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The Area Is Proud of Sean Baran And His Actions in London

Maybe we're letting our pride get the best of us. But, we'll take that chance. The area is proud of Sean Baran of Westfield and how he conducted himself during the dastardly bombing of the London subways last week.

First, and most importantly, our deepest condolences and reassurance of total support go out to our friends, the Brits. America stands with you as you stood with us during 9/11. We all have work to do.

Sean was riding a bus that moment in the center of London and saw injured people exiting the subway. He jumped off the bus and immediately helped care for the injured.

During the hubbub, TV cameras noticed this young man helping on the streets of London during the chaos. They wondered who he was - and found out he was an EMT from Westfield, NJ. Unexpectedly, Sean found himself on national and international TV, the Today Show and the Larry King Show.

As an EMT and a member of the Westfield Rescue squad, it was part of his training. As a good person from New Jersey, it was part of his character.

In the midst of this modern "Day of Infamy" and

with so often only bad things being reported, it's great to write about good things, good people and good deeds. It helps us think better of ourselves and better of others.

Sean was part of the WHS state championship swim team in 2003 that gave Westfield a tie for the most swimming championships in state history (subsequently garnered exclusively by Westfield the next year). Jocks always tell us that participating in athletics has value - that it builds character. This fact is hard to dispute in Sean's case.

His swim coach, Bruce Johnson says, "and I can 99.99 percent guarantee that if those #!*\$^!! Morons had been there shooting guys, Sean still would've done what he did. That's the way he is. I'm not surprised in the least."

So, congratulations Sean, we're proud of you.

We may not be as eloquent as Bruce Johnson, but if the terrorists are allowed to keep doing this, all reason could soon be lost.

The French, Germans and Muslims sitting on the sidelines must stand up soon before the fuse is lit and very bad retribution happens.

Who Dropped the Ball in the Westfield Baseball Controversy?

The roots of the Westfield Baseball League (WBL) go deep. For over 40 years, the WBL has offered programs for the youth of Westfield. From the newspaper archives of 1997, it is noted that over 1,000 boys and girls participated in programs of the WBL. The participation has only grown since. Now, over 1,500 participate.

Dads and moms remember fondly their own involvements with the WBL. Successful businessmen list their involvement as a coach or umpire as one of their more memorable civic activities.

In 2004, Warren Shea of Scotch Plains was named to the board of Union Hospital - in his bio, it is prominently listed that he was a coach and umpire in the WBL.

In 1999, when Bruce Elliot, formerly of Westfield, was named manager of the Middletown office for Burgdorff Realtors, he also listed being active in the WBL as a major activity.

Viola Ricciuti of Scotch Plains was a chef at the Arrow Lounge. When she died at age 80 in 1999, donations in her memory were requested to be made to the WBL.

In 2004, the death notice for former NJ Bell executive Walter Treut who died at the age of 88, requested that donations in his memory be made to the Westfield Baseball League - Mr. Treut had lived

in Westfield from 1950 to 1977 and coached in the WBL, before retiring and residing in North Carolina for more than 25 years.

John Fiorino, a Westfield firefighter, died suddenly in 1997 at the age of 38. He was active in helping the youth of the community, and each year a Westfield Baseball tournament is held in his memory.

Not only are the roots deep for the Westfield Baseball League as offered by the above examples, the good that is done for our youth today is immeasurable. The caring nature of our community guarantees that our youths prosper, stay out of trouble and contribute to their communities in the future.

The tradition has been here for over forty years.

That's why we're confused about the current controversy created from the decision by the Westfield Board of Education to not allow the WBL to play on the high school field this summer. The reason - a neighbor is complaining about foul balls.

Surely, this can be worked out - we're surprised it even got this far. For decades, this has not been an issue. Is something else going on that we don't know about?

Has the Westfield BOE and Superintendent committed an error and dropped the ball on this one? There's still time to rally and grab back the lead.

We hope they do.

Queens Resident Notes Westfielder In London Helping Bomb Victims

I awoke to the news of the horrific terrorist attacks in London. While I was listening to the Today show, I heard Katie Couric speaking with a young man who was helping a British doctor care for some of the injured. I later found out that he was an EMT from Westfield named Sean Baran.

My husband is a Foreign Service Officer, so I felt compelled to contact you about this young man. I am so proud to see how this American jumped into action, and made a huge difference abroad.

Mr. Baran and his family should be very proud.

Veronica Cassidy
Queens, New York

BOE, Please Reconsider Short Sighted Baseball Field Decision

To the Westfield Board of Education: Your recent denial of the use of the Westfield Varsity Baseball field for our township summer baseball teams because of the complaints of a single resident who purchased a home adjacent to the baseball field is very disturbing. This decision to deny the use of a field (that is provided and maintained by tax funds), because of one individual's complaints, adversely affects dozens of children and families in Westfield and surrounding communities.

It seems to be very unfair and short sighted. Please reconsider this decision.

Michael and Eileen Armento
Westfield



21st District News Judiciary Is Asked To Review

By Senator Thomas Kean, Jr., Westfield

Editor's Note: Senators Thomas Kean, Jr. (R-21) and Gerald Cardinale (R-39) sent the following letter to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Senator John Adler.

Dear Chairman Adler:
We write to request that you immediately convene the Senate Judiciary Committee for the purpose of reviewing the actions of the Department of Law and Public Safety in matters concerning the so-called "Norcross tapes."

Specifically, we request that the scope of these hearings include not only the apparent mishandling and destruction of evidence, but also the conduct of officials involved in the investigation and the decision as to whether or not actions uncovered in this investigation merit prosecution.

Public confidence in our system of justice has been severely compromised by the repeated reports that have raised questions about the handling of this matter. It is our duty as the elected representatives of the people to exercise the legislature's oversight authority to shine a bright light on this matter, ensure the even application of justice and restore public confidence in our legal system.

We appreciate your cooperation and leadership on this issue.

Voting Bill Becomes Law

A bill sponsored by Senator Thomas Kean, Jr., that requires all voting systems to issue a paper record of all the votes cast was signed into law last Thursday.

Senator Kean said, "As we advance with more sophisticated methods of voting, we need to assure voters that their ballots will not be tampered

with, and that their votes will be counted. A voter-verified paper trail, now required to be used in the event of a machine recount, will preserve the integrity of the voting process, and guarantee that democracy does not become an accidental victim of the triumph of technology."

The legislation requires that by January 1, 2008, each voting machine in use in the state produce an individual permanent record for each vote cast. The paper record would be made available for inspection and verification by the voter at the time the vote is cast and preserved for later use in any manual audit.

"As a result of the vote counting problems we witnessed in the last two Presidential elections, voters lost confidence in the procedures used to verify the final tally," Kean said. "On the state level, New Jersey's many divisions of government and many different elections pose unique challenges that this package will address. This new law will serve to increase the integrity of the voting process and promise the electorate that every vote does indeed count."

Counties will be required to comply with the provisions of this bill by January 1, 2008, unless a waiver is granted by the Attorney General if the technology is not available.

"We have seen people from South Africa to the former Soviet Republics to Afghanistan and Iraq risk their lives to stand in long lines to claim the right to vote for their leader," Kean concluded. "This package will ensure that voters in the Garden State will be able to vote for their representatives easily and be assured of the vote count's accuracy."



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. Bibelot - A small object whose value lies in its beauty or rarity
2. Pennach - A plume or bunch of feathers
3. Insouciance - Gay; lighthearted
4. Titivate - To dress up

USSUK

1. The bearded seal
2. A Scottish grandfather or great-grandfather
3. A long handled battle-axe
4. A large basket; a wicker basket for carrying loads

CYNANCHE

1. A center of attraction; anything that attracts attention
2. Canine; doglike
3. An inflammation of the throat or windpipe causing difficulty in breathing and swallowing
4. The constellation Ursa Minor

LIBIDINOUS

1. Self-absorbed, self-loving
2. Free spirited; open minded
3. Very lighthearted; overly cheerful
4. Lustful, lewd

SHELD

1. To gnaw or chew
2. Variegated or spotted
3. In the know; up to date
4. Shameful; corrupt

All Need To Exert Our Rights To Preserve Them

My daughter, Emily Colvin, 18, was unlawfully arrested at the protest in Westfield on March 4 while protesting Bush's Privatization of Social Security and the unconstitutional war in Iraq.

With continuing deaths of young men and women on the news each night, as well as countless Iraqi human beings killed and not counted, Emily and our whole family are deeply disturbed by what is happening to our country and world. There is no plan for ending U.S. involvement.

As people came out of the Bush meeting, one of the guests walked towards the protesters and shouted profanity. My daughter did not respond in kind but instead held up a sign that said "No More Oil Wars." She was picked out of the crowd and arrested in her hometown. She had the brains to not resist arrest and was not antagonistic. Anyone who has ever met her knows she is a young woman of integrity, conviction, and gentleness.

After three months, Emily's hearing came to fruition in the Springfield courthouse. Because of witnesses, and examination by her lawyer of a video taken by the Emergency Response Team of the county police, the charges were dropped. Emily had persistence in seeking out the truth through due process of law, proving her innocence. I am extremely proud of her as a patriot and person of faith.

Free speech is one of our most important freedoms and this right must be valued, used, and upheld to protect true democracy. Without it, people can be singled out on any whim for arrest. Emily simply exerted her constitutional right to speak out what she believes.

We thank the many people who offered their support and prayers, including old friends and total strangers who came forward and offered witness and support. We thank her lawyer, Donald DiGioia, for his keen intelligence and expertise. We have renewed faith in the power of justice and peace.

All of us need to exert our rights in order to preserve them.

Rev. Sarah Seivard Colvin
Westfield

League Appreciates Printing of Declaration

Thank you to *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* for reprinting the *Declaration of Independence* in its entirety. Sustaining our republic is hard work just as building it was; the *Leader/Times* has done its readers a great service by printing this inspiration for us.

Democracy requires engagement of its citizens, and by engaging ourselves we honor the sacrifices of those who work for our freedom. Reading the document that started it all is an important step and voting your choice at each election is another vital step in the preservation of our liberty.

Raise your hand if you read it all - raise your voice this November by voting.

Merry Wisler
Westfield

Clean-up Success, Kudos to All SP

The revamped Scotch Plains clean-up program appeared to be an overwhelming success to all involved. It gave all an opportunity to work together with neighbors and to reduce the cost of the program for the benefit of all citizens previous taxed, but not participating.

I'll reserve comment as to the effectiveness of the management of the program in the past.

Ultimately, credit for the revamped program has to be given to the election process as the idea was first generated by Democratic Candidate for Mayor, Andy Baron. Politics aside, ultimately we all benefited, the program was cheaper for all taxpayers and the totally Republican Council recognized the change on its merits. Kudos to all.

Please continue on your other areas of focus, presented shortly after the election, that were direct results of the election; improving the membership of the Volunteer Fire Department and efforts to work further on some form of a plan for the downtown.

Michael Weber
Scotch Plains

Letters to the Editor

Reader Remembers Lance Porter's Dedication to Scotch Plains-Fanwood

Lance Porter's diligence and integrity have well served all the children and every taxpayer in Scotch Plains and Fanwood during his years on the Board of Education. Our community will miss his dedication, thoroughness and fairness.

He has conducted himself with courtesy and respect for all in Scotch Plains and Fanwood, even on occasions when some impassioned individuals behaved most discourteously. He has worked long, unpaid hours to inform himself on myriad issues during his years on the Board. For example, he went out of his way to see for himself each of our school buildings before, during and after the recent major construction.

I have heard Lance discuss many issues at BOE meetings, weighing opportunities, many legal strictures, the needs

of exceptional and average students, and prudent stewardship of taxpayers' contributions. At each session, I heard common sense, respect and thoughtfulness.

I will remember an early September morning when a child had rushed into a street near a school, only to be struck by a car slowly pulling away from a parking space. No surprise - Lance Porter was there, showing concern for the student and listening to suggestions for improving pedestrian and vehicle safety.

Consistently, he displayed high standards in his role, making our communities better places to live and work.

Many thanks to Lance, and his supportive family who stood with him, for all that he has done.

Barbara Cronenberger-Meyer
Scotch Plains

Westfielder Says Town Council Did Not Disclose Truth About Turf Projects

The Westfield Soccer Assoc. (WSA) has done a great job in building a quality program. They should be commended for their dedication. I am in full agreement that the town has a responsibility to provide safe playable fields.

Last month, the town council voted to turf Houlihan field and put 70 ft. tall spotlights on Houlihan and Sid Fay fields over the strong objection to the lights by the entire neighboring community.

We were told in an open forum that the original plan was to turf both fields, without lights. However, the town found out at the last minute, because of poor planning, that they did not budget enough monies for the expense and decided to turf only Houlihan and light both of the fields.

The town council told the community that there was "No Way" the expense could be covered to turf both fields. Even if the \$175,000 expenditure for the lights were taken out of the project, they would still fall short by \$200,000. Construction of the fields started one week after the vote was passed.

It is now a month later and the town council has had meetings, as reported in *The Leader*, and has now found \$300,000 to turf the Sid Faye field. I personally asked the council, during an open meeting to find a creative way to fund the

monies to turf Sid Faye field with Houlihan without the lights, as originally planned. The answer was a resounding, "it can not be done."

The town council did not disclose the truth to the community about the town's fiscal abilities to have accomplished the original plan, to turf both fields without the 70 ft. tall spotlights. In fact, they had this finance plan in the works all along. This newfound money out of the town's asset fund was available all along. The lights are a waste of money and were approved to accommodate a voter base at the expense of a neighborhood's quality of life.

A user fee of \$10 will be added to the registration fees for the WSA to recapture the monies spent. What's next? A toll-booth or parking meters at Tamaquags Park because we fix the baseball fields?

This is also two months after the community voted down the school budget and services to our educational system have been reduced.

Think about this issue when you are planning that new addition to your house. The town is deciding if you can build the same addition onto your home that your neighbors have already done. "You Can't."

Michael Giordano
Westfield

Westfielder Disagrees With Moving Farmer's Market to Saturday

Editor's Note: This letter was sent to Allison O'Hara, Executive Director of the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce and copied to The Westfield Leader and The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times.

I am writing to ask why the Westfield Farmers' Market was switched from Thursday afternoons to Saturday mornings. Now, there are two Farmers' Markets within 2 miles of each other - one in Westfield, the other in Scotch Plains, scheduled at the same time on the same day.

The market in Scotch Plains has been a Saturday morning fixture for years. No, I do not live in Scotch Plains. I've been a Westfield resident for more than 25 years. The Thursday afternoon Westfield market afforded a perfect balance.

As someone who loves to cook, the availability of fresh produce and herbs is a terrific convenience. While I am quite familiar with how to store produce and fresh herbs, having to buy a week's worth of produce defeats the purpose of "fresh". This switch may be especially troublesome to local restaurants/chefs. They set their menu's price points on being able to guarantee the freshest produce to their customers. They may no longer be able to do so.

More importantly, it is extremely difficult to make a living as a farmer. Why would any town want to have them compete against each other at the same time and on the same day when alternative days and times have been available and worked so well for everyone?

Now, I hope you are not going to say

that "parking" was the culprit. I was always able to find a parking spot for the few minutes it took to shop at the Westfield market on Thursdays. What's more, the NYC commuters had an opportunity to get off the train, walk over to the market on Thursday evenings and go home with the freshest of ingredients. That will not be the case this season.

Times change and I'm not one to seek out the future by looking into a rearview mirror! Change is a constant - whether we like it or not. It is often unpredictable. However, when we have some control over the changes we choose to make, I would hope that collaboration, local input, market conditions and rational problem-solving would take precedence so that the towns of Westfield and Scotch Plains, the farmers and their customers would all benefit.

Michael L. Mazzarese
Westfield

Clark GOP Wishes New WF Mayor Good Luck

Honorable Mayor Andrew Skibitsky, I would like to congratulate you on your recent appointment to Mayor for the Town of Westfield. I have personally witnessed your leadership and skills while you served as councilman for the Town of Westfield.

May the best of luck be with you on your upcoming election.

Robert Tarantino, President
Clark Republican Civil Association

