



BACK TO SCHOOL...Wilson Elementary School's band entertains parents seeing their children off for the first day of school. Fifth-grader Grace O'Connor plays flute with the band. More than 6,000 Westfield children returned to school under sunny skies on Wednesday.

LeStrange, Glover, Strauss Announce Campaign Events

SCOTCH PLAINS — Neal LeStrange, Kevin Glover and Jeff Strauss, the Democratic candidates for Scotch Plains Township Council, will host a series of community events to be held in the fall.

Mr. LeStrange, Mr. Glover and Mr. Strauss will be talking with residents at a barbecue to be held at Jerseyland Park on Saturday, September 9, from 1 to 4 p.m. This event is open to the public and is free of charge.

Scotch Plains residents can meet the candidates over brunch on Sunday, September 17, at the home of Lou and Ann Beckerman at 3 Highlander Drive. The event will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for \$10 per person.

A golf outing will be held on Monday, October 23, at the Scotch Hills Country Club. A combination of nine holes of daylight golf and nine holes

at night with glow-in-the-dark balls will be played. A meal will be served between the rounds. The cost is \$135 per golfer, and there are a limited number of openings still available.

Mr. LeStrange is a retired Scotch Plains police lieutenant. Mr. Glover's background is in facilities management, while Mr. Strauss is an attorney with local government experience.

"They (the candidates) look forward to meeting [residents] at one of these events or during the campaign to discuss [residents] hopes and concerns for our township," a campaign spokesman said.

To learn more about these events, request a lawn sign or to become involved with the LeStrange, Glover and Strauss campaign, call campaign headquarters at (908) 490-1900, or e-mail to scotchplainsdem@aol.com.

Summer News Wrapup

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as the district's new superintendent of schools. She replaces Carol Choye, who has retired after 13 years with the district. Ms. Hayes previously was assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction and assessment for the district.

A citizens' advisory panel to Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders presented plans for soccer fields, a picnic area, gardens, playground area, a possible water feature, a walking/jogging path and the refurbishment of the former Sevell family home into a senior or education center at the county-owned Ponderosa Farm property on Cooper Road in Scotch Plains.

Previous plans for a Green Meadows children's farm, which was to have leased the 23-acre property, were dropped after Scotch Plains residents and officials opposed the plan at township and county meetings.

Westfield was the stage for filming of a Christmas season movie featuring Queen Latifah called *Perfect Christmas*. The crew shot scenes in downtown locations including Elm Street and Central Avenue.

State Attorney General Zulima Farber resigned after a report by retired judge and Deputy Attorney General Richard Williams found she had violated the state ethics code when she went to the motor vehicle stop of her boyfriend Hamlet Goore, who, police said, was driving with an expired driver's registration and suspended driver's license.

Governor Corzine has appointed his chief counsel, Stuart Rabner, to replace Ms. Farber. The state senate must confirm Mr. Rabner before he can take office. First Assistant Attorney General Anne Milgram is serving as acting attorney general.

The New Jersey Motor Vehicles Commission has initiated an investi-

gation into whether any of its employees violated procedures in assisting Mr. Goore. Mr. Williams' report found that Angel Estrada, a Union County freeholder, helped Mr. Goore get his driving privileges reinstated by calling the court's suspension unit. The report found that Mr. Gore's license was activated during that phone call — an hour before Mr. Goore paid the required \$137 reinstatement fee in person at the Elizabeth DMV office, which Mr. Estrada manages.

A state superior court judge temporarily halted the sale of three 2004 luxury cars to Sheriff's Officer Christopher Coon, the stepson of longtime Sheriff Ralph Froehlich, for \$300 following an auction conducted by the sheriff's department on August 15 at Sevell's Auto Body Shop in Westfield.

Hillside Auto Center has claimed the sale was "a sham" when a third bidder opted not to purchase the vehicles and the \$110,600 bid of Raj Srivastava, Hillside Auto's owner, was not allowed because he did not have a certified check with him at the scene as required by auction rules, according to court records.

Mr. Coon filed suit against Hillside following his July 2004 purchase of a Mercedes Benz E-500 for \$49,500 when he found out the car had a defective radio, which was not reported. State Superior Court Judge John Malone ruled that Hillside was in violation of the Consumer Fraud Act and later issued a judgment of \$142,500 against the dealership, which led to seizure of the additional autos at Hillside's Route 22 dealership to satisfy the judgment.

A hearing on a "show cause" order by Hillside Auto is scheduled for tomorrow morning before Judge Malone.

Westfield Town Council

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Scotch Plains school is about two miles down the road. He's not part of that community. She said she is "concerned" about emergency vehicle access because, even though she pays taxes to Scotch Plains, "there is no way to access my property without going through Westfield."

Prior to attending the meeting, she said she had spoken to Scotch Plains-Fanwood BOE President Thomas Russo, who also said the "best policy was to have the property annexed."

First Ward Councilman Sal Caruana said the determination on which a municipality inherits educational responsibility, "strangely enough," is based on the location of the child's bedroom.

Mrs. Root cited two examples in which that precedent was not adhered to — one on Breeze Knoll Drive and another on Standish Avenue, where houses bordered on Mountaintop but children attended Westfield schools regardless.

During the conference session, Ryan Smith, the location manager for Elevation Filmworks and The Gracie Movie LLC, gave an overview of filming plans for the upcoming movie *Gracie*. *Gracie* stars Elisabeth and Andrew Shue in a film about a 16-year-old girl who won the right for girls to play competitive soccer.

Mr. Smith said filming is planned at a private property on Lawrence Avenue for two and a half weeks. Mr. Smith, who worked on the television show "Ed," which filmed in Westfield, made two requests. He asked that the property, contrary to the town's property maintenance code, not be maintained in order to give it an "overgrown look."

He also requested that on five of the dates, the crew be allowed to shoot beyond the hours permitted in the ordinance — some nights until midnight and others until 3 a.m. Because of the possible disturbances to neighbors, Mr. Smith came before the council to address any concerns.

Responding to a question from Mr. Echausse, Mr. Smith said the street wouldn't need to be shut down, but because the film takes place in 1978, no modern cars can be shown. Therefore, he said for two days, neighbors will be asked "not to park on the street or the driveway." On the two days, the film company will request police and will absorb the costs.

Mr. Smith said, "Since we don't want to shut down the street, we will do intermittent traffic control. The camera will roll and cars will be asked to please wait. When the camera cuts, then they go."

He said he has spoken with all the

residents in the area, noting that, "so far, everyone's been supportive."

Mr. Echausse said handing out letters to residents in August is "a moot point."

"I care about the noise," he added. "I'm really concerned about them filming until midnight or two o'clock in the morning. I'd say if we move forward with this, the production company is at risk of severely being penalized under our noise ordinance and I would prefer we stop at midnight. I'm all for shooting in Westfield, but limitations to night-time shoots should be discussed further."

Mr. Caruana suggested that the owner of the property where filming is to take place collect signatures from immediate neighbors so they are on notice. If "we get the bulk of (signatures) back, I have no problem going forward." The council agreed on employing this method.

While not incurring the costs involved in filming on public property, the film company nevertheless said it would donate \$2,500. Mayor Skibitsky suggested that the company donate that amount, or beyond it, to the Caring Neighbor Fund. He said this gesture might make neighbors more agreeable to the filming, especially because "it will occur before the holiday season."

Mr. Caruana, under his Public Safety, Transportation and Parking Committee report, said he would present a high-school parking plan to the council in two weeks after meeting with the BOE. The changes will be targeted to take place next September.

In addition, his committee will investigate the "misuse" of Gumbert Field's parking lot by non-park users, specifically bus commuters. Mr. Caruana said whatever relocation plan is enacted will offer a "global solution to all the residential impact issues. We will use it as a template for other areas."

Mr. Gildea said the recreation department needed council consent to apply for matching county grants that could finance Sycamore Field turfing or the master plan of Memorial Park. The maximum amount to be received is \$500,000, and the entire master plan amounts to \$1.9 million. The council agreed to give consent to apply; Fourth Ward Councilman Tom Bigosinski said, "It's a no-brainer."

Mr. Caruana announced that a September 11 anniversary event would take place on Monday. The First United Methodist Church of Westfield will hold an interfaith memorial service at 7:30 p.m., along with a candlelight vigil at the memorial site.



NONE HURT...Don Wussler of Coles Avenue in Scotch Plains examines the tree limb that crushed his Ford Explorer at 3 a.m. last Sunday morning, startling he and his wife Judy. Squalls struck randomly throughout the region as tropical storm Ernesto exited the area.

POLICE BLOTTER

Westfield

Monday, August 28, Erika Fiallos-Acosta, 23, of North Plainfield was arrested at South Avenue and Boulevard and charged with driving while intoxicated (DWI). She was released to a responsible individual.

Monday, August 28, Thomas Ralston, 55, of Westfield was arrested in the 600 block of Ripley Place on an outstanding \$500 Garwood motor vehicle warrant. He was released after posting bail.

Tuesday, August 29, Anatoly Oshust, 18, of Cranford and Christine Malczanek, 19, of Scotch Plains were arrested during a motor vehicle stop at North Avenue and Clark Street and charged with possession of a suspected controlled dangerous substance, believed to be ketamine; possession of hypodermic needles; underage possession of alcohol and unlawful possession of fireworks. Both suspects were released on their own recognizance.

Tuesday, August 29, a resident of the 900 block of Prospect Street reported a burglary at his home in which an undetermined amount of jewelry was taken. There were no signs of forced entry.

Wednesday, August 30, Daniel Robinson, 40, of Westfield was arrested and charged with burglary and theft following an investigation in the 700 block of Central Avenue involving a home burglary that occurred earlier in the year. He was released on his own recognizance with a summons pending a September 6 court date.

Thursday, August 31, Thomas Walsh, 52, of Cranford was arrested and charged with DWI following a motor vehicle stop on East South Avenue. He was released to a responsible individual.

Thursday, August 31, James Curry, 26, of North Plainfield was arrested and charged with possession of less than 50 grams of suspected marijuana. Curry also was taken into custody on an active criminal warrant for \$2,500 from Union Township Municipal Court.

This investigation followed a motor vehicle stop at Downer Street and Scotch Plains Avenue. Curry was released on his own recognizance on the suspected marijuana possession charge and turned over to Kean University police on the warrant.

A passenger in his vehicle, Claire Gordon, 25, of Westfield was arrested and charged with possession of less than 50 grams of suspected marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia. She was released on her own recognizance with a summons.

Friday, September 1, Josepaulo Almeida, 21, of Roselle was arrested and charged with DWI following a motor vehicle stop at North and Central Avenues. He was released to a responsible individual.

Sunday, September 3, a resident of the 700 block of Fairacres Avenue reported a rear window and tailgate on his motor vehicle sustained damage as the result of a bicycle striking the vehicle. The bicycle was apparently hurled at the vehicle and was recovered at the scene. The vehicle was parked in front of the owner's residence.

Sunday, September 3, a resident of the 900 block of St. Marks Avenue reported the theft of a navigational system valued at \$700 from his motor vehicle while it was parked in front of his home. The vehicle was unlocked at the time of the reported theft.

Scotch Plains
Monday, August 28, a resident of Hunter Avenue reported being the victim of theft. She stated that one or more unknown individuals obtained her credit card information and made purchases totaling approximately \$300.

Wednesday, August 30, a resident of Fanwood reported being the victim of theft. He stated that one or more unknown individuals removed his bicycle, which he had left at a store on East Second Street. The bicycle was valued at \$400.

Thursday, August 31, an employee of a Terrill Road business reported being the victim of terrorist threats. He stated that he received calls from an unknown individual demanding money.

Thursday, August 31, a golf club reported being the victim of theft. The superintendent stated that one or more unknown individuals removed several hole flags. The flags are valued at \$105.

Friday, September 1, George Nowicki, 4th, 27, of Scotch Plains was arrested and charged with harassment after police responded to a report of an attempted abduction of a young girl who was walking on the sidewalk on Westfield Road.

According to police, Nowicki was stopped in his red Jeep Cherokee shortly after police received the 911

call. The victim positively identified the suspect, who was arrested and was being held on \$7,500 bail.

Daniel Mendez, 26, of Roselle Park, who was a passenger in the vehicle, was arrested on outstanding warrants and released to the Roselle Park Police Department.

Friday, September 1, Michael Christy, 22, of Union was arrested following a motor vehicle stop for speeding and charged with possession of suspected marijuana.

Fanwood
Wednesday, August 30, Lisa M. Warren, 24, of Newark was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue, which revealed outstanding Newark warrants.

Wednesday, August 30, Anthony King, 45, of Bethpage, N.Y. was arrested following a field investigation on outstanding Fanwood and Newark warrants.

Thursday, August 31, Ahlijuwon Williams, 22, of Plainfield was arrested on active Scotch Plains and Paterson warrants following a field investigation.

Thursday, August 31, Elder Castaneda, 29, of Plainfield was arrested at the north side train station and charged with possession of burglary tools. He also was charged with theft of a bicycle, police said.

Thursday, August 31, Nelson Pelaze, 24, of Plainfield was arrested at the north side train station and charged with theft and providing false information to police.

Friday, September 1, Courmiasa R. Morgan, 33, of Plainfield was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on North Avenue, which revealed an outstanding Plainfield warrant.

Saturday, September 2, Walter Lewis, 26, of Plainfield was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue, which revealed an outstanding Scotch Plains warrant.

Saturday, September 2, Karisma Brown, 28, of Plainfield was arrested after a field investigation revealed an outstanding Scotch Plains warrant.

Saturday, September 2, William T. Bouza, 30, of Plainfield was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue, which revealed an outstanding Irvington warrant.

Sunday, September 3, Herman E. Jackson, 58, of Plainfield was arrested on an outstanding Parsippany warrant following a motor vehicle stop.

Sunday, September 3, Donnell K. Home, 27, of Jersey City was arrested on an outstanding Newark warrant after a motor vehicle stop.

Sunday, September 3, Gesner J. Jean-Simon, 73, of Plainfield was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Terrill Road, which revealed an outstanding Orange warrant.

Monday, September 4, Vincent R. King, 31, of Scotch Plains was arrested on an outstanding Scotch Plains warrant following a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue.

Monday, September 4, Shivaugh T. Sinclair, 30, of Irvington was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on Terrill Road and charged with possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of suspected marijuana. He also was charged with active warrants out of Harrison, Hamilton Township and Bayonne.

North Ave. Collision Injures Two Women

By SUZETTE F. STALKER
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Two people were injured Tuesday morning when the vehicles they were driving collided at the intersection of North Avenue and Crossway Place in Westfield.

A black Jeep Liberty operated by Kathleen Denning, 44, of Cranford was traveling westbound on North Avenue as a blue Ford Explorer driven by Jennifer Gould, 26, of Scotch Plains was stopped at the stop sign at Crossway Place, said Sergeant Scott Rodger of the Westfield Police Department.

The collision occurred at 7:52 a.m. as Ms. Denning passed on the right of another westbound vehicle that was waiting to make a left-hand turn from North onto Crossway, which Sergeant Rodger said she was permitted to do, and Ms. Gould began crossing over North Avenue.

Westfield Rescue Squad personnel transported Ms. Denning to the hospital with back and arm injuries. Sergeant Rodger stated, adding that Ms. Gould also was injured but not taken to the hospital. The sergeant said both of the vehicles were disabled and had to be towed from the scene. He stated that no citations were issued.



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TRAFFIC NIGHTMARE...The rest area on Route 22 in Mountaintop eastbound was the scene of a tractor-trailer jack knife accident Tuesday afternoon at 5 p.m. The truck careened off the road against a telephone pole and on top of the guardrail. PSE&G assisted with the pole and wires. Mountaintop Police and Fire Departments responded and Atlantic Health Care transported the driver to Overlook Hospital. Union County Haz Mat also responded.

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