

ST. BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE CHURCH

All are invited to share in the Liturgy of the Holy Week

April 5 - **HOLY THURSDAY** - Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:30 pm, Night Prayer 10:00 pm

April 6 - **GOOD FRIDAY** - Children's Walk with Jesus 10:00 am
 Celebration of the Lord's Passion 3:00 pm
 Outdoor Stations of the Cross 7:00 pm



HOLY SATURDAY

April 7 - Easter Vigil
 Mass 7:30 pm

EASTER SUNDAY

April 8 - Masses
 7:30, 9:00, 10:30 am &
 12:00 pm

Cranford Puts Off Action on Limiting Feeding of Wildlife

By FRED T. ROSSI
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD — After receiving comments from residents concerned about the scope of a proposed ordinance that would sharply limit the feeding of wildlife on public and private property, the township committee on Tuesday night put off a vote on the ordinance so that its language could be more closely examined and fine-tuned.

At its regular meeting on Tuesday, the township committee was set to vote on the ordinance, which would "prohibit the feeding of unconfined wildlife in or on any public or private property" in an effort to "protect public health, safety and welfare." But Commissioner Lisa Aduabato-Nesi said committee members had received "a number of comments" from residents over the past few weeks expressing concerns about the ordinance, leading the governing body to agree to put off formal action until Tuesday, April 10.

Several residents also expressed their concerns at Tuesday's meeting, with a Holly Street resident saying that the ordinance, if enacted, would mean that, "I can't do what I want on my own property." She raised the notion of residents being fined for feeding birds.

Ms. Aduabato-Nesi said while bird feeding is specifically permitted in the ordinance, she was "troubled about the private-property issue." She added that she felt "the ordinance itself is necessary" and that "these types of ordinances are very, very common in New Jersey." Last month, Ms. Aduabato-Nesi said the ordinance was aimed primarily at curbing the feeding of deer, a practice she said had led to other wildlife, including foxes, coming into residential neighborhoods. This week she also noted the impact on storm-water runoff from increased wildlife activity in neighborhoods.

In other business, the committee, by a 4-1 vote, approved an ordinance setting this year's sewer fees. Under the new structure, the minimal usage for sewer fee assessments is being lowered from 75,000 gallons to 25,000 gallons and the minimum fee is being lowered from \$175 to \$140 — a move that Mayor David Robinson said was good for senior citizens and others on fixed incomes. Commissioner Edward

O'Malley voted against the ordinance, saying that larger-volume users such as non-profits and nursing homes were being unfairly hurt by the fees.

The township committee also introduced the 2012 municipal budget, but all five members stressed that much work still needed to be done to cut expenditures and lower what would be a 4-percent increase in the municipal portion of local property-tax bills. No details were provided on Tuesday, but more information is expected to be posted on the township's website next week.

"This is still a work in progress," said Deputy Mayor Andis Kalnins, who added that the committee was looking at several items that would lower the tax hike "significantly." He said the finance subcommittee, which he heads, would be meeting to discuss the budget and said residents were welcome to speak with him at two public hearings to be held on Tuesdays, April 3 and April 17, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Briefly addressing the latest developments surrounding the Birchwood Avenue development, Township Attorney Phil Morin said the township's planning board will discuss at its Wednesday, April 4, meeting proposed changes to the township's master plan to allow multi-family affordable housing at the Birchwood Avenue site. The township committee, he said, will be required to pass an ordinance to formalize such a designation. The township needs to take these actions, Mr. Morin said, to comply with a judge's December order allowing work at the site to go forward. He said that once these steps are taken and the township certifies to the court that it is in compliance with the judge's order, then the municipal government can formally file an appeal of the judge's order.

At the start of the meeting, the committee congratulated Christopher Kosciwa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America. Commissioner O'Malley presented certificates to two local businesses — Artemisia and X-tra Mile Fitness — for their efforts at adopting environmentally-sustainable practices as part of the local Go Green initiative. The flag salute was led by several members of Girl Scout Troop No. 51114.



COZZABLANCA...Bob Cozzolina of Westfield recently traveled to Casablanca, Morocco, visiting Rick's Cafe, made famous by the film Casablanca starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman. He catches up on the news back home by reading a copy of The Westfield Leader.

For Mountainside Board of Education story see page 5.

Garwood Council

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Tuesday night's meeting. The guards had heard from Councilman Jim Mathieu that a council committee had been discussing ways to reduce the municipal budget by looking at unemployment benefits given to the guards. Some of the crossing guards said they felt that Mr. Mathieu asking them questions about their jobs was invasive.

Linda Canear, a crossing guard for 20 years, said Mr. Mathieu came to her corner and asked her about her unemployment benefits. "In 20 years, nobody has come to my corner," she said.

"Nobody should be coming to you. A councilperson should take it up with the police chief or police commissioner," the mayor responded.

"What I wanted to do was get your [Mrs. Canear] opinion. I was a little surprised to find out later on that you felt intimidated by me," Mr. Mathieu said. "Chief [Bruce] Underhill said I could not talk to you. I was basically threatened with arrest by talking to you. I think that is basically wrong. You are my constituents... and I want to hear what you have to say... I'm not going to stop talking to people... Put me in jail if you want to."

"I never threatened to arrest him," Police Chief Underhill told *The Leader*. "He violated Title 40 by speaking to my employees."

"He is not allowed to speak to them about the terms and conditions of their employment contract," Chief Underhill added.

Several crossing guards spoke of their right to collect unemployment benefits when their services are not needed while school is out for the summer.

Crossing guard Rosemary Snow said, "Regarding the unemployment benefits for our crossing guards, I have called the governor's office and spoke to one of his aides and he said 'yes, you can collect unemployment.' I called the unemployment office and they said we can collect because we pay into unemployment."

Diane Cirillo said, "The law is we can collect this. We don't know why this subject was brought up by council at all. I was a crossing guard for 22 years and this has never come up."

"I think there are misconceptions," the mayor said. "There are special laws that do regulate crossing guards. Crossing guards are not

seasonal. They are part-time workers. According to the law in the State of New Jersey, you are ready and willing to work and when there is no work, you are entitled to unemployment. For me, nothing will change until the laws of the State of New Jersey change."

"As a crossing guard we have to make sure each and every day we are on the corners, that our children go to school safely and go home safely. We are not there to take abuse by anyone. Our responsibility is the children first. We don't want more abuse," Ms. Snow said.

Resident Fred McCarick said, "This, with the school crossing guards, is uncalled for. This should have never been made public by the councilman."

In other business, the council approved the hiring of Timothy Delgado as a laborer for the Department of Public Works, replacing retired laborer William Pervarnik.

The council will present its public hearing on the borough's budget on Tuesday, April 10, at 7:30 p.m. With the local Policemen's Benevolent Association's negotiations still ongoing, the budget under review includes the maximum increase the arbitrator has discussed in private meetings, Council President Keith Sluka said.



Paul Lachenauer for The Westfield Leader
RECOGNIZED FOR LEADERSHIP...Union County College President Margaret McMenamin was among those women honored March 23 at the Union County Commission on the Status of Women's 20th Annual Women of Excellence Awards Dinner held at The Westwood in Garwood. Ms. McMenamin, a Springfield resident, was honored for excellence in education.



Horace R. Corbin for The Westfield Leader
FUN VISIT...Mountainside Boy Scouts visit the office of The Westfield Leader last Thursday in order to complete a community assignment to earn a badge. A fun time was had by all.

Westfield Council

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themselves, to which he responded that his children are four and five years old.

Greg Kasko said one of the seven accidents that did occur at the crosswalk, but that the light was not activated at the time of the accident. He said that while Freeholder Chairman Al Mirabella said it was his opinion that the light is safer at its current location, Mr. Kasko questioned the accident data used to reach that conclusion. He cited several errors in accident reports where accidents were listed as having occurred on Central Avenue, but had not. Mr. Kasko also questioned what had been done to improve the intersection of Central and Clover, which was previously identified as a traffic "hot spot" by the town.

Katherine Clifford said the discussions of where to put the light was a multifaceted issue and that the mid-block crossing "seemed like the most appealing option" during public hearings several years ago.

John Difabio said he wishes the light were there 16 years ago. He added that he witnessed the accident two weeks

ago and the light was not activated at the time.

Councilwoman JoAnn Neylan, chairwoman of the public safety committee, announced that on Wednesday, April 18, at 7:30 p.m. a presentation will be held at Westfield High School for suggested parking and traffic improvements. The improvement recommendations include the areas of Westfield High School and Edison Intermediate School, and take into account public comment from previously held joint meetings of the council and board of education.

In other business, the council approved several resolutions including the demolition application for a home at 209 Sunset Avenue.

Also approved were sidewalk cafe licenses for Crumbs Bake Shop, Isabella's American Bistro, Jeffrey's, Mojave Grill, Panera, Starbucks, Theresa's, Xocolatz, Swirl Whirl, Casa Di Pizza, Cosimos, Qdoba, Rock'n Joe's, Turning Point and Wild Greens. The Rialto Theatre's annual theater license renewal was also approved.

Union County Layoffs

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Local No.1080, representing social, case and clerical workers in social services, said the county hired 17 new workers in October 2011 to handle the heavy caseload.

"Then we are told last month that you have deficit, but we also were told that you knew about it last year. Why were we approved to get a new training class of 17 people last year, October 24, when you knew you were going to have a problem with money in 2012?" Ms. Wilder questioned. "So now the class is going to be out the door...and then we are going to have workers that are left that are not going to be able to do their job."

Joanne Colucci-Turbett, CWA No. 1080 vice-president who is employed as a fraud investigator with social-services, said workers handle caseloads of 600 each. "If we lose our staff we are not going to be able to keep up with that (caseload)," she warned county officials. "People are not going to be serviced properly. It's going to be a mess." She said 12 social-services staff members are being let go in the first wave of layoffs.

Another worker said she was laid off in 2010, brought back in 2011 and now is being laid off again. "We're (October social services class) all going to be let go. Just let go like that. What are we going to do?" she asked the board.

Another social-services worker suggested the freeholders give up half of their salaries for a year to reduce spending.

Brandon Thomas, representing workers at Runnells, asked the freeholders, "When are you going to lay off the guys that sit in the back, do absolutely nothing all day and make \$90,000?"

Albert Hendricks, a 19-year Runnells employee in the activity therapy department, said he and his co-workers serve Runnells residents who are often "withdrawn from their environment." He said some residents when they heard of staff layoffs cried. Mr. Hendricks said he could find \$600,000 to cut in the

Runnells budget "within five minutes."

In response to comments from employees and union representatives, Kathy Hatfield, an outside labor attorney who represented the county in the negotiations with the collective bargaining units, said the county met with the unions twice in February, the second time of which the county made a proposal to avoid layoffs.

"We got silence on that," Ms. Hatfield said. She said the county then reached out a third time when county police and Local 68 made a counter offer that was accepted by the county. She said Council 8, however, "said no" to making concessions.

"It is our hope from now until the layoffs go into effect that we will be able to sit down with people and negotiate so we can try and come up with a mutually satisfactory solution," Ms. Hatfield told the freeholders.

Union County Director of Finance Bibi Taylor said the county is looking into an early retirement incentive program for employees and is currently looking at various options to fund such a program. "At this point in time, one of the issues that we don't have is readily available cash," Ms. Taylor said. The New Jersey Division of Local Government Services must approve the incentives.

Bruce Paterson of Garwood, who is not employed by the county but regularly attends freeholder meetings, said the county has been spending too much money the past 10 years, from a \$20-million clubhouse at Galloping Hill Golf Course to the \$45-million family court project.

He said Freeholder Sullivan has five relatives employed by the county. "Are any of his five relatives being laid off?" Mr. Paterson asked. In addition, he said Assemblyman Joseph Cryan (D-20, Union), an undersheriff in the sheriff's department, is really a part-time employee who spends "most of his time down in Trenton" and should have his \$120,000 county salary cut in half.

GOP Names Candidates

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as one of the solutions to lower gasoline prices.

Delegates also heard speeches from supporters of Mr. Romney, Texas Congressman Ron Paul and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich in their quest for the GOP nomination for president. No one spoke on behalf of former Pennsylvania U.S. Senator Rick Santorum.

Senator Tom Kean, Jr. (R-21, Westfield), speaking on behalf of Mr. Romney, said, "This election is about electing a leader who knows how to lead. Everything Mitt Romney has done he has done successfully," from running businesses and creating jobs to turning around the U.S. Olympics to his governorship of Massachusetts.

State Senator Michael Doherty (R-23, Hunterdon), speaking on behalf of Mr. Paul, said Mr. Paul "has raised some very important issues about the Federal Reserve, about following the Constitution, about getting a declaration of war" from Congress before the nation goes to war.

Meanwhile, a speaker on behalf of Mr. Gingrich, commented that Mr. Gingrich is "the only bold conservative in this race."

Sen. Kyrillos, who was given the Union County GOP line over challenger Joseph Rullo of Lakehurst, said since Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) took office in 2007 the nation's unemployment rate has doubled and the national debt has quadrupled to

\$8 trillion, while gas prices have gone from \$2.50 per gallon to close to \$4 per gallon in New Jersey.

"I am going to be a very different kind of senator," Sen. Kyrillos said, noting he would vote to lower individual federal tax rates by "taking out the loopholes and deductions," among other campaign initiatives.

Mr. Rullo said he was the "conservative alternative" to Sen. Kyrillos. "I am a businessman. I am not in office, but I am an operative," he said.

Mr. Rullo said he would focus on bringing manufacturing, research and technology to New Jersey to help lower unemployment and foreclosure rates. He said he supports building military bases on U.S. borders while deporting illegal aliens out of New Jersey and closing check cashing businesses "so they can't take the money and send it overseas."

Following the redrawing of Congressional lines, Scotch Plains and Fanwood have been moved into the 12th Congressional District currently represented by Rep. Rush Holt (D). Republican candidate for the seat, business owner Eric Beck of Middlesex County, said the General Election this year boils down to a "federal government that respects the Constitution and is a true partner to the private sector" versus "the vision of President Obama and Rush Holt, where we pretend to guarantee equal outcomes with no costs, no risks, no personal responsibility and ultimately no results."

Westfield BOE

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of the equipment is for upgrades in computers that are seven years old or older within the district. In addition, Mr. Slater added that the technology budget includes a \$250,000 increase for additional staff as well as an additional \$5,000 in the software line.

He concluded by noting that 53 percent of the total budget increase is because of technology upgrades. This, he also stated, does not include the \$600,000 of wireless services that "is funded out of the maintenance reserve account or existing staff salaries and benefits."

In all 14 resolutions were passed regarding the bond referendum including an application to the New Jersey commissioner of education to hold a special election on Monday, September 24, 2012. All plans of the roof replacement project will be submitted and include roof replacements at Westfield High School, Edison Intermediate School, Roosevelt Intermediate School, Jefferson Elementary School, Lincoln School, McKinley Elementary School, Tamaques Washington, and Wilson Elementary Schools and the Board of Education office building on Elm Street.

During prior BOE meetings, George Duthie, an architect from Fraytak, Veisz, Hopkins and Duthie (FVHD), spoke regarding \$13.6-million roofing project. Mr. Duthie had advised the board to fund the project through a bond issue because of the magnitude of the work. He had stated that if the district wanted to have the project done in the summer of 2013 then the board needed to approve the project no later than March 27, 2012.

This, he explained, would give the needed time to have the referendum done by September so that bidding could be completed by late winter/early spring of 2013 and construction could begin by the summer. He expected the project to be completed by August 2013.

Mr. Duthie had explained that approximately 80 to 85 percent of the roofs in the district had deteriorated and required immediate attention. He had also stated that construction costs remain favorable due to the current depressed state of the industry.

Mr. Yaniro explained that based upon information received from the district's bond counsel, for a 20-year bond term it would cost the average Westfield household \$88 per year based on an assessed home value of \$182,000. The first payment would be due in the 2013-2014 school year. He stated that whenever a new bond issue is proposed the bond payment schedule wraps around the existing schedule, thus the first year's payment in tax bills would average \$38 instead of \$88.

He also noted that there were three other outstanding bonds that were coming due by the 2015-2016 school year. This, he said, would then bring the total debt service to its current payment schedule or may even decrease over the next 18 years.

Also, last week Board member and Facilities Committee Chairwoman Jane Clancy gave a report on the condition of the Edison field, stating that adding \$1.5 million to the bond could fund a turf field. She noted that a report originally done in 2010 stated that the field needed work because of its continuous use. She stated that because of past budget restrictions this project had not been pursued.

The BOE had decided that because more information was needed, the facilities committee would do some more research at their next meeting regarding cost, size, location and lighting of the field. Mrs. Clancy then stated that the facilities committee would then report their findings to the full board at the April 24, 2012 meeting. This, she stated, would still give enough time to be added to the September 24 bond if the BOE decided they wanted to pursue the project.

The next BOE meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 10, at the BOE administrative building at 302 Elm Street.