

The Westfield Leader THE SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD
— Established 1890 —

Legal Newspaper for the Town of Westfield,
Boroughs of Mountainside and Garwood
And the County of Union, N.J.

Members of:
New Jersey Press Association • National Newspaper Association • Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce
Scotch Plains Business & Professional Association • Fanwood Business & Professional Association

Periodicals - Postage Paid at Rahway, New Jersey
P.O. Box 250 • 251 North Avenue, West
Westfield, N.J. 07091
Tele: (908) 232-4407 • E-mail: editor@goleader.com • Web: www.goleader.com • Fax: (908) 232-0473

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the offices of the newspapers at
P. O. Box 250, Westfield, New Jersey 07091

Published every Thursday by Watchung Communications, Inc.

Paul Peyton
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR
Suzette F. Stalker
COMMUNITY
Betsy Burgdorf
EDUCATION & ARTS

Horace R. Corbin
PUBLISHER
David B. Corbin
ASSISTANT PUBLISHER & SPORTS
Ben Corbin
SERVICES

Jeff Gruman
SALES MANAGER
Michael L. Bartiromo
MARKETING PRODUCTION
Robert P. Connelly
BUSINESS OPERATIONS

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE
One-year - \$33 • Two-year - \$62 • Three-year - \$90

www.goleader.com/subscribe

Is County Going in Right Direction On Taxes? Must Do A Lot More

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders took a different direction last week by approving a \$3.7-million reduction in the county tax levy increase they first proposed in March. Now grant it, the county budget still calls on taxes to be raised \$9.5 million county-wide, but the increase proposed is the lowest in five years. But the county, in our opinion, must work a lot harder to achieve real tax relief here in Union County.

If the freeholders are serious about getting taxes under control, they must reduce county debt. This year's budget includes a debt service payment of \$60.1 million on total debt of around a half billion dollars. That number equals nearly 12 percent of total county spending for 2014 of \$504 million.

The pending sale of Runnells Specialized Hospital, in our estimation, will help reduce the county tax increase even more in the years ahead. We encourage the freeholders to pay off all of Runnells' debt and to use some of proceeds from the sale to reduce overall county debt load. A significant amount of the

remaining revenue from the sale should be utilized to knock the county tax increase closer to the state's 2 percent mandate within the municipalities themselves in Union County. Summit officials have complained that their city has witnessed double-digit tax percentage increases from the county while Summit has held the line on municipal and school taxes (Summit has a mayor-appointed school board.)

Perhaps, the Governor and the State Legislature should study plans to move more county services to the state such as county jails, juvenile detention centers and prosecutor's offices to help reduce the county tax burden on homeowners. But, does this just "pass the bucket" and increase state taxes?

We hope the freeholders have heard the call from Westfield, Summit and other towns to lower the county tax impact. But only the future will tell if this board will follow the likes of Morris County — which has had two consecutive flat tax levies — or resorts to double-digit million dollar tax increases as has been the custom of recent freeholder boards.

Scotch Plains Democrats Were Responsible for Library Cuts, Not This Year's Restoration

In response to a letter to the editor appearing on these pages last week concerning the Scotch Plains 2014 budget, it certainly seems that, as Mayor Glover often says, the "silly season" of pre-election political posturing is upon us already!

Last week's letter, besides some blatant partisan attacks of the "vast right-wing conspiracy" ilk, attempted to make the point that Mayor Glover and Ms. Gialanella were responsible for the restoration of last year's library cuts and for the good cash results Scotch Plains had last year. Both points are wrong; the Democrats currently on the Council were responsible for last year's library cuts, not this year's restoration, and good luck is why the town was in a good cash position at year end 2013.

This year's budget, prepared by the town manager, did not include any recommended amounts for the library. (The manager wisely left the entire topic open for Council discussion.) The library requested that it get its funding restored to 2012 levels. Council members Marcus, Vastine and Jones supported that (and supported some additional funding to restore the library's opening hours)

while Mayor Glover and Councilwoman Gialanella supported instead coordinating the library's opening and closing times with Fanwood's library as well as a private fundraising drive to provide funds for the library. They also implied that since the Parks and Recreation Department charges user fees perhaps the library should do so as well. At the public council meeting all five Council members voted to increase library funding, but at the non-televised public budget workshop preceding the Council meeting it was very clear that Council members Glover and Gialanella were not sympathetic to the library's request.

Last year's budget increased spending for virtually all departments but cut the library over public objections as well as over objections from Mr. Vastine and Mr. Marcus. Last year's budget cut into the town's year-over-year cash surplus by roughly 20 percent and also used \$100,000 in cash from the town's sewer utility (one reason why sewer rates are not going down this year). Both maneuvers were widely acknowledged, including by the town's financial professionals, as one-time budget gimmicks. The primary reasons that Scotch Plains is

not now in financial straits as a result is because the town's health insurance costs went down due to the new town manager's diligence in renegotiating the premiums, tax collections over-all were slightly higher than the prior year and construction permit revenues were significantly higher than the prior year.

The town manager's diligence and good luck left the town in a good year-end cash position, not Mr. Glover's or Ms. Gialanella's financial planning.

You should be aware that at the budget workshop both the Mayor and Councilwoman Gialanella expressed an interest in spending even more money — over and above already budgeted increases — because the "extra" money was available. The thought was that since the library was having its funding restored we should spend even more money on Parks and Recreation summer programs. The Mayor even went so far as to refer to the town (and, by extension, its taxpayers) as a "cash cow." All I could think of was that other people's money was burning a hole in their pockets.

Rich Fortunato
Scotch Plains

Letters to the Editor

Resident Appalled By Objectors To Stop & Shop Hearings

I read with great interest, and later dismay, your article on Thursday, April 10, concerning the Stop & Shop development hearings. Thank you for a comprehensive reporting as I was unaware of the deceit which accompanied the delay in adjudicating this matter.

As a resident and taxpayer in Westfield, I am appalled at the continued abuse of the permit process and denial of our residents of the opportunity to have a choice in grocery shopping.

The use of a nominee to oppose an apparent legitimate business expansion request by Stop & Shop raises

questions of intent and integrity by the true objectors.

Are we not a capitalistic country where customers and businesses alike benefit in the long run from competition? Do the objectors truly see themselves as valued long-term members of our community or are they merely to extract that which they can? Why could they not merely reveal their identities?

I look forward to *The Leader* conducting additional investigative journalism and informing the people of Westfield on this matter.

Grant Ashley
Westfield

I Will Boycott ShopRite Over 'Unscrupulous' Acts

The next chapter of unscrupulous and dastardly acts by Village Supermarkets continues reportedly under the guise of Mr. Hughes, resident of Massachusetts Street, a non property owner whose actions continue to financially burden Stop & Shop and the fine citizens of Westfield through frivolous objections and lawsuit.

One must question "when is this nonsense no longer going to be tolerated?" It may be within Mr. Hughes (aka Village Supermarkets) legal right to challenge the planning board, but

it is also within the citizens of Westfield's right to protest by hitting Village Supermarkets where it hurts, the cash register. I for one will be boycotting the ShopRite on North Avenue, Garwood until these ridiculous actions cease. It is up to Westfield's and Garwood's citizenry to decide if this sort of un-neighborly and lowly behavior is welcome within our fine upstanding towns.

Ron Camuto
Westfield

They Twisted the Editor's Words to Justify Their Perception of Message

"Different men often see the same subject in different lights," Patrick Henry said. But, wow, the difference in "light" as described by the Barcan's letter to the *Leader* (April 10) of a *Leader* editorial (April 3) expressing its opinion of the recent carjacking in Westfield darkened the subject. I cite their assertion that, "At its best, the editorial was ignorant; at its worst, it was overtly racist."

I can handle the ignorant critique, but the racism charge ups the ante. It is a most troubling accusation. And, when leveled, particularly against a local news organization, which serves to represent the community at-large, there ought to be strong facts to indicate such mal-thinking on the part of the paper.

professionalism provided by our municipal police departments who wear their shields proudly.

We read of the Mountainside and Westfield Police Departments responding in tandem to capture the criminals. By the way, carjacking is usually part one of a multiple series of criminal events. The shields prevented more bad things from potentially harming others. And, bravo to the neighbor!

I might add that our community security blanket remains sufficiently porous to allow new families to move into our communities. Just go to church and you'll see evidence of that.

The Barcan's interpretation of *The Westfield Leader* editorial is anemic in the proof department. It appears they twisted the editor's own words to justify their perception of the editor's message. The editor urged "the good citizens of Newark...to stand up and help themselves." The editor never referred to the citizens as "vermin" as the Barcan letter suggested.

The editor saved that epithet for the carjacking suspects, and other criminals, he described as cretins, cold-blooded gangsters, animals and culprits who prey on their victims. None of those words have been, to date, tagged through popular etymology or otherwise, as racially divisive terms. In fact, I know many examples of men and women of all ethnicities who have been labeled as such.

Charlie Manson and his murderous crew come to mind. Perhaps those that witnessed the Boston Marathon tragedy used such terms to describe those responsible. How about the 9-11 "bastards." That's my word.

"Do we need a Bigger Wall?" the editor asked. No, we don't need a bigger wall! The community, and I include the surrounding communities, already have in place an effective

"shield" professionally provided by our municipal police departments who wear their shields proudly.

The "Raisin in the Sun" reference is working. These new families represent multiple ethnicities and a positive change to where we live. They, too, deserve the best protection our communities can offer from unsavory types: dare I call them: cretins, culprits, animals, and cold-blooded gangsters.

So far, these words have not been morphed into racial epithets. And I don't want them to be. We should be able to use them as descriptors of bad actors. As we lose words to convey meaning, and in this case to describe bad people doing bad things, then we lose the ability to communicate with each other with emotion.

Do we need the ability to discuss the topic of serious criminality without fear of being accused of racism? You bet we do. *The Leader* did its job.

The editor may be "ignorant," and the paper can argue that one on their own, but racist, absolutely not; and that, I argue. A false charge of racism only dilutes the real issue of racism when it does occur.

We must be careful when leveling that charge. Obviously, racism is still an issue in our world and I don't minimize the sensitivity, but in this case *The Leader* had no subscription to it.

Tom Sloan
Westfield

ABCDIJKLMNOPQRSTUWXYZ

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. Treacly — Thick and sticky
2. Peignoir — A woman's dressing gown or negligee
3. Habroneme — Having the form of fine threads
4. Stot — A young bull

ASOMATOUS

1. Without sense or ability to reason
2. Without a material body
3. Distorted; not symmetrical
4. In grammar, a sentence that has a word omitted but still could be understood

FOVEOLATE

1. Marked by minute depressions or pits
2. To saturate; soak
3. Plaitlike or folded
4. Fermentation resulting in a strong, musty smell

EPULOTIC

1. Having the shape of a lense
2. Having a healing power
3. Oar-shaped
4. Prophetic; oracular; mysterious

CAPNOMANCY

1. Divination by the ascent or motion of smoke
2. Murdering persons in order to sell their bodies for dissection
3. Belief in a singular divinity or creator
4. Killing by decapitation

See more letters; page 5, 16

Letters to the Editor

Leader Editorial

Dehumanized Suspects

During a recent visit with family who live in your area, I was appalled to read your recent editorial "The Carjacking! Do We Need a Bigger Wall?" Your use of the phrases "cretins," "cold-blooded gangsters," "animals," and "vermin" served only to dehumanize the suspects in the incident. These insidious words are strikingly similar to ones used for centuries by whites to justify the enslavement of blacks. I certainly don't mean to insinuate that your comments were racially motivated, for anyone who reads the editorial can be sure of that fact.

How fortunate for you that you live in Westfield where "things such as this don't happen often." How fortunate that you have the power to legitimize your deplorable opinions by enshrining them in print. I wonder if you would consider making use of your good fortune to improve the circumstances of those who don't share in it, rather than denigrate them further.

These two men allegedly committed a crime. They deserve a trial, and if found guilty, an appropriate consequence. They do not deserve to be the subjects of virulent hate speech by your editorial board.

Kari Denitzio
Walpole, Mass.

Schoeman Letter Right On Target on Putin

It is with great pleasure that I read Mr. Schoeman's letter to the editor on April 10th in *The Westfield Leader*.

Mr. Schoeman is right on target concerning Putin's power grab of Crimea from Ukraine. In case we forget, Putin was a major leader in the KGB. Generals James Kelly's and Charles Jacoby's assessments on Russian interventions in our hemisphere fell on deaf ears. Obama's foreign policy and his stated "more flexibility" towards Russia gave Putin the chance to rise as a major world power. While Russia is increasing its military might, the United States is decreasing our military capabilities to pre World War II levels.

While Putin works around the clock to increase Russia's dominance, our administration is planning another vacation. Mr. Romney was right. When will we learn that Russia was and is our number one enemy!

Dr. Ostap Tershakovec
Westfield



Removal of 700 Trees for Sports Complex In Flood Area Is Illogical

Get your sump pumps ready! There is a need! The intelligentsia at Union County College are planning to demolish 4.3 acres of woodland in Cranford. Their plan includes a sports field and a track. Run-off water is to be piped under several streets into the Nomahegan Lake that connects to Rahway River! Plans meet minimum state requirements for minimal flood control. We in Union County are still recuperating from flooding. We need more than minimum!

Officials and students claimed this need because of inconvenience and a flood zone. Scheduling sometimes requires early or late afternoon practice. College vans take too long to get to the Berkeley Heights sports facility. They claim they can't use the

field across the street from the campus (near the aforementioned lake) because it is in a flood zone!

Approximately 84 athletes are on the teams. Athletes from the other three campuses would commute to Cranford for practice. What's their benefit?

Logical taxpayers and flood victims know the difference between want and need. Exacerbating flooding and misplaced priorities must be addressed. This is a serious health and safety issue. Flood prevention is a need! The removal of 700 mature trees for a sports complex in a flood prone area is an illogical want.

Stanley Kipness
Cranford

Westfielders Should Be Offered to Buy Parking Ticket Immunity

An open letter to Mayor Skibitsky and the Westfield Traffic Department: It's time to treat Westfield taxpayers and residents with respect. The parking situation and the constant ticketing have gotten out of control. It is almost like it is "open season" on those that want to support our local businesses and eateries. Though I understand the need to having parking violations, the bigger issue is how to treat those that live in Westfield in a more fair and reasonable manner.

One simple solution I put forward is to have residents pay an annual parking fee of around \$50 a year and in return be given immunity from

parking tickets. Give each resident that chooses to pay the fee a sticker giving them a "Free Pass for Westfield" and the ability to park anywhere in town that is a legal spot. I understand the train station might be off limits and obviously handicapped or no parking zones. But for the remainder of the downtown area - show some love for those that pay our high property taxes instead of treating them as common criminals. Enough is enough already. I look forward to hearing from our elected officials on this idea.

Mitch Slater
Westfield

APRIL 15 REMINDS US THAT WE GET TAXED ALL YEAR.

CHARLIE
August 10, 1927 WL

State 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	State LD-22 Sen. Nicholas Scutari (D) 1514 E. Saint Georges Ave. Linden, N.J. 07036 (908) 587-0404 Asm. 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	7th Congressional District Representative Leonard Lance (R) 425 North Avenue E., Westfield, NJ 07090 (908) 518-7733 [Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford are in the 7th Congressional District] 12th Congressional District Rep. Rush Holt (D) 50 Washington Rd., West Windsor, N.J. 08550 (609) 750-9365 [Fanwood, Plainfield and most of Scotch Plains are in the 12th Congressional District]
---	--	---

senkean@njleg.org, senscutari@njleg.org
asmbramnick@njleg.org, asmunoz@njleg.org
aswstender@njleg.org, asmgreen@njleg.org