



FUN GROUP...Brunner School Cubs from Scotch Plains visit the *Leader/Times* newspaper office last Thursday because their mothers made them do it (to learn about community communications).



MEADOWLAND ARGOT...Bill Sanders of Bernardsville, formerly of Mountaintide, was the welcoming announcer for the NFL at the Verizon Pavilion at Super Bowl 48.



OUTWARD BOUND...Troop No. 177 out of Mountaintide competed in the Klondike Derby held January 25 in the Watchung Reservation for the first time. Although they did not place, they learned from their mistakes and had a great time.

Westfield Council

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streets around the schools are what we do first. Inclines, of course, are next. Primary roads, then the downtown area, then secondary and tertiary roads. So that's kind of the flow that we do.

"As we all know, we've heard this before, we have over one hundred miles worth of roads. It's pretty substantial what we have to do. On top of that, we've got municipal lots; we have public parking lots; our sidewalks in the public areas and public buildings."

Mr. Arena next addressed what Westfield residents can do to assist the process. "It's pretty simple. You have a car and if you have a driveway, put it in your driveway. I know firsthand, when there's cars in the streets, the trucks go around them; it slows things down and piles up snow. Also, little things like when you're clearing your sidewalk and your driveway, you're not supposed to put that snow in the street. Try to put it

on your property because that just adds more to the work that has to be done. There's safety issues for law enforcement as well," he said.

Town Administrator James Gildea reminded residents that the town has sources of instant communication to disseminate relevant information to the public in case of foul weather. "We have a Twitter account, we have Nixle, which is the police account that connects directly to Twitter, and we provide links from our website," Mr. Gildea said.

In other news, the council approved the demolition of a single-family dwelling located at 229 Golf Edge.

The next town council conference session open to the public is scheduled for Tuesday, February 18, at 7 p.m. at the municipal building, located at 425 East Broad Street. The conference session will immediately be followed by the council's regular public meeting at 7:45 p.m.

SP-F BOE Hears Presentation On Common Core Standards

By KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

SCOTCH PLAINS – Topping the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education agenda last Thursday was a presentation given by Supervisor of Social Studies Noel Baxter and Erin Mullman, elementary instructional coach.

As highlighted in the presentation, the common core state standards for elementary language arts and social studies for K-5 are addressed within the cross content teaching styles for both subjects.

According to Ms. Baxter, grades 3, 4 and 5 write persuasive letters, letters to the editor and persuasive essays regarding school rules, positive changes to their community or inventions created within the last 100 years, respectively. In the report it was noted that types of writing, including argumentative writing, are encouraged in addition to civic, global studies and history lessons.

In addition, Ms. Baxter noted that the district has "anchor standards for reading that integrates both knowledge and ideas." She stated that students are taught and encouraged to evaluate all information presented visually through media such as videos and television, as well as books, newspapers and other written passages. She also stated that students are taught to "delineate and evaluate arguments and specific claims in a text including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance." This, she noted, was done by using multiple sources for the same topic, comparing and contrasting sources and developing the ability to use evidence in support of a position or opinion.

It was noted by both Ms. Baxter and Ms. Mullman that in the second grade, key assignments include the comparison and contrast of important points presented by two different sources on the same topic. This was illustrated in their slide show by using Material World posters, literature and e-books from the Peace Corps

website to understand "Cultural Universals."

Finally, it was noted that in fifth grade, while engaging in a study of European explorers, multiple reading sources are used including the usual non-fiction sources but also novels based on historical facts. The students also are introduced to a textbook entitled "The Log of Christopher Columbus, A Young People's History of the U.S."

To conclude, it was noted that on-going tasks for the younger grades include providing additional varied, developmentally appropriate resources in content areas, continuing to explore ways of integrating social studies content standards with the literacy standards and supporting the students' development of background knowledge and academic vocabulary.

In other business, a resolution was read proclaiming February 2014 as "Black History Awareness Month," an annual observance every February. The resolution states that the district recognizes the extensive civil, social and religious contributions made by African-Americans, including residents of Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

The board of education officially adopted the 2014-2015 school calendar, with 182 student days and 186 teacher days. The calendar, which starts for students on Wednesday, September 3, 2014, ends on Thursday, June 18, 2015. It was noted that the calendar has three emergency days built into it.

According to the newly adopted calendar notes, if no emergency days are needed, schools will be closed for the day on May 22, 2015. On the other hand, if more days are needed, they will be taken from the April 3-10, 2015 spring break, working back from April 10 and moving on. This calendar was first approved on January 23.

The next board of education meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 20, at 7:30 p.m. in the Administration Building on Evergreen Avenue and Cedar Street in Scotch Plains.

PSE&G Prepares For Coming Winter Storms

NEWARK – Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G) is preparing for more wintry weather that is expected to bring a mix of snow, sleet and ice through Thursday morning, according to current weather forecasts.

PSE&G has all available personnel on hand to deal with any weather-related outages due to the heavy snowfall and is taking similar precautions for when another weather system is expected to affect our service territory.

These steps include ensuring that all available personnel are ready to respond; Arranging for contractors, including tree crews, to assist the utility's own skilled workforce; Ensuring that additional supplies, such as poles, transformers and other pole-top equipment, are on hand; Fueling all vehicles; Testing generators at utility locations; Coordinating with county and municipal emergency management personnel to inform them of outages and expedite restoration efforts.

Accumulation of ice and heavy snow may weigh down power lines and as a result cause power lines to come down. Downed wires may appear dead but should always be considered "live."

Stay away from all downed lines. Do not approach or drive over a downed line and do not touch anything that it might be in contact with. Parents are urged to check for downed wires in areas where their children might play and to remind the children to stay far away from any wires. If a wire falls on a vehicle, passengers should stay in the vehicle until help arrives. To report a downed wire, call 1-800-436-PSEG and tell PSE&G the nearest cross street.

If you lose power, first check your neighborhood. If you are the only one without power, check your fuse box for tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses. If that is not the problem, look outside at the wire between your house and the utility pole. If it is down, report it immediately to PSE&G.

To report downed wires or power outages, customers should call PSE&G's Customer Service line at 1-800-436-PSEG. PSE&G uses an automated system to handle customer calls

as efficiently as possible.

Customers with a handheld device, or who are at an alternate location with power, can also report power outages and view the status of their outage by logging in to My Account on pseg.com.

General outage activity throughout a service territory is available online at www.pseg.com/outagecenter and updates are posted on pseg.com during severe weather.

It is wise to have an emergency kit on hand year round. Here are some things to include: Battery powered radio; Corded telephone. (Cordless phones will not work if the power is out); Flashlights and extra fresh batteries; A first-aid kit; Bottled water and an adequate supply of non-perishable food; A non-electric can opener; Matches and candles with holders; Extra blankets and sleeping bags; A list of emergency phone numbers, including PSE&G's Customer Service line: 1-800-436-PSEG. Call this number to report power outages or downed wires.

Westfield BOE Meeting Set For February 11

WESTFIELD — The next meeting of the Westfield Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, February 11, at 8 p.m. instead of 7:30 p.m., since the board will meet in private session beforehand.

The Westfield High School gymnastics team will be guests at the public meeting and will receive certificates recognizing them as winners of the state sectional title.

The business agenda will include a report on Genesis, the district's student data system, as well as an update on the kindergarten wrap program. The complete agenda will be posted at westfieldnj.k12.org/agenda on Friday, February 7. Board meetings are open to the public and are held in Room 105 at 302 Elm Street. Meetings are taped and may be viewed online at westfieldnj.k12.org/video or on WHS-TV36.

SP Mayor Glover

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He said the police department accounts for 35 percent of the township's operational budget.

With the township nearing discussions on the 2014 municipal budget, the mayor said the township must "come to grips with how we are going to maintain valued services throughout the community and be able to balance our budget without again burdening people with municipal tax increases that we have seen in the past." He said municipal services account for 18 percent of the total Scotch Plains tax bill.

"Last year we put through the lowest tax increase in the town in the past 10 years. I'm hopeful that we will... be resourceful to be able to keep those increases as low as possible," Mayor Glover said.

He said he wants to show the township is "prudent" in its spending by "driving efficiencies which are putting [the town] in position where any increase is one that we can all understand."

On the proposed 60-unit housing development by Toll Brothers on the border of the Shackamaxon Golf Club, the mayor said the application, which has been presented to the township council, will now go before the planning board, "to get this project launched as soon as possible."

"My understanding is that these will be expensive units," Mayor Glover said. "All of that potentially creates (taxable) revenue... for the township, which is good thing."

The mayor pointed to his 2013 initiatives to improve the way Scotch Plains communicates with its residents. He said the township upgraded TV34 and got it back on the air, gained access to an AM low frequency radio station through a joint venture with Fanwood, upgraded the township's website and utilized social media.

"The bottom line is that we've got all these wonderful vehicles to talk to our community on but it requires someone to take the bull by the horns and to be able to monitor those outlets, make certain that they are current and newsworthy of what is going on in the community," the mayor said, noting the

township needs to "centralize the responsibility for the flow of information to the community."

The mayor also said he is "hell-bent on trying to bring business to our downtown." He said he feels the township needs to "drive (foot) traffic into the downtown." He said Scotch Plains needs more family-oriented events staged in the downtown like an art show, a craft show and an automobile show.

"It's really a foot traffic thing. The municipality has to be willing to invest in that," he said.

As part of the Shackamaxon development, the township will receive \$100,000 in two installments to be used for downtown improvements. "Fifty thousand of that money is in the house right now and I would like to use that money to invest in the kind of activity that I just outlined... And I think we need to start and plan now and have this thing launched by the spring," said Mayor Glover.

Westfield PD

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on Westfield residents to be the department's "eyes and ears" in their local neighborhoods and to not be afraid to call 9-1-1 when they see something that does not seem right.

Speaking on local crime, Chief Wayman said Westfield is attractive for criminals "because of the profits they can gain here." He said Westfield has more crimes against property, such as thefts, home burglaries, motor vehicle break-ins and stolen bicycles than it does violent crimes against persons, although a strong-arm robbery against a Westfield juvenile recently occurred.

He said North and South Avenues both link Westfield to Plainfield to the west and Elizabeth to the east, enabling criminals to access the town via Route 22. He said these roadways offer criminals an "easy escape" out of Westfield. NJ Transit trains as well as the NJ Transit 59 bus, which runs from Plainfield to Elizabeth, stops in Westfield.

"We are aware of the many entry points and the ingress and egress points of Westfield, so we do as best we can to monitor these points to deter [criminals]," he said, noting that Westfield shares information statewide with law enforcement.

He said Westfield police make motor vehicle stops and are out looking to prevent crimes, which creates an "omnipresence." Police also respond to all medical calls, people locked out of their homes or cars as well as resident service calls. The department responded to 48,000 calls in 2013.

Scotch Plains Council

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In the wake of Sandy in late October 2012, and amidst criticism from some residents about the township's efforts during and after the storm, the police department was tasked with overseeing emergency management efforts. Sgt. Hernandez on Tuesday listed a number of upgrades and other changes that have been made, including turning the former civil defense room in the municipal building's basement into a new emergency operations center that can be used by police and other township officials. Several generators have been purchased to be used in the event of power outages and a new radio system will replace a 40-year-old system.

A new mobile command post, housed in an RV-type trailer, will allow police and emergency personnel to be on the scene in the event of an emergency. The trailer was secured — free of charge — from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which was giving away excess inventory in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The trailers had been secured by New Orleans to house displaced families at that time. Sgt. Hernandez also pointed to the enhanced means of communicating with residents during an emergency, including Facebook, the Code Red alert system and the new radio station.



WHITE OUT...Mindowaskin Pond in Westfield is picturesque on Monday after a major winter storm dropped approximately six inches of snow.



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SNOWDAY...Matt Oslislo and Richard Dazzo pose with their nearly 10-foot-tall snowman on Monday in Scotch Plains. The pair took advantage of the heavy snowfall, as well as the day off from school.