

## Asm. Chivukula Announces Bid for Congress in 7th Dist.

REGION — State Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula (D-17, Somerset) has announced his candidacy for Congress from the Seventh District. Rep. Leonard Lance (R-7th) currently represents the district.

Born in Nellore, India, Mr. Upendra immigrated to the United States in 1974. He received his master's degree in electrical engineering from City College of the City University of New York.

Mr. Upendra was appointed by Governor James Florio to the New Jersey State Board of Social Work Examiners, serving from 1994 to 1997. In 1997 he was elected to the Franklin Township Council, where he served as deputy mayor of the council in 1998, and mayor in 2000.

Mr. Chivukula was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1996, 2000, and 2008, and was an alternate delegate in 2004.

In 2002 Mr. Upendra was the first Indian-American elected to the General Assembly. He currently serves as chairman of the Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee and as vice-chairman of the Homeland Security and State Preparedness Committee. He also serves as a member of the Commerce and Economic

Development Committee.

Among his campaign issues is his support for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a regulatory program aimed at reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 10 percent by 2018. This bill was passed by ten New England and Mid-Atlantic states. On May 26, 2011 Governor Chris Christie withdrew New Jersey from the greenhouse pact. Assemblyman Chivukula called the Governor's decision, "a reckless endangerment to the environment; [and] a regressive and misguided move that impedes decades of progress towards a responsible energy future."

Mr. Chivukula said he supports "strengthening our public schools through smaller class sizes and investing in teacher training." He also vows to continue to fight for K-12 and higher education funding.

The candidate also said he believes "promises made to Americans by ensuring the financial health of Social Security, Medicare, and the Veterans' health care system."

Under redistricting, starting this election cycle, the Seventh District includes Clark, Cranford, Garwood, Mountainside, Springfield and Westfield. Scotch and Fanwood have been moved to the Twelfth District.

## Lance Hopes High Court Overturns Health Care Law

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Rep. Leonard Lance (R-7th) released the following statement on the opening day of the U.S. Supreme Court hearing on the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act, often dubbed as ObamaCare.

"The constitutionality of the 2010 health care reform law is among the most important issues to come before the U.S. Supreme Court in a generation and the High Court's decision will have significant consequences for the American people. The Court's ruling, expected by the end of June, will decide whether the U.S. Constitution puts any limit on Congress' power to regulate not just healthcare, but the entire U.S. economy.

"The arguments this week begin with a technical discussion of whether the proposed penalty for not buying health insurance

amounts to a tax. If the justices find that it is, under an 1867 law they may have to postpone ruling on most of the issues until after the penalty goes into effect in 2014. This is an issue very important to me as I am the author of 'Americans Need a Health Care Ruling,' a bill that seeks to compel the U.S. Supreme Court to rule expeditiously on the constitutionality of ObamaCare and spare the nation years of litigation and uncertainty.

"Like millions of Americans I will be closely watching this week's historic arguments. I firmly believe we must end ObamaCare. Only through repeal of the President's health care law can we pursue real reforms that will lower costs, expand access and grow jobs. Regardless of the Supreme Court's final deliberations I will continue my fight to repeal ObamaCare."



**CHAINSAW GANG...** Union County Freeholders Daniel Sullivan, left, and Bette Jane Kowalski, right, present resolutions to members of the Union County Adopt-A-Trail Chainsaw Crew thanking them for removing nearly 900 fallen trees from along hiking and bridle trails in the Watchung Reservation, Lenape Park and Ash Brook Reservation last year. Crew members, from left to right, are: Rich Palmatier, Jane Osman, Sal Coppa, Bob Czaja, Bill Wallis, Larry Russo and Ned O'Connell.

## UC Tea Party Endorses Federal Fair Tax Legislation

COUNTY — The Union County New Jersey Tea Party adopted a resolution on March 21 endorsing the Fair Tax.

FairTax Volunteer Regional Director James Bennett of Summit welcomed the news by saying, "We are pleased and proud to receive this endorsement from the Union County Tea Party. It is important to understand that FairTax cannot reciprocate with an endorsement of the Union Tea Party because the Tea Party advocates other issues, and it endorses political candidates, which the FairTax organization is not able to do.

"However FairTax is grateful to receive an endorsement and support from any lawful and responsible group, no matter what the political leanings of that group are. We welcome the support and encouragement

of the Union County Tea Party," Mr. Bennett said.

According to the Tea Party, the 112th Congress has before it a bill called the Fair Tax Act of 2011, designated as HR25 and S13. "FairTax" would replace the current tax code with a national retail sales tax "that addresses the problems caused by federal income, employment, payroll, estate, gift and generation-skipping taxes," according to the Tea Party resolution.

"The Union County Tea Party expressly finds that the FairTax is the only tax, existing or proposed, that meets the tests of simplicity, efficiency, friendliness to economic growth and fairness that form the standard for evaluating sound tax policy," the resolution reads.

## New Law Funds Landmark Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights

TRENTON — Legislation to help school districts fully comply with the landmark Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights measure has been signed into law.

The Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights was signed into law last January and went into effect in September with the start of the new school year. In late January of this year, the state Council on Local Mandates found that the law contained unfunded mandates after several school districts

filed complaints. The state Legislature was given 60 days to remedy the law or risk it being invalidated.

The state will provide \$1 million in funding to be awarded as grants through the State Department of Education to help districts provide training on harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention and on the effective creation of positive school climates, and to help fund related personnel expenses.

## DWC 2012 Budget Ratified; Girls Night Out Promoted

By DOMINIC A. LAGANO  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — The Board of Directors of the Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC), the management entity of the Westfield Special Improvement District (SID), officially ratified its 2012 budget Monday evening.

The budget was presented to the Westfield Town Council for its approval on March 13. An open hearing on the DWC's budget will be held at the Westfield Municipal Building on Tuesday, April 24, at 8 p.m.

This year's approved budget for the DWC is \$409,605, which is slightly greater than last year's budget of \$409,484. Last year's budget was an increase of almost 5 percent from the 2010 budget, the first such increase for the DWC in six years. This year's budget is "flat," according to DWC Executive Director Sherry Cronin.

The budget includes the salaries of DWC employees, equipment such as planters and lampposts and events sponsored by the DWC, such as the Girls Night Out and the Downtown Westfield 5K and Pizza Extravaganza. The budget also awards grants to partially reimburse SID businesses for improving their properties.

The board then discussed upcoming events in town sponsored by the DWC and promoted other items of interest. The Girls Night Out event, a shopping and dining experience that is held biannually in the downtown area, is scheduled for Thursday, April 19, from 5 to 9 p.m. The event is used to generate revenue for participating businesses and restaurants that offer promotions for the event.

"Right now, we have 1,250 pre-

registered for the event and it's three weeks away," Ms. Cronin told the board. That number compares favorably to last year's Girls Night Out, which had just over 1,300 pre-registered participants.

Interested parties can still pre-register for the event at the DWC's website, [Westfieldtoday.com](http://Westfieldtoday.com).

Sponsored by the Make a Wish Foundation of New Jersey, the Wheels & Wishes Car Auction & Car Show will be held on Saturday, April 14, at 10 a.m. The auction will be held at the National Guard Armory, located at 500 Rahway Avenue. The public may inspect and then bid on the autos beginning at noon.

In other news, several Westfield businesses were highlighted as they were recently voted the "Best in New Jersey" by the readers of *New Jersey Monthly Magazine*.

In the food and drink category, The Bagel Cafeau, located at 223 South Avenue East and Rock'n' Joe's Coffeehouse and Bistro, located at 20 Prospect Street, both in Westfield, were honored for their wares. Rock'n' Joe's was voted the best coffeehouse in New Jersey.

In the shopping category, The Farmhouse Store, located at 221 East Broad Street, was one of the honorees for best home furnishings. Honored in the entertainment category was the Rialto Theatre, located at 250 East Broad Street. The theater was voted the best movie house in New Jersey. The entire list can be viewed at [njmonthly.com](http://njmonthly.com).

The DWC's next Board of Directors meeting open to the public is scheduled for Monday, April 23, at 7:30 p.m.

## State Legislature Honors 100th Year of Girl Scouting

TRENTON — The Girl Scout Councils of New Jersey were honored on March 15 by the New Jersey state Senate and Assembly with resolutions recognizing the organization's 100th anniversary, which took place on March 12.

Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver (D-34, East Orange) presented the resolution on behalf of the Assembly, and Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg (D-37, Teaneck) presented the resolution on behalf of the Senate. Mary Connell, chief operating officer of the Girl Scouts of Central and Southern New Jersey, made remarks on behalf of the Girl Scouts Councils of New Jersey. Also in attendance were Susan Brooks, CEO of the Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey; Charisse Taylor, chief program officer of the Girl Scouts of Northern New Jersey; and Pat Walsh, senior director of development of the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore, along with girl members of the Girl Scouts.

The resolutions commended the Girl Scouts for 100 years of dedication to building girls of courage, confidence and character, who help to make the places they live better by becoming leaders within their communities. From Sandra Day O'Connor to Vera Wang and Hilary Clinton, the Girl Scouts have played an instrumental role in developing today's female leaders, according to the Girl Scout Council.

The state's four councils have come together to celebrate the 100th anniversary beginning with the crossing of the George Washington Bridge on November 13, 2011, and ending with a concert on June 23, 2012 at Liberty State Park. The concert is open to adults and children of all ages. For more information visit [www.thebigconcertnj.com](http://www.thebigconcertnj.com).

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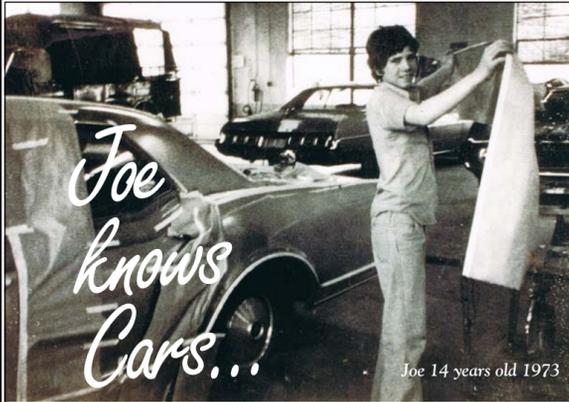
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