

Campaign Release DEM

County Has Preserved Over 130 Acres of Open Space

By Freeholder Rick Proctor
Candidate for Reelection

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders recently announced we have entered into an agreement with the City of Summit to purchase and preserve 5.34 acres of environmentally significant land at an edge of the Watchung Reservation in Summit. This land would have otherwise been developed into 38 townhouses, causing a significant impact upon already stressed eco-systems within the reservation.

While the overall acreage preserved in this particular instance is not massive, this story is symbolic of what the freeholder board has been trying to accomplish through the Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Trust Fund since it was overwhelmingly approved by voters in 2000. Every acre preserved in Union County adds immeasurably to our quality of life.

Our efforts to preserve open space are in the heart of New Jersey, the nation's most overdeveloped state. Since the inception of the Open Space Trust Fund, the Democratic freeholder board in Union County has been able to preserve more than 130 acres of open space — well ahead of our 10-year plan. During this time, we have worked to preserve last remaining farms and green spaces in Plainfield, Scotch Plains, Clark and Union — to name a few.

It is a record of achievement that my colleagues and I on the freeholder board point to with great pride. Our Republican opponents, meanwhile, have taken a page out of the Bush Administration environmental playbook, and year after year have called for the dismantling of the Open

Space Trust Fund.

To appropriately use an environmental analogy, these Republicans cannot see the forest for the trees. Now more than ever, we need to work harder to ensure the protection of our environment for future generations to come. We are nearing the point of critical mass in New Jersey, the point at which our environment will begin to permanently deteriorate unless we stand up and do something about it.

After years of steady improvement, the nation's water and air pollution have sadly gotten worse under Bush's tenure, according to government data. Among the most troubling trends, there have been increases in the amount of toxic releases nationwide from industrial facilities, along with worsening mercury contamination, sewage contamination and air pollution, according to studies from the National Resources Defense Council. Meanwhile, federal enforcement against polluters has declined dramatically, and hazardous waste clean-ups have dropped to record lows.

With the federal government missing on this issue, Union County must take care of matters in its own backyard, and this is why Democrats on this freeholder board have taken a strong position in protecting the environment.

As your elected officials, we will continue to support the actions of the Open Space Trust Fund in preserving Union County's last great green spaces for generations to come.

Attorney General to Address Women's Grp.

SUMMIT — New Jersey Attorney General Peter Harvey will be the guest speaker before the regional gathering of Business and Professional Women at 6:15 p.m. on Monday, October 17, at the Grand Summit Hotel, located 570 Springfield Avenue. The public is invited to attend.

Mr. Harvey will speak on issues concerning domestic violence, sexual assault and other related topics. Mr. Harvey's address begins at 7:30 p.m. The cost of dinner for the general public is \$35 and \$30 for BPW members. For reservations, e-mail meetingsrvp@summitbpw.org or call Nella Camporeale at (973) 267-2191 by Monday, October 10.

Candidates Forum

Attend the Candidates Forum in Fanwood at Borough Hall on Tuesday, October 18 at 8 p.m. E-mail your questions for the candidates to editor@goleader.com.

See the candidates on Fanwood TV35 and Westfield TV36.



MEET THE CANDIDATE...First Ward candidate for Westfield Council, Audrey Fisch, center, meets residents and exchanges thoughts during an informal gathering at the home of Jim and Dana Baker last Sunday.

DEMs Point to Service & Experience Of Fanwood Council Candidates

By FW DEMS
Wheeler and Walsh for Council

At the heart of the 2005 Fanwood Borough Council election is the question of community service and professional experience. Mrs. Joan Wheeler and Mr. Bruce Walsh have decades of experience in the public and private sectors that makes them far and away the most qualified candidates for Fanwood Borough Council.

"I need Joan Wheeler and Bruce Walsh on the borough council to help keep the progress going here in Fanwood," said Mayor Colleen Mahr. "Joan and Bruce want what's best for Fanwood families and they have the needed experience and expertise to contribute to an already fantastic team of public servants."

As a senior administrator at Rannels Specialized Hospital, Mrs. Wheeler has experience in disaster preparedness, community health and senior fitness and has an intimate knowledge of New Jersey's prescription drug options. She currently volunteers as the Vice Chair of the Fanwood Board of Health and is the President-Elect of the Soroptimists International-Westfield Chapter.

As the lead administrator for several hospitals throughout her career, she knows what's needed to keep an eye on the bottom line.

Mr. Walsh is an attorney who served on the borough council for nine years, until 1999. His nine years of service included two years as council president. Mr. Walsh has an extensive record of community involvement, having served as Fanwood's Police Commissioner and Fire Commissioner, a member of the Library Board, the Board of Health, the Historic Preservation and Shade Tree commissions, and as a mentor to Students Against Drunk Driving.

As a current member of the Fanwood Planning Board, he is contributing his expertise to the community during the downtown redevelopment process.

Green Candidate For Governor Outlines Plans For Political Reform

NEW JERSEY — Citing a "democracy deficit" in New Jersey, Green Party gubernatorial candidate Matt Thieke announced his 7-point plan to bring wide-ranging reforms to state government, focusing on campaign finance "pay to play" reform and making government more transparent.

Mr. Thieke said, "The Green Party and I place a high value on grassroots democracy. The voters are eager for real reforms, unfortunately neither Jon Corzine nor Doug Forrester are willing or able to bring about these kinds of changes. That's because both of the major parties are corrupt machines that want to maintain the status quo. We Greens want to empower the citizens of New Jersey and believe that a lot more can be done to increase the level of democracy in our state. To that end, my campaign is proposing this 7-point plan:"

Clean Elections: Unlike the state's current version of public financing being tested in two legislative districts, we need a "clean" elections system that's closer to the laws in Maine and Arizona. One that makes it easier for candidates to qualify by drastically lowering the amount of money candidates must raise. In addition, third party and independent candidates must be given funding equal to the two major parties. A workable system of public financing would then be used for all elected offices: governor, legislature, freeholder, mayor etc. Besides "clean" financing, we have to lower the dollar amount of allowable contributions to candidates and parties, and ban all contributions from companies doing government work, i.e. "pay to play".

Initiative and Referendum (I&R): When elected officials fail to pass needed reforms (see property taxes), the voters should have the right to place questions on the ballot. Half of the states have I&R. New Jersey should join them.

Term Limits: I believe that absolute power corrupts absolutely. If our governor is limited to 8 years in office, then state legislators should have limits too. I propose a limit of 10 years for members of the Assembly, and 10 years for state senators.

Ban politicians from holding multiple offices: Simply put, no politician should be able to hold more than

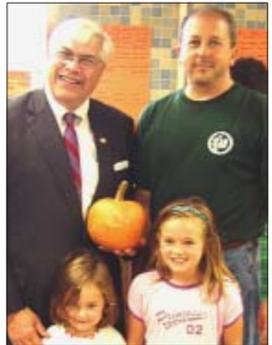
one government job. **Proportional Representation:** One problem with winner-take-all district representation is that minority views are under-represented. The major parties gerrymander legislative districts until most are "safe" for one party or the other. Instead of electing two people to represent one district, I propose having just one Assemblyperson elected per district, and electing the other 40 seats 'at-large' using proportional methods. If a party gets 10 percent of the votes, they get 10 percent of the at-large seats.

Elect more officials, appoint fewer: New Jersey appoints a far higher portion of its public officials than most states. Too many of these are patronage jobs used to reward partisan supporters. In most states, commissions are elected rather than appointed; in many states, planning boards are elected. Since the Green Party values grassroots democracy, we propose opening up our government by electing our state and county commissions (e.g. county improvement authorities, state port authorities, highway commissions, BPU, Pinelands commission) and municipal planning boards. By electing these positions, the media will pay more attention to the work of these agencies, and the public will know more about the decisions that are being made. In addition, we need an elected Attorney General whose independence from the governor will enable him or her to expose corruption within the administration. Current Attorney General Peter Harvey has been completely blind to the corruption in state politics.

Televised government: New Jersey needs its own version of C-SPAN. I'd like to see a second NJN-type channel devoted to televising committee hearings in the state legislature, county freeholder meetings, state authority meetings, school board meetings, etc. Democracy only works when the voters know what our elected officials are really doing.

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PUMPKINS...Mountainside Councilman Keith Turner is joined by Assemblyman Eric Munoz (R-21) in distributing over 300 pumpkins to Mountainside residents at the PTA Fair. The pumpkins were donated by Assemblymen Munoz and Jon Bramnick. Also pictured are Heather and Jacqueline Goldbeck.

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