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Letters to the Editor
Mountainside School Administrator
Updates the Public on Schedules
 Dear Mountainside Families:
 I hope this letter finds you in great anticipation of our upcoming vacation and the warm weather. Before we break, I wanted to update you about a few things.
 First, I just want to remind you that school will be closed next week from Monday, April 2, to the following Monday, April 9. School will resume on Tuesday, April 10. The district offices will be open Tuesday April 3 through Thursday, April 5. In addition at Tuesday's board meeting, the Board of Education approved a calendar change. We have one remaining snow day and in the event that we do not use the snow day between now and May 24, the Memorial Day holiday will be extended to Tuesday, May 29.
 Second, on March 15, the PTA held their annual fundraiser. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincerest thanks on behalf of the district and the Board of Education for their efforts. They do so much to support the programs and children of Mountainside.
 Speaking of programs, I just wanted to call your attention to our special Curriculum Night on Thursday, April 12. This is an opportunity for you to see and participate in the special activities and lessons students have been engaged in throughout the school year. Beechwood's School program begins at 5:30 p.m. and Deerfield School's program begins at 7 pm. I look forward to seeing you there.
 Finally, I would like to wish you and your family a relaxing and enjoyable spring break. I hope you find lots of time to spend with your wonderful children?
Nancy Lubarsky
 Chief School Administrator
 Mountainside

ABCDICTIONOPQRSTDECEPTIONUVWXYZ

Diction Deception
 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. Levigate — To rub or grind; to make smooth
 2. Drogue — A buoy attached to the end of a harpoon line
 3. Sibillant — Hissing sound
 4. Spelcheuchan — A tobacco or money pouch
SPETCHES
 1. The trimmings of skins and hides, used for making glue
 2. Splints used for broken bones
 3. Spittle
 4. Wetland; bogs
DREPANIUM
 1. A small cleaning cloth
 2. The art of interior decorating
 3. An eyepatch
 4. In botany, a sickle-shaped cyme
SHOTE
 1. Archaic past tense of shoot
 2. Undesirable; worthless
 3. A young pig
 4. To strike or hit
LIMICOLOUS
 1. Of or like a sea slug or shell-less snail
 2. Living in mud
 3. Very bright green shade
 4. Having edges partly overlapping, as a suture

Commuters, Transport Workers Seem to Be Developing a Bond

Hundreds of commuters take NJTransit buses to and from work every day in the area. It's amazing how well-run and on schedule the buses seem to be. The drivers are courteous and understanding, as we observe. The timing at 6 to 7:30 a.m., when the buses arrive, coincides with the last-minute arrivals of commuters, merging just within seconds each morning. Somehow few commuters miss their bus, even though they are cutting it so close.
 In Westfield, commuters in the early morning gallop up the north side parking lot (some more speedy than others) to the North Avenue bus stop after parking their cars on the south side and coming through the underpass. The bus drivers are patient, holding open the doors, though surely pressured to maintain the schedule. It seems as if the commuters and the drivers must be developing a bond as all of this works surprisingly well day in and day out.

For those arriving early for the bus, perhaps as much as 45 seconds, they line up orderly. Given this spare moment, a friendly "good morning" may actually be heard.
 It's true that there is some confusion occasionally, such as when a spouse drops off their mate, sometimes a little late. To compensate, they may enter the parking lot through the one-way entrance — doing it from the wrong direction. The caution in such a case is to not surprise and accidentally hit a pedestrian walking in the lot. Perhaps adding 20 seconds to the alarm clock would reduce such occurrences.
 It's an everyday rite of passage with interesting commuting stories to be told from towns in the region.
 The trains seem to be on time as well and several postal workers are caught smiling — even saying hello.
 Could this be a pleasant trend?

A Quiet Week, Even So on Monday As Candidates Filed for Primary

Parents with children in school are on spring break. Many of them have escaped the area for a week of a well-deserved vacation. There are no school-board elections this April, no PTA letters sent home with the backpack brigade. No school board publications of the traditional "budget bytes." No school-board officials campaigning for reelection. No campaigning for "pass the budget." Those in Westfield, however, do get to vote on a \$15-million bond request for school roof repairs on September 24.
 The state Legislature is on pause. The Governor is in Israel for eight days because...?
 It's a quiet week. Even so, on Monday, candidates for partisan offices filed to run in the June 5 Primary Election for office, with hopes of succeeding and ultimately becoming victorious in the November General Election. Such offices include President of the United States, Senate, Congress, Freeholders, Mayors and Councilpersons. Since the New Jersey Primary is one of the last in the nation, it's unlikely there will be any significance for voting for President then in the Primary as it will be "fait accompli all over again."
 The Primary will have meaning for Republicans in Scotch Plains and for Democrats in Elizabeth and the county. The GOP has a contested Primary for the Seventh Congressional District. For most others in this area, the Primary is a matter of confirming their

party's choices of unopposed candidates.
 Mayor Nancy Malool of Scotch Plains is running off the party line for reelection, as she did not receive the Republican Committee endorsement, losing out in a close vote, 21-15, to Deputy Mayor Mary DePaola. This Primary should be hotly contested. The winner will face Councilman Kevin Glover (D) for mayor in November. This is expected to be a donnybrook-doozey.
 Democrats For Change (DFC) proves to be a thorn in the side of the Elizabeth/County Democrat machine. The DFC has mounted a full slate for the June Primary, including freeholder candidates. The out-gunned Republicans for freeholder may have a glimmer of hope in November should the DFC knock off a DEM party choice in the Primary. The thinking being that there's nothing worse than opposing the party and beating the line. The party then must exact punishment, even if it means supporting the other party — or at least becoming momentarily dormant.
 The turnout for Primary Elections is normally low. Anything could happen.
 When the Primaries are over, be prepared for the tsunami — to be swamped by hundreds of millions of dollars of campaign slime, Ads for "Not Him for President."
 We recommend paying attention to local and county races, as "Charity Begins at Home."

Larsen Made No Efforts to Reach Out To Union County GOP Delegates

Someone should check David Larsen's residency because he is living in Fantasy Land, which is not a municipality in the Seventh Congressional District.
 Mr. Larsen's recent statement, which purports to claim my support of his ill-fated candidacy, would be laughable if it were not so sadly devoid of any basis in reality. David Larsen knows that I fully support and will continue to support Rep. Leonard Lance as the best choice to continue to represent the nearly 200,000 residents of Union County in the Seventh Congressional District. In fact, I publicly endorsed Congressman Lance on the steps of Summit City Hall on March 13, and I cast my ballot at our convention this past Saturday for Congressman Lance.
 It's disappointing that David Larsen and his campaign would try and deceive voters to think otherwise. The only reason I placed candidate Larsen's name into nomination is because as of the eve of our convention, the Larsen for Congress campaign failed to find any individual to nominate him or second his nomination — despite knowing our rules and having participated in the convention process in 2010.
 As Union County Republican chairman, I have long believed that even fringe candidates like David Larsen are entitled to an opportunity to compete. To this end, I placed his name into nomination to save him the embarrassment of having declared his interest in writing to compete in our convention but not having a nomination from the audience to do so. In fact, David Larsen's own campaign manager reached out to me to "help" him find someone to nominate him. Not a single member of the Union County Republican Committee was willing to do so.
 What's more, I flatly reject David

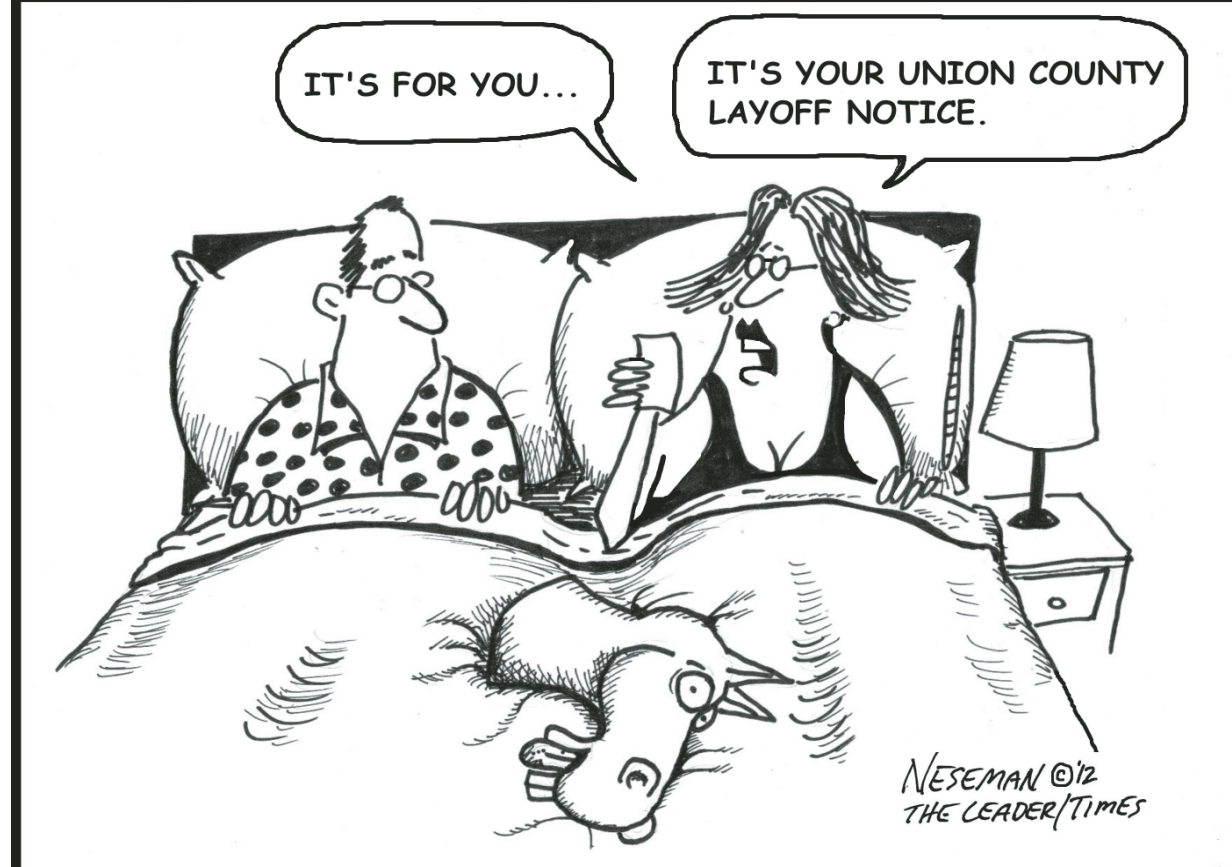
Larsen's disparaging remarks about the Union County Republican Convention process. The Union County Republican Convention has always been an open, transparent contest where people vote their conscience and beliefs and don't merely tow the party line. We have a proud history of listening to all candidates. In 2005, we were a battleground for the Republican nomination for Governor and Morris County Freeholder John Murphy almost pulled off an historic upset of the "establishment" candidate, and in 2008, State Senator Joe Pennacchio upset the "establishment" candidate for the U.S. Senate nomination. David Larsen is no Joe Pennacchio or John Murphy. He made no door-to-door efforts, unlike Freeholder Murphy or Senator Pennacchio, to engage the rank and file. Based upon his lack of effort to engage our committee members and his attempt to mislead voters based upon my charitable action at our Convention, David Larsen clearly lacks the character and conviction to earn the support of Republicans in Union County.
 The Union County Republican organization is proud to have endorsed Congressman Leonard Lance for Congress. Congressman Lance is a constant presence in Union County and fights for our fiscally conservative values in Washington against a Democratic President and Democratic-controlled Senate, which is responsible for out-of-control gas prices and a stagnant economy. I am honored to call Leonard Lance my representative in Washington and proud that his efforts on behalf of the citizens of Union County were rewarded with such an overwhelming victory at our Republican Convention on Saturday.
Philip Morin, Chair
 Union County GOP

This Resident to Vote No on Westfield Board of Education Bond Sept. 24

Reluctantly, I will vote against the BOE bond proposal on September 24, 2012. Management of the BOE budget by "assessment" instead of careful planning for a rainy day must be discouraged.
 Like a poorly managed condominium association, the BOE finds that there is no provision for a predictable long-term expense and has to burden Westfield taxpayers for their shortsightedness. In the future, savings from increased energy efficiency and other laudable BOE initiatives should be applied to regular, ongoing maintenance of infrastructure. Twenty years is a long time to pay interest on repair of something as basic as a roof.
Robert Nehring
 Westfield

NJ Watchdogs Tattle \$100k Pensions

TRENTON — Call it the \$100K Club — an elite corps of retired public employees that's growing bigger, younger and richer at the expense of the New Jersey retirement system.
 The number of retirees collecting more than \$100,000 a year from state pensions jumped to 1,244 last year — up 28 percent from 2010, according to New Jersey Watchdog's analysis of state data. For example:
 New Brunswick Police Director Anthony Caputo, for example, retired at age 47 to draw a \$115,019 annual pension. One year later, the city rehired Caputo as police director — the same position — at a \$120,000 salary. For one job, he receives two checks, totaling \$235,019 a year.
 Robert Mulcahy hit the jackpot when he was fired as Rutgers University's \$341,250-a-year athletic director. He received a severance package that cost the state school more than \$600,000. The next month, Mulcahy started collecting a \$162,399 annual pension.
 Joseph Blaettler will rake in more than \$4.5 million from the Police and Firemen's Retirement Fund if he reaches age 80, his statistical life expectancy. At age 46, Blaettler began pocketing nearly \$135,000 a year in retirement checks when he stepped down as Union City deputy police chief.
 For the complete story, go to newjersey.watchdog.org.
Mark Lagerkvist
 NJ Watchdog



The Titanic Is Remembered, But Not In So Good a Way

The *New York Times* in "Collectibles" in its March 31st issue states in bold print, "Titanic Spring Sale! Save 15 Percent Off Storewide! Commemorate The Titanic's 100th Anniversary!"
 You too can own a piece of "authentic coal and wood from ship." And a piece of a door. You can have an exact replica of Titanic which went down on April 12, 1912 after striking an iceberg. And an "Autographed Framed Titanic Photo" signed by Millvina Dean "the final Titanic survivor." "Less than 20 left!"
 HMS Titanic, the largest human made moving object of the time, has become a veritable industry. James Cameron continues to make a fortune from his movie *Titanic*.
 A judge has awarded RMS Titanic, Inc. \$110,000,000 for the full value of the artifacts, which it "salvaged" from the grave which is RMS Titanic and which it exhibits worldwide.
 All so maudlin! Such bad taste!
 What next? "JFK Assassination Spring Sale! Save 15 Percent Off Storewide! Commemorate JFK's 100th Anniversary!"
 The 1,514 human beings who lost their lives because their captain proceeded full steam ahead on a moonless night though warned about ice fields must not be commercially commemorated. They must be remembered, reflected upon, prayed for. As must the 710 human beings who survived in psychological shock which would last their remaining years.
 Neither Congress nor the state leg-

islature can legislate decency and good taste!
 The only solution is not to buy but rather to sit in silence and contemplate the horror for the 2,224 human beings those last few hours aboard the great ocean liner.
 On April 12 I shall not need a lump of coal or a piece of wood or a replica or a photo. I shall only need my mind as I sadly think about what happened and what I can do to persuade shipping authorities that such a thing not happen again! And so should we all!
Stephen Schoeman
 Westfield

Lautenberg, Picking Pockets for Decades

Sen. Lautenberg has been picking the pockets of no-bid, pay-to-play vendors at the DRPA and other public agencies throughout New Jersey for decades. Aside from the absurdity of his comments, it's interesting to note that he never expressed these sentiments when he literally begged for South Jersey's support in all of his campaigns for reelection. It's the height of hypocrisy.
 It's appalling that the only time Sen. Lautenberg shows any interest at all in South Jersey is when he needs campaign money and votes. He has been missing-in-action on the critical issues affecting the citizens of this region.
George Norcross III
 Camden County
Editor's Note: Mr. Norcross is an insurance executive and a fundraiser for Democratic Party
INNOVATION? CAR DOORS LOCK WITH THE THIEF INSIDE.

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 Asm. Jon Bramnick (R)
 251 North Ave. West
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 Asm. Nancy Munoz (R)
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LD-21 includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford.
LD-22 includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark and Linden.
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