

Letters to the Editor

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Parents Concerned for Kindergarten Child Over SP-F Teachers' Strife

Editor's Note: This letter was sent to members of the SPF-BOE and copied to The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times.

I write to you as a resident of Fanwood who is deeply disturbed by the lack of contract between the board of education (BOE) and the teachers and staff. I understand the process of negotiations and often when sides have different opinions, third party mediators and fact finders have to be brought in and how this process takes time. However, I also know that at any time the BOE can meet with the SPFEA and agree to settle on a fair contract.

I moved to this town 10 years ago knowing the great reputation the schools in this district held. My wife and her siblings received an excellent education here and have always credited the outstanding teachers they have had over their years. That positive influence that these most dedicated professionals gave and continue to give should never go unappreciated and unnoticed.

Our towns have enjoyed an incredible boost to our real estate value over my 10 years here and it is directly related to the quality of education it can offer. We all

benefit from having the best possible educators for our children here in our schools. However, when it comes time to offer and settle a fair contract, members of our board of education seem to forget what a good thing it has.

The strength of our towns depends on the strength of our schools. The strength of our schools depends on the strength of our teachers. To keep and attract the best teachers, we need to have a fair contract.

As much as I do not want these negotiations to drag on, I support the teachers and their efforts to settle as quickly and as fairly as possible. I know that they would rather not have to worry about their contract status but I also understand that they are forced into taking strong positions to show their unity in working toward that goal.

We have stayed in Fanwood knowing that this was the place where we wanted our children to be educated. As our son heads to kindergarten in the fall, we sincerely hope that the BOE will have avoided any more feuding over providing a fair contract to its teachers.

Salvatore Fazzino
Fanwood

Area Synagogue to Provide Defensive Driving Courses

CRANFORD — AARP Defensive Driving courses will be offered next week at Temple Beth-El Mevor Chayim, located at 338 Walnut Avenue in Cranford.

They will take place on Wednesday and Thursday, March 22 and 23, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day and Wednesday and Thursday, April 26 and 27, from 6 to 10 p.m. each day.

This eight-hour refresher course is designed to help adult drivers assess and refine their existing driving skills and learn about age-related changes that may affect their driving.

Graduates of the course will receive a "Certificate of Completion" entitling them to a 5 percent discount on the major portion of their automobile insurance premiums for three consecutive years. Two violation points also will be deducted from their motor vehicle record, if applicable.

The course will be given in two sessions. Each session will start on time and last approximately four hours. Participants must attend both days to be awarded a certificate of completion. There will be no written tests and AARP membership is not required. The cost is \$10.

Checks should be made payable to AARP and brought to the first session. The class size is limited to 25 people and will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information and/or to register for this course, please call Liela Bernstein at (908) 233-0058 Monday through Thursday between 7 and 10 p.m. or e-mail lielaberns@comcast.net.

PUBLIC NOTICE

TOWN OF WESTFIELD INVITATION TO RE-BID

Sealed proposals will be received by the Town of Westfield in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building, 425 East Broad Street, Westfield, New Jersey, at 10:00 AM prevailing time on March 27, 2006, for the

"THE REPAIRS TO THE EXISTING BANDSTAND IN MINDOWASKIN PARK, WESTFIELD, NEW JERSEY"

The work under this Proposal includes the furnishing of all labor, materials and equipment necessary to complete the work as shown on the Contract Drawings and described in the Contract Specifications, and Proposals shall be in accordance with such Drawings and Specifications and the terms proposed in the Contract.

The major items of work under this contract include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Repair of existing foundation
 - Replacement of existing rails
 - Replacement of crown moldings
 - Re-setting of portions of brick edge
 - Replacement of column covers
- The successful bidder shall start construction ten (10) days after notice of award of Contract is given, and shall complete all work within ninety (90) calendar days after notice to proceed.

All bidders must submit with their bid a copy of their New Jersey Business Registration Certificate. Failure to submit proof of registration will disqualify the bid.

Proposals shall be in writing on the forms furnished and must be delivered at the place and before the hour above mentioned, and must be accompanied by a certified check or bid bond payable to the Town of Westfield in an amount equal to at least ten percent (10%) of the base amount of the bid, but not less than \$500.00 nor more than \$10,000.00. Each bid must also be accompanied by a Surety Company Certificate stating that said Surety company will provide the bidder with the required Performance bond in the full amount of the Contract, by a Non-Collusion Affidavit and a Contractor's Qualification Statement, Statement of Ownership, on the forms included in and explained in the contract documents.

Bidders must be in compliance with all provisions of Chapter 127 P. L. 1975 supplement to the law against discrimination (Affirmative Action) and must pay workmen the prevailing wage rates promulgated by the New Jersey State Department of Labor and Industry for this project, copies of which are on file in the Office of the Town Engineer.

Plans and specifications may be seen or procured (\$50.00) at the office of the Town Engineer, Public Works Center, 959 North Avenue West, Westfield, New Jersey. The Mayor and Council reserve the right to reject any bid, and to waive any informality in any bid, if in the interest of the Town, it is deemed advisable to do so.

Kenneth B. Marsh
Town Engineer

1 T - 3/16/06, The Leader Fee: \$63.24

Next Alternate Route Class For PD Recruits July 21

ELIZABETH — Union County Prosecutor Theodore J. Romankow announced last week that the John H. Stamler Police Academy would offer the alternate route basic police program in the next police recruit class beginning on July 21.

Mr. Romankow said, "one of the project's goals is to create a pool of trained officers who could then be hired by local police departments, sparing municipalities the costs associated with training a police officer."

"The alternate route program was first offered as a pilot project at the academy in 1993," said Union County Police Chief Daniel Vaniska, President of the Union County Police Chiefs Association. "One hundred percent of all alternate route candidates graduating from the

academy are in excellent position to obtain jobs in law enforcement," he added.

Candidates completing a written examination and review process become part of the academy's regular police training class.

Academy Director Anthony Parenti said "the alternate route recruits receive the same instruction as the regular police cadets during the 20-week training session." The training courses include firearms, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, use of force, court procedures, crime prevention, community relations, juvenile crime, domestic violence, the state criminal code, drug enforcement, crash injury management, crime scene management and constitutional law.

Mr. Parenti said "the academy functions much like a military basic training course." The alternate route and regular police cadets wear the same uniforms and must adhere to a strict military regimen, including daily physical training.

"All Alternate Route candidates must have a minimum of 60 college credits at an institution of higher learning," Mr. Romankow said. "The alternate route candidates are not guaranteed a position by the program but will have met all the state requirements necessary to become police officers."

According to Chief Vaniska, 70 percent of the alternate route program is open to in-county residents and 30 percent may come from out of county. The tuition for the course is \$1,260. Alternate route candidates demonstrating financial hardship will be given one year from the time they obtain a position in law enforcement to pay the tuition," he added.

"They also can receive 12 credits if they enroll in a course at Union County College," he said.

Prosecutor Romankow said the program has helped young people interested in a law enforcement career achieve their dreams. "Agencies are looking for people who have a jump up on their training and there have been 155 people who have participated and so far we have an excellent placement rate."

Anyone interested in applying for the alternate route program may pick up an application starting Monday, April 3 at the John H. Stamler Police Academy, 1776 Raritan Road Scotch Plains. When an applicant completes the application and makes payment of \$75 to cover the initial application and test fee, they will be given a study guide. For further information, contact Mr. Parenti at (908) 889-6112. All applications must be returned on or before Monday, May 8 by 11 a.m., the day of the test.

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For additional information or a private tour, please call:

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