

# GW Council Looks at Ordinances, Senior Program

By TED RITTER  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**GARWOOD** — Mayor Dennis McCarthy and the Borough Council focused on multiple ordinances at their regular meeting on Tuesday at Borough Hall. The three approved ordinances were administrative or procedural in nature, and they examined a measure that appropriates \$18,000 from the borough's capital improvement fund to finance the purchase of computer equipment for the public library. Council President Kathleen Villaggio said most of the computer equipment presently in service at the library is "antiquated and obsolete" and overdue for replacement. "This (capital fund) appropriation includes training, as well as hardware and software for the library," she said. "It'll help bring the library into the 21st century," said Mayor McCarthy. Councilman Walter Tucker reported on a recent recommendation from the borough's parking committee to draft an ordinance addressing parking concerns in the 300 block of 2nd and Willow Avenues. "This area needs parking relief due to non-residents parking there," he said. The parking committee recommended creating two-hour, un-metered parking zones that would apply from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. on weekdays, excluding holidays. Under this proposed ordinance, he said households would be issued parking decals at no cost once they show proof of residency and vehicle registration. "There will also be temporary or guest permits issued for up to 30 days," he said. "In addition, a flyer would be sent out to residents prior to any action

taken by the council." The mayor and council authorized the borough's attorney to begin preparing an ordinance with an eye toward scheduling a public hearing in the near future. Local resident Anne Leonard, during the public hearing portion of the meeting, suggested that the borough look into the potential impact of the proposed parking restriction on employees of two local businesses and the post office who currently park along 2nd or Willow Avenues during the day. Police Chief William Legg reported that the borough will look into joining a senior-citizen reinsurance program, which would enable local seniors to arrange to be contacted or call in once a day to ensure that they are safe and in good spirits. Chief Legg explained that neighboring Cranford currently offers such a program, but Cranford's police department has two dispatchers, one of whom is available to handle the senior reinsurance program at all times. He said that is not an option in Garwood, which has only one dispatcher. However, the chief said Council President Villaggio has researched a similar program run by the nearby Catholic Charities that Garwood could join for free. The mayor and council agreed to pursue joining the program and publicizing it in the borough's newsletter and at the next senior-citizens committee meeting. "We currently have about 100 members on our senior citizens committee, but that's not including seniors who don't or can't get out of the house," said Chief Legg. "This would be a good program for the borough to have, and it doesn't cost anything."



**BENEFITTING MOUNTAINSIDE...**Borough Mayor Robert Viglianti (right) poses with members of the newly-formed Blanche and George Watts Mountainside Community Foundation, a \$3.5 million fund which will award annual grants of \$140,000.

# Former Residents Establish MS Benefit Foundation

**MOUNTAINSIDE** — Former Mountainside residents Blanche and George Watts have established a foundation to benefit the borough. Announced to the public at the borough's annual reorganization meeting, the concept behind the foundation is to aid organizations delivering services to Mountainside residents, whether based in Mountainside or not. Patterned after a community foundation, the organization will not only solicit grant requests but also entertain funding initiatives to meet community needs. To be funded with approximately \$3.5 million, the foundation anticipates making grants each year in excess of \$140,000. Benefactors Mr. and Mrs. Watts lived at 375 Short Drive, Mountainside for more than 50 years. Blanche is a retired teacher of stenography and business courses in the Newark Public School system, and George has retired from a career at Western Electric, the manufacturing arm of the old Bell Telephone System. Although they enjoy traveling, for the most part the couple led frugal lives and in so doing literally became the "millionaires next door." The couple's attorney, Thomas C. Phelan, said the idea for the foundation arose during the estate planning process. The couple has no children, nieces or nephews. Blanche has one sister but no other close family members. After pro-

viding for her sister, they were at a loss for what to do with the remainder of their estates. The couple talked about how much they enjoyed living in Mountainside and how much the services available in town meant to them. Doing something to assist those services was the natural evolution of that discussion. A committee of nine trustees has been organized to direct the foundation, which is to be called the Blanche M. and George L. Watts Mountainside Community Foundation. At the organizational meeting Nicholas Bradshaw was elected president. Jack Clifford, Bart Barre and Dewey Moser, will serve as vice-president, secretary and treasurer, respectively. Susan Winans will serve as the chairman of the grants committee. The other trustees are John Amalfie, Christopher Belden, Patricia Connelly and Vasy Honecker. All trustees are active residents of the Mountainside Community. The first grant of the foundation will be a gift to the borough of a handicapped-equipped community bus. Grants may be made only to tax-exempt organizations, not to individuals. Applications for grants may be obtained at the municipal building and at the library.

# WF BOE Candidates

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She said it would be "interesting" to run against a high-school student. "An 18-year-old can add a perspective that is different from someone who has been through it." Mr. Garfinkel said that is exactly why he's running. "The main reason I'm running is because a different perspective on the board could do such good," he said, adding that having a student on the board could ultimately save taxpayers money because he can help guide the budget more efficiently. "Public policy is not just an interest to me, it's a passion," he said, adding that he flips on C-SPAN when he gets home from school. "To me it's just as important to campaign and bring the kids out and get them involved."

also an important issue to Mrs. Cassie. "It is one of the most important things a board will be involved in," she stated. "The high school is the crown jewel. We need to have a great person there." Mrs. Cassie has served on every committee except for policy, so she said she has a good understanding of the community. "Both of my parents were public-school teachers, so school is in my blood," she said. "At the end of the day, I look at it as what have we done to make our community a better place. If I can do that, I'd be happy." The deadline for candidates to withdraw is Monday, March 6. They will draw for ballot positions on Wednesday, March 8.

# WF Municipal Budget

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tem," explained Councilman Echausse. Mr. Gildea said the town did make contributions for New Jersey Police and Firemen's Retirement System in 2002 and 2003. Likewise, Westfield did not contribute to PERS in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004. Councilman Echausse said that the state told towns they could gradually come back to 100 percent of fully funding pensions. "But we knew those liabilities would start hitting our budget again and we were fearful that the state could come back and say boom, you're going to pay a 100-percent liability," he said. Under state regulations, Mr. Gildea said the town must pick up 60 percent of its allocation for police and fire pensions (PFRS) and 40 percent for PERS. The town's annual RVSA assessment is up \$310,000 to \$1.9 million as the facility is the middle of a court-mandated \$137 million upgrade. Under state law the town is mandated to fund the library a total appropriation this year of \$2,079,000, an increase of \$205,000 over last year. Mr. Gildea said the cost is based on one-third of a penny times the market value of the town. The library assessment has risen from \$1.5 million in 2003, \$1.7 million in 2004 and \$1.87 million in 2005. "So in a three-year time frame the library's budget has gone up \$600,000," said Councilman Echausse. "And there is nothing that we as a council can do because of state law. We are required to give them the minimum amount under the statute." Mr. Gildea said the town has negotiated with the library board the past few years to have them use their capital reserve budget reimburse the town for capital projects such as the replacement of its roof. On the revenue side of the budget, Mr.

Gildea said the projected \$700,000 in revenue in the 2005 budget from municipal court fees fell \$170,000 short at \$530,000. Mr. Gildea noted that the state receives \$13.50 for every \$20 parking summonses issued by the town, which reduces the town's revenue stream. "It used to be a 60-40 split. The town kept 60 percent of the ticket and the state kept 40. Now it's just reversed. The state keeps that money," Mr. Gildea said. "On the revenue side (of the budget), we are losing revenue to our own state which is not giving the money back in aid." Mr. Gildea said the main revenue sources for the town are: court costs, parking revenue, building and construction code fees, state aid, grants and property taxes. Recreation fees pay for programs offered. He said the department's budget, excluding salaries and wages, is \$20,000. The Westfield Regional Health Department budget is allocated among the seven member towns based on population and services utilized. The department's costs are offset by member town allocations. Member towns are: Fanwood, Garwood, Mountainside, New Providence, Roselle Park, Springfield and Westfield. "Westfield regional (health department) is known as one of the best in the state," said Mr. Gildea, adding that the town is looking for further expansion. "It serves a lot of costs for the town yet the town has direct services" such as flu shots, blood drives and nursing services. Mr. Gildea said he has looked at each department's operating budget for decreases, consolidation of costs and positions, shared services with other towns and the local school board. Councilman Echausse said the committee has met six times since mid January to meet with department heads.

Mr. Garfinkel is the president of the Model United Nations club, has served as a class representative, is on the Academic Challenge Quiz Bowl Team and plays Varsity Lacrosse. Asked whether he would be around after graduation to fulfill his duties on the board, should he win, or if he would be away at college, Mr. Garfinkel responded, "if at any time I would make a determination that I would not serve if elected, I would withdraw from the race. It's not fair to the voters." His first-choice school is Georgetown, but he would stay local if elected. Mrs. Riegel, who has one child at Edison and another at WHS, is running for her third term. Balancing enrollment, passage of the school budget and choosing a new WHS principal after Dr. Robert Petix retires in June are her top priorities if re-elected. She said another personal goal is to "make sure that we're meeting the needs of kids well." As a member of the curriculum committee, she said, "we have an atmosphere that our staff wants to create a good fundamentally sound curriculum." Mrs. Riegel said last year's budget defeat and "overall funding issues" have been the biggest challenge. "We get very little state aid. We know that taxes continue to burden people." She added that one positive result of last year's school budget defeat is the amount of community input it has generated. Mrs. Cassie, who has two children at Franklin, is running for her second three-year term. As chair of the citizens advisory committee, she said it is important to her to see the "enrollment issue resolved with a good working plan as opposed to a bunch of temporary solutions." "I feel an obligation to the community to see that through," said Mrs. Cassie, an eight-year resident. The search for a new WHS principal is

# WF Council

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enues and sections of Forest and Lennox Avenues, Webster Place, Terrace Place and Boulevard. She announced again the council's intention to have four workers from the Department of Public Works assist the Recreation Department in a field-maintenance capacity. During public comment, former councilman Kenneth MacRitchie estimated that the "total municipal expenditures" in the Detective Sandra Chambers matter, including salary and benefits while on paid suspension, "were about \$80,000." Mr. MacRitchie said, "For a claim to be pursued by the town at great expense, there must be something the town gets in return. In this case, the town didn't get anything in return; the money just went out the window." Town Administrator Jim Gildea responded, "I'm not sure the town didn't get anything in return, especially with a police matter. The legal expenses by themselves for the time period were actually very low. The salary and wages were budgeted for already. To suspend her without pay would not be appropriate. The issue is behind us and she's returned to work with the new chief." Councilman Caruana disagreed with Mr. MacRitchie's conclusion. "Whenever there are allegations involving the honesty and integrity of town employees, most importantly our police department, which we rely on to enforce the law, those allegations should be investigated." The council began the meeting by awarding proclamations to McKinley Principal Claudia Andreski for her role in Read Across America, an initiative being taken today on what would be Dr. Seuss's 102nd birthday. Acting Mayor Ciarrocca also lauded the volunteer rescue squad after serving more than 30,000 hours and handling upwards of 2,423 calls last year. The acting mayor also bestowed a resolution on the Westfield-Mountainside Red Cross, which is celebrating its 88th anniversary.

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# POLICE BLOTTER

**Westfield**  
Friday, February 17, a motor vehicle was vandalized while parked at a business in the 600 block of North Avenue. Someone ran a sharp object along both sides of the vehicle, leaving deep scratches in the paint. Friday, February 17, a resident of the 2000 block of Grandview Avenue reported his unlocked motor vehicle was burglarized while parked in his driveway. Ten dollars in assorted change was removed from the vehicle. Friday, February 17, Bernard Jennings, 49, of Plainfield was arrested in the 200 block of Elm Street for shoplifting razor blades from an Elm Street grocery store and on outstanding criminal warrants from Garwood and North Hunterdon and a traffic warrant from Fanwood. Jennings was released with a summons on the shoplifting charge and released on his own recognition on each of the warrants. Saturday, February 18, someone threw two rocks through the front window of an unoccupied home in the 100 block of Lincoln Road, causing the window to shatter. Sunday, February 19, Michael Macalle, 39, of Westfield was arrested on an outstanding Plainfield traffic warrant following a motor vehicle stop at South and Central Avenues. Macalle posted the \$127 bail and was released. Monday, February 20, Michael Frio, 27, of Westfield was arrested at South and Windsor Avenues and charged with driving while intoxicated (DWI). He was later released to a responsible individual. Monday, February 20, a North Euclid Avenue resident reported that her home was burglarized. One or more individuals apparently gained entry through a basement window, after which the master bedroom was ransacked and an undetermined amount of jewelry was taken. Monday, February 20, Thomas J. Cunningham, 46, of Garwood was arrested in the 200 block of East North Avenue and charged with obstructing justice for allegedly attempting to elude police investigating a suspicious person report. Police also discovered Cunningham was wanted on a no-bail Union County Sheriff's Department warrant and turned him over to Sheriff's department authorities. Wednesday, February 22, Randy Roane, 41, of Plainfield was arrested at the Port Authority Police Station on outstanding traffic warrants from Westfield and Dunellen. Bail for both was set at \$500. He was transported to the county jail. Thursday, February 23, Kenneth Pope, 29, of Newark was arrested at South Avenue and Cacciola Place and charged

with hindering apprehension for allegedly giving police a false name and date of birth. He also was arrested on outstanding criminal warrants from Newark, for \$500, and Livingston, for \$305. Pope was committed in default of bail. Thursday, February 23, Antwan D. Clark, 23, of Linden posted bail on a \$500 Westfield traffic warrant after surrendering himself. Thursday, February 23, Nicole Wiley, 38, of East Orange was arrested at the Somerset County jail on open warrants from Westfield for \$691, and Paramus for \$355. She was committed to the county jail. Friday, February 24, Alan Ozdamar, 18, of Westfield posted bail on an outstanding \$300 Union traffic warrant after turning himself in at Westfield police headquarters. Saturday, February 25, Jennifer Corisdeo, 23, of Piscataway was arrested in the 800 block of East Broad Street and charged with DWI and with refusal to submit to chemical testing. She was later released to a responsible individual. Saturday, February 25, Darren Certosimo, 41, of Newark was arrested in the 10 block of Prospect Street on contempt of court warrants from Mount Olive, for \$1,000; Hackensack, for \$500; Washington Township, for \$500, and Newark, for \$450. Certosimo was turned over to Mount Olive authorities. Saturday, February 25, Scott Diaz, 19, of Clark was arrested at Lenox and Central Avenues and charged with DWI and with possession of alcohol underage. He was later released to a responsible individual. **Scotch Plains**  
Monday, February 20, David Rozar, 42, of Scotch Plains was arrested and charged with resisting arrest following a police investigation into criminal activity that occurred in Warren. According to police, Rozar attempted to flee from police during questioning. He was processed and released to the Warren Police Department. Tuesday, February 21, a resident of Fenimore Drive reported being the victim of harassment, stating that an unknown person or persons telephoned him and used offensive language before hanging up. Thursday, February 23, a resident of Front Street reported being the victim of a hit-and-run. The victim stated an unknown person struck her motor vehicle while it was parked in front of her house and left without reporting the incident. Saturday, February 25, a student at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School reported being the victim of harassment, saying a classmate threatened to hit him. The incident is under investigation. Saturday, February 25, a resident of Canterbury Drive reported being the victim of criminal mischief. The victim stated someone struck his motor vehicle, which was parked in front of his house, with a soft drink bottle, causing damage to the mirror. **Fanwood**  
Wednesday, February 22, Juliette L. Johnson, 43, of Scotch Plains was arrested in the 200 block of South Avenue on numerous outstanding warrants after a field investigation. Monday, February 27, James L. Bass, 29, of Elizabeth was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue at Third Street on a no-bail warrant. He also was charged with hindering apprehension. Monday, February 27, Paul G. Kamichoff, 30, of Rahway was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Midway Avenue at Forest Road that revealed outstanding warrants. He also was charged with possession of a controlled dangerous substance (CDS) and drug paraphernalia.

# DWC

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coin in the past. For every \$10 spent, a person will earn one "W dollar" to be used as cash at participating stores. So far, 20 businesses have agreed to participate. The DWC is discussing giving people who pick up free Newark Museum tickets five "W dollars." At the end of the promotion, the net of whatever merchants give out or take in is redeemed by the DWC. After a question by resident Kathy Solomon, Mr. Martone corrected the perception that Stop and Shop bought both buildings adjacent to it. He said that Stop and Shop purchased the land their business sits on and the parking lot space when it bought out its land lease. They have interest in acquiring adjacent space and redesigning the building.

# Authorities Seek Murder Suspect, Request Public's Help

**HILLSIDE** — Union County authorities Tuesday released a sketch of the man believed responsible for a murder in Hillside over the weekend. Detectives from the Hillside and Union County Prosecutor's Office are attempting to identify the suspect, a black male approximately 25 to 30 years of age who was spotted running off to a waiting getaway car, believed to be a black Acura TL, either 2002 or 2003, around 9:47 p.m. on Friday. "We want to bring this killer, the person responsible for this terrible tragedy to justice," said Prosecutor Theodore Romankow, who said the shooting may have occurred during an attempted carjacking of the victim's vehicle. The gunman had a light complexion, stood about 6 feet tall weighing 190 pounds with a visor and earflaps, a black coat, black pants and black hi-top shoes or sneakers. "Someone who recognizes the face, the clothing, should take a minute and call to tell us what they know." Those with information should contact the Hillside detective bureau at (973) 926-5800 or use the 24-hour Crimestoppers hotline number at (908) 654-TIPS. Richard Plinio, 42, died at around 1:30 a.m. Saturday after being shot in the chest

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