," said Councilman Caruana, who was elected to the council in 2002.

He said if he is not successful in garnering the committee's bid for mayor, he would like to be considered for reelection to his council seat. He declined to specify his platform, noting he wanted the process for the committee to choose its candidate first.

"We came off a divisive time in terms of the deck," he said, a reference to last November when voters defeated the proposed \$10 million downtown parking deck by a margin of 80 to 20 percent.

Councilman Caruana currently serves as Vice Chairman of the council's Public Safety, Transportation and Parking Committee. He was Chairman of the Code Review & Town Property Committee last year.

He is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Foster Capital Corporation, an investment management company he founded in 1991.

Councilman Skibitsky, who was also elected to a three-year term representing the third ward in 2002, is also seeking the party's nod. Like Mr. Caruana, his council term expires at the end of the year.

"I am prepared to work hard in the upcoming elections and I'm confident that Westfield's voters will recognize my record as a council member, my service to the community and my bipartisan approach to problem solving," Councilman Skibitsky said.

"As Mayor of Westfield, I would

continue to work toward new and innovative ideas designed to protect our residents and further enhance the quality of living in our town. I have been proud to represent the people of the third ward and look forward to serving all of my fellow residents in the years to come," he said.

Councilman Skibitsky, who serves as Vice Chairman of the Public Works Committee, is a product director with Schering Plough.

Assemblyman Jon Bramnick (R-21), the Westfield Republican Municipal Chairman, said the Republican Committee has received requests from Councilmen Caruana and Skibitsky to speak before the committee about the mayoral nomination.

"They are two really good candidates. So I am happy," said Mr. Bramnick, who indicated the committee would meet within the next two weeks to consider the mayoral nomination. He did not expect any other candidates to come forward for the nomination.

Former councilman Neil Sullivan said several individuals had contacted him to consider a run for mayor. Between his personal life and the expansion of his Westfield-based mortgage company, "now is not the time (to take on the duties of mayor)."

"But I will stay active in any way I can to help the community," Mr. Sullivan said. He said he would have run for the nomination had the committee not had an "appropriate" candidate for the post and requested that he run for the nomination.

He said both Republican mayoral candidates "have an understanding of what it takes to be a good mayor." He anticipates a close mayoral election in November.

"November elections, (in Westfield) when the incumbent is not running, historically have been close," he said. He stated that the mayoral hopeful with the best vision for the town will likely be the next mayor.

In addition to the office mayor and the council seats of Mr. Caruana and Mr. Skibitsky, the seats of Second Ward Councilman Rafael Betancourt, a Republican, and Fourth Ward Councilman Larry Goldman, a Democrat, are also up for reelection this year.

Westfield Municipal Democratic Chairman Ken Rotter said the local party is still a ways away from selecting its candidates for mayor and council.

"We are just undergoing our (selection) process right now," said Mr. Rotter. When asked whether the party would have a complete slate for mayor and each of the four wards he responded, "absolutely."



Sal Caruana



Andy Skibitsky



PROUD FORCE...The Westfield Police Department held their 2005 promotions ceremony on February 1 at the town hall. Pictured, left to right, are: Detective Lisa Perrotta, Gregory Hobson, Sergeant Scott Rodger, Lieutenant Edward Maguire, Chief Bernard Tracy, Captain John Parizeau, Lieutenant Carmen Brocato, Sr., Detective Joe Costanzo and Sgt. John Ricerca.

Westfield Police Department Promotes Eight In Ceremony

WESTFIELD — Eight police officers received promotions in the Westfield Police Department at a ceremony held in the Westfield Municipal Building on Tuesday, February 1.

Officers promoted were: Captain John Parizeau; Lieutenant Carmen Brocato, Jr.; Lieutenant Edward Maguire; Sergeant Scott Rodger; Sergeant John Ricerca; Detective Gregory Hobson; Detective Joseph Costanzo and Detective Lisa Perrotta.

Captain John Parizeau graduated from the College of New Jersey and was appointed to the department on March 29, 1981. He was promoted to the rank of plainclothes on February 1, 1987 and assigned to the Juvenile and Detective Bureaus. Sergeant on July 1, 1988, Detective Sergeant on January 1, 1997 and Lieutenant of Police on December 27, 1999.

He has served as the Records Bureau Commander and is the department's informational technology and media officer.

Lieutenant Brocato attended Kean College and was appointed to the department on September 8, 1985 and promoted to the rank of Sergeant on September 30, 1992 assigned to the Patrol Division. He has served with the Union County Narcotics Strike Force and served as an unarmed self-defense, PR-24, instructor at the John H. Stamler Police Academy.

Lieutenant Maguire attended Kean College and graduated first in his class from the John H. Stamler Police

Academy. He was appointed to the department on August 5, 1992 and promoted to the rank of Sergeant on February 1, 2000 assigned to the Patrol Division.

Sergeant Scott Rodger attended Union College and was a dispatcher for the department since 1986 and appointed to the department on February 1, 1989.

Sergeant John Ricerca attended the University of Bridgeport and was appointed to the department on October 1, 1992 and serves in the Patrol Division.

Detective Gregory Hobson graduated from Northeastern University in Boston and was appointed to the department on February 10, 1988 and will be assigned to the Juvenile Bureau. Detective Hobson is a certified D.A.R.E. instructor as well as member of the Bike Patrol.

Detective Costanzo was appointed to the department on February 10, 1988 and was assigned as a Plainclothes Officer to the Detective Bureau on January 1, 2002. Detective Costanzo has attended numerous schools related to identity theft, cyber crimes and served as an instructor for the State Police's Top Gun school.

Detective Lisa Perrotta was a meter maid and dispatcher prior to her being appointed to the department on July 26, 1996. Det. Perrotta is a certified D.A.R.E. officer and is assigned to the Traffic Safety Bureau and Traffic Enforcement Personnel Supervisor.

Modifications in Bulk Waste Program Near In Township

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

One factor in the burgeoning, and wandering deer population in and around the Ashbrook Reservation has been residents setting out food for deer. The recommended ordinance would address that matter. Mayor Marks said it presented a "quandary" because of the question of where to draw the line in forbidding the feeding of wildlife. He wondered whether such an ordinance might include bird feeders or the feeding of squirrels.

Mr. Hansen said he would review similar ordinances enacted in other towns and draft an ordinance. He also said another similar ordinance may be needed to comply with the recently-issued stormwater management regulations that would forbid feeding of wildlife on public property, such as in parks.

Mr. Atkins informed the council that facility improvements, namely to the municipal building, the public works building on Plainfield Avenue and the Township Library, "will be a major priority this year."

Last year, architectural services were secured to evaluate the three buildings, which are in need of roof repairs, heating and ventilation upgrades and other improvements.

Mr. Atkins said the evaluation of the library building is nearly complete and it's likely that library personnel will want to meet with the council in the next few weeks to review their options.

He said that a professional review

of the municipal building and public works facility is also nearing completion and that preliminary conclusions about those two buildings would be ready for review in the near future.

Late last year, the council heard a presentation by a firm that provides construction management services about the possibility of securing its services to oversee the refurbishing of the three buildings.

Councilwoman Nancy Malool, noting that several months' time had elapsed since that presentation, asked her colleagues whether they were interested in engaging those services. Mayor Marks noted that "the larger the project, the greater the need for a construction manager," but pointed out that the three-building project in Scotch Plains "is a close call" as to whether one is needed.

While Mr. Atkins said that in his experience, architects often are not the best at construction management, the council decided to wait until it receives the evaluations of the three buildings before deciding how to proceed.

At next Tuesday's regular meeting, eight members of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School DECA chapter will sit in for the mayor and council as well as the township manager, township attorney and township clerk and, as they do every year, act as the governing body by running the meeting, casting votes, making announcements and discussing matters that are pending.

Township Budget Hike May Depend on NJ Aid

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

township library. Mr. Atkins' budget maintains the number of Police Department employees at 46. He proposed additional funding for the township's autumn leaf collection program, which he said would likely have to be modified to comply with recently issued storm water management regulations.

Mr. Atkins told the council it was "very possible that we will have to get into more of a structured collection program on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis," meaning leaves may have to be collected within a

much narrower time frame than in the past. He said that mandatory leaf bagging would be considered as "an absolute last resort."

Mr. Atkins did not endorse a request from library officials for an additional \$24,244 in funding to allow the Bartle Avenue facility to open on Sunday afternoons. "I could not support that in view of all the other financial concerns you have," he told the council at its conference meeting on Tuesday night during a brief discussion of his recommendations.

New Communications Tower To Aid Fire and Rescue Squads

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

bids for the leasing on the new tower to three companies. Lin Cellular, a joint effort between AT&T and Cingular, bid \$42,000, which ensures its equipment is placed highest on the new tower.

Verizon bid \$27,545 and Sprint bid \$21,804, making the total for the three bids just over \$91,000 and near the upper end of the projected range initially anticipated by township officials. The initial term for the leases will be 10 years, with options for two five-year extensions.

The lease costs will increase 3 percent annually, so the township will recoup the costs of the new tower in just over five years and then see annual revenue in the last five years of the initial contract of more than \$100,000, which, township officials have pointed out, will be a new and creative revenue source that can be used to offset some part of a future property tax increase.

"After the first five years," Mr. Atkins said, "it will all be gravy."

In addition, Mr. Atkins says there will be positions on the new tower for Westfield emergency services to ensure better communications among their emergency personnel when responding to calls in the Tamaques Park area.

Fanwood will also have a position on the new tower to assist its communications in the southern part of the borough, particularly the King Street area, which has experienced problems. He also noted that Scotch Plains has a position on Fanwood's new tower at Borough Hall, which will contribute to better communications on the northside.

Councilwoman Carolyn Sorge, who has been a member of the fire department for eight years, called the

new tower "a necessary upgrade" that will "benefit all the emergency services," including those in Westfield and Fanwood, and could help all three communities in mutual aid situations.

She told *The Times* there are presently dead zones where one firefighter sometimes can't hear another one calling or can't effectively communicate with the fire chief. She said such situations have never risen to the level of dangerous, "but it's definitely a problem."

The new tower, she said, "will solve that problem."

Sprint

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ing will be funded in part by a \$200,000 grant from the state's Department of Transportation's Municipal Aid Program, Borough Engineer Joseph Pryor informed the council in his Public Works report. Mr. Pryor is reviewing proposed design drawings, and the project will be awarded by June 1.

The senior citizens group, which uses the recreation building at Forest Road Park for its meetings and activities, has been looking forward to the installation of a full-service kitchen. A contractor will be awarded the project next week.

The second reading of the ordinance amending the Downtown Redevelopment Plan will be held at next week's council meeting, which begins at 7:30 p.m. The public will have the opportunity to speak on the matter.

Enchantments, a gift store located on South Avenue, will receive a presentation from the borough at next week's council meeting, recognizing their 15-year anniversary.



LOCAL PERFORMERS...Megha Reddy of Scotch Plains, Shivangi Goel of Edison and Charlotte Greaney of Scotch Plains presented a song, "Rhythm of Life" at the Wardlaw-Hartridge Lower School's lunchtime cabaret at the end of January. The trio, all students in Ellen Ritz' fourth grade class, participated in the cabaret which featured 13 acts, ranging from piano and vocal solos to gymnastic routines and Indian and modern dance numbers. The bi-annual cabaret gives the elementary school children the chance to perform before their peers while allowing the other pupils to learn proper audience etiquette for concerts and recitals.

Special Services Up Three Percent In Projected 2005 School Budget

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

music, and e-mail.

"The technology we use is great, because there's a type for everyone," said Emily.

Another student, Kaitlyn Rau, said that students were graded at the end of the year using a culminating assessment exam. The students are given topics on the day of the exam, and they are graded on fluency.

Board members were very impressed with the students' demonstration of their German knowledge.

"It's really great to see what happens in the classroom from the perspective of a student," said board member Betty Anne Woerner.

Ms. Stevenson commented that her classes focus more on authenticity than anything else. She believes it is better to let the students "be themselves" to really learn how to speak German properly.

"My goal is to give the students a context" in which to speak, she said.

In other board business, several members of the public commented on various issues.

work was needed, he said, parents would be left with virtually no vacation days for other times in the year.

Dr. Carol Choye, Superintendent of Schools, responded that this system of parent-teacher conferences was the most effective for the district. She provided a list of schools and their conference schedules, though only Roselle, Rahway and Bridgewater schools exhibited similar patterns.

Mr. Bernstein, who had researched the issue on his own, stated that the schools he contacted did not follow a schedule mirroring Scotch Plains-Fanwood's conference schedule.

Dr. Choye and the school board are expected to revisit the issue to determine whether any modifications can be made.

Scotch Plains resident Al Muller commented on the expected rise in the school board's budget for next year. He also referenced the increasing county budget, which in turn would impact the school budget.

Board member Lance Porter expressed his frustration with the county budget situation, and he also took a slight jab at the freeholder board. It was announced recently by the freeholders that they approved retroactive pay raises for department heads.

Quipped Mr. Porter, "Unlike the freeholders and the county budget, there will be no retroactive pay raises (for the board members)."