

The Westfield Leader
— Established 1890 —
The Official Newspaper of the Town of Westfield
Legal Newspaper for Union County, New Jersey

Member of:
New Jersey Press Association
National Newspaper Association
Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce

Periodicals - Postage Paid at Westfield, New Jersey
P.O. Box 250 • 251 North Avenue, West
Westfield, N.J. 07091
Tele: (908) 232-4407 • E-mail: editor@goleader.com • Web: www.goleader.com • Fax: (908) 232-0473
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the offices of the newspapers at
P. O. Box 250, Westfield, New Jersey 07091

Published every Thursday by Watchung Communications, Inc.

Paul Peyton
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR
Suzette F. Stalker
COMMUNITY
Michael Pollack
EDUCATION & ARTS
Victoria McCabe
JOURNALIST

The Scotch Plains - Fanwood TIMES
— Established 1959 —
Official Newspaper of the Borough of Fanwood
and the Township of Scotch Plains

Member of:
New Jersey Press Association • National Newspaper Association
Scotch Plains Business & Professional Association
Fanwood Business & Professional Association

Periodicals - Postage Paid at Scotch Plains, New Jersey
P. O. Box 368
Scotch Plains, N.J. 07076

Fred K. Lecomte
MARKETING DIRECTOR
Michael L. Bartiromo
MARKETING PRODUCTION
Robert P. Connelly
OPERATIONS & LEGALS
Ben Corbin
SERVICES

Horace R. Corbin
PUBLISHER
David B. Corbin
ASSISTANT PUBLISHER & SPORTS
Karen M. Hinds
OFFICE MANAGER

Subscription Price:
One-year - \$28 • Two-year - \$52 • Three-year - \$76 • One-year college (September to May) - \$20

We Invite BOE Candidates To Submit Weekly Columns

The Westfield Leader and The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times will provide space each week for school-board candidates to express their views to our readers. This is a standing offer throughout the year to all elected officials of the region.

We commend those candidates who take the time to write in this forum. The candidates like to hear from our readers about the issues they feel to be important, so we encourage letters to the editor are encouraged.

The voting in the region for the public to decide on school budgets and choose school-board members will be held on Tuesday, April 18. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in Westfield and from 2 to 9 p.m. everywhere else. Voters should note that the last day to apply for absentee ballots by mail is Tuesday, April 11.

Voters and candidates alike, please e-mail all items to editor@goleader.com. Our intent is to get to the heart of the important local issues in this campaign. Personal attacks, spin and "fluff" will be rejected by our editors, whose sole judgment shall apply if

criteria are deemed out-of-policy.

A submittal of about 300 to 400 words is recommended. Alternately, a photograph with caption information and a write-up of about 150 words may be submitted. Submissions must be received by Friday evening of the week prior to publication. For school-board elections, we are changing our policy regarding submittals on the last Thursday edition prior to the voting (Thursday, April 13). Releases from candidates will be accepted for this edition as well. At this time, our editors summarize the campaign, the candidates and the school-budget request for the voters.

Several years ago, in an editorial about campaigning and politics in New Jersey, we coined the term "silly season." It's necessary to keep a sense of humor about politics, property taxes and budgets in New Jersey, but we know how important the issues are.

We appreciate the effort and good intentions of all those serving and seeking to serve. Thank you and good luck to all who have put their names forward for this important community service. To others, we urge you to vote.

Hometown Memories Come From Good Coaches On/Off the Field

There are several changes underway at Westfield High School (WHS) with many looking on, wondering what's next. The questions entail administrative leadership, perhaps a new heading in science and mathematics and of course the great football debate.

First, Dr. Robert Petix is retiring after 26 years as principal. He has been a foundation and icon at the school. For anyone to survive that many years at this high-profile position is an accomplishment in itself. Certainly, those 10,000 or so who went through the school during Dr. Petix's leadership have many memories - perhaps some amusing, some controversial - but mostly fond memories.

Graduates from WHS succeed at college, find successful careers and attain good lives for themselves and their families. Whether they end up in Tuscon or L.A., when we hear from them, they talk about their affectionate recollections of their hometown - Westfield.

WHS has always been a big part of their memo-

ries, and we contend that the experience at WHS has contributed to their success and happiness in life.

Dr. Petix must take great personal satisfaction with this. We wish him well and thank him for his dedication to our youth.

The search is on to find a new principal. That may seem far away. But what is very close is the passion for finding the new head football coach at WHS to replace Ed Tranchina as he focuses on the larger role as athletic director. Perhaps that decision has already been made based on the considerable buzz going around at the moment.

We're ready to hear about the new coach, the new principal and their approach is to instilling in our children the fondness that we have for our hometown.

We're confident that future WHS graduates will succeed on the gridiron, in college, in good careers and in life with their families because there will be good coaches at the helm on the field, in the classrooms and in the front office.

Opportunity Knocks, But Savor the Remainder of High School Time

"March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb," so they say. However, there is a contingent among us with a very different opinion of what the end of March feels like; this group will be stepping out of the house waiting not for the lamb's weather but rather for the mail.

High-school seniors and their parents are in the throes of one of the most emotionally demanding waiting games they have ever had to play. College admissions boards are pouring over huge stacks of applicant files. The seniors are hoping that their own files do them justice, that somehow they've been able to consolidate all their accomplishments and aspirations onto a few sheets of paper and a unique-enough essay.

Once the mail comes, a lion of a choice remains. Some will be accepted by their first choices, others won't. Some students know exactly where they want to go, but many will be staring at multiple acceptance letters, each one promising unique opportunities, each one promising a different future. It is a "choose your own adventure" moment, and it is a very personal decision.

College certainly is an important step in one's education and influences one further in life. Academic choices made in college affect what one learns. It opens doors for the first step into that "real world." It is up to all students to challenge themselves to find their academic passions and to pursue them. Most schools have the resources to foster those passions.

The college experience is much more than the continuation of education. The character of the school, its surroundings and its students shape the social and emotional experience as students mature to adulthood. Whatever the choice one makes, feel good about it and proceed with optimism and determination. Then, most any choice becomes a good one.

We hope that all seniors receive an acceptance letter from the college of their choice, but the selection process is subjective and might not always seem fair. Those who do not get into their first-choice

school need not fret. College is an amazing experience for those that open their minds to the opportunities.

College is, in many ways, about embracing the unknown. It is a fresh start in a new place with new people, surroundings and choices. It is an exciting time for the Class of 2006. They take with them what they've learned, along with the love and nurturing received from family, community and friends. They blaze their personal trails into the future.

So while this bleary March weather slowly lengthens the daylight and morphs into the lamb, it's natural to think about those trips to the mailbox. Enjoy the excitement of moving to the future. True, it seems stressful for high-school seniors. But, they only need to understand that this is opportunity knocking and that they should savor the remainder of their high-school experience.

Letters to the Editor

Motorists Who Park In Private Lots Deserved To Have Their Cars Towed

I have noticed in recent weeks there has been some drama in articles written on vehicles being towed in private lots as well as state intervention on towing costs. Now my question is, "Why would someone complain about cars towed legally when they themselves have parked illegally?"

As for the vehicles that parked in the PNC Bank lot, those individuals deserved to have their cars towed. Signs clearly state that vehicles would be towed that aren't supposed to be there. Mind you, if the lot was coned off completely, how are MAC machines supposed to be accessed at night, or the bank itself supposed to be accessed during the day?

Another valid point would be that if cars park in an active construction zone and some debris falls and strikes his/her auto doing some damage, then the car owner would sue the pants off the owner of the property.

Now on the issue of state to regulate towing costs - that issue seems to be a farce in the very least. I can understand

the set rate for fees if a public entity arranges for the vehicle to be towed in instances of snow emergencies or accidents, or even flat fee tows. But why would the state try to regulate private matters?

How do you think towing companies make their money? There is the fee for the wrecker and storage costs. I know of people that had their vehicles towed and it costs them several hundred dollars to have it released. But they did park illegally and they justly deserved it (shame on them).

So you would expect to have a slap-on-the-wrist flat fee for an illegally parked car on private property? That would lead to habitual offenders, don't you think? Personally, cars towed out of the PNC lot (or any other lot that marked with signs) deserved to be towed and the owners deserved to pay the price of negligence.

Travis Redd
Irvington
(Former Westfield resident)

Ferguson's Tax Cuts Help Economy And Residents of New Jerseyans

I read with interest the letters that appeared in your paper last week from David Korfhage and Chris Sdao. Their hyperbolic assertions that Congressman Ferguson's vote to cut non-discretionary federal spending by one half of one percent will cause "thousands of poor people [to lose] their health insurance" and "[make] college unattainable for many students" are just silly.

I'm proud and relieved that Congressman Mike Ferguson is a tax cutter. Despite the claims of these two gentlemen, the tax cuts voted for by Mr. Ferguson went to every single taxpayer in America and have caused federal tax revenues to swell, not shrink.

To offer a specific example, Rep. Ferguson voted to cut the capital gains tax in 2003 and revenue from this tax have grown by more than 67 percent in the past two years. As New Jerseyans, we live in a state with one of the highest incomes in the nation. Meanwhile, the federal tax code makes no allowances for different standards of living.

Earning \$80,000 a year in New Jersey offers a much different standard of living than \$80,000 in Mississippi. When fed-

eral taxes go up, New Jersey residents pay more than someone living in a state with a lower standard of living.

The inverse is true as well, and federal tax cuts help New Jerseyans more than other states. At the same time, Congress just passed a budget that attempts to cut the federal deficit in half by 2009 by reforming several programs that are not working and cutting others.

Medicaid is one reformed program which will now grow by 7.3 percent instead of 7.5 percent. Yes, Medicaid spending (which provides health insurance to poorer Americans) is still growing by over 7 percent in the budget that was painted in such apocalyptic terms.

While the Democrats in Trenton have raised taxes on everything from the income tax to the tax on tires (yes, tires) and even home sales and still face a \$4 billion deficit, Republicans in Washington have cut taxes and are now cutting spending. Good for them.

That's why I thank Congressman Ferguson, because he is fighting to keep all of our taxes low.

Anthony Attanasio
Westfield

Brookside Park Should Be Saved in Its Natural Form for the Benefit Of All

I attended the Scotch Plains Recreation meeting on February 27 where the topic for the night was the proposed installation of lights at the Vo-Tech field. In attendance were members of both the soccer and baseball associations in town, along with about 25 to 30 people who came to listen to the plans our town has for future field renovations.

While Brookside Park was not mentioned at the recreation meeting, I have seen a copy of the conceptual plans developed by the firm of HatchMott and McDonald for Brookside Park. These plans contain a new lighted soccer field, repositioned baseball field, 40,000-square-foot gymnasium and recreation center, a pavilion and a 216-space parking lot. Mr. Poerio, the Scotch Plains recreation director, has said that the plans are only conceptual in nature and no definite decisions have been made.

However, even if half of what is on these plans goes through, Brookside Park will be irrevocably changed, and in my opinion, not for the better. During the recreation meeting, many comparisons were made between the facilities in SP and Westfield. I began to wonder. Would Westfield remove trees and install lighted

ball fields in Mindowaskin Park? I don't think so.

Certainly the soccer and baseball associations in our town can not support the clear cutting of hundreds of mature trees in this wildlife and wetlands area and the bulldozing of hundreds of cubic yard of land in order to construct a soccer field, to relocate the baseball field and to add a 216-space parking lot as shown in the conceptual plans? I would like to think that we can come together as a community and find a solution to the issue of field space without having to dismantling the park.

Brookside Park should be saved in its natural form for the benefit of all our residents both young and old, athlete and non-athlete. Personally, I do not have a problem with the town spending money on upgrading and modernizing our athletic fields. I just don't happen to think that Brookside Park and the surrounding wildlife preserve is the proper place to install these facilities.

I urge the mayor and town council to begin a dialogue with the community to discuss what lies ahead for the park before any more plans, conceptual or otherwise, are drawn.

Lisa McNally
Scotch Plains

By Douglas Stokes, Westfield BOE Candidate

Exceptional Education Also Requires Enhanced Sense of Value for Residents

I have spent the last 12 years working in public schools. During those years I have been privileged enough to work first hand with hundreds of students and parents. Additionally, I have worked directly with dozens of staff members including: teachers, guidance counselors, child-study-team personnel, administrators and superintendents. I am currently a curriculum resource teacher in Edison Township. My primary responsibility involves training and coaching colleagues in all curriculum disciplines.

My wife, Josephine, and I are both involved in the community of Westfield. Josephine is an active PTO Executive Board Member at McKinley School, leads a Daisy Scout Troop and volunteers as a religious education teacher. I am on the Memorial Library Board of Trustees. Our four children are involved in a variety of sports organizations and clubs through-

out town.

My expertise in the field of education, coupled with my concerns as both a parent and taxpayer, will prove vital in bridging the gap between the Westfield Board of Education and Westfield's residents. Living through the day-to-day operations of schools, I have valuable insight on the importance of quality education for our children that not only prepares our students for the future, but also fosters lifelong learning! I understand the pressures school boards face by budget shortfalls, overcrowding, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandates, personnel issues and the upkeep of facilities.

I believe most residents support education but want a "better value" for the taxes they are paying. Open communication with the taxpayers and the town government, as well as looking into shared services with the town, will enhance that "sense of value." Westfield Schools are excellent, but it is time for them to become exceptional! I am committed to that pursuit of excellence through improved communication, fiscal responsibility, and keeping Westfield's students (our children) at the forefront of all decisions!

Thanks for your support! If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me at stokesix@verizon.net.

Creative Writing Contest Status

Thank you to everyone who has submitted entries to our inaugural Bernard Heeny Creative Writing Contest. The following is a list of all the entries we have received. If you do not see your contest number but have submitted an entry, please call our office at (908) 232-4407. Good luck to all the contestants.

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 3-B-22-H-28 | 5-B-23-H-15 |
| 28-B-15-H-21 | 29-B-9-H-31 |
| 30-B-22-H-9 | 33-B-20-H-1 |
| 36-B-9-H-27 | 37-B-11-H-1 |
| 38-B-19-H-1 | 43-B-18-H-2 |
| 46-B-22-H-27 | 52-B-23-H-28 |
| 53-B-16-H-8 | 56-B-15-H-28 |
| 59-B-17-H-14 | BH-440924 |
| BH-440925 | BH-440927 |
| BH-440928 | |



Below are four arcane words, each with four definitions - only one is correct. The others are made up. Are you sharp enough to discern this deception of diction?

If you can guess one correctly - good guess. If you get two - well-read individual. If you get three - word expert. If you get all four - You must have a lot of free time!

All words and correct definitions come from the board game Diction Deception.

Answers to last week's sarcane words.

1. Kibe - A crack or chap in the flesh caused by cold
2. Despumation - The act of skimming or scumming
3. Garran - A small work-horse
4. Eyra - A reddish or chestnut-colored wildcat of Central and South America

SUCCESS

1. Aid or assist
2. Scatter
3. Discontent
4. Poise; dignity

ONEIROSCOPIST

1. A snake charmer
2. One who interprets dreams
3. A wine taster or expert
4. A hypnotist

SUDOR

1. Thick or hard
2. Sweat or perspiration
3. The male falcon

WYNKERNEL

1. A surplus in supplies, materials, etc.
2. The European water hen
3. A cornfield
4. Corn meal, mush

Letters to the Editor

Coach to Parents: It's Sportsmanship

As the days get longer, our thoughts begin to turn toward spring sports. Nowadays, everyone has read news accounts about adults behaving badly during youth sporting events, thinking, "these incidents could never happen here."

Unfortunately, unsportsman-like behavior is becoming more of a common occurrence in just about every sporting arena. Fortunately, I have found an organization called the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) that conducts workshops geared towards coaches, parents and organizational leaders in creating a common vision to "honor the game." Their philosophy is designed to change the focus of everyone involved from the outcome of the game to the overall athletic experience for the players. The bottom line is that the athletes have more fun, perform better, learn more and maybe even win more.

Over the course of the last two years, I have used many of PCA's ideas while coaching my son's soccer team and feel that it has had a positive effect on the players. I am proud that the Cranford Soccer Club recently has joined forces with PCA to enhance the experience of all its players, coaches and parents. I believe that our community as a whole could benefit by participating in this program and encourage all to be on the lookout for the upcoming PCA courses the soccer club is hosting for all youth sports participants. By enhancing our children's lives, we all win.

Tom Dombrowski
Cranford

Resident Praises

Ferguson on Port Issue

Like many of my neighbors, I was shocked to read that the Bush Administration approved the management of U.S. ports by UAE-owned Dubai Ports World.

But I was pleased to read that my congressman, Mike Ferguson, has questioned this decision and called for congressional oversight hearings into this decision. It makes sense not only for the security of the entire nation that Congress looks into the safety of this decision, but particularly for New Jersey. With Port Elizabeth right here in Union County, I'm glad our local congressman sees this.

Once again, Congressman Ferguson has demonstrated why the Seventh Congressional District continues to send him to Congress: he looks out for New Jersey.

Thomas Lienhard
Westfield

Reader Missed Point: It's About Meter Hours

In response to Jonathan Walswever's response to my letter about parking: Let me add this - You Missed the Point! I don't care whether the ticket is \$20 or \$35, and obviously if we ever get this parking deck there will be a cost to park. My point was that 7 p.m. is a ridiculous time to keep the meters running. The officer may have been doing his job but one would think they have better things to do rather than punishing residents who want to take advantage of our great downtown on a freezing cold weeknight.

By the way, I have received a number of very positive calls from other Westfield citizens agreeing. It's not the money Jonathan!

Mitchell Slater
Westfield

Publisher's Note

If you have been reading the newspapers lately (March 3, Tom Moran of The Star Ledger), you may have noticed that Newark Mayor Sharp James, also holding office as State Senator, has transferred about \$80 million of taxpayer money to a trust account and named himself as director-for-life for the account to dole it out to support business projects as he sees fit.

The mayor's action is so outrageous, while he defies all authority and perhaps the law, in our view. Few lawmakers or those responsible for enforcement dare even speak of the matter in public - although they whisper in disgust to us.

Have we now become so weak in the face of corruption? Have we sunk this low? We demand that something be done, but from whom?

