



**OLD IS NEW AGAIN...** Originally taken in 1947, the boys in the photograph were McKinley Elementary School Cub Scouts. The faces of this year's McKinley Pack No. 176 Webelos Scouts in Westfield have been superimposed on the original. This fun photo was part of the pack's annual Blue & Gold Banquet held recently at the school. The banquet's theme was partly a celebration of the 75th Anniversary of Cub Scouting. The theme is "75 Years and Still Having Fun!"

## Westfield United Way Sets Annual Meeting on May 19

WESTFIELD — Members will be elected to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Westfield United Way at their annual meeting and awards presentation on Thursday, May 19, at 7 p.m. in the Community Room of the Municipal Building.

The names placed in nomination to be newly elected are Linda Kaplan, Pam McClure and John "Jet" Taylor. Nominated for re-election are Sal Caruana, Tom Cusimano, Carolyn Fleder, James McCabe, James Nixon, Richard Rippe, Mark Swingle and Danielle Walsh.

Board President Fleder will con-

## Genealogical Society Sets May 14 Meeting

WESTFIELD — The Genealogical Society of the West Fields will meet on Saturday, May 14, at 10 a.m. in the Program Room of the Westfield Memorial Library, located at 550 East Broad Street in Westfield.

Genealogist Robert Underhill of Deerfield, Mass. will present a program called "Implications of the YDNA Project," in which he will provide an orientation on DNA identification.

He will explain in laymen's terms the basics of the YDNA projects and demonstrate with examples how it can be used for genealogical purposes.

Mr. Underhill has roots in New Jersey dating to the Dutch settlers in the 1600s. Other ancestors include families in Quebec City, Canada, Irish and German immigrants to New York City and New Jersey in the 1800s, plus some English ancestry.

This meeting is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be served. For additional information, please call (908) 276-7014.

## Jumble Store Seeks Garage Sale Vendors

CRANFORD — The Jumble Store, located at 110 Walnut Avenue in Cranford, invites all interested vendors to participate in its Jumbo Garage Sale on Saturday, June 4. The rain date is Saturday, June 11. Home-based businesses and crafters are welcome.

The sale will be held outside in the Jumble Store parking lot. Spaces are \$20. Refreshments and entertainment will be provided. To reserve a space or to obtain more information, please call (908) 276-0222.

## Agendas and Agenda Items Need to Be Available on Time

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

With the vast changes in communications over the past decade such as the Internet, e-mail, voice mail and cell phones, reaching out and touching someone has never been easier. Well, that may be so but obtaining government records seems to be a little more difficult these days. This is despite the fact our state now has OPRA — the Open Public Records Act, which is supposed to help citizens gain quicker access to all government records.

In Union County, anyone seeking a copy of a resolution or ordinance must now fill out an OPRA request. The county will then call back with a cost on the document or advise when it can be viewed during work hours for free. These documents used to be readily available at meetings.

The Westfield Town Council is moving ahead with a parking improvement plan. Officials said a "verbal" presentation would be offered at the April 26 council agenda meeting but that there was not any written documentation. "Lo and behold," Third Ward Councilman Mark Ciarrocca, who chairs the town council's Public Safety, Transportation, and Parking Committee, passed out a written proposal for the three-phase plan to Mayor Greg McDermott and the other seven council members. While copies were given to reporters after last Tuesday's meeting, it would have been nice to have reviewed the plan in advance. Members of the public also should have had an opportunity to see the report.

## Boro Baseball League Collecting Equipment

GARWOOD — During the month of May, the Garwood Baseball League will be collecting used baseball equipment for the "Bats, Gloves and Kids" organization that provides used equipment to those less fortunate children in the United States and overseas.

Residents should check their garages and basements for equipment. They can drop off equipment on any Saturday in May at the Little League baseball field at the east end of Myrtle Avenue.

For more information, please call Bob Pender at (908) 389-1362.

Westfield, it should be noted, makes all their agenda items available to reporters and, I suspect, the public if they ask for them. The town even posts their agendas on the Westfield website. I wish the county would do so; they will not release the agendas prior to a meeting. They even used to take back agendas if an "error" was spotted or if an item had to be removed.

These agendas should be made available at least 48 hours in advance and posted on the county website. We could understand that if someone requested a document that was 15 years old, such as a departmental memo that is not readily available, it might require some legwork and thus a processing fee could be justified. But items on the agenda should be available at or prior to a meeting. And if not, what are they doing on the agenda in the first place?

We made an OPRA request for a copy of the 2005 budget, which was on the agenda last Thursday (May 28) for introduction, and were told that copies were not available. We received copies of the 2005 introduced and 2004 adopted county budgets on Tuesday. We thank the county for honoring our request.

As a newspaper editor and reporter with over 15 years experience, it becomes extremely frustrating when I cannot count on obtaining records in a timely fashion.

The Westfield Board of Education, it should be noted, has copies of their agendas dropped off at our office by Friday afternoon prior to a Tuesday meeting. Again, why can't the county do this? Agendas can still be changed. The public can still ask questions on matters on or off the agenda.

In the future, all government meeting agendas need to be placed on their websites, as well as providing access to any items on that agenda. The Union County Clerk's office now has access available to public land records on-line. Also, elections are available countywide on the clerk's website, as well. Perhaps the freeholders should enact a similar policy.

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Paul Peyton is the assignment editor for The Westfield Leader and The Times of Scotch Plains and Fanwood and covers Union County.



**WEBLOS OF DEN ONE...** Scotch Plains-Fanwood Pack 4 Cubs from Brunner Elementary School visit the office of The Westfield Leader and The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times on May 5 (Cinco De Mayo) to learn about communication to earn their badge. James Kaiser, Ryan Lesiak, Antonio Spadaro, Brian Burns, Evan Johns, Andrew Citera, Chris Stone, Alex Segulin and Nicky Johns were in the group.

## HUNG UPI!

## Friendship, Acceptance Cited As Vital to Healthy Marriage

By Milt Faith, Executive Director  
Youth and Family Counseling Service

**A Married Woman Writes:** With the divorce rate well over 50 percent, are there any indicators to look for, which can strengthen a marriage?

**Answer:** In *The New York Post* dated January 5, 2005, Dr. John Gottman of Washington University stated that he created a test which showed that "those who are most knowledgeable about their partners' likes, dislikes, interests and hobbies, are most likely to enjoy the married life."

Dr. Gottman feels that friendship and acceptance by both partners are the strongest characteristics in the marriage, and that "over 70 percent of the passion, romance and sex for both men and women stem from friendship."

Of the 22 characteristics in his "How Well Do You Know Your Partner?" test, I've listed the top 16 that I feel are the most significant, to me:

1. I can name my partner's best friends.
2. I know what stresses my partner is currently facing.
3. I can tell you some of my partner's life dreams.

4. I know my partner's basic philosophy of life.

5. I can list the relatives my partner likes the least.

6. I often touch or kiss my partner affectionately.

7. My partner really respects me.

8. There is passion in our relationship.

9. Romance is still part of our relationship.

10. My partner appreciates the things I do.

11. Our sex life is mostly satisfying.

12. At the end of the day, my partner is glad to see me.

13. We just love talking to each other.

14. There is lots of give and take (both people have influence) in our discussions.

15. My partner listens respectfully even when we disagree.

16. We generally mesh well on basic values and goals in life.

Of importance, Dr. Gottman states (and I agree) that the surest signs that a relationship is in trouble are: defensiveness, stonewalling, criticism and contempt!



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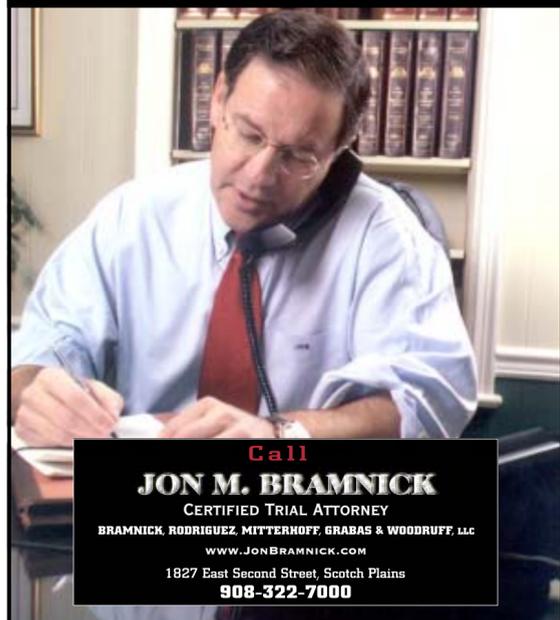
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