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21st District News
**Abandoned Children,
 Laser Safety Issues**
 Sen. Thomas Kean, Jr. - Westfield
 Asm. Jon Bramnick - Westfield
 Asm. Eric Munoz - Summit





ABCDICTIONOPQRSTUVEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

 Diction Deception

**Kean Safe Haven Bill
 Passes Committee**

TRENTON - Legislation introduced by Senator Thomas Kean Jr. (R-21) that would require posters and other educational material informing high-school students of "New Jersey Safe Haven Infant Protection Act" recently passed the Senate Education Committee. The new measure will seek to address the continuing issue of abandoned infants in New Jersey. The measure has already passed the General Assembly.

"The New Jersey Infant Safe Haven Protection Act is an extremely effective tool in preventing the tragedy of an abandoned child," Mr. Kean said. "In order to be even more effective, young women who might abandon their child in a moment of panic must be made aware that this program is an option."

The "New Jersey Safe Haven Awareness Promotion Task Force" would be formed immediately after the bill is enacted into law and would have six months to report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature and Governor. The report would include recommendations for new legislation that should be adopted to solve any structural problems in the original act.

"While police stations, hospitals and other designated locations have served as a place of sanctuary for many newborn babies, unlawful abandonment continues to exist," Mr. Kean said. "In the 12 months before Safe Haven was passed, eight babies were abandoned in public places. In

the first 12 months of Safe Haven, there were only two. As a state, we need to increase our education efforts to ensure that everyone knows this program is a viable alternative."

**Bramnick ID for Lasers
 Clears Committee**

TRENTON - Legislation sponsored by Assemblyman Jon Bramnick (LD-21, Westfield) that require sellers of class IV lasers to check the purchaser's identification and to keep a record of each laser sold, cleared a state assembly panel on May 18.

Approved by members of Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee, Mr. Bramnick said lasers used for drilling, welding, laser surgery and cutting metals are a few examples of such lasers.

"Class IV lasers are capable of causing injury to both the eye and skin and may even present a fire hazard," according to a press release from Asm. Bramnick. "A few years ago, when this bill was originally introduced, powerful lasers such as these were used to temporarily blind pilots. The FBI and Department of Homeland Security have evidence that terrorists have explored using lasers as weapons."

"Maintaining purchaser records may discourage individuals from procuring these types of lasers for terrorist activity," Mr. Bramnick said.

Mr. Bramnick said he has been active in introducing legislation to address homeland security issues. He can be reached at (908) 232-3673 or asmbramnick@njleg.org.

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 arcane words.

1. Rubiginose - Rust-colored;
2. Threnody - A song of lamentation; a dirge
3. Cozen - To cheat or defraud
4. Pollan - A white fish found in some lakes in Ireland

LUSK

1. Soreness of the eyes
2. To sail with a quartering wind, or with a wind about 45 degrees abaft the beam
3. Lazy; idle
4. Muddy, thick or turbid

TUBERON

1. A wartlike lump or node
2. A shark
3. A potato
4. The pocket gopher

PILIGEROUS

1. Covered with hair
2. Putrid; foul-smelling
3. Shaped like a cap
4. Given to theft or robbery; untrustworthy

BRACCATE

1. Having feathers which conceal the feet and legs
2. Concise; brief; to the point
3. Having the breadth of the cranium greater than the length, according to the cephalic index
4. In botany, furnished with branches in pairs

See more letters on Page 8

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor

**Petro President Clarifies
 Hazardous Cleanup Source**

My name is Robert Petrozziello, president of Petro Extrusion Technologies, Inc., in Garwood. In your May 24 issue, you ran a photo labeled "Hazardous Cleanup" on page 1 of *The Westfield Leader*. While a spill did occur on the property, the information included with the photo implies that it was in some way related to Petro Extrusion Tech., Inc., and/or its operations there. In fact, the spill occurred inside of a Fed Ex Freight truck, here for delivery of an unrelated machine part. While parked at the Petro Extrusion loading dock, our shipping personnel noticed a liquid on the truck floor. The Fed Ex truck, a tractor trailer carrying 20 drums of a liquid "resin," as well as some other equipment, apparently had a problem when one of the pieces of equipment on the truck punctured one of the drums. The puncture leaked the liquid onto the truck bed, as well as the ground area at our loading dock. Neither the drums nor the equipment were part of any shipment scheduled for delivery here at our 490 South Avenue location. Nor was the leaking material at any time a product used at our facility. It just so happened that the leak was noticed while the Fed Ex vehicle was parked at our dock, and as soon as it was detected, our personnel notified the Garwood Fire Department so that they could notify the proper authorities. The article in your paper implies that the leaky drum was delivered to our facility and is a product that might be used at our facility, both of which are not the case.

We would appreciate any printed clarification to the information listed with the May 24 photo, so that your readers understand that the hazardous cleanup was in no way related to our facility here. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Bob Petrozziello President, Petro Extrusion Technologies, Inc.

**McKinley School Principal Thanks
 All for Book Reading Program Help**

On May 16, the students and teachers of McKinley School took the train to Kean University for a "Reading Rally." It was the culmination of a year-long goal to encourage recreational reading among our kindergarten through fifth grade students. The children far surpassed our expectations, reading 16,642 books. We consider them to be on the "right track."

We would like to thank Mayor Andrew Skibitsky, Fire Chief Daniel Kelly, Superintendent William Foley, and Officer Gary Moore for supporting our goal and

**Claudia Andreski
 Principal of McKinley School
 Westfield**

**Hi's Eye Alum Hopes WHS Journalism
 Tradition Will Be Maintained**

I typically look at *The Leader's* weekly online edition to check the obligatory page to see if any of my WHS classmates (or their parents) passed away recently. I moved from town after my high-school graduation, in 1975, and don't get back home very often, so there's often little on *The Leader's* front page of interest to me these days, unfortunately.

In the past month, however, I have become engrossed in the ongoing page-one/editorial page drama of how Westfield's mayor apparently asked the board of education president to take steps to monitor the content of a student-run news broadcast aired on the local access cable station. He is, as I understand it, so upset over how a WHS student journalist conveyed her impressions of several town council meetings on a Blue Devils News broadcast that a series of actions were set in motion at his behest which now apparently threaten a seven-decade tradition of an uncensored student press at the high school.

I've followed this matter with great interest because I look back on my time as a *Hi's Eye* reporter and editor as one of the best and most formative experiences of my time at Westfield High School (1972-1975). Like the thousands of other students taught by the legendary Walt Clarkson, who passed away in 2005, I am grateful for the chance we had to learn how to write, write well and write on deadline for the *Hi's Eye*. Walt also instilled in us a great sense of responsibility to not only write well, but to do so with accuracy and fairness. I am confident that these lessons are being taught by those who have succeeded him as teachers in the WHS journalism program.

President Harry Truman once famously observed that if you "can't stand the heat" of politics, "then get out of the kitchen." While I don't know Mayor Skibitsky personally, it seems a bit unusual that the elected chief executive of a community boasting one of the highest socio-economic status levels in New Jersey would become so enraged at a remark from a high-school student made on a local cable television show. I have to wonder how he reacts to criticism by the "grownups" who attend town council meetings if this is how he reacted to this situation.

What the student said was neither libelous nor defamatory. There was no "actual malice" or "reckless disregard" of the truth, nor were her comments directed personally at the mayor, any other individual council member or city employee. In the final analysis, what we clearly have here is the "subjective opinion" and (perhaps) "fair" or "unfair comment" of a teenager who sat through several recent

(and probably, from her perspective, boring) town council meetings as part of a school project. For this "sin" seven decades of uncensored student journalism at WHS is threatened?

I think the student involved in this matter, along with her classmates and academic advisers, would have learned a much better lesson from this if the mayor had taken the time to come to WHS to sit down with the involved parties and explain why he was unhappy with her comments. It might have been instructive had His Honor conveyed his opinions, in a positive and mature way, directly at the student herself so that she would appreciate the impact that the words she chose had on the town's chief executive.

I am personally gratified by the strong outpouring of support for WHS student journalism published in the last four issues of *The Leader*. It's obvious that Westfield residents are as (justifiably) proud of the high-school newspaper as they are their sports teams and other student programs. In fact, I've yet to read anything in *The Leader* supporting the mayor or school board president's actions on this matter except the statements printed in *The Leader* by school board president and superintendent of schools.

By now I am sure Walt Clarkson has given St. Peter and others within earshot beyond the Pearly Gates a rousing lesson in the importance of a free student press as only he can give it. Unfortunately, the rest of us will have to wait for a while to, if we're lucky, hear from Walt on this topic again. In the meantime, I hope that cooler heads will prevail in Westfield and that its tradition of student journalism excellence will be maintained without the dead hand of administration "censorship" or "review."

**Andrew Karp
 Westfield High School '75
 Sonoma, Calif.**

**Honor Those Who
 Serve the Country**

In this week of the Memorial Day Holiday as we honor and remember our fallen heroes, I would like to take this time on behalf of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders to thank all those who now serve and have served in our armed forces.

I urge all residents to take this week and try in some way to honor and remember those who protect our nation. We must never forget that it is because of their service that America remains a free country and the greatest place to live.

**Bette Jane Kowalski
 Freeholder Chairwoman**

**Dual Office Holding, Tell Them
 You're Fed Up With the Malarkey**

Because of public outrage, the New Jersey State Legislature says that it will address the problem of dual office holding in this state. Dual office holding is illegal in many other states.

In New Jersey, dual office holding has become a disgrace. It has resulted in many conflicts of interest. Because of this, many of those seeking elective office are those who have their personal welfare held far above the interests of the citizens. To us, it's clear that this practice must be eliminated immediately.

So what is the Legislature in Trenton planning to do? With much-ballyhooed flimflam and fanfare, they claim to be crafting legislation to eliminate dual office holding. But the devil is in the details.

The legislation planned only applies to future

officeholders. Existing officeholders are grandfathered and can continue double-dipping. Worse, the legislation will not become effective until February 2008. In addition to those currently abusing the system, all those elected this November will also be allowed to abuse the system ad infinitum.

If they had any real mettle and integrity, the legislation would apply to all elected officials - and would become effective this November.

The way it is being set up, we are concerned that it will take another generation to purge our government of this cancer. Write and call your legislators now before they pass this phony ban.

They are feeding you baloney and telling you it is steak. Tell them you are fed up - with this and all the other malarkey going on.

**Former WHS Principal Petix Extends Recommendation
 On Free Speech to Westfield BOE and Town Officials**

As the healthy public discussion on censorship at Westfield High School enters its second month, many cogent arguments in defense of free speech and adhering to traditional procedures have been presented in several thoughtful and eloquent letters published in *The Westfield Leader*. The Westfield community has made its position clear: it does not want the school newspaper, *Hi's Eye*, or its broadcast counterpart, "Blue Devil News (BDN)," to be censored by the administration.

Since my first letter to *The Leader* in response to Victoria McCabe's article on censorship was a catalyst for the dialog, I would now like to propose a solution that will meet the expectations of the community, maintain the tradition of free speech at Westfield High School, and enable the superintendent of schools, the board of education and town leaders to demonstrate their qualities of leadership to the entire community.

Respectfully, I ask Dr. Foley in one of his final acts as superintendent to recommend to the board of education that prior review of student articles, commentaries and editorials of the printed and broadcast journalism programs remain with the teachers. Under the astute and dedicated guidance of legendary advisors Walter Clarkson, Charles Soriano, Charlotte Faltemeyer, and current equally talented teachers Rosemary DiBattista, Corey Walsh and Warren Hynes, the Westfield High School journalism program has been a consistent model of excellence worthy of emulation by other high schools and professional journal-

ists alike. Certainly, Westfield High School student journalists have been as thorough and accurate in their reporting and as fair in their commentaries as adult journalists.

Dr. Foley's acknowledgement of his confidence in the quality of the students' and teachers' work can be confirmed by his recommending to the board that pre-April procedures be reinstated and that the board adopt a policy that rejects administrative prior approval of the *Hi's Eye* and "Blue Devil News" except under specifically defined circumstances. If the superintendent makes these recommendations, he will promote the highest educational values and will enhance his own legacy.

I respectfully ask the Westfield Board of Education to reconsider what appears to be its intractable position on the censorship of the cable version of *Hi's Eye*. I ask the board to trust its teachers and students of journalism so that they can do their jobs without looking over their shoulders and worrying whether they dare cover a story, advocate a cause, take an unpopular position or write an article in a tone that might offend community and school leaders or other readers.

In 73 years without administrative review, there have been no lawsuits against the board of education initiated by articles or opinions written in the *Hi's Eye*. The publication, unafraid of administrative, board or political interference, has done superb investigative reporting for the community as well as for the school and has provided a check and balance

against those in positions of authority.

As principal, I always looked forward to the weekly publication, not only to better understand students' perspectives on issues, but also to see what the students thought I had done wrong. Invariably, the student newspaper made me reconsider my positions. Sometimes the students were right and I was wrong. The "Blue Devil News" serves the same purpose. Uncensored, it enriches the quality of thinking and discussion in the school and in the greater community.

A public statement now by the board of education rescinding the order for administrative prior review of future "Blue Devil News" programs will send an important message of trust to all Westfield High School students and teachers. Further, the statement will give credibility to the board's oft-stated declaration that it listens to the community it serves. This board statement will also send a powerful message to all town politicians: don't ask school board members to intercede on your behalf if students in the journalism program write or broadcast unflattering reports.

Contact them yourself. Write a letter; agree to be interviewed by the staff; or ask for rebuttal time. Model the democratic process.

Respectfully, I ask the town council to make a public statement of support of an uncensored *Hi's Eye* and "Blue Devil News" to reassure students and others that council members endorse unencumbered freedom of speech.

During the past few weeks, I have been contacted by several Westfielders of all ages. They, like all those who have written articulate and passionate letters to *The Westfield Leader*, have made it abundantly clear that maintaining the tradition of free speech at Westfield High School is a significant community issue. Knowing the tradition of this great community as I do, I am not surprised by the firm and confident commitment of its citizens to encourage the pursuit of truth for and by Westfielders of all ages.

I urge the superintendent, the board of education and members of the town council to hear the loud and resolute voices of the citizens of Westfield. Rescinding the order of prior review and vowing non-interference in the journalism programs will demonstrate to everyone that great leaders ultimately make the right - even if not always convenient or comfortable - decisions.

**Al Danker
 New Smyrna Beach, FL.**

**Robert Petix
 Scotch Plains**

**Danker Dairy Bottle Invokes Memories
 Of Westfield for Florida Resident**

I was happy to read the article in *This Is Westfield* about the bottle man, Barry Batzel, and to see the Aug Danker milk bottle. My father owned Danker Dairy during the teens until about 1930. Warren Rorden and a couple other Westfield merchants gave me four or five Danker bottles years ago when they found them in downtown buildings that they had purchased.

I retired to Florida in 1979 after selling my home and real estate business. Many friends were surprised to see me leave my hometown since I had been very active in town and was born in the family house at 314 Scotch Plains Avenue (not Muhlenberg Hospital) in 1920. I think Everson Pearsall is the only one left in town from my WHS class of 1938. I was

active in the "Y" which I joined in 1930 at 10 years of age. I was a vice president of the "Y" when I moved to Florida. Also a past president of the Westfield Real Estate Board, a long time member of the School Boosters and past president of the same.

I remember when I was a youngster seeing the middle of town under water and people in canoes and row boats going past my dad's dairy store on Broad Street, which was next to Epstein's Bootery and the National Bank. So much for old times. I do enjoy reading *The Leader* and look forward to receiving it even though it comes two at a time quite often.

I TOLD YOU, CARLA, \$6 MILLION IS ALL I CAN AFFORD. NOW, ABOUT THAT BRAKE FLUID STAIN I SAW ON YOUR BLOUSE THIS MORNING...



*NGEEMAN/07
 LEADER/TIMES*

**Lou Francz
 Westfield**

**Student Seeks
 New Jersey Artifacts**

Each member in my fifth grade class is working on a project called "Parade of States." We are responsible for gathering as much information and materials about the state as we can, to help "sell" the state. The project is due in June 2007.

I have chosen your state, New Jersey, for my presentation. If any of your readers would help me out by sending pictures, postcards, a used license plate, facts, products, etc. from your state, it would be greatly appreciated.

Please send these to: Taylorkehr, c/o Foothills Elementary, 10621 234th Ave, E. Buckley, WA 98321.

**Taylorkehr
 Buckley, Washington**

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