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Letters to the Editor
Hauler Says \$101 Per Ton Fee to Dump at Incinerator Is Ridiculous
Editor's Note: The following letter was sent to Daniel Sullivan, acting executive director of the Union County Utilities Authority (UCUA), and copied to this newspaper, Senator Tom Kean, Jr., Assemblyman Jon Bramnick, as well as Michael DeTulvo and Deborah Pinto of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

 Mr. Daniel P. Sullivan,
 I received your letter on December 23, 2011 regarding the increase at the U.C.U.A. In your letter, it states that non-contract haulers are in the fifth year of your contract with Covanta as of January 1, 2012.
 Covanta's contract started on July 21, 2008. On January 1, 2012, it will be three years, four months and 10 days into that contract. The first day of the fifth year does not start until July 21, 2012.
 If your new price per ton stands, \$100.89, I firmly believe that this ridiculous fee will redirect trash out of the county!
 Please send to this office a copy of that contract as soon as possible. Also let me know if my interpretation of dates is incorrect.
Gerald Infantino
Infantino Brothers Disposal Co.
 Westfield

ABCDIJKLMNOPQRSTUDECEPTIONVWXYZ

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. Maricolous - Marine or sea-dwelling
 2. Sobriquet - A nickname
 3. Saleratus - Baking soda
 4. Impinguation - A flattened state or condition
NAIAD
 1. A water nymph or woman swimmer
 2. A thorny plant; Christ's-thorn
 3. A dwarf
 4. The inner part of a temple
TINEA
 1. Brushwood and thorns for making and repairing hedges
 2. Ringworm; a skin disease caused by a fungus
 3. A lime tree
 4. A persistent ringing sound in the inner ear
ICHTHYOLITE
 1. A footprint
 2. The impression of a fish in a rock
 3. An infection causing pernicious clotting of blood
 4. An extinct genus of birds with socketed teeth and biconcave vertebrae
PHILIATER
 1. An amateur medical student
 2. A soldier, especially an infantryman
 3. A stamp collector
 4. A self-absorbed person

Tipping Fees of \$100/Ton Smell, Dumping Rules Need Fixing

The Union County Utilities Authority (UCUA) has completed the extension of the lease of the county's waste to energy incinerator through the year 2031 to Covanta Energy. Once again, the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders has said how wonderful this deal is for towns in that it will save them collectively \$100 million over the next 20 years; an average of \$4 million per year. Unfortunately, this is not so for towns such as Westfield and Fanwood where trash collection is done by private business. These towns with private business actually get hammered with higher costs and the county puts some of your trash money into their pockets. It's a slam to private enterprise and another suffocating government expansion. Please note the frustration of the private haulers as expressed in Mr. Infantino's letter on this page.

as solid waste grants mounting to an average of \$3 per ton paid directly to the towns, not the haulers. Is this "hush" money? Taxpayers won't see a drop as this money simply will go into municipal budgets as revenue.
 Union County and all counties were ordered by the state years ago to build incinerators or to dump at a neighboring county's burner. Some counties fought it and refused. The hundreds of millions of dollars in debt to build these facilities has been the big problem faced by Union and other counties that proceeded. As such, Union County offered towns a \$50 per ton fee with a CPI if they signed 25-year contracts to dump at the county burner, a decision that followed a court decision to un-regulate waste disposal in New Jersey. But haulers without contracts servicing towns like Westfield and Fanwood have no choice; they are ordered under a county ordinance to dump at the Rahway incinerator or face stiff penalties.

Don't blame the private haulers in this town when you see your bills rise.
 Freeholder Dan Sullivan who championed this deal now catapulted himself up to head the UCUA with a six-figure salary. Does he intend to remain a freeholder as well?

In our opinion, this restriction is unjust and should be removed. Where is the competition? There are less expensive alternatives for private haulers. Are they (and we) being held hostage? And why is the county in the garbage business in the first place? The county should stop interfering with Covanta by letting them run this facility at a profit and without forcing them to split revenue from the generation of electricity with the county. And when did the county or UCUA become big brother by dictating such a disparity in tipping fees? Clearly, the debt service is being passed onto towns like Westfield, Scotch Plains and Fanwood as a punishment for not signing long-term contracts. Shouldn't haulers be able to find a disposal solution that best serves their customers, not the county?

As we have said repeatedly on this editorial page, this is a bad deal as it amounts to nothing more than a county mandate on towns: Either towns sign long-term contracts with the UCUA (including the strings and guarantees attached) and receive tipping fees of around \$58 per ton or do not sign contracts for which private haulers will be charged \$100 per ton in 2012. Last year's rates were \$68 for contract towns and \$97 for non-contract communities, so the disparity in rates is getting greater. Where will the fees be in a year or two or 10? Where is free enterprise?

We don't blame the other towns that were forced to sign on. They had no choice but to submit - and we're just a voice in the dark; regrettably with the only solace to say, "We told you so."

So who is "saving money" in this deal you may ask? And who is making money in this deal you may ask? According to a Union County Public Information press release dated December 19, the 14 towns that signed lease extensions - all that had existing long-term contracts - will receive reimbursements relative to a \$12 drop in tipping fees retroactive to January 1, 2011. They are: Elizabeth, \$658,000; Garwood, \$16,000; Hillside, \$101,000; Kenilworth, \$30,000; Linden, \$148,000; New Providence, \$41,000; Plainfield, \$235,000; Rahway, \$158,000; Roselle, \$95,000; Roselle Park, \$54,000; Springfield, \$67,000; Summit, \$90,000; Union, \$269,000, and Winfield, \$9,800. Who is paying for these "savings"? Couldn't this "savings" have been better used to pay down the incinerator debt?

The seven towns that do not have contracts are Berkeley Heights, Cranford, Clark, Fanwood, Mountainside, Scotch Plains and Westfield. The UCUA said it would be issuing checks to these towns

Covanta Union, Inc., Rahway, NJ
 www.covantaenergy.com - The Union County Resource Recovery Facility, operating as Covanta Union, Inc., is located on the banks of the Rahway River and began commercial operation in June 1994, serving the residents of Union County. The facility processes up to 1,540 tons of solid waste each day into enough electrical energy to power some 30,000 homes and businesses. The facility runs entirely on the energy it produces, with the remaining 39 megawatts of renewable energy sold through a merchant power marketer. Designed and built by Covanta Energy, the facility is owned by the Union County Utilities Authority and operated by Covanta Energy under a 25-year lease negotiated in 1998.

Center for Hope Hospice Offers The Finest Of Professional Care

I'm writing this in response to the article that appeared in the Thursday December 29, 2011 issue concerning Center For Hope Hospice. I was hired by the previous administration at Center For Hope Hospice and am still employed here. I agree that there have been some staffing changes as there are in all organizations. These changes were made to ensure the highest quality of care at Center For Hope Hospice.
 I am appalled by the comment alluding to the fact that patient care has suffered under the new management. Patient care has never been better and employee morale has never been higher. I have been a nurse for over

36 years and I pride myself in patient care. During the course of my career I have always surrounded myself with clinical personnel that had the same work ethics as me.
 Center For Hope Hospice has offered and continues to offer the finest of professional care to all of our patients and their families regardless of their ability to pay. I welcome anyone to come tour our facilities and I would be happy to conduct that tour personally.
Nancy Rager
RN, CLNC, WCC, CALA
Facility Administrator
Peggy Coloney's House
Center For Hope Hospice

WF Needs to Stop Relying on Mutual Aid from Neighbors to Fight Fires

"Mutual Aid" is the common name given to the practice of contiguous municipalities calling for help in the areas of public safety covered by police, fire departments, and ambulance squads. The statute covering this is NJSA 40A:14-26. The actual title and body of the statute refer to "Emergency Assistance." It seems to have become the practice of some towns to rely on their neighbors, not just for emergencies, but as a means of lowering their own budgets. For years some larger cities have lowered their budgets by cutting the number of firemen and then relied on their neighbors to supply the necessary manpower they refuse to include in their own budgets. The requesting town is required to pay only a fraction of the costs of the responding town. It would seem that this economic reason for reliance on an emergency practice is a misuse of the statute.

department and the first hose being brought into the house by the Plainfield department. The damage to that house was increased by the fact the fire doubled its size 10 times before suppression began. This was not an emergency on the order of Ferraro's. This was an ordinary fire that would never have required an emergency call for help 10 years ago. This is the result of the misuse of the statute.
 In responding to starving Parisians' calls for bread, Marie Antoinette is alleged to have said, "Let them eat cake." When our politicians were told of the increased damage caused by delay in suppressing fires, they are alleged to have said, "That's what insurance is for." Fires will continue to occur. Fire will continue to double in size every minute it is not suppressed. As a public official you cannot be proud that your punctual department must sit and wait until a neighboring town shows up. You cannot be proud that an economic decision increases the damage to property and the safety of the responding firemen.
 Everyone applauds budget cuts in non-safety, non-emergency areas. Priorities exist and should be followed. Stop applauding punctual firemen and remove the shackles with which your economic decisions bind them.
A. John Blake
 Westfield

Won't Extending Soc. Sec. Tax Cut Leave Less Money to Pay Us?

Recently the Congress passed and the President signed legislation extending a reduction in the amount of taxes all workers pay into the Social Security trust fund. The reduction was already in effect for all of 2011 and two weeks ago was extended for the first two months of 2012, and they are talking about voting again to keep that reduction in effect for all of next year.
 These taxes are paid by every worker no matter what their income and they are paid to fund the Social Security payments, which they will receive when they retire. The Social Security trust fund is where that money is held and that's where the Social Security payments paid out to retirees come from. The trust fund is similar to a bank account - it holds the Social Security money until it is needed.
 I do not understand why Congress and the President reduced the amount of money being paid into the Social

Security trust fund. I've heard over and over again, including from the government itself, that the Social Security system does not have enough money to pay benefits to the retirees currently getting benefits and all the Baby Boomers who will be retiring over the next decade or so.
 In other words, the government had already done the math and figured out that the amount of money going into the Social Security trust fund wasn't going to be enough to pay all of the benefits we've all been promised.
 So why did Congress (including our Senators and Representative) and the President reduce the amount of money being saved for our retirement benefits? It doesn't make any sense to me. With less money going into the trust fund, won't there be even less money available to pay us our promised benefits? Doesn't that mean that benefits will have to be reduced since there will be even less money in the fund to pay out to us?
Rich Fortunato
 Scotch Plains

People Move From NJ For Many Reasons

Referring to Senator Kean's letter published on December 29, 2011, he states, "there is a strong correlation between new Jersey's increased tax burden...and the loss of population...."
 As the saying goes in statistics, correlation does not imply causation. There is also a strong correlation between the number of firefighters fighting a fire and the size of the fire. Does that mean that getting more firefighters to fight a fire makes the fire larger?
 People move for many reasons. Taxes can be one of them. To know the real reasons why people are moving, we have to ask them. We can't take a correlation and assume cause and effect.
John Robison
 Westfield

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 Scotch Plains

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 THE LEADER/TIMES

Letters to the Editor

The Thoughts And Prayers Of The Westfield Community

Ranger Margaret Anderson (a native of Westfield) made the ultimate sacrifice yesterday (Sunday) while stopping an armed gunman in Mount Rainier National Park. Ranger Anderson's selfless actions protected the lives of families vacationing in the park on New Year's Day. The thoughts and prayers of the Westfield community and the State of New Jersey are with Margaret's husband and two young children.
Asm. Jon Bramnick
 Westfield

Horrified by Article, Margaret Kritsch Anderson Shooting

Editor's Note: This letter was sent to The Star-Ledger and copied to The Westfield Leader.

 I read your (Star-Ledger) front-page news this a.m., and when I got to the next page of the article I was horrified to see my pastor's home pictured in the article along with the information that he flew out to Oregon last night with his wife. You also informed the public about the town he lives in.
 You have articles every day of the week about people's homes being robbed every day when they appear (or their family info) in the obituary column. Why put a man's home picture in the paper along with the town? Are you trying to put a blue print to point out the way to go for a criminal to rob the home?
 Are you that insensitive and irresponsible?
Carl Swenson
 Westfield

I THOUGHT THE CAUCASUS WERE IN EURASIA, NOT IOWA

 CHARLES
 August 10, 1927 W.I.

The 1% Danger

The trend of big companies buying up small farms is a dangerous example of what the 1 percent does. Sadly, the IRS and estate taxes make the destruction of American farms even more sinister. It is only the small farmers that resist the use of genetically modified crops. The Federal Reserve, Goldman Sachs, Monsanto and the military industrial complex are manipulating our futures. Start learning critical thinking skills before it is too late. Perhaps it already is!
Joseph DuPont
 Towanda, PA

Your State Legislators

<p>---LD-21--- Sen. Thomas Kean, Jr. (R) 425 North Ave. E. Westfield, N.J. 07090 (908) 232-3673 Asm. Jon Bramnick (R) 251 North Ave. West Westfield, N.J. 07090 (908) 232-2073 Asm. Nancy Munoz (R) 57 Union Place, Suite 310 Summit, N.J. 07901 (908) 918-0414</p>	<p>---LD-22--- Sen. Nicholas Scutari (D) 1514 E. Saint Georges Ave. Linden, N.J. 07036 (908) 587-0404 Asw. Linda Stender (D) 1801 East Second St. Scotch Plains, N.J. 07076 (908) 668-1900 Asm. Jerry Green (D) 17 Watchung Ave. Plainfield, N.J. 07060 (908) 561-5757</p>	<p>LD-21 includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford. LD-22 includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark and Linden. E-mail senkean@njleg.org sscutari@njleg.org asmbarnick@njleg.org aswmunoz@njleg.org aswstender@njleg.org asmgreen@njleg.org</p>
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