



GOOD BYE TO FRANKLIN...Construction crews began demolition work on Garwood's Franklin School last week. The school was built in 1913. Students now attend Lincoln Elementary and Middle School.

Garwood Borough School Construction Continues

By ANNA GITHENS
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

GARWOOD - While the final phase of the Lincoln School renovation project is underway, construction crews began the demolition work on February 8 to Franklin School (located behind Lincoln), which was built in 1913. Franklin School is the oldest municipally-owned structure in Garwood.

Garwood residents passed a \$9 million bond referendum a few years ago to support both projects. An additional \$3 million was funded through the New Jersey School Construction Act.

"It was designed by D.C. Newman Collins, the architect who also designed gatun locks on the Panama Canal," said Linda Koenig, President of the Garwood Historical Committee and Vice President of the Board of Education. "Poured reinforced concrete, a method developed by Thomas Edison, was used when the school was built."

Ms. Koenig, along with some other Garwood residents, had been interested in remodeling and preserving the original building. Over the past few years, studies were done to explore the possibility of maintaining Franklin School but it was determined that the school did not meet current educational standards, particularly square footage of classrooms.

The construction project is not expected to cause any interruption to school services, school officials said. The Lincoln School plan provides for a new media center, cafeteria, administrative area, music room, computer lab and 11 new classrooms with additional support areas. The new school will house both elementary and middle school students.

The renovation project has also run into a couple of unforeseen cost increases along the way, officials said, one of which involved the removal of plywood flooring and asbestos tile in three of the Franklin classrooms. Complete asbestos removal had already taken place. The unexpected removal of the asbestos tile and flooring cost an additional \$18,150.

The Garwood Board of Education has said they have attended to neighbors concerns and complaints along the way. Neighbors have been upset with the lights along the side of Lincoln School. The school board had new lighting installed with shades so that light would not shine on neighboring homes. However, residents have said the lights have not been toned down enough.

Another neighborhood complaint on Third Avenue has been about excessive noise coming from the air conditioning unit on the roof at Lincoln School. The Board of Education has acknowledged this concern and plans to address the need for a sound barrier installation over spring break in March.

"We have been very compassionate about that problem," said Barbara Tudek, Business Administrator of the Garwood Board of Education. "We are working diligently to solve the noise problem." Estimates to install the sound barrier run roughly around \$100,000, officials said.

Further community complaints focus around the relocation of a large maintenance shed. Neighbors have expressed that the board is not being considerate of the neighbors when addressing landscaping issues and changes on school property. They claim that the shed (which is being used for metal storage) is an eyesore. The school board says that this shed cannot be moved.



FROM THE HEART...Children from each elementary school in Westfield present a \$4,243 donation to WF/MS American Red Cross Chair Dan Kelly (right) on Valentine's Day toward the tsunami relief efforts. Pictured above, from left to right, are: top row, Theresa DePalma, Washington School; David Kane, Franklin; Anna Liah, Franklin; and Maura Heinbokel, Jefferson; second row: Victor Cruz, McKinley; Nicole Cruz, McKinley; Katie Sullivan, Jefferson; and Kate Helander, Franklin; bottom row: Krysta Huber, Tamaques; Megan Luppino, Tamaques; Matthew Huff, Wilson; and Lauren Koenigsberg, Wilson. Holding the Red Cross sign is Patrick Woods from Washington School.

State Senate Advances

Polling Place Accessibility

TRENTON - The state senate advanced bill S-1387 by a vote of 36-0-4 that aims to make polling places more accessible to seniors and individuals with disabilities.

The bill would require each polling place to be in compliance with the "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990" (ADA) and permit private buildings to be used when an accessible polling place is lacking. The bill also allows voting facilities to be more than 1,000 feet from the boundary line of a voting district when there is otherwise no ac-

cessible polling place within the district. "The right to vote is arguably the most fundamental right in America," said Senator Nicholas Scutari (D-22). "Yet, for far too many of the millions of Americans with disabilities, this right is empty because local polling places are not accessible to them. The goal is to make voting easy and simple for everyone including individuals with physical disabilities."

The bill will go to the state assembly for consideration.

Westfield Community Center News Remembering Dr. King

By SASHA SCHWARZ
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

It was a cold day but warm inside the Westfield Community Center. It gave everyone a proud feeling being there. Zayid Mohammed's Freedom School Choir performed "We Shall Overcome" and other songs. Westfield's "finest" in their handsome uniforms, celebrated with us. They made us feel very safe.

Westfield Native Named VP of Firm

DALLAS - Joseph A. Pobiner, a native of Westfield, has been named Vice President of HKS, Inc. in Dallas, TX, where he also serves as Director of Planning.

HKS is the fifth largest architectural firm in the world with offices throughout North America and Europe. Mr. Pobiner directs the firm's global master planning practice across all service areas, including healthcare, sports & entertainment, corporate, resort/hospitality, residential, and aviation.

Current projects under his direction include master plans for new NFL stadiums for the Dallas Cowboys in Arlington, TX and the Indianapolis Colts in Indiana, the Grupo Empresarial Logistika International Business Park in San Luis Potosi, ME and the Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem Campus Master Plan in Jerusalem.

Born and raised in Westfield from 1955 to 1965, Mr. Pobiner moved to Princeton and graduated South Brunswick High School in 1973. His father, Harvey, was a research scientist in inorganic chemistry.

Mr. Pobiner holds both undergraduate and graduate degrees from Ohio State University in Columbus, OH. He resides in the greater Dallas area with his wife, Johnnie Kay Stark.

I also had a chance to thank Josie Principio for the holiday luncheon she prepared as a "thank you" gesture to the Community Center for taking such good care of her mother, Rosa.

A very handsome board member, Donnel Carr, cooked and served the pancakes and the best meat patties you can think of. The coffee (move over Dunkin' Donuts) was out of this world. Mr. Carr, an electrical engineer, was also a center child from the age of five until high school.

Inoticed an impressive gentleman, Dr. Joseph L. Graves, Jr. who graduated Westfield High School and moved on to Fairleigh Dickinson University to become a professor of biological science - What a record! He was also a Center child - and could have been a "street child" with no place to go if the Westfield Community Center did not exist.

Also at the breakfast was our beloved Community Center President, Wallace Brown - you will read more about him at a later time - along with his lovely daughter who was serving us coffee.

Carol Molnar volunteered at the ticket counter.

Thelma May Smith, a strong leader in the Community Center will announce in a later letter, the income tax services provided at the Center for Westfield's senior citizens.

Martin Luther King's Quotations: "Don't look down on someone unless you are willing to help them up."

"The ultimate weakness of violence is a descending spiral begetting the very thing that it seeks to destroy."

What a man! What a mind!

The Westfield Community Center is located at 558 West Broad Street in Westfield. For more information or to become involved, please call (908) 232-4759.

Westfield Elementary Students Give From the Heart for Tsumani Aid

The cupcakes and candied hearts so familiar to elementary schools on Valentine's Day were just one cause for celebration in Westfield. The 2,787 children in kindergarten through fifth grade were praised by their teachers and principals for their generous "gifts from the heart." To help the tsunami relief efforts, the children collected more than \$4,240 from piggy banks and allowances, and presented their donation to the Westfield/Mountainside Chapter of the American Red Cross on Valentine's Day.

All six elementary schools participated in the fundraising effort, which was called "Dollars for the Disaster." Principals stressed the importance of children learning about events and places, fostering an awareness of other people and encouraging children to help others.

Local Red Cross Chapter Chair Dan Kelly thanked the students for their donations and presented the following elementary schools with a certificate of appreciation: Franklin, Jefferson, McKinley, Tamaques, Washington and Wilson.

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