



Kevin Glover and Theresa Mullen

Campaign Release, Scotch Plains Democrats Glover, Mullen Say SP Needs 'Positive Change'

Kevin Glover, Democratic candidate for Scotch Plains mayor, and Theresa Mullen, Democratic candidate for township council issued the following statement:

"While the citizens of Scotch Plains are calling for change, our opponents promise 'more of the same,' a complete disconnect with voters' needs in these difficult economic times. They have promised that our taxes in 2009 will rise by double digits. Their candidate for mayor has consistently voted for higher taxes since being elected to the township council, beginning with her first vote in 2003 for an 18-point increase, the highest one-year increase in township history.

"We can't afford their business as usual programs and pledge for more of the same. We need positive change. Unlike our opponents, we are committed to stabilizing taxes and bringing back fiscal responsibility to our municipal government. We understand that these are volatile and difficult economic times requiring leadership that is committed to insuring that our tax dollars are being spent wisely with the goal of stabilized taxes and more money in families' pockets.

"This November 4 you can bring positive change to our community by break-

ing the habit of 'more of the same.'"

County Purchases License Plate Scanners

ELIZABETH - The County of Union has purchased automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) devices to identify license plates and match them with databases.

Three units were purchased at a cost of \$20,000 each, funded by a Federal Homeland Security grant.

The ALPRs are equipped with cameras that record an image of the license plate by scanning the numbers and letters of plate numbers. The characters are then matched with databases for vehicles associated with threats to public safety, such as car theft, carjacking, terrorism, drug dealing, felony warrants such as murder suspects, and Amber alerts.

Three ALPRs were given to the Essex/Union Auto Theft Task Force (ATTFF). Additional ALPRs will go to the Union County, Linden, Union and Elizabeth police departments.

"The addition of new technology helps our investigators better execute missions, keep the public safe and ensure that we continue to catch the bad guys," Union County Prosecutor Ted Romankow said.

FW GOP to Hold Dinner For Former Mayor Trumpp

FANWOOD — The Fanwood Republican Campaign Committee will hold a dinner on Saturday, September 27, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 2400 North Avenue in Scotch Plains, to celebrate 50 years of Republican service to Fanwood and Union County by Ted Trumpp.

A former two-term mayor of Fanwood, Mr. Trumpp is retiring from his position as chairman of the Fanwood committee and has turned over the reigns of the organi-

zation to Joe Britt. At the dinner, friends and colleagues of Mr. Trumpp will toast and roast him as they rummage through five decades of memories.

Those wishing to attend can contact Fanwood Councilman Tony Parenti at (908) 322-8583. Tickets are \$68.

Attending the event with their families will be Bob Manducca and Mike Szuch, Republican candidates for the two open seats for the Fanwood Borough Council.



Ted Trumpp

Campaign Release, Garwood Republicans

GW GOP: Council Let Down Residents

Republican candidates for Garwood Borough Council, Patricia Quattrocchi and Timothy Hak, responded this week to the borough council's 4-2 vote against county freeholder districts.

"We were very pleased recently when Garwood Councilman Steve Napolitano (a Democrat) spoke of and requested a resolution be placed on the council meeting agenda regarding county government and a possible means of correcting the obvious lack of representation of whole groups of county residents on the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

"There is something wrong with a system when a candidate can receive the majority of the votes in a majority of the towns in the county and not win a seat on the freeholder board. Even more confounding is that the municipalities, which make up central Union County, send the most tax dollars to the county coffers and receive in return almost nothing in services, while having virtually no say in how the county government spends their hard earned tax dollars.

"Realize that Garwood levies county taxes on her residents in excess of \$2 million a year. Realize also that Union County government, the freeholders, spend in excess of a million dollars a day, so that in approximately two days time they have spent the equivalent of what we spent for the year. In the neighboring town of Westfield, they send more to the county than they keep running their town, as does Summit. And, like Garwood, they have nothing to say about where that money goes and we would venture to guess that in the not too distant future we too, in Garwood, will send more to the county than we keep to finance our own borough.

"Recently Garwood applied for and was awarded \$250,000 in extraordinary aid by the state, which enabled us to balance our budget and not have to put an unreasonable property tax bur-

den on our residents. But think about this: over the weekend the county spent over \$300,000 for entertainment in one of our county parks. This figure was for obtaining talent for the event; it did not cover overtime for security, for park maintenance crews to clean up or the cost of the gasoline and wear and tear on county shuttle buses.

"Yet, here we are in Garwood going with our hats in our hands seemingly begging for money from the state to ensure continued services to our residents and the freeholders are cavalierly tossing more than that at a concert in the park. What is wrong with this picture?"

"When the topic was first broached by (Republican) Councilman Anthony Sytko a few meetings ago, we were very disappointed to hear this council's reaction to the resolution at that time. Again we were disappointed as we had hoped that given a few weeks to fully digest the resolution as it was written, which called for freeholders to be elected by districts, as well as some at-large, they (the council) may all have seen fit to vote yes on it.

"Voting yes would not mean that they were denouncing the current board, which, coincidentally, is of the same political party as all but one of our council members; rather it would mean that they were looking out for the well being of the residents of the borough. Voting yes, would have given the power of government back to the voters by allowing the question of how freeholders are elected to be placed on the ballot.

"Unfortunately, the Garwood Borough Council has let the residents down by not supporting this resolution.

"As members of the Garwood Borough Council we will strive to keep as much of the residents' tax dollars here in our borough as possible because we believe that tax dollars should be working to maintain the health and safety of the residents."

Prosecutor's Office Seeks New Child Advocacy Center

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

ELIZABETH — The Union County Prosecutor's Office last Thursday proposed a new \$4.5-million child advocacy center to replace an aging facility in Elizabeth.

Assistant Prosecutor John Esmerado said preliminary plans call for construction of an 11,000-square-foot facility in Elizabeth that would be easily accessible from the courthouse and the prosecutor's office. The current center measures 2,400 square feet.

Mr. Esmerado, supervisor of the existing facility at 123 Westfield Avenue in Elizabeth, said the advocacy center handles 500 child abuse cases per year, significantly up from the 200 cases handled when the center opened in 1994.

He said that 90 percent of all child abuse cases investigated by the prosecutor's office are for sexual abuse. He described child abuse as "an epidemic that touches every town."

County Prosecutor Ted Romankow said, when he took over as prosecutor in 2002, he quickly became aware "that there was an evil force in the county... and it was the evil of those that abuse children physically and sexually."

"It is a very difficult type of work to see children who were sexually abused over and over again," Mr. Romankow told the freeholders. "Four years ago I decided we had to do something" to improve the facilities utilized in both treating child abuse and garnering information to prosecute child abusers.

During the prosecutor's office 15-minute presentation, Mr. Esmerado explained specific abuses, including one incident in Linden where the abuser struck a child so hard that the abuser got a bloodied hand. In another abuse case a mother struck her child repeatedly in the face with her ring pointed at the child.

Another area on the rise in the county is Shaken Baby Syndrome, a condition in which someone shakes a baby causing neurological disorders or even death. He said the caseload has jumped from 275 in 2004 to 493 cases in 2007.

Victor Richel, who developed a 501c3 non-profit group with its own board to raise funds for the project, said the foundation would raise between \$1.5 and \$2 million for the project. He asked the freeholders to consider providing \$2 million in county funding to make the project a reality. Officials said the county has been awarded a half-million-dollar grant for the project.

Mr. Richel told *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* that the proposal has come to this point because of the "drive of the prosecutor."

"We will definitely consider it," Freeholder Chairman Angel Estrada

responded, calling child abuse "a very difficult reality."

Freeholder Dan Sullivan called the advocacy center "a crucial investment for Union County."

Cranford resident Tina Renna supported the project saying this is the type of project county taxes should be utilized towards. "You should be funding that 100 percent," she said.

Garwood resident Bruce Paterson said the county funding for the project comes down to a "choice of priorities." He called the PowerPoint report a "powerful presentation."

Mrs. Renna said the board's priorities seem to come down to "what makes you popular," such as the annual MusicFest concert. She said the freeholders' job should be to "defend the defenseless" rather than being in "the entertainment business."

During the public portion of the meeting, Mrs. Renna spoke critically of this year's MusicFest.

"It's an easy million dollars that you are paying for that MusicFest," she said.

When asked to comment by *The Leader* and *The Times*, County Manager George Devanney called Mrs. Renna's million-dollar estimate "grossly inaccurate." He estimated the cost of talent for MusicFest at \$250,000, a cost offset by the same amount in corporate sponsorships.

He said overtime costs have not been calculated at this time. In addition to corporate donations and sponsorships, the county benefited from in-kind services provided by some vendors. Mr. Devanney told *The Leader/Times*. He said some county employees who worked the event did so on a voluntary basis.

Referring to negative comments made by Art Alexakis of the band Everclear directed toward GOP Presidential candidate John McCain and his running mate Sarah Palin, Mr. Devanney said the GOP would likely not have opposed those comments if they were said of Barack Obama.

Mrs. Renna shouted from her seat that Mr. McCain is an "American hero."

Mr. Devanney said Mrs. Renna "would have us do nothing" in terms of county entertainment.

A police officer escorted Mrs. Renna out of the meeting after Mr. Estrada ruled she was out of order. "You are cowards; all of you," Mrs. Renna told the board in response to her ejection from the meeting.

Speaking on Mr. Alexakis' comments, Freeholder Al Mirabella said, "I don't think anyone up here condones the bad language." He said the county would "have to keep an eye on that and see what can be done" at future concerts.

Mr. Sullivan said, in terms of the political comments made, that, "You know there is something called the First Amendment" and that "you don't always have to agree with it."

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