



SMILES...Enjoying the festivities at a fundraiser for the re-election of Assemblyman Jon Bramnick (LD-21, Westfield) held at 16 Prospect in Westfield on Monday are, left to right, are: Helen Rosales, chairwoman of the Elizabeth Republican Party; Garwood Councilman Anthony Sytko; Roselle Republican Chairman Roger Stryeski and Union Township Republican Chairman Ralph Gaglione.

Ex-WF Administrator Comments Shared Services

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"This (the IIF) was a prime example of towns getting together, pulling their resources, sharing the benefits, sharing the problems but working collaboratively to get it done," Mr. Gottko said.

In terms of merging municipalities, he pointed to Princeton Borough and Princeton Township, which, he said, have put forth referendums three times since the 1950s to merge, but each time, voters have defeated those ballot questions.

He said the debate often comes down to "who is going to give up what?"

"Is there the political will to do it? And, a lot of times, it's not there," Mr. Gottko said.

He said Long Beach Island has "seven communities on an island" that would seem to be a good fit for merging operations.

"It's about who wants to give up the prestige of not having [a town]," he said.

Mr. Gottko said when sharing services, governments should look to relationships they have with other towns such as between Scotch Plains and Fanwood. He said small towns often have departments with only a few people; thus, there are not many areas that can be cut.

Merging municipal courts has been accomplished, but again, the question becomes who is going to be the judge, the court administrator, prosecutor, public defender or will each have its own prosecutor and defender, thus cutting down on any potential savings.

Mr. Gottko said Westfield once talked with Fanwood about sharing construction services, but "it just wasn't a fit," he said.

As far as producing more revenue for towns, Fanwood Councilman Anthony Parenti, the borough's former police chief and the former director

of the county's police academy, has proposed that 80 percent of revenue from moving-violation summonses written by local police departments stay with municipalities, while the remaining 20 percent go to counties. Under current state law, counties receive 50 percent of the revenue.

"This is the problem. The county has counted upon that money to do certain things. And now you are going to take that money from them, the counties," Mr. Gottko said.

He questioned about whether towns would use the money to offset taxes or on new initiatives.

One of the biggest issues in Westfield has been parking. Mr. Gottko recalled reading parking studies from the 1960s when he arrived in town in 1979. He said in the 1980s the town had considered a parking deck across from the post office on Central Avenue, but the bids the town received for the project were double the estimates the town was working with, and the project never moved forward.

He said the deck proposed for Elm Street, which was heavily defeated by voters in 2004 went through a number of phases before the location was picked.

"It became...more than a parking deck," Mr. Gottko said. "It just got out of hand. It just got too massive."

"I personally thought it got to the point where we were losing site of the parking and were trying to create something else," a reference to having retail stores along the front of the deck as part of the redevelopment project.

In his opinion, a deck at the South Avenue train station parking lot, which was originally proposed, "was something that could have been accomplished."

See a video with Mr. Gottko on goleader.com/video.

GW BOE Vacancy, Health Care Buyout Offered

By CAROLYN FREUNDLICH
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD — During Tuesday night's board of education meeting, Superintendent Teresa Quigley said the "opening of schools went smoothly" on September 4. More than 400 students are educated in Garwood's system.

The board reported that teachers will be paid \$4,000 if they opt out of their health plan. Three teachers accepted the money.

Washington School renovations were approved. New gym doors and copiers will be added. Offices will be relocated within the building.

There is a vacancy on the board of education due to the resignation of a board member. The board asked all interested residents to send them a letter with a resume for consideration to fill the vacancy. So far, there has been one applicant. The board will review all applications at the October 16 meeting.

AP classes for computer science and microeconomics have been added to the curriculum for 11th and 12th grade students at the Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark.

Back to School night for Washington School is tonight, September 18, at 7 p.m. for first and second graders, and 8 p.m. for the rest of the school. Back to school night was last night for high school students who attend Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark.

Bernadette Bodnar announced her retirement after 24 years of teaching at Garwood. Board President Adele Lewis wished her "happiness and success in her retirement" and presented her with a certificate of appreciation.

Previous students, family and friends were present to wish her well on her future endeavors.

Garwood teachers learned a new computer program called Real Time on September 2 and prepared classrooms and lesson plans on September 3 in advance of the students' arrival.

September 11 was labeled School Spirit Day in remembrance of the tragedies that happened seven years ago at the World Trade Center in New York City.

Students and teachers wore red, white and blue, and observed a moment of silence.

Lane Change Causes Backups at Intersection

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Motorists heading out of town via East Broad Street and Springfield Avenue have been facing traffic backups to Fairview Cemetery following a change in traffic patterns at the intersection. Formerly, motorists could turn left from either of two lanes. Now, only the left lane can turn left. Both streets are under the jurisdiction of Union County.

Union County Director of Engineering and Public Works Joseph Graziano told *The Westfield Leader* that the traffic pattern was changed after a homeowner on Springfield Avenue opposite the intersection complained of safety issues due to numerous accidents at the corner.

The owner had reported cars smashing through a fence and landing on her lawn, according to Mr. Graziano. "Both the county and the Westfield Police Department decided that this was the best thing that could work," he said.

Mr. Graziano said the county has been monitoring the new pattern, noting, "It (the backup) is bad." He said the change was the result of a "joint effort" between the county and Westfield.

"It was a real safety issue," he said. County employees, not an outside contractor, completed the work.

Both Westfield Police Chief John Parizeau and Assistant Town Engineer Kris McAloon said the town was not notified until after the work was completed.

"No one from the police department was consulted or made aware of the lane change until it happened," Chief Parizeau told *The Leader*.

From his own experience, Chief Parizeau said before the change, a driver in the East Broad Street right lane who turned left would appear

suddenly to the motorist in the left lane as they both turned onto Springfield Avenue.

Mr. Graziano said the situation is also hampered by the narrow width of the two-lane East Broad Street roadway.

"We have since been in contact [with the county] to see what could be done to fix the delays," Chief Parizeau said.

Sebastian D'Elia, a county spokesman, said the county received an e-mail from Chief Parizeau dated June 20 with the department's support of the traffic pattern change.

"I agree with the current new configuration that you have done at East Broad and Springfield Avenue. The prior configuration caused those that could make a right on red to be stuck behind the one car that was waiting to go left onto Springfield Avenue," according to an e-mail sent by Chief Parizeau to Nicholas Pantina of the county's engineering and public works department.

"Also, we had a number of [road] rage instances when two cars were making a left from two different lanes and then trying to merge into one lane. Unless the new configuration causes some unseen problem, please keep this new configuration," it continued.

Mr. McAloon said, "They (the county) were not in touch with us until after [the lane change] occurred." He said Westfield police began questioning the work on June 19, a day before the chief corresponded with county officials.

When called by *The Leader* Tuesday, the chief said, "The bottom line is we want it to work out for both sides."

Mr. Pantina said in a follow-up e-mail to Chief Parizeau that the county would continue to monitor the situation, saying, "I think it should work out over time."

Westfield Library 'Goes Green'; Land Use Update

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in smaller zones to 35 feet in larger ones.

Mr. Foerst announced at the meeting that the taskforce's findings would now be "married" with the planning board's master plan review.

Town Attorney Bob Cockren said the work to integrate both works could last another "several months." When Third Ward Councilman David Haas asked if the undertaking could be completed this year, Mr. Cockren said "no."

"It became clear that the two bodies of work need to be integrated and turned into one," Mr. Cockren said. "For a series of legal issues, it's best to come up with one definitive roadmap for land use changes, then follow the specific statutory requirements."

While he said he "wasn't excited to hear we won't be able to proceed with the changes right now," Mr. Foerst said, "it's the right thing to do, having the planning board involved."

Separately, in his report, Mr. Foerst announced that Westfield would begin charging for the use of its town professionals, such as Town Planner Bill Drew or Town Engineer Ken Marsh, on certain types of applications.

"We're re-thinking government," Mr. Foerst said. "We're looking for ways to increase revenue...We are going to run the engineering department as a business."

A professional, under the plan, would be paid two times his or her hourly rate. Mr. Foerst, at the meeting, calculated Mr. Drew's rate to be roughly \$102 an hour. Mr. Marsh's rate would be slightly higher than that figure, Mr. Gildea told *The Leader* after the meeting. Licensed planner Blais Brancheau, whom the town used as a consultant prior to having a formal planner, earned a rate of \$105 an hour.

Mr. Foerst cautioned that this would not apply to a resident seeking to use the professionals' services when addressing a bulk variance, which arises during residential addition proposals.

Mr. Bigosinski, in response, asked, "Are you inclined to pass on 100 percent of the hourly time or 200 percent?" He also asked if there would be profit made through this initiative. "Certainly not," replied Mr. Foerst. "It's not a money-making [scheme]."

His salary doesn't take into consideration healthcare, pension, electric, lights and staff."

Mr. Cockren responded, "Fundamentally, the assumption of [Mr. Bigosinski's] question, which is flawed, is that everything he works on is a chargeable circumstance; clearly, that's not the case... It's only for [certain] applications."

Mr. Bigosinski asked, "From the perspective of the person or company...if [the professional] works four hours on an application, they might be paying for eight hours."

Mr. Foerst replied, "No, they would be paying for four hours of time at a rate calculated at double [their hourly rate]."

Favoring a user-based structure, Mr. Foerst said he believes the average taxpayer who receives no benefit from a given piece of development "should not end up subsidizing a town employee for the benefit of one particular individual."

Mr. Foerst said a "streamlined" chart with more understandable rates and charges would replace the complicated formulas that had previously existed.

Mr. Cockren said a survey would bear out that Westfield is "substantially below our peer communities" when charging for such services. "We've been a step behind the curve," Mr. Cockren added.

Finance Chairman Sal Caruana said with state aid going "down the toilet," towns like Westfield will be "scrambling for every nickel and dime. The sooner we understand what's coming and how we can mitigate next year's tax rate, we'll embrace more ideas like this."

Star-Ledger Warns Of Sale or Closure

AREA — According to poynter.org, "Since it is doubtful that the drivers will ratify an agreement by October 8, 2008, we will be sending formal notices to all employees this week, as required by both federal and New Jersey law, advising you that the company will be sold, or, failing that, that it will close operations on January 5, 2009," writes Newark *Star-Ledger* publisher George Arwady.



VIVE LE QUÉBEC!...Westfield Leader stringer Linda (née Beaudry) Condriello catches up on what is happening back home while on vacation in Canada. The photo was taken in front of the Citadelle on the Parc les Plaines d'Abraham inside the walls of the old city. The historic hotel, Château Frontenac, can be seen in the background. The province of Québec celebrates its 400th anniversary this year.

POLICE BLOTTER

Westfield

Monday, September 8, Jamie Agullo, 20, of Roselle was arrested after a motor vehicle stop at South Avenue, West, and Boulevard and charged with exhibiting false documents (driver's license) and possession of a stolen property (license plate on motor vehicle). Agullo, who also was arrested on a Perth Amboy criminal warrant for \$25,000, posted \$2,500 on the Westfield charges and was committed on default of bail on the warrant.

Monday, September 8, Tammy Khalil, 45, of Plainfield was arrested at the southside train station lot on a charge of obstruction of administration of law and on traffic warrants from Roselle and Newark. Bail amounts on the warrants were \$550 and \$500, respectively. Khalil allegedly refused to pay the fare aboard a NJ Transit train or to leave the train when requested to do so. She was released on her own recognizance on both the warrants and issued a summons on the Westfield charge.

Tuesday, September 9, Orlando Camilo, 31, of Roselle Park was arrested after a motor vehicle stop in the area of East Broad Street and Hampton Court on an outstanding Elizabeth criminal warrant. He was released after posting \$381 bail.

Tuesday, September 9, Richard Bennett, 24, of Plainfield was arrested at the Somerset County jail on an outstanding Westfield criminal warrant. Bennett was unable to post the \$500 bail and was held for court.

Wednesday, September 10, Chika Uche, 27, of Plainfield was arrested after a motor vehicle stop in the area of South and Westfield Avenues on an outstanding North Plainfield traffic warrant. Uche was released after posting \$150 bail.

Wednesday, September 10, Denise Black, 44, of Plainfield was arrested at Middlesex County jail on an outstanding Westfield traffic warrant. She was unable to post the \$1,000 bail and was held for court.

Wednesday, September 10, Virginia Dewitt, 50, of Westfield was arrested on an outstanding Westfield traffic warrant after responding to Westfield police headquarters. She posted the \$655 bail and was released.

Wednesday, September 10, Gordon Novak, 45, of Westfield was arrested at Westfield police headquarters on an outstanding no-bail Union County Sheriff's Office warrant. He was turned over to the sheriff's office.

Saturday, September 13, Robert Davis, 52, of Edison was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated (DWI) after a motor vehicle accident on the 500 block of Prospect Street. No injuries were reported. Davis was released to a responsible adult.

Scotch Plains

Friday, September 12, Kevin Midwinter, 43, of Scotch Plains was arrested on an outstanding warrant after a motor vehicle stop. He was processed and released.

Friday, September 12, a resident of Riga Court reported that someone damaged her front window valued at approximately \$125.

Friday, September 12, police investigated a hit-and-run accident that occurred in a municipal parking lot. According to police, someone struck a vehicle while it was legally parked, damaging the rear of the vehicle.

Saturday, September 13, Luiz Angueta, 26, of Plainfield was arrested for an outstanding warrant after a motor vehicle stop. He was processed and released.

Sunday, September 14, Thomas Charles, 50, of Piscataway was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated (DWI) after police smelled the odor of alcohol after stopping him for a motor vehicle violation. According to police, he was processed and released.

Sunday, September 14, David Cavelli, 48, of Scotch Plains was arrested for an outstanding warrant after a motor vehicle stop. He was processed and released.

Sunday, September 14, Dereck Squire, 56, of New Brunswick was arrested for an outstanding warrant after a motor vehicle stop. He was processed and released.

Sunday, September 14, a resident of Route

22 reported that someone made several phone calls to his house and yelled profanities at him.

Mountainside

Tuesday, September 9, a suspicious message was received at headquarters stating that "someone is going to get wacked at the Foodtown in Springfield." According to police, the message was played for the Springfield Police Department and the incident is under investigation.

Tuesday, September 9, a resident of Short Drive reported that on someone made fraudulent charges to her credit card on Friday, September 5.

Friday, September 12, a contractor reported that someone removed ladders from the garage of a home on Ledgewood Road that he had previously been working on. According to police, the contractor had a dispute with the homeowner and when he returned to get the ladders they were missing. The homeowner reported that he did not know what happened to the ladders, police said.

Monday, September 15, Melvin L. Watson, 34, of Plainfield was arrested and charged with driving with a suspended license after a motor vehicle stop. According to police, he was processed and released.

Fanwood

Tuesday, September 9, Jesus A. Moreno-Diaz, 39, of Plainfield was arrested on a no-bail federal immigration warrant after a motor vehicle stop on North Avenue. According to police, he was processed and turned over to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency.

Wednesday, September 10, a resident in the 200 block of South Avenue reported that someone broke into his locked vehicle while it was parked in the street. According to police, it is not yet known if anything was removed.

Wednesday, September 10, a resident in the 200 block of Farley Avenue reported that someone entered his unlocked vehicle while it was parked in his driveway and removed a GPS system valued at \$500.

Thursday, September 11, a resident in the 100 block of Farley Avenue reported that someone broke into his vehicle while it was parked in his driveway. Access was not gained to the vehicle, police said.

Saturday, September 13, a resident in the 200 block of Belvidere Avenue reported that someone entered his vehicle while it was parked in his driveway. Access was not gained to the vehicle, police said.

Thursday, September 11, Timothy Williams, 52, of Newark was arrested for an outstanding Fanwood no-bail warrant after a field investigation on Martine Avenue. He was processed and turned over to the Union County jail.

Thursday, September 11, a 15-year old juvenile from Scotch Plains was arrested and charged with burglary in connection to an incident that occurred on May 22. According to police, he was processed and released pending a court date in family court.

Friday, September 12, Charles Hampton, 3rd, 21, of Allentown, Pa. was arrested and charged with possession of a controlled dangerous substance (CDS) after a motor vehicle stop on North Avenue. According to police, he was processed and released.

Sunday, September 14, Travis M. Cassett, 18, of Westfield was arrested and charged with possession of CDS after a motor vehicle stop in the 200 block of South Avenue. He was processed and released.

Monday, September 15, Felton R. White, 48, of Plainfield was arrested for an outstanding Florham park warrant after a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue. He was processed and released.

Monday, September 15, a resident in the 100 block of Pleasant Avenue reported that a contractor allegedly removed \$1,200 in jewelry from her home sometime between July 25 and September 15. According to police, the incident is under investigation.

MS Council Honors Whytes As Parents of Yr. by Group

By JOHN MAGUIRE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

MOUNTAINSIDE — The Mountainside Borough Council, Tuesday night, recognized residents Gary and Debra Whyte as Parents of the Year by the New Jersey Parents Foundation.

The Whyte's children wrote an essay to the Parents Foundation nominating the couple for the award. State legislators were in attendance to recognize the couple's achievement.

Calling the Whytes a "renaissance family," State Senator Tom Kean Jr. (LD-21, Westfield) praised them for their work on behalf of children who suffer from Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva (FOP)—a disease that causes fibrous tissue to ossify when damaged. The disease afflicts one in two million children, according to the International FOP Association.

"New Jersey is a far better place because of your efforts," Mr. Kean said while a group of family and friends in attendance looked on.

Assemblyman Jon Bramnick (LD-21, Westfield) said parents were "more important than ever in the history of our society" and praised the couple for serving as role models to other parents and the community at large.

Joseph Coyne, president of the New Jersey Parents Foundation, presented the Whytes with the award. Mr. Coyne praised the couple, saying to those in attendance, "these are true heroes."

DWC Sponsors Forum

For Downtown Owners

WESTFIELD — Owners of properties within the designated Westfield special improvement district, managed by the Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC), are invited to attend a Downtown Property Owner forum on Monday, October 6, at 6:30 p.m. at the DWC office, 105 Elm Street, lower level conference room.

At this forum, property owners can get acquainted with the staff of the DWC and some of the volunteers and share their issues and concerns. DWC goals and objectives, plans for the 2009 DWC budget, and progress on the Downtown Improvement Plan.

All property owners of the over 200 properties within the improvement district received invitations but are asked to confirm their availability by contacting the DWC at (908) 789-9444 or via e-mail s.cronin@WestfieldToday.com.

WBA

Westfield Basketball Association

Winter Registration Coming October 2008

In-Town Girls and Boys Saturday Leagues

Grades 2 - 8

Registration will begin in early October.

Information and link will be posted to:

WWW.Westfieldnj.com/WBA

Travel tryouts for Girls and Boys

Grades 4 - 8

Will be held in the first 2 weeks of October 2008.

All Dates will be posted to the WBA Website and in The Leader.

Adults interested in volunteering to work as:

League Directors, Coaches and Asst Coaches

Contact WBA@Westfieldnj.com

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