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**HUNG UP!!**  
**Parents Need to Work Together To Correct Toddler's Behavior**  
By Milt Faith, Executive Director  
Youth and Family Counseling Service

ABCDICTIONOPQRSTUWXYZ  
**DD**  
Diction Deception

Here are several questions which were not answered at the end of 2004 and need to be addressed.

To the frustrated mother who has a three-year-old who opens up Oreo cookies, takes out and eats the cream and then returns the chocolate crackers into the box (and whose husband thinks this is cute and encourages it): First, tell your husband this is inappropriate and unsanitary for others who want to eat Oreos, and then, tell your son he cannot do this. He will need the constant setting of limits from both parents. To avoid further power struggles, buy cookies without cream in them!

To the grandmother who feels guilty because she is unable to leave money to her children when she passes away (bad investments, limited income): We, as parents, try to do the best we can to provide for our children; however, money is not the only way in which we provide. We, hopefully, offer care, security, nurturance, support and the determination to have a meaningful life. Here's hoping you've done this - feel that you have offered them the world!

I love this quote, which I read recently: "What we leave in our children is more important than what we leave our children."

To the mother who feels uncomfortable because her daughter is ashamed of her European accent: This is nothing for which to feel ashamed. Instead of being defensive, ask your daughter if she would like to learn how to speak the language with which you grew up - and be proud of it!

To the young man who drinks constantly at every party or gathering,

- 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. Singultus - A hiccup
  2. Lazaretto - A public hospital for lepers
  3. Trophic - Having to do with nutrition
  4. Taube - A type of German monoplaner having pigeon-shaped wings
- ZEKKOE**
1. The hippopotamus
  2. A German helmet with a sharp metal spike
  3. A wedge
  4. A heavy javelin used by the Roman infantry
- KRANG**
1. Second-class; something of lesser value
  2. The shattering effect of a sudden burst of energy, as in an explosion
  3. Spittle
  4. The body of a whale stripped of its blubber
- PHILAUTY**
1. Pleasing, charming or delightful
  2. A selfish regard for oneself
  3. Self confidence; ability
  4. Understanding; perceptiveness
- STOIT**
1. Slow-moving; sluggish
  2. To run abandon; decamp
  3. To stagger or stumble
  4. Sturdy; solid

## Residents Must Become Involved To Make a Difference in Tax Bills

Once again, it is budget time for towns, the county and area boards of education. The lion's share of budgets is funded by property taxes paid by you. Taxes are now so high and continue to rise that the state legislature is considering a ballot referendum on whether a state constitutional convention should be held to reform the tax system.

Mayor Martin Marks of Scotch Plains feels strongly that a tax convention is required. He's taken to the Internet with a video on this matter. Please see www.goleader.com/video.

We think it's important for residents to become better educated about, and get more involved in, the setting of these budgets and how taxes are assessed. Residents should attend meetings of the county, schools and towns. If just one person from each of the 21 towns in Union County attended the Freeholder meetings, a big difference would result. Given the money and tax dollars involved, it's staggering to us that no one attends.

Similarly, residents should attend town and school board meetings, and the information regarding budgets funded by taxpayers should be made readily available.

Union County Manager George Devaney put forth his 2005 budget recommendations to the Freeholder Board last month. The spending plan calls for a 5 percent increase, about \$18 million more in tax dollars.

The Freeholders will confer in the next several weeks, reviewing Mr. Devaney's proposals before formally introducing this year's budget and then voting on it in the spring.

If no changes are made to the county budget, some area towns will be hit with big increases in the county portion of property taxes. There are 21 towns in Union County, but locally, the increase will be significant.

Preliminary calculations show that Mountainside would be hit hardest, with an average \$204 increase in county taxes this year. Scotch Plains taxpayers would see a \$134 increase, while the average Westfield taxpayer would be looking at a \$128 hike. Countywide, these are the three highest amounts.

It would be helpful and informative if citizens from these towns demanded to know why their taxes are slated to increase so significantly, especially when other towns like Linden and Summit are set to see increases of only \$49 and \$51, respectively. New Providence is even seeing a reduction in its tax level from the county.

What is the reason the county budget is increasing by 5 percent this year? What services are deemed vital? What cuts have been made? Will there be another retroactive pay hike for county management later this year - like they've done for themselves at Christmas the last four years?

Municipal governments are just beginning their budget processes, and citizen input is important here as well. The services provided by towns are most easily seen from front porches; snowplowing in the winter, road repaving in the warmer months, recreation programs, police, fire and services for young and old.

Towns in the area have not yet provided firm numbers regarding their budgets for this year. But it's a safe bet that spending will rise and the blame will be put on the so-called non-discretionary expenditures.

These are items such as union contracts, insurance, sewage fees, pension fund contributions, utility charges, etc. Officials can't cut or eliminate these. They must pay the bills.

There is a whopping sewer bill increase coming this year and it will be with everyone for over 20 years as the Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority spends over \$70 million to revamp the facility. Few towns are talking about this. Westfield will see an increase of at least \$500,000 per year for the sewage treatment plant rework.

Mayors and administrators will say they are not getting any state aid and it's out of their control. Officials at all levels say that government spending is beyond their control. If spending is not within their control, then who is steering the ship?

With the way the system works, only a small chunk of expenditures is open to the scrutiny of town politicians and resident taxpayers. The big chunk is set out for vote each year - it's the public school budget.

Budget meetings are open to the public. Once the framework of budgets are available, they should be posted on the Internet at each town's website. The townspeople should see their county portion, school and municipal budgets all together so the total impact can be evaluated. That way, residents could evaluate priorities and guide spending limits.

That goes for the big picture of debt, too. Given school, town, county and sewer authority bonds, Westfield is about \$100 million in debt, but few people know this. Please see www.goleader.com/features. The money must be paid back and the debt is guaranteed by your property.

Lastly, school budgets need increased public attention. Education taxes make up the bulk of the typical property tax bill. Yet, it seems to be the component that flies under the radar screen, at least if one judges by voter turnout in the April school elections.

Too often, budgets seem to be presented to the public as fait accompli, with the decisions made behind closed doors, out of the public eye.

No one puts the total picture together for the taxpayer. Each entity claims their increase is necessary and only very small, equal to the cost of a mere cup of coffee. Then the sewer bill arrives, bond payments on debt are due, new textbooks need to be purchased, open space, pocket parks and parking permits are required. Suddenly, that cup of coffee becomes a big job of Java.

## Letters to the Editor

### Opponent of Deer Hunts Blames Problem on Overdevelopment

I am writing to voice my opposition to Scotch Plains Mayor Martin Marks proposal to conduct a deer hunt in both the Watchung and Ashbrook reservations, possibly this winter.

My husband and I moved to Scotch Plains 15 years ago. Since our move, every part of Scotch Plains that was not developed has been. The only habitat left for the deer are the reservations and the local golf courses. The township has overdeveloped the area, and now wishes to kill the deer in the areas it has defined for them.

The Humane Society of the U.S. says on its website, www.hsus.org, that hunting to prevent overpopulation is not effective and can in fact contribute to the growth of deer herds.

Heavily hunted states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania are among those experiencing higher deer densities than ever before.

The hunt in the Watchung Reservation has been conducted since 1994, despite that it was to be a one- to three-year program. Hunting has obviously not solved overpopulation.

Since the township has overdeveloped the area, I believe it shares some culpability in finding a solution that is safe, humane and effective.

If there are other Scotch Plains residents who do not condone this hunt, please contact Mayor Marks at (908) 322-6700.

**Ann Berk**  
Scotch Plains

### Fundraiser Is Chance to Help Family Of Custodian Who Gave So Much

On September 2, 2004, a terrible tragedy befell our community. Salvatore "Sam" Spadaro, 45, died suddenly of a massive heart attack. Sam left behind his wife, Cindy, and three young children, Salvatore, 11; Antonio, 9; and Gabriella, 5.

The Spadaros are long-time residents of Scotch Plains and are active in our community, schools, church, sports programs, Boy Scouts and Brownies. Sam was an employee of the Scotch Plains/Fanwood Board of Education and worked as head custodian at the Terrill Middle School.

Sam's untimely death has caused tremendous grief for his wife, children and extended family. His loss has also caused unexpected long-term financial difficulties for his wife and children.

Nonetheless, Cindy and the children have found strength in one another and have carried on. Having always been an extremely generous and caring family, their selflessness and kindness has continued in Sam's memory.

For instance, only days after Sam's funeral, Cindy and the children carried on with the family's plans to hold a neighborhood garage/bake sale with proceeds benefiting a child suffering from spinal bifida and in need of a wheelchair.

In an attempt to give back to this wonderful family some of what they have always unselfishly given to others, The Friends of The Spadaros are planning the first annual "get-together fundraiser" to be held on Friday, March 18, at the Italian American Hall in Scotch Plains.

We hope and pray that with the help of community businesses and individuals, we can at least ease some of the family's financial burden.

Their heartbreaking emotional loss will endure, but hopefully the family can rest assured with the knowledge that during his life, Sam touched so many people who now are ready and willing to assist those he loved.

In this regard, we kindly ask that members of our community consider making a contribution toward this fundraiser. Your contribution may take whatever form you choose - from money to gift certificates, gift baskets, products or services that will be offered as raffle prizes during the benefit dinner.

Additionally, corporate contributions to the "Spadaro Children 2005 Minors Trust" would greatly help the future of these three young children left fatherless.

All contributions will aid in making this fundraiser a success and are greatly appreciated by the Spadaro family and all of us planning this event. Contributions may be mailed directly to: Karen Stone, 119 Woodland Avenue, Fanwood, N.J. 07023.

**Karen Stone**  
Fanwood

### Shock Jock Crossed Line In Thrashing Acting Gov.'s Wife

Fellow New Jerseyans, this Shock Jock does not deserve notoriety. The other day, the line was crossed! When Craig Carton of radio station WKXW verbally "trashed" our acting Governor's wife, he "trashed" all people who suffer from depression.

Depression can be a serious handicap. Mrs. Codey is commendable for speaking about her personal issues. An informed public is less fearful and is more likely to seek the good help that is available today.

Listening to "The Jersey Guys," it seems that Mr. Carton likes to "rile up" his listeners, dragging a subject ad nauseum, then at times, verbally attacking or hanging up on callers who try to educate or share differences of opinion. Recently, he suggested that his radio show has the "power" to influence the way that New Jerseyans vote. Don't most people think for themselves?

Certainly, Mr. Carton's behavior is not helpful to society. Perhaps Mr. Carton suffers from some form of behavioral disorder. Maybe he could learn about taking responsibility for his own actions. The New Jersey radio listeners can hope that Mr. Carton eventually speaks the error of his ways and gives a decent and honorable contribution to us. Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

**Susan Covert**  
Westfield

## State 22nd District Legislative News

### Assembly Bill by Green Targets Discrimination Among Gender-Different

TRENTON—Assemblyman Jerry Green of Plainfield (D-22) has co-sponsored a bill that amends the state's Law Against Discrimination to codify protection for transgender and gender-different people.

The Appellate Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey has ruled in the case of Enriquez vs. West Jersey Health Systems (2001), that state law prohibits discrimination against transgender people, according to the Gender Rights Advocacy Association of New Jersey (GRAANJ).

Assembly Bill No. 3678 would write the substance of that decision into the language of statute, making it clear to transgender and gender-different citizens that they enjoy legal protection against discrimination, and clarifying the law for New Jersey's businesses, which otherwise might face liability for actions taken in ignorance of case law, the association stated.

The legislation has the support of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Human Rights Campaign, the New Jersey Lesbian and Gay Coalition, Garden State Equality and the National Center for Transgender Equality as well as GRAANJ.

**Deadlines**  
General News - Friday 4pm  
Weekend Sports - Monday 12pm  
Classifieds - Tuesday 12pm  
Ad Reservation - Friday 4pm  
Ad Submittal - Monday 12pm

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**MAD COW**

### Freeholder Board Should Remove Earth Care From Waste Mgmt. Plan

Union County residents have been granted what appears to be a bit of a reprieve. The biohazardous medical waste treatment facility, which was to be constructed and operated by the Earth Care Company at Linden's Tremley Point, has hit a stonewall, namely the state DEP.

Besides listing possible environmental concerns as reasons for recommending that Earth Care withdraw its application; the DEP pointed out that the application was not only incomplete but was erroneous as well. This comes as no surprise, considering this company's performance record in other states, and that they actually went ahead with a ground breaking at the Linden site, this past spring, claiming to not have known that their permits had expired.

It would seem that a global company with a hand in almost all areas of the medical waste industry should not have any problem getting all of their ducks in a row to obtain approvals on all aspects of this type of operation. Perhaps a company which doesn't seem to take care when it comes to simply dotting its "i"s and crossing its "t"s" on necessary paperwork could also be lax when it comes to meeting standards and enforcing necessary operating procedures.

The residents of Union County should be leery about having what amounts to a gigantic pressure cooker processing biohazardous medical wastes in our backyards. These recent developments should serve as a heads-up to our Freeholder Board to revisit this situation and seriously consider rescinding the inclusion of this plant from the county's Waste Management Plan.

**Patricia Quattrocchi**  
Garwood

**Ground Hog Day Uncertainty Arises**

As of press deadline for *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* on Ground Hog Day, February 2, Punxsutawney Phil could not be contacted directly for his prediction of the longevity of this season's winter due to the overwhelming traffic at www.groundhog.org. Unofficial sources such as MSN, CBS and other national news networks, report that Phil saw his shadow, implying six more weeks of winter.

Upstart, Staten Island Chuck, with dif-

The Editor