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FRESH BAKED...The smell of fresh baked bread drew a crowd to the bakery booth at the Home and Garden Show at the National Guard Armory in Westfield this past weekend.

Greg Ryan for *The Westfield Leader*

Police Seek Motive, Suspects In Death of Ripley Pl. Secretary

The Westfield Leader archives, March 18, 1976

WESTFIELD — Police are continuing a day and night investigation of the murder of Miss Lena Triano, a 57-year-old secretary found strangled and stabbed in her home at 16 Ripley Place Monday.

Death was attributed to asphyxiation by strangulation according to the coroner, but a complete autopsy report is still awaited by Police Chief James F. Moran.

Miss Triano's body was discovered shortly after 3:30 p.m. Monday by Patrolmen Ronald Coles and Donald Lamendola and Det. Sgt. William Muth following a phone call from her employer who became alarmed when she failed to report for work and efforts to contact her failed.

Police said they have interviewed hundreds of people acquainted with Miss Triano who lived alone on the first floor of her home on Ripley Pl. The upstairs apartment had been vacant for years, they said.

Neighbors reportedly saw the victim Sunday and she was known to have attended mass at Holy Trinity Church that morning. No motive has yet been found for the slaying, and there was no visible sign of a forced entry to the house. Police were forced to break into the apartment, which was locked from the inside.

Born in Westfield, Miss Triano was the daughter of the late Philip and Philomena DelGuidice Triano, a communicant of Holy Trinity Church, she was a graduate of Westfield High School and was employed as legal secretary for the Law firm of David Britkopf of 11 Hill St., Newark.

She is survived by two brothers, Anthony F. Triano of Fanwood and Joseph P. Triano of Westfield.

Funeral services are being held at 9:30 a.m. today at the Dooley Colonial Home, 556 Westfield Ave., and at 10 a.m. at Holy Trinity Church where a funeral mass will be offered.

Interment will be in Fairview Cemetery.

Rewards Offered for Information On Murderer, Assailant

The Westfield Leader archives, July 15, 1976

Rewards of \$750 each for information leading to the arrest and convictions of the murderer of Miss, Lena Triano and the assailant who knifed Josephine Plasecka have been offered by the Town Council. Miss Triano, a legal secretary, was found dead in her home at 61 Ripley Pl. of strangulation and wounds Mar. 14. Miss Plasecka, of 211 Cacciola Pl. was knifed repeatedly June 30 when she apparently was surprised by an intruder when she returned home from grocery shopping. She is recovering from stab wounds. Anyone with information is advised to contact Police Chief James F. Moran who authorized the council to post the rewards.

Editor's note: Her brother Anthony, who died in 1980 at 64, owned Glen View Manor Tavern in Scotch Plains for 30 years before retiring in 1976. Glen View is now Charlie Brown's Restaurant. A search of *The Westfield Leader* archives in the late 1930s shows that Miss Triano received many academic and sports honors while in the Westfield public schools.

LENA TRIANO, Westfield High School's *The Weather Vane*, 1937... Academic Committee (2); Finance Committee (4); Nominating Committee (4); Typing Club (2, 3); Hockey (2, 3, 4); Soccer (2, 3, 4); Basketball (2, 3, 4); Volley Ball (2, 3); Tennyquitt (3); A. A. Council (3); G.A.C. (3). To be a private secretary is the ambition of this dependable student, efficient helper, and excellent athlete.

See it on the web!
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WF BOA

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cumbent upon the contractor."

Joseph Stager, a traffic engineer hired by RWM who has done traffic research of the intersection of Springfield Avenue and Mill Lane, said it would take a car seven to nine seconds to get through the intersection and four to six seconds during rush hours. He also said that in the morning, 1,600 vehicles drive past the facility and in the peak evening hours, 2,000 cars drive past. He said there currently are 17 cars entering the site and seven leaving in the morning, and there are seven going in and 10 exiting the facility in the evening.

Further testimony was given about the size and length of the parking spaces and about how many doctors and other employees would be working at the site at one time. John McDonagh, a professional planner, testified on behalf of RWM. He said the facility is in a commercial zone and, thus, does not impact the downtown area.

After much discussion by the board, and guidance by Board Attorney Vincent Loughlin, the board gave its preliminary approval with conditions to the project. Some of the conditions are as follows: a developer's agreement must be presented to the town planner and attorney and others in the administration for their approval; construction on the building cannot go on while the facility is in use and the town must be provided with a specific time line and dates for construction. If these conditions are met, the board will give final approval for the plan to go forward.



SAY CHEESE...Cub Scouts from Tamaquas Elementary School in Westfield pose for a picture after a recent visit to the office of *The Westfield Leader*.

Horace R. Corbin for *The Westfield Leader*

Malool, DePaola Winner to Face Glover In Mayor Race

By FRED T. ROSSI
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

SCOTCH PLAINS — Mayor Nancy Malool will challenge Deputy Mayor Mary DePaola in the Tuesday, June 5 Primary Election for the Republican mayoral nomination, with the winner facing Democratic Councilman Kevin Glover in November.

The mayor's move came after the township Republican Committee voted last week to endorse Mrs. DePaola as its mayoral candidate and Ed Saridaki, a former member of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education, as its candidate for township council. Mr. Saridaki and the winner of the June Republican mayoral Primary will face Mr. Glover and Colleen Gialanella, the Democrats' choice for township council.

Mrs. Malool, who joined the council in 2002, was elected mayor in 2008 over Mr. Glover, with Mrs. DePaola winning her council seat at the same time. The GOP currently controls the township council by a 3-2 margin.

"I don't think a small group of Scotch Plains Republicans should decide who the candidate is," the mayor told *The Westfield Leader* in explaining her reasons for mounting a Primary challenge. She said there was "no legitimate reason" why the local GOP failed to name her as its candidate, aside from what she said were "some personal disagreements from a few years ago."

The mayor bucked her party in 2010 when she backed Dominick Bratti, a Republican council member who ran unsuccessfully for re-election as an Independent, and irked some party members two years ago when she replaced the township legal team that had been in place for some years and had been named by a township council led by then-mayor Martin Marks. She also ruffled some feathers by not reappointing party supporters like long-time zoning board of adjustment chairman Jim Fawcett and Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority Commissioner Joan Papan.

"The people — not a small group — should decide who the candidate is going to be," Mrs. Malool said. She said Republican Chairman William McClintock, a former council member himself, told her several weeks ago that she should "not bother running" and "not bother showing up" at the March 28 candidates screening because the party apparatus was lined up against her by a two-to-one margin. "I didn't think it was right to run away and give up," the mayor said. At last week's screening, Mrs. Malool lost to Mrs. DePaola by a 20-15 vote.

Mrs. Malool also accused Mr. McClintock of engineering a last-minute change in the party's bylaws that prevented several members supportive of Mrs. Malool from voting last week. Mr. McClintock told *The Leader* the bylaw changes were made in order to ensure that only those committee members who were regular attendees at party meetings were allowed to vote on candidate selections; he pointed out that the vote to change the rules had been unanimous.

The mayor lamented that what she termed to be a "personal vendetta" against her has had an "impact on the town government." She said she has "served the town well, probably through one of the most

difficult times we've had," alluding to the recessionary economy when she took office in January 2009 and then the town being without a manager during its critical budget deliberations that winter and spring.

"The town's been efficiently run," she added. She said finding "good people" to serve in elective office will be difficult if the local Republicans simply want to "put in people who will just listen to what they say." That, the mayor told *The Leader*, will lead to the "same political hacks" being elected repeatedly.

Mayor Malool questioned why Mrs. DePaola — "someone who claimed to be my friend" — was opposing her, given that "she's agreed with me 99 percent of the time" and "for three-and-a-half years, she told me she wouldn't run against me."

For her part, Mrs. DePaola, who has served as deputy mayor since January 2011, declined to comment on the mayor, saying she preferred to focus on her experience and leadership. She told *The Leader* she was running for mayor because, "I like serving the town, and the way for me to serve is through leadership." She said that, "We've reached a point where we need some strong Republican leadership in town. I'm the person to step up and take a strong leadership role."

The third council Republican, William Vastine, told *The Leader* he backed Mrs. DePaola because "the single biggest issue in this campaign is going to be the [Scotch Plains and Fanwood] police department merger, not the summer concert series, as Mr. Glover seems to think." Mr. Vastine said he felt Mrs. DePaola supports a more aggressive attempt at combining the two departments than Mayor Malool. And he said he and Mrs. DePaola disagreed with the council's decision to use \$100,000 in surplus funds from the sewer utility to lessen the overall property-tax increase this year.

Mr. Glover was elected to the council in 2006, lost to Mayor Malool in the 2008 mayoral race and was reelected to his council seat in 2010. He told *The Leader* this week he believes the township is "starting to turn the corner," and said he believes he has contributed to that in terms of promoting a more open municipal government, more dialogue, urging new ways to save taxpayer dollars and pushing more shared services. On the last point, Mr. Glover said he seeks an increased shared-services relationship with Fanwood that "will benefit both towns significantly through better services and reduced costs."

He said the township government, recognizing that it cannot rely as much on help from Trenton, "needs to come to grips with financial reality and work to navigate it." Without getting into specifics seven months before the election, Mr. Glover said he would work to "propose a vision and a strategy to make the town even better than it is, and we have to begin by reducing property taxes."

His running mate, Mrs. Gialanella, who is making her first run for elective office, is an educator who works for the Clark school district. Her husband is a law enforcement officer and they have two children.

Arrest Made in 1976 Westfield Murder

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those who are involved in crimes like this...that cases are never closed," Mr. Romankow said.

The prosecutor said he would file a motion to have the suspect's name released. "I think the public has a right to know," Mr. Romankow said. "I can tell you that it is very frustrating as a prosecutor to know that you have to try someone who is 50 years of age as a juvenile," said Mr. Romankow.

Mr. Romankow said Ms. Triano kept her back door open. However, he said when police went to the house in 1976 to check on her whereabouts after she failed to show up for work, they found the back door locked and the key missing.

"I am sure that's how access was gained," Det. Byron added.

Det. Byron recognized Westfield Police Officer Nicole Stivale and Lieutenant John Riccerca for their help in the investigation, along with Prosecutor's Office Sergeant Harvey Barnwell.

Det. Byron and Sgt. Barnwell went out into the Westfield neighborhood to talk to long-time residents about the case. Det. Byron said one resident him, "If you ever find out who did this mystery, please let us know," he said.

A niece of the victim, who lives in Cranford and is the only known living relative, was told of the arrest concerning her aunt's murder. Speaking on cold cases, Mr.

Romankow said the Triano case "tells us how important it is to retain evidence," noting that without the retention of evidence, her murder "would have never been solved."

He said the clothes Ms. Triano was wearing at the time was a critical piece of evidence in the case.

Mr. Romankow is asking anyone who knows of anyone who was hogtied in current or old cases to call his office at (908) 527-4500. "The investigation is continuing with reference to this crime and possibly other crimes," he said.

Initially detectives began looking into the Triano homicide case in an effort to see if there was a link to a Springfield homicide that had occurred two months after the Triano murder.

"The connection was that [Ms. Triano] worked at the same firm with [the Springfield victim's] husband," Det. Byron said. The Springfield case remains unsolved.

The suspect in Ms. Triano's murder, who is employed as an oil truck driver and is not married, is being held in the Union County jail with no bail pending a release hearing in the next few days.

"Obviously, we will object to him being released," Mr. Romankow said. "This was not a random murder; we think this person lived in the area."

See this page for reprint of *The Westfield Leader* archive of the murder.

SP Council

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also said the store "does good work" in raising money for animals and felt the sidewalk displays "gets customers to come in."

The council was split on a proposal from Councilman Glover, the liaison to the Memorial Day Parade Committee, on sponsoring a concert on the Sunday prior to the Memorial Day parade and ceremonies. Three years ago, the nascent Scotch Plains Management Corporation, in an effort to boost downtown businesses, sponsored an all-day music festival after the traditional parade — an event that angered many veterans who preferred the day be set aside for solemn ceremonies and remembrances.

Mayor Malool expressed concern about the veterans' reactions, but Mr. Glover vowed a "highly dignified concert," recalling the pre-Memorial Day concert by the Marine Corps Band several years ago. The mayor said it was important to gauge the veterans' opinions before moving forward on any serious effort to hold a concert. Mayor Malool and Mrs. DePaola also raised the issue of costs — particularly for police and public works overtime.

The council also approved advertising for engineering and construction services in connection with needed repairs on nine storm outfalls, which are where storm water drains into brooks and streams. An estimated \$290,000 to \$350,000 will be required for the repairs, which include stabilization of banks, and a variety of state environmental permits also will be necessary, according to Robert Lynes of Hatch Mott Macdonald, the township's consulting engineering firm. Funds for the repairs are available in two existing bond ordinances from 2006 and 2010. "The money's there; this needs to be done," said Mayor Malool. Lesser repairs to several other drains have already been completed, Mr. Lynes told the council.

At the start of the meeting, the council officially named Mr. LaCosta and Township Clerk Bonnie Lacina as co-managers, replacing the Chris Marion, who recently resigned to take the position of business administrator in Old Bridge Township.



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