

Board of Ed. Reviews \$75 Mil Budget; Tax Levy to Total \$68 Mil

By ED COONEY
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — The Board of Education (BOE) recapped the proposed 2005-2006 school district budget Tuesday night, which board member Richard Solomon called "a responsible implementation of community priorities."

Westfield Mayor Will Not Seek Third Term

By PAUL PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Mayor Greg McDermott officially announced Tuesday night that he will not seek reelection. "I will not be seeking a third term as mayor. It's been a tradition in this

Mayor Selling Home: See Story on Page 3

town that a mayor never runs for more than two terms. I believe it is time for me to move on," Mayor McDermott told *The Westfield Leader* during a personal interview in the mayor's office following Tuesday night's Town Council meeting.

The mayor said his decision follows his own philosophy of rotating people in and out of various municipal boards.

Mayor McDermott was first elected mayor in November 2000 following three years as councilman from the first ward. "It has been a terrific five years. I've learned a tremendous amount," he said.

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While each of these numbers is up slightly from last year's budget, school officials said it is important to note that the increases do not signify the addition of new positions. Additionally, the cost of instructors for the district's fine arts courses has been taken from the general education portion of the budget and moved to the fine arts portion, which totals \$3,420,840.

This total is up \$116,388, or 3.52 percent, from the current year's budget. Supply allocations to the different schools will not increase in the proposed budget. These allocations include the purchase of classroom furniture, maintenance supplies, and other consumables.

Jefferson Elementary School has requested funds for two sets of classroom furniture, while McKinley

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Five Seek Seats On School Bd.

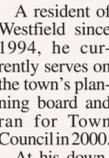
WESTFIELD — Five candidates will face off for three available seats on the town's board of education in this year's school board elections in Westfield.

Incumbents William Ziff and Alice Hunnicutt are joined in this year's race by Steven Dorry, Gary McCready, and Ann Ormsby Cary.



William Ziff

Mr. Ziff, an attorney in town, is seeking his second term on the board. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from the American University, a Master of Science degree from Tulane University and a law degree from Delaware Law School.



Ann Ormsby Cary

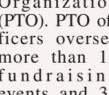
A resident of Westfield since 1994, he currently serves on the town's planning board and ran for Town Council in 2000.

At his downtown Westfield office, Mr. Ziff specializes in the representation of insurance companies and self-insured's. His wife works as a mental health counselor for the Employee Assistance Program. They have a 10-year-old son who attends Washington Elementary School.



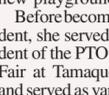
Benjamin B. Corbin

He is currently the Standing Secretary, District XII Ethics Committee.



Gary McCready

Ms. Ormsby Cary was senior vice president at United Way and is co-president of Tamaques Elementary School's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). PTO officers oversee more than 10 fundraising events and 30 service events for the school.



Alice Hunnicutt

This year, they are spearheading an effort to buy new playground equipment.

Before becoming PTO Co-President, she served as Co-Vice President of the PTO. She ran the Book Fair at Tamaques for four years, and served as variety show director

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Town to Host President Bush Friday at Westfield Armory

By PAUL PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Westfield will make history this week when President George W. Bush holds a Town Meeting-style appearance on Social Security reform this Friday.

Since word spread last weekend, the town and other elected officials, federal, state and municipal have been fielding hundreds of calls from individuals seeking tickets and news on possible disruptions.

The meeting will be held Friday morning around 10:40 a.m. at the Westfield National Guard Armory on Rahway Avenue across the street from Westfield High School (WHS). Town officials have said the President is expected to stay in town until around 11:45 a.m.

Town Administrator Jim Gildea said prior to Tuesday night's Town Council meeting, the town's police and fire chiefs were informed of the President's visit on Friday. They were briefed by the FBI on Monday.

"The honor of having the President come to your town is a piece of history that you will never forget," Mayor Greg McDermott said. "I look at it as totally a positive experience."

"I think it's a tremendous honor. It is very exciting. I think it is great for Westfield," the mayor added.

The trip was arranged in part by Congressman Mike Ferguson (R-7th) whose Congressional district includes Westfield. He said Westfield should be honored to have been chosen as part of the President's appearance schedule on Social Security reform.

"(Westfield is) one of New Jersey's great communities; a community of

families and individuals," he said, noting that he felt Westfielders as well as Union County residents would have a lot to add to the discussion. It's a credit to Westfield, Union County, and our entire state" that the President is coming to town.

He said plans are to accommodate between 1,500 and 2,000 people at the event.

"We are going to get as many people in there as possible," said the congressman.

The orderly Town Hall style meeting is being conducted to gauge opin-

ions of New Jerseyans on the President's proposal for personal Social Security accounts.

"This (Social Security reform) is a real challenge," said Rep. Ferguson. He said every day the current Social Security system comes closer to "fiscal collapse."

The President previously visited Plainfield a few years ago.

"I'm excited to have the President back in New Jersey and in the heart of the (7th) district in Westfield," Rep. Ferguson said.

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WELCOME TO NEW JERSEY...President George W. Bush received a rousing welcome from the packed crowd in the Sheraton at Newark Airport on June 24, 2002. Congressman Mike Ferguson applauds as his wife Maureen looks on, beaming with pride.

Construction Commences on 'Y's' New East Broad Street Facility

By PAUL PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Renovations for the Westfield Area Y's new East Broad Street facility commenced this week. The facility, the former home of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, was purchased last year by the "Y" and will be known as the East Broad Street "Y" Family Branch.

The new facility, located at 422 East Broad Street—the second building owned by the "Y" in Westfield—will house the "Y"'s nursery school on the lower level, with senior daytime programs and an afternoon teen activities center on the main and mezzanine level, according to Darielle Walsh, Chairwoman of the "Y"'s

Board of Directors.

"It (the church) was in excellent condition. It was the perfect facility for us," she said, noting that the "Y" had been looking for another building for a number of years.

She said the nursery school program, which will be moved from the "Y"'s main Clark Street facility to the Broad Street building this fall, will be housed in four large classrooms in the new building. The teen area will include a computer laboratory.

Mrs. Walsh said the "Y" plans to collaborate with the town's recreation department, which operates a Teen Center in the Community Room of the Municipal Building on most Friday nights throughout the school year, to provide activities for teenagers.

Construction will be completed by June to enable the "Y"'s summer camp program to meet at the new facility, Mrs. Walsh said. The biggest change to the exterior of the building will be the front facade, which faces the Westfield Municipal Building. The entrance of the renovated building, to be located on the left side of the facility, will include an elevator for handicapped accessibility to all three levels of the building.

The church sanctuary will be converted into the Westfield Foundation Community Room. The foundation provided a donation to the "Y" to defray the cost.

The right side of the building, next to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, will be squared off and feature a glassed lounge and meeting area, Mrs. Walsh

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NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY...Commerce Bank, in conjunction with the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce (WACC) and the Downtown Westfield Corporation, held a wine and cheese reception and networking social on February 16 to introduce the bank, which recently opened a branch on North Avenue, to the Westfield community. Pictured, left to right, are: Jean Stone, Mary Santorella, WACC Executive Director Allison O'Hara, and Commerce Bank Regional Vice President Brian Ziemba.

Codding Road Residents Seek Immediate Action on Public Safety, Parking Concerns

By PAUL PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Residents of Codding Road asked the Town Council Tuesday night to take action with regard to parking and public safety issues near Westfield High School (WHS).

Police Chief Bernard Tracy has assigned Detective Greg Hobson of the Juvenile Bureau to investigate the safety concerns Codding Road residents have.

Last Friday around 3 p.m., Carrie Swingle, a Codding Road resident, observed that a teenager was bleeding from the head after he emerged from a group of some 30 students. (Please see related story on Page 12.)

Police are investigating the incident, although the victim and his family have opted not to press charges, Town Administrator Jim Gildea said.

Joe Swingle, Carrie's husband, said he and his neighbors have been growing increasingly impatient concerning issues including the congregating of students in the street, littering and overtime parking, as well as reckless driving by some students.

Mr. Swingle urged the council to enhance police patrols of the neighborhood, issue tickets to students who disobey the two-hour parking limit on Codding Road, install a stop sign at Codding and Lynwood Place, and assign a crossing guard at Edgar Road and Lynwood.

He warned of the potential for a traffic tragedy on the street if action is not taken soon to address public safety issues. He noted that a number of small children reside on Codding,

"Mr. Mayor, members of the council, don't let it (a tragedy) happen on your watch. Please protect our children," said Mr. Swingle.

Mr. Gildea said there would be an immediate effort to step-up police patrols on Codding. The council's Public Safety, Transportation and Parking Committee would soon be addressing high school parking issues.

James Abate of Codding Road said that his street is a narrow, dead-end street. He said he would like the high

school parking issue as it relates to Codding looked into as a separate issue, as opposed to being considered as part of an overall high school parking solution by the committee.

Councilman Mark Ciarrocca, Chairman of the Public Safety, Transportation and Parking Committee, said the committee felt that "the high school parking issue has to be dealt with as a whole" because minor changes approved by the council in the past to some streets near the high

school have simply pushed parking problems elsewhere.

"We need to come up with a goal of a local solution working with the board of education," he said. "We have that (high school parking) on our agenda and we are going to tackle it."

On another matter, Mercedes Fol-Okamoto of Wychwood Road said she would like a public record kept by the town on any "incurred expenses" as a result of President Bush's trip to

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Carwash, Lube Center Proposed For Former Auto Parts Building

By DAVE GIALANELLA
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — A carwash and lube center has been proposed for the former home of Norwood Auto Parts at 215 South Avenue East.

The town's Board of Adjustment held a specially scheduled meeting on February 23 to hear the application of Will and Joe Faris who want to open Westfield Auto Spa. The business would be located on two lots.

James Watson of EKA Associates, an engineering, surveying and planning firm, presented the overall plan, which would require a number of variances from ordinances dictating coverage, minimum parking and illumination level.

Two witnesses aided Mr. Watson in

his presentation, beginning with architect J.R. Frank, who testified that he's had extensive experience in designing carwashes.

Mr. Frank explained that the building currently on the lot does not need to be demolished because it has "good bones," or a solid frame.

He also said that the walls of the structure are sound, and that it is a perfect size and layout for a carwash.

Mr. Frank explained that Westfield Auto Spa would use a system that recycles water and detergent, thus making it "much more environmen-

tally sound" than other carwashes.

Robert Criscuolo, who is under contract to supply equipment to Westfield Auto Spa, testified that the project is viable. Mr. Criscuolo explained that while he'd "rejected concepts, ideas and investment opportunities" in the past, that the Faris' had "done their homework" and come up with a good plan.

Mr. Criscuolo emphasized that the carwash "will not exceed state requirements for decibel levels," and that while Westfield is home to four

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CONSTRUCTION-READY...This week, construction began on the Westfield "Y's" new facility at 422 East Broad Street, which is the former site of the First Church of Christ, Scientist. This building will house the "Y"'s nursery school on the lower level, senior daytime programs and an afternoon teen activities center on the main and mezzanine level, according to Darielle Walsh, Chairwoman of the "Y"'s Board of Directors.

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