



FAMILY FUN...Wilson Elementary School in Westfield recently celebrated family by holding two evening family game nights. Hundreds of family members attended and played many rounds of bingo. Teachers and staff members emceed the evening's events and provided entertainment. Pictured, above, Emily Plump, 2½, tries her hand at bingo.

## DWC Panel Presents Report On South Ave. Bus. District

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nation store," board member Frank Arena said. "There are a lot of things we could do in the short-term - like get a chain store. If we had that type of activity on the southside it would make a huge, huge difference."

Unlike the northside, it was suggested that the southside doesn't have the type of merchants that attract people from miles away. Parking was considered one of the deterrents for a "mall-type" store to lease retail space on the southside.

"One reason I was so pro the redevelopment project was because I think it would have been the catalyst to link the two spots," board member and Town Councilman Larry Goldman said, referring to the lack of a connection between the north and southside.

DWC Treasurer David Capodanno reported that to date, approximately \$29,000, or 8 percent, of organizational expenses have been utilized. The total operating budget for the DWC is \$377,575.

In other news, Executive Director Sherry Cronin reported on the meeting she had with Comcast regarding Westfield ads to run on local networks.

"I asked them (Comcast) to look at the Food Network as a possibility," she said. "Other networks have gotten popular and pricey." The proposed budget for the Comcast ads is \$12,000.

The CTS Cycling Event will take place on Saturday, April 16. The DWC has not yet received approval to close South Avenue for the event. Two businesses have expressed concern about the potential closing of South Avenue.

The Spring Fling street fair will be held Sunday, April 17, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine. The event features shopping, food and entertainment.

The renovation of the municipal

parking lot behind Baron's Drug Store was briefly discussed.

Mrs. Cronin said, "The current thinking is to create a sidewalk around the perimeter of the lot" to increase pedestrian safety.

She added that the DWC was "pleased" with the first edition of *Suburban Westfield*, a magazine published in conjunction with *The Suburban News*.

"I think it was a nice piece and good press for us," she said. The next edition will most likely be coming out in June.

Mrs. Cronin also announced that the Westfield Memorial Library has installed a new system that allows any valid library cardholder to access major business information sources at [www.wmlnj.org](http://www.wmlnj.org). Standard and Poor's Net Advantage, EBSCO Business Source Elite and certain business oriented newspapers are available.

Hoover's is available but on the library's computers only. Anyone living, working or paying municipal taxes in Westfield is entitled to a library card.

## Ward

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112 Ferris Place expressed concern at the possibility of resident parking spaces being rented to commuters when residents are away.

Mr. Ward told Ms. Ursa that a homeowners' association would not likely allow such a provision.

Another special meeting will be held in order to finish the proposal and reach a final action by the board.

## Quick Chek in S. Plains Scene of Armed Robbery

SCOTCH PLAINS — Scotch Plains police this week arrested the second suspect wanted in an armed robbery that occurred on March 17 at the Quick Chek Food Store at 1928 Westfield Avenue. Police Captain Brian Mahoney told *The Westfield Leader*.

The second suspect has been identified as Jermaine Goins, 33, of Plainfield. He has been charged with robbery and weapons offenses, stated Captain Mahoney.

Goins, who police determined was acquainted with the other suspect, Michael Sutton, 34, of Plainfield, was arrested on March 18 in Plainfield on drug charges and turned over to Scotch Plains police, Captain Mahoney said. Goins' bail was set at \$500,000.

According to police, the robbery occurred at 1:50 a.m. when two male suspects wearing ski masks allegedly entered the store and approached two male employees behind the counter in an office area.

One of the suspects reportedly brandished a small caliber semi automatic handgun and demanded money. As the suspect entered the store's office he allegedly struck the store manager, a 58-year old Fanwood man in the head with the gun causing a laceration, police said.

According to police, the manager and the other employee, a 35-year old Plainfield man, were forced to the floor. The manager was then reportedly taken to the counter area to gain access to a drop safe, police said.

Police reported that both suspects then fled the store on foot after removing cash along with several packages and cartons of cigarettes heading east toward Forest Road as the employees notified police by calling 9-1-1.

The first responding officer, Police Sgt. Dennis Murphy, traveling west on Westfield Avenue, reportedly observed a 1989 blue Chevy

Celebrity occupied by two males turn abruptly from Forest Road onto Westfield Avenue heading west in front of him, police said.

At this point Sgt. Murphy activated his emergency lights and siren and the vehicle fled at a high rate of speed, police said.

Scotch Plains police pursued the suspect vehicle into Plainfield and then North Plainfield on Farragut Road, heading north. The vehicle made a sharp left turn onto Jackson Avenue, police said.

The passenger of the vehicle fled on foot before being captured earlier this week, police said.

Police said the driver of the vehicle, identified as Sutton, reportedly ran into the side of Sgt. Murphy's patrol vehicle as it came to a stop and fell over the curb area and was immediately taken into custody.

The passenger of the vehicle fled on foot and at this time is still at large, police said.

Sutton was transported to Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield where he was treated for a leg injury.

Police said they recovered several items of property from the vehicle including an undetermined amount of cash along with both loose packages and cartons of cigarettes believed taken from the scene of the robbery.

Also recovered was a loaded .380 caliber handgun that contained Hollow Point bullets, police said.

Sutton was charged with armed robbery, aggravated assault, weapons possession, eluding police, resisting arrest and several motor vehicle violations.

Bail was set by Scotch Plains Municipal Court Judge Brian Levine at \$600,000.

The store manager was treated and released at Muhlenberg Hospital for the laceration to his head. There were no other patrons in the store at the time of the incident, police said.

## Parking Improvements Report Expected Over Next Few Weeks

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The first ordinance authorizes the town to spend \$261,000 for curb replacement and/or new curbing to Tuttle Parkway, Terrace Place, Forest Avenue, and North Euclid Avenue. New granite block curbing will be utilized and some roadways will be reconstructed with storm drainage facilities installed on other streets.

The council is also set to introduce an ordinance to initiate the town's annual sidewalk replacement program. Fifty percent of the \$100,000 program will be paid through property owners participating in this year's program.

The third ordinance appropriates \$2.5 million for the remainder of the capital budget including road improvements and capital projects for the police and fire departments.

The governing body will also vote to award a contract to Bulk Storage Inc. of Beecher, Ill. to construct a salt storage facility behind the Department of Public Works building on North Avenue. The \$137,860 contract follows the second phase of stormwater management regulations imposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The council is also set to approve two more single-family home demolition permits for houses located at 110 Nelson Place and 6 Rutgers Court. Nelson Place resident Sharon Stockwell inquired as to whether the permit was in line for the Nelson Place home, which will be torn down by D. Villane Construction of Westfield.

Noting that all the proper paperwork has been filed with the building department Mr. Gildea said, "There is no reason not to approve" the permit application.

Mrs. Stockwell also inquired about the town's noise ordinance regarding the time contractors can begin work in town. She also questioned the council as to the status of an ordinance for hiding port-a-johns for construction work from public view.

Mr. Gildea said the noise ordinance was updated in December of 2004. He said construction work time limits would be discussed in the near future by the Code Review and Town Property Committee. The committee will also soon be reviewing restrictions

for port-a-johns as part of an ordinance regarding fencing and the overall safety of construction sites in town.

Councilman Ciarrocca announced that a second round of meetings for community outreach would be conducted within six weeks or following this week's public meetings concerning the eight traffic hot spots in town as determined by Mr. Ciarrocca's committee as well as the Citizens Traffic Advisory Committee. The town's traffic consultant Keller & Kirkpatrick will present proposals at that time. A third meeting will be held at which time a consensus will be reached on the town's safety improvement plan.

Resident Jim Baker questioned whether removal of underground gas tanks from the Elm and Prospects lots, the site a former gasoline station, would hold up the project due to the need for environmental approvals from the state. He also questioned whether town parking revenue would fund the removal of the tanks to which Mr. Gildea said, "it's not decided at this point."

Public Work Committee Chairwoman Joann Neylan said the advisory panel formed to look at improving efficiency and customer service within the DPW met with the Public Works Committee. The panel is chaired by former councilman Matthew Albano and includes residents Pam Waczek, and John Ryan. The committee will be meeting with the residents, interviewing the four department heads within the DPW and observe the operation, and meet with DPW personnel in other towns to compare their operations with Westfield's.

A panel is expected to report back to the council by early May.

Mr. Gildea said the Public Works Committee is also looking at developing town-wide newsletter that would include "basic information" on DPW information such recycling and bulky waste. Councilman Ciarrocca suggested having the newsletter available for e-mail for residents who would like to receive it.

The council will also vote on the municipal budget of \$32.3 million following a public hearing on Tuesday night. The \$17.7 million tax levy will be reduced as the result of receipt of a homeland security grant.

## Kindergarten Enrollment Expected to Jump By 100

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would be from December 24 through January 2, and Spring Break would be from April 8 to April 17.

Alice Hunnicutt, board member and Facilities Committee Chairwoman, said the committee would like to place padding on the walls of the gymnasium at Edison Intermediate School to prevent injury to students playing basketball. The total cost would be approximately \$2,000.

She also discussed the possibility of placing a net by the baseball field at Edison to keep errant baseballs

from being hit into neighboring yards. Ms. Hunnicutt said she plans to involve nearby homeowners in the process, reflecting a desire for "everyone to be part of the discussion."

The board's next public meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 29, during which board members will adopt the final budget for the 2005-2006 school year, which will be presented to voters on Tuesday, April 19. Members of the community are invited to attend that budget hearing.

## Speeding Among Concerns Cited at Traffic Meeting

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to congestion.

Several residents said that Westfield High School students drive through the area at excessive speeds before and after school, and during open lunch periods.

Mr. Meth said streets could be made one-way streets, in a circular pattern around the school, during drop-off and pickup hours.

Central and Clover/Ayliffe were the final areas discussed. Many residents who live on the east side of Central would like to see a traffic light put in that would allow safe crossing for children accessing Jefferson School. "Let's face it - Central Avenue is a highway," said Josephine Both of Boynton Court.

Others, who live on the west side of Central Avenue are worried that such a light would defer even more traffic down their side streets that lead to Summit Avenue and the Boulevard.

Several residents suggested lowering Central Avenue's speed limit to

25 miles per hour, as is the case in Clark and further north, towards downtown. Another resident suggested constricting the width of the road.

"There are no magic bullets," said committee member and First Ward Councilman Sal Caruana. The committee reminded audience members that compromises must be made in order to come up with the best course of action.

Councilman Ciarrocca, who represents the second ward, promoted "Citizen Radar," one of the initiatives aimed at getting residents involved in traffic safety. Citizens who participate in the program are trained to use radar equipment and asked to report unsafe drivers for notification by the Westfield Police Department.

To voice specific concerns or for more information regarding Citizen Radar or other initiatives, residents are encouraged to call the traffic safety hotline at (908) 789-6039 or e-mail [team@wpdnj.org](mailto:team@wpdnj.org).

## Mountainside BOE Revises Budget and Introduces CSA

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impressed with the Mountainside schools and I am delighted to be part of the educational community. This school district has a long history of providing quality education and it will be my job to see that Mountainside obtains a more prominent academic standing among New Jersey's top school districts," Dr. O'Malley said.

He comes to Mountainside from the Branchburg Township School District, where he was the principal at the elementary K-2 level. The board approved the appointment of Dr. O'Malley as CSA at a starting salary of \$130,000 per annum, with board members Pat Knodel and Carmine Venes voting "no."

"I have no problem with Dr. O'Malley," Mrs. Knodel said. "There are too many revisions in this contract."

Mr. Goggi recognized Mr. Rusak's role in the district over the past months, saying, "You have never, ever demonstrated the word interim in your title. You have always put Mountainside first. Thank you for your tremendous leadership for us and for all your hard work."

In other news, David Kichula of LEW Corporation, an Environmental services company, presented his finding regarding samples taken in order to locate the source and cause of the odor at Beechwood School.

Mr. Kichula reported that additional samples were taken from the insulation on the exterior ductwork, from the supply and return ductwork in the classrooms.

"Samples were submitted and did indicate some micro biotic activity," Mr. Kichula said. Referring to the insulation, he said, "The numbers were significantly higher than you would expect to find, especially on new insulation."

His conclusion was that there is micro biotic activity and it appears to be centered on the roof. He continued by saying that the numbers were not alarming and called the odor a "nuisance odor," not likely to cause allergic reactions or asthma.

"It is a nuisance condition rather than a health condition," Mr. Kichula stated.

He also advised the board that the data suggests the source of the odor is on the roof and most likely the approximately 60 feet of wet insulation that was removed from rooftop unit RTU-2. But he said that he feels additional samples are needed "to document that that is the case" because tests prove inconclusive.

"I recommend additional testing to nail down where these colonies are before we start tearing things down," Mr. Kichula said.

Richard Worst, a parent of a student in one of the affected classrooms, addressed Mr. Kichula, stating, "You are saying the tests are inconclusive but you want to do more testing."

"We are handicapped to some extent in this industry because we don't

have any standards. We use a comparative approach," Mr. Kichula responded.

"About the only thing we can conclude is that we have activity in the ductwork. With a little more testing we can probably conclude the ductwork is okay," he continued.

Sean Reilly of Home Health Sciences, an environmental microbiologist company, presented his report to the board, stating that his evaluation indicates that there is no moisture in the classrooms. "Supply ducts are clear, dry and in nearly perfect condition," he said.

"Our conclusion was that it appears that (room) 110 had water coming in from the roof," Mr. Reilly said. "We think it all started with the external leaking on the roof. It appears there is a direct correlation between the wet insulation and the odor."

Board member John Perrin said, "One of the things we are trying to hedge is if we have an air conditioning unit incapable of dehumidifying the air properly."

"In examination, the dehumidification appears to be, in our opinion, okay," Mr. Reilly responded.

"I disagree that the source of moisture is evident and I think my report states that," Mr. Kichula stated. "I would be uncomfortable with that evaluation. I think the dehumidification process needs to be examined."

Mr. Goggi responded to the reports, stating, "I think based on what we've heard tonight, the shell and envelope of this building are fine. There is no safety risk here. While not conclusive, both findings point to the ductwork."

Mr. Goggi said the board is now looking for an outline and asked both Mr. Reilly and Mr. Kichula to make recommendations.

In conclusion, Mr. Goggi said, we need to "isolate, compartmentalize and remediate."

Mr. Rusak reported that the Pest Management Plan will be put into effect tomorrow at Beechwood School. The fields will be fertilized and sprayed with pest control, and residents are urged to not walk dogs or allow children to play on the fields for 48 hours.

Mr. Rusak also announced that there will be no school tomorrow, Friday, March 25, and that there will be no school on Monday, March 28, for a teacher's in-service day.

Spring break will take place from Monday, April 11, through Friday, April 15. School will also be closed from Friday, May 27, to Monday, May 30, in observance of Memorial Day.

"I have a problem with this (schedule)," Mrs. Knodel said. "It indicates we have snow days in our contract. We do not have snow days in our contract and I object to the school being closed on the (May) 27th."

The next regularly scheduled school board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 5, at 8 p.m.

## What's...



## EASTER FLOWER HEADQUARTERS

## ...Hopping?

It's time to bring the family out to the Williams' Great Easter Egg Hunt, this Saturday at 2 pm. There will be over 4000 eggs filled with candy & toys. New for this year will be hidden 200 limited Edition "Let it Grow" Elastic Bracelets only available at our Egg Hunt hidden in certain eggs. The Egg Hunt is only for Children 10 and under. Please arrive at least 30 minutes early since the Hunt starts at exactly 2pm.

While your here, why not choose an Easter flower or three? We have hundreds of pots of clematis, calla lilies, freesia, tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, Easter lilies, hydrangea, martha washington geraniums and about 307 other things in bloom.

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