



Peyton's Peek at the Week In Politics

By Paul Peyton of The Leader/Times

U.S. Attorney Christie Seeks NJ Legislators' Records

U.S. Attorney Chris Christie and state legislative officials were scheduled to appear in a Trenton courtroom over Mr. Christie's effort to seek internal memos, e-mails and other pertinent records concerning potential legislative conflicts. Mr. Christie, who has focused on political corruption, seeks records concerning the state budget to assess whether legislators are steering money to non-profits that may have benefited themselves, friends or families. *The Star-Ledger* reported that the Office of Legislative Offices did not respond to a request for records pertaining to conflicts of interest of lawmakers, which prompted the U.S. Attorney's Office to seek a court order for the records.

Area Electricity Rates to Rise Up to 14 Percent This Summer

Area utility customers will see their electric bills increase by up to 14 percent this summer.

The increase is the result of an annual auction at which the state's four electrical companies purchase a portion of the power they will need to supply their customers.

Rates will increase 10.5 percent for customers of Atlantic City Electric, 14.2 percent for Jersey Central Power and Light, 11.7 percent for Public Service Electric & Gas (PSE&G) and 12.2 percent for Rockland Electric.

The higher rates continue a recent trend that has seen a rise in energy costs contribute to escalating electric bills in New Jersey and the rest of the region, particularly in states where deregulation has occurred.

Sen. Bryant Retires From Law Firm

State Senator Wayne Bryant has retired from the law firm of Bryant & Zeller, according to politicsnj.com. He has yet to announce whether he will seek re-election to the Senate. Mr. Bryant has been under investigation by the U.S. Attorney's office for a no-show job he held at the University of Medicine and Dentistry (UMDNJ).

State Car Inspection System To Be Put to Bid This Year

State officials have announced that New Jersey's car inspection system will be put out for bid this year. Seven firms will compete for the \$65-million annual contract, which has been held by the Parsons Corp. since it was offered to private operators in 1998. The Parsons deal was criticized after it left motorists on lines for hours when new equipment was installed at the motor-vehicle inspection stations with the launch of a new system in December 1999. Parsons has since collected more than \$550 million for its work. Bid documents are scheduled to be sent out next week, with the new contract to be awarded in December.

About 1.9 million cars are inspected at the 30 sites Parsons currently runs for the state.

Committee on Ethical Standards Drops Complaint Re. Sen. Bark

The Joint Committee on Ethical Standards has dropped a citizen's complaint against Republican State Senator Martha Bark of Burlington County. The complaint, lodged by Burlington Democratic Chairman Richard Perr, had accused Ms. Bark, who is not seeking re-election, of holding two no-show jobs, according to *The Star-Ledger*. The decision will not impact an ongoing probe by the State Attorney General's Office into what Ms. Bark did to earn consulting fees from multiple public agencies.

State Legislators Want Electronics Recycled

State Assemblyman Reed Gusciora and Senator Robert Smith want to require consumers to recycle old television sets, computers and other electronics, according to the Associated Press. California, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota and Washington have such laws on the books. Mr. Smith proposes adding \$10 onto the price of electronics purchases to fund a recycling program. Mr. Gusciora wants manufacturers to pay \$5,000 annually each.

Asm. Barnes Named State Parole Board Chairman

State Assemblyman Peter Barnes, 79, a Middlesex County Democrat, has been named chairman of the state's parole board, according to politicsnj.com. If confirmed by the State Senate, he would resign his 18th District Assembly seat. His son, Edison Councilman Peter Barnes, 3rd, is reportedly the leading candidate to replace him in the Assembly.

State Human Services Acting Director Resigns Amid Questions

Clarke Bruno, New Jersey acting director of Human Services, has resigned amid questions about his qualifications for the job. The department employs 16,000 people, has a \$9.4-billion budget and serves about a million people per year. His deputy, Jennifer Velez, has replaced him. Mr. Bruno will stay on as special counsel, reporting to Ken Zimmerman, Governor Jon Corzine's chief counsel.

Flaherty Elected Director at Marsh

AREA—Shawn Flaherty of Westfield was named a managing director of Marsh Inc. Morristown office. Marsh, a unit of Marsh and McLennan companies, is a risk and insurance services firm with approximately 26,000 employees worldwide. Prior to joining Marsh, Mr. Flaherty was employed by AON. He holds a B.A. in Economics from Hobart College.



A CENTURY OF DESIGN...The Newark Public Library through March 3 salutes the architecture, planning and interiors firm of GRAD Associates with an exhibition, "A Salute to GRAD Associates: One Hundred Plus One; and A Selection of Great Books on Architectural History." Westfield resident Debra Ryan, seated, is a senior interior designer with the GRAD firm, founded in Newark by Frank Grad in 1906. Here, she reviews a design drawing with one of the firm's current principals, Suzan Lucas Santiago, director of interiors. The exhibition, in the third-floor gallery of the library, features a century of architectural drawings, photographs, precise models and historic records.

Rahway Hospital Foundation Elects 2007 Leadership

RAHWAY—Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Rahway Foundation has announced its leadership for 2007. Re-elected are Christine Kline, chairman, and Bonnie Josephs, vice chairman. Newly elected are Joseph Gibilisco, second vice-chairman, Bernice Bowen, secretary, and Richard Parker, treasurer.

Mrs. Kline joined the foundation in 1999 and has served as chairman for the past two years. She also served as vice chairman for three years and has served as chairman of the Annual Rose Ball for the past nine years. A long-time member of the hospital's auxiliary, she currently serves as president.

A foundation trustee for 12 years, Ms. Josephs has served as vice chairman for the past two years. She has served as co-chairman for the annual golf classic and fashion show and as a member of the Rose Ball Committee.

Joseph Gibilisco joined the foundation in 2003 and is the owner/operator/manager of Lehrer-Gibilisco Funeral Home in Rahway. He previously served as secretary of the foundation and is a member of the Rose Ball vice-chairman's committee. He has served on boards of organizations including the Rahway Geriatric Center, Rahway

Education in Excellence, Rahway PAL, Rahway Day Care, Rahway YMCA and the Union County Red Cross. He is a member of the Lions Club, Rahway Elks B.P.O. 1075 and Sons of the American Legion Post 238 of Clark. He is a recipient of the New Jersey PBA Silver Life Award and the New Jersey FMDA PBA Gold Life Award.

Ms. Bowen, a Clark resident, joined the foundation in 1999. A graduate of the American School of Business, she is a New Jersey Real Estate broker and has served on the board of the Union County Arts Center. She is a member of the foundation's Rose Ball, golf classic and fashion show committees.

Richard Parker was elected to the foundation board in 2003 and has served on the golf classic committee for years. An executive director with CBIZ KA Consulting Services LLC, he previously was vice president of finance at RWJUH in Rahway. He is a member of the Healthcare Financial Management Association, serving as treasurer of the board of directors.

For information about RWJUH Rahway Foundation's special events or to make a donation, call the foundation office at (732) 499-6135 or e-mail foundation@rwjuhr.com.



7th Congressional District News Bill Would Require Labels On Fur-Trimmed Garments

Representative Mike Ferguson

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Ferguson (R-7th, New Providence), along with 19 additional co-sponsors, has introduced the Dog and Cat Fur Prohibition Enforcement Act, legislation that would protect consumers and animals by outlawing the import of fur from raccoon dogs and requiring all garments trimmed with fur to be labeled, regardless of their value.

According to a press release from Mr. Ferguson, it is illegal to import, export, sell or advertise any domestic dog fur in the United States. Fur from other animals must be identified with a label, but only if the value of the fur exceeds \$150.

"American consumers have every right to know whether the faux fur coat they think they are buying is falsely labeled," Mr. Ferguson said. "We are a nation of animal lovers,

and it's just outrageous that consumers are being deceived. Congressional action is needed to make sure that the best, most accurate information is made available when purchasing new jackets and coats."

The raccoon dog is a member of the dog family with markings resembling those of a raccoon, known to be skinned alive for fur in China, according to the Humane Society of the United States.

Half of all fur garments entering the United States come from China, where large numbers of domestic dogs and cats, as well as raccoon dogs, are killed every year for their fur and are sometimes skinned alive, according to the press release.

The legislation would outlaw raccoon dog fur and close a loophole in the Fur Products Labeling Act of 1951 that exempts garments with a "relatively small quantity or value" of fur from requiring labels disclosing the name of the species, the manufacturer, the country of origin and other pertinent information for consumers. The Federal Trade Commission defines that value today as \$150 — an amount that allows multiple animal pelts on a garment without a label.

Public Invited to View Lunar Eclipse in March

CRANFORD — On Saturday, March 3, starting at 5:30 p.m., Amateur Astronomers Inc. (AAI) will conduct a special session featuring a total eclipse of the moon at the William Miller Sperry Observatory located at Union County College, 1033 Springfield Ave. in Cranford. The eclipse will be in progress when the moon rises at 5:44 p.m. Totality ends at 6:58 p.m., and the partial phase ends at 8:12 p.m. There will be time to observe this celestial event, weather permitting.

Club members will be available with telescopes and binoculars to assist the public with viewing and details. Following the eclipse, Mr. Alan Witzgall will give a presentation on "The Nature of Eclipses." Mr. Witzgall holds a B.S. in Planetary Geology from Kean University and is a long-time member of AAI. Following the presentation, Saturn will be viewed through the club's two large telescopes.

This event is free and open to the public. For more information, visit asterism.org. If the weather is inclement, the presentation will still take place. See the special notice section of the website for updates.

WF Library to Hold Pajama Party Feb. 24

WESTFIELD—YOSI, a composer of children's songs, will perform in his PJs at the Westfield Memorial Library on Saturday, February 24 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Families with children aged 3 and up are invited to this pajama party to laugh, dance, sing and open up to the joy of music. Advance registration is required, and this program is open to M.U.R.A.L. library cardholders only.

The Westfield Memorial Library, founded in 1879, provides an environment that promotes a love of reading and ensures free access to ideas and information. For more information, call (908) 789-4090, visit the library on the web at wmlnj.org or stop by the library on East Broad Street for a copy of the quarterly newsletter.

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Smart Wines

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<p>HOP KILN OLD WINDMILL ZINFANDEL \$21.99</p> <p>There might not be a better place than the Russian River for growing serious red zinfandel. Huge blackberry, blueberry and raspberry flavors with generous doses of pepper, spice and earth. Try it with ribs, lamb or a rich Cajun dish for Mardi Gras.</p>	<p>TWENTY BENCH CABERNET SAUVIGNON \$18.99</p> <p>Napa Cabernet is almost never this good at this price. Lots of rich dense fruit and great structure from 18 months in French (60%) and American (40%) oak. Flavors of black currant, plums and chocolate linger on the finish. The little bits of merlot (6%) and cabernet franc (4%) add complexity and aromatics. Terrific stuff.</p>	<p>PARCEL 41 NAPA VALLEY MERLOT \$18.99</p> <p>Most merlot at this price point is at best passable and drinkable, but without character or length...more beverage than wine. This is the real deal. Great concentration and depth. All kinds of dark cherry, blackberry and currant with hints of mocha and some vanilla from 16 months in oak. This <i>ain't</i> the merlot you had at the office party - it will hold up to a steak.</p>
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Your Favorite Wines

Blackstone Merlot	\$8.99	750ml
J Lohr Chardonnay	\$10.99	750ml
Simi Chardonnay	\$12.99	750ml
BV Coastal Cabernet/Merlot	\$7.99	750ml
Hess Select Chardonnay	\$9.99	750ml
Toasted Head Chardonnay	\$10.99	750ml

Your Favorite Value Wines

Mondavi Coastal Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay	\$16.99	1.5L
Beringer Founders Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay	\$15.99	1.5L
Woodbridge Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay	\$10.99	1.5L
Vendange Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay	\$6.99	1.5L
Fetzer Cabernet/Chardonnay	\$12.99	1.5L
Cavit Pinot Grigio	\$11.99	1.5L
Walnut Crest Cabernet	\$8.99	1.5L
Cesari Pinot Grigio	\$10.99	1.5L
Bolla Soave	\$10.99	1.5L
Beringer White Zinfandel	\$8.99	1.5L
Franzia Burgundy/Chablis/Chianti	\$10.99	5L
Carlos Rossi Burgundy/Chablis/Paisano/Sangria	\$9.99	4L
Opici Homemade Barbarone	\$11.99	4L

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Wine Of The Week

Geografico Ferraiolo Toscana \$22.99

A great example of what an affordable super Tuscan should be. From the Chianti region, this is a blend of 60% Sangiovese and 40% Cabernet Sauvignon. 18 months of aging in French oak barrels has added depth and complexity to the vivid fruit. The cabernet provides lots of cassis and blackberry flavors. The sangiovese adds cherry, spice and smoky nuances. Great with lamb or firm aged cheeses.

Your Favorite Cordials

- Baileys \$17.99 750ml
- Romana Sambuca \$17.99 750ml
- Kahlua \$16.99 750ml
- Southern Comfort \$14.99 750ml
- Amaretto Di Saronno \$18.99 750ml

Your Favorite Vodka

- Absolut 80 \$32.99 1.75L
- Ketel One \$35.99 1.75L
- Grey Goose \$26.99 750ml
- Smirnoff \$19.99 1.75L
- Stolichnaya \$31.99 1.75L
- Skyv \$24.99 1.75L
- Wolfschmidt \$13.99 1.75L
- Gordons \$14.99 1.75L

Your Favorite Scotch

- Dewars White Label \$29.99 1.75L
- Chivas Regal \$52.99 1.75L
- Johnnie Walker Black \$56.99 1.75L
- Johnnie Walker Red \$29.99 1.75L
- Clan MacGregor \$16.99 1.75L

Your Favorite Whiskey

- Jack Daniels \$36.99 1.75L
- Jim Beam \$24.99 1.75L
- Seagrams 7 \$15.99 1.75L

Your Favorite Gin

- Bombay Sapphire \$35.99 1.75L
- Tanqueray \$31.99 1.75L
- Hendricks \$27.99 750ml
- Beefeater \$28.99 1.75L
- Gordons \$14.99 1.75L
- Seagrams \$16.99 1.75L

Your Favorite Rum

- Captain Morgan \$24.99 1.75L
- Bacardi Silver \$19.99 1.75L
- Bacardi Gold \$19.99 1.75L
- Malibu \$23.99 1.75L