



PAL SMILES...The Irvington PAL held its first annual PAL football banquet recently, aided by the Westfield and Scotch Plains PAL. Irvington Mayor Wayne Smith, center, and organizer John Abrams, right, are all smiles as the youth beam in receiving recognition. See letter on page 4.

Why Westfield? Nowhere Else I Would Rather Call Home

By CHRISTIE STORMS
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

A few years ago, after tripping over one toy truck too many, my husband and I decided it was time to move to a bigger house.

The first question was whether to stay in this area or move closer to where he works in northwestern New Jersey. The second question was which bank we would have to rob to finance the leap from a three-bedroom to a four-bedroom house.

Luckily, we managed to scrape enough money together without having to do jail time, so we enlisted realtors to cover several areas between here and my husband's office.

Rolling hills and breathtaking views awaited us in the northwestern part of our state. Traffic? What's that? There were miles of open country roads with nary a reason to ever honk the horn. Houses were spacious, boasting kitchens with center islands and convenient main floor laundry rooms.

Back in Westfield, we toured house after house on postage stamp lots. The so-called fourth bedrooms were merely cramped attic spaces smaller than some of the walk-in closets we'd seen in other towns. Several of the homes didn't even have commonplace amenities like central air-conditioning, and many family rooms were nothing more than tiny glorified porches.

With three active little boys, finding a large yard was paramount in our home selection process, and the other part of the state readily served up an acre or two, or sometimes even five.

The taxes were lower. The air was cleaner, quieter. My husband's commute would be shorter. You certainly get more house and more land for your dollar.

The choice seemed so blatantly obvious. And yet...

Where were the sidewalk neighborhoods? Where was the traffic cop in the town center? Where was the main street movie theater straight out of a Frank Capra film?

How about other moms jogging by with their strollers, folks walking their dogs and waving hello?

Where were the charming porches, the welcoming front porches, the historical gables and gingerbread trims of bygone eras?

You have to drive 20 minutes to buy milk? The shore is how far away? There's only one elementary school and the kids would be riding the bus for how long each day?

After searching for a year and a half, we finally found our colonial,

and we found it right here in a friendly Westfield neighborhood. It has four bedrooms on the second floor, central air and a nice backyard.

Of course, it also has bathrooms that, on a good day, could best be described as Brady Bunch-esque with dizzying wallpaper and turquoise and pink fixtures. To think we fought a bidding war just to own them.

Some people definitely thought we were crazy. But many people think we are crazy for various other reasons anyway, so we're used to it.

With the astronomical taxes we're paying, we may never be able to add that coveted kitchen island, and heaven knows I'm still lugging a laundry basket from the basement up two full flights of stairs each day.

But I love our block, with its manicured lawns all in a row and neighbors close enough to chat with while gardening on a Sunday afternoon.

I love that my children are getting an outstanding education, that there are so many local clubs and programs available to suit their interests now as well as in the future.

I love that no matter how sick or frightening the world gets, I can stroll past the stately Presbyterian Church lit up at Christmastime while the carolers are singing downtown, and for a second feel like I'm in a Norman Rockwell painting.

I love the town that strives to preserve its history so proudly, and the sense of family, friendship and community I get from the people who live here.

Sure, we probably could've spent less money and found a bigger, better house elsewhere. But there is no place else I would rather call home.



CONVERSATION ABOUT CAREERS...Brigid Ryan, left, interviews Liz Smith about her experiences during Career Day last week. Both are students at Roosevelt Intermediate School in Westfield.

Career Day Offers Youth A Taste of 'Real World'

By BRIGID RYAN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD - On April 28, eighth-grade students had an opportunity to learn about careers by accompanying an adult and seeing what their job is like.

Some students joined their relatives, friends or other people in whose career they are interested. Students got to see what it is like in the real world so they know what to expect when they get a job.

Eighth grader Liz Smith followed a former teacher from Washington Elementary School. She got to spend a day with Sally Heyder, Media Specialist at Washington. Liz, who is now thinking about becoming a special education teacher, has known this teacher for a long time and thought

it would be interesting to spend Career Day with her.

Liz stated, "It was a really rewarding experience to help out the kids."

Career Day is also known as "Take Your Child to Work Day," a day started to teach girls about the many careers they could have. Now all students participate in this activity as a way to look into careers in which they are interested.

It is something that every student should take advantage of so they can find out what they will do with their life.

Brigid is an eighth grade student at Roosevelt Intermediate School. For Career Day, she went to work with a journalist. She wrote this story as an assignment for The Westfield Leader and The Times.

Letters to the Editor

WF Residents Thank Council and Police For Action at Intersection

We wanted to thank you (the Westfield Town Council) for the immediate response to a very dangerous situation. On April 15, at approximately 3 p.m. there was another serious car accident at the intersection of Lawrence and Dudley Avenues.

Three cars were involved and packs of Roosevelt students were on all corners. Another 30 seconds, and a student may have been seriously injured or killed.

You looked at the pictures of the accident, read the e-mails, listened to us at the April 18 council meeting and immediately acted. On April 19, at school dismissal, there was a police officer at the intersection of Lawrence and Dudley directing traffic and guiding pedestrians. The crossing guard at Prospect and Dudley was reinstated. We can't thank you enough!

As indicated by the town, these are two of the eight worst intersections or "hot spots" in town. In addition to the high

number of car accidents with injuries, these intersections are extremely dangerous because of the large volume of Roosevelt and Franklin students crossing them on a daily basis.

We know the town council is working on long-term solutions to these intersections and many others in town. However, you realized the grave danger our children are in now, and you came up with an interim solution. We cannot ask more from our town government and our police department.

By your actions, you have proven to us that nothing matters more than our children's safety. With this interim solution, you have saved lives! Thank you.

Jackie and Mike Cash, Debbie and Scott Kephart, Liz and Dave McAlister, Lynne and Paul Partridge
Westfield

Det. Chambers Defended For Efforts On Behalf of Community's Youth

I am a 25-year resident of Westfield, a naturalized American citizen. I raised my children here and have always enjoyed being part of this lovely town.

I am therefore absolutely appalled that one of our finest police officers, Detective Sandra Chambers, is being raked over the coals for what appears to be a very minor offense. Had she been found DWI, brawling, leaving the scene or inappropriately using her weapon, I might understand — but a parking ticket?

Detective Chambers is a bright, intelligent and energetic young woman who for many years has enhanced our town with her deep involvement and caring of our children. She has always been a cham-

panion for our youth, going above and beyond what was required of her to assist any child in need, be it through counseling, arranging basketball games or enrollment in county programs.

Not to mention, she helped us poor parents make sense of our adolescents and their raging hormones! The list goes on.

Perhaps I am missing something, but in this instance the punishment does not fit the crime. I hope that the "powers that be" will see this and realize that Westfield needs more people like Sandy in our community.

Lyndsey Benito
Westfield

PETERSON'S
Wines Unlimited
1120 South Avenue West
908-232-5341

HOURS: Mon - Sat 9 AM - 9:30 PM • Sun 12 PM - 8 PM
Perfect Mother's Day Gifts
Smart Wines From Everywhere At Every Price

| | |
|--|--|
| Prospero Orange Muscat 2003 \$12.99 Lightly sweet, clean with orange zest and a bright finish. Fresh fruit. | The Gate McLaren Vale Shiraz 2002 \$32.99 Surprising finesse and elegance but still big dark fruit. |
| Gratien & Meyer Saumer Brut NV \$13.99 Bright lemony fruit; crisp and refreshing Loire Valley bubbles. | Whitehaven Marlborough Pinot Noir 2002 \$26.99 Rich and full Pinot made to go with the native sheep. |
| Domaine de la Louverie Muscadet Sevre et Maine Sur Lie 2001 \$15.99 Dry, minerally and long on the palate. Made for shellfish. | Duckhorn Paradox 2001 \$49.99 A Zinfandel / Cabernet blend with huge flavor - The essence of California wine |
| Boggy Creek Riesling King Valley 2001 \$16.99 Classic Aussie, cool climate, lime toned dry Riesling | Poggio Ai Chianti 1999 \$26.99 A more elegant and refined version than many others at the price. What Chianti should be. |

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| YOUR FAVORITE WINES | | WHISKEY | |
| Toasted Head Chardonnay \$10.99 750ml | Blackstone Merlot \$8.99 750ml | Jack Daniels \$34.99 1.75L | Jim Beam \$22.99 1.75L |
| J Lohr Chardonnay \$9.99 750ml | Simi Chardonnay \$12.99 750ml | Seagrams 7 \$14.99 1.75L | |
| BV Costal Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay/Pinot Noir \$7.99 750ml | Hess Select Chardonnay \$8.99 750ml | GIN | |
| Kendall Jackson Chardonnay \$9.99 750ml | | Bombay Sapphire \$33.99 1.75L | Tanqueray \$30.99 1.75L |
| | | Hendricks \$27.99 750ml | Beekeeper \$28.99 1.75L |
| | | Gordons \$13.99 1.75L | Seagrams \$15.99 1.75L |
| VODKA | | VALUE WINES | |
| Absolut 80 \$30.99 1.75L | Ketel One \$33.99 1.75L | Sutter Home Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay \$8.99 1.5L | Mendavi Coastal Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay \$16.99 1.5L |
| Grey Goose \$24.99 750ml | Pravda \$26.99 750ml | Beringer Founders Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay \$15.99 1.5L | Woodbridge Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay \$10.99 1.5L |
| Smirnoff \$18.99 1.75L | Stolichnaya \$30.99 1.75L | Vendange Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay \$6.99 1.5L | Fetzer Cabernet/Chardonnay \$13.99 1.5L |
| Skyy \$23.99 1.75L | Wolfschmidt \$13.99 1.75L | Cavit Pinot Grigio \$11.99 1.5L | Walnut Crest Cabernet \$8.99 1.5L |
| Gordons \$13.99 1.75L | | Cesari Pinot Grigio \$9.99 1.5L | Bolla Soave \$10.99 1.5L |
| | | Beringer White Zinfandel \$8.99 1.5L | Franzia Burgundy/Chablis/Chianti \$8.99 5L |
| | | Carlos Rossi Burgundy/Chablis/Paisano/Sangria \$8.99 4L | |
| RUM | | CORDIALS | |
| Captain Morgan \$23.99 1.75L | Bacardi Silver \$18.99 1.75L | Baileys \$17.99 750ml | Romana Sambuca \$17.99 750ml |
| Bacardi Gold \$18.99 1.75L | Malibu \$23.99 1.75L | Kahlua \$14.99 750ml | Southern Comfort \$13.99 750ml |
| | | Amaretto Di Saronno \$18.99 750ml | |
| SCOTCH | | | |
| Dewars White Label \$32.99 1.75L | Chivas Regal \$51.99 1.75L | | |
| Johnnie Walker Black \$55.99 1.75L | Johnnie Walker Red \$31.99 1.75L | | |
| Cian MacGregor \$16.99 1.75L | | | |

MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL
10% OFF Any 2 bottles of wine with this coupon
Mix and Match is O.K. Sales Items are excluded. 750 ml Only. Expires 05/11/05

20% Off any 12 bottles or more of wine
10% Off any 6 bottles or more of wine
Mix and Match is O.K. Sales Items are excluded. 750 ml Only.

Make Our Mansion Your Mansion
Weddings Sweet 16 Birthdays Fundraisers Corporate Team Building
The James Ward Mansion of Westfield
Call Josephine at 908-389-0014
169 East Broad Street, Westfield, NJ
Visit our website www.Jameswardmansion.com

A Mother's Love is Endless
Endless Love Endless Blooms
Celebrate Mother's Day
Show the special Mother in your life that your love is just as endless. Find the perfect gift for every Mother at Parker Gardens. Come down for our 14 acres of endless varieties of Annuals & Perennials, Flowering Trees and Shrubs, Hanging Baskets, Roses, Azaleas, Orchids, Statues, Fountains, gift certificates, custom gift baskets and much more!
Endless Summer Hydrangea®
The hydrangea that blooms all season.® Join us May 7th at 1pm for our Hydrangea Seminar. We will tell you everything you need to know about hydrangeas including the incredible Endless Summer®.
14 acres
Parker Gardens
Mon - Sat 7am - 6pm Sun 9-5
1325 Terrill Road, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076
Garden Center * Greenhouses * Landscape Services
www.parkergardens.com
call 908-322-5555