



13-06-06: PROM NIGHT...On a Saturday afternoon, attendees of the Westfield High School Prom gathered for pictures at the Stoneleigh Park home of Jim and Judy Brucia. Pictured, left to right, are: Emily Greenberg and Chris Callahan, Kristy Troutman and Adam Greene, Emily Brucia and Parker Friedman, Sian Scott and Reid Harrison, Jenna Perrotta and Christian Burgdorf, Nicole Miller and Jake Heroux, Rachel Hertzberg and David Soloman and Tara Reardon and Michael Cash.



13-07-02: WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2013...Westfield High School graduated 451 seniors at the New Jersey National Guard Armory in June. The elaborately decorated hats of the Class of 2013 proudly displayed their college choice for the coming year.



13-07-11: WATER BREAK...The Cranford Canoe Club's annual Fourth of July canoe race drew a large crowd of participants who were eager to get in the water in order to beat the heat.

2013 Year In Review: June Through November

JUNE Westfield

The town council approved its \$2.3-million capital budget that will fund repairs to town hall's HVAC system along with work to the Department of Public Works building and the two firehouses plus road resurfacing for several streets in town.

Recreation Department Program Coordinator Traci Kastner told the recreation commissioners that in spite of the pouring rain on May 19, 330 people showed up for the 5K Race and One-Mile Fun Run at Tamaques Park.

Faculty, staff, friends and family greeted the 451 members of Westfield High School's Class of 2013 at graduation. The event was held indoors due to severe thunderstorm warnings throughout the day, but allowed for those without tickets to be a part of the commencement via a live video stream.

After three hours of public comment, both pro and con, the board of education voted 7 to 2 to approve a one-year contract to hire a student resource officer (SRO) for Westfield High School. The position was filled by an armed Westfield police officer, Jeff Johnson, appointed by Police Chief David Wayman.

Scotch Plains

The graduating class of 371 students from Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School gathered at Tyson Field to receive their high-school diplomas and praises from administrators, teachers, friends and proud families.

Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education members heard a brief overview of the five-year long-range facilities plan from Tom Potter of Potter Architects, LLC. As part of his report, his team surveys all of the district's buildings and keeps records of the size

of all of the schools and what each site contains. The report contains all maintenance projects that have been completed over the last five years, and looks ahead at the next five years with projected budgets as to what else might need to be done. According to the data, there were 2,192 students in the district from kindergarten through fourth grade. This was expected to decrease by 270 students over the next five years.

Fanwood

The borough council held a special meeting to amend and approve the 2013 municipal budget, which included appropriations of \$9.2 million, 2.7 percent above 2012.

Cranford

The township committee approved an amendment to the 2013 municipal budget that pared expenditures enough to reduce the municipal property-tax increase from 2.8 percent to 2 percent. An independent report commissioned by the Township Committee found that there was no conflict of interest in Phil Morin's representation of Cranford on the Lehigh Acquisition site plan hearings relating to 555 South Avenue or the Birchwood Avenue/Cranford Development Associates affordable-housing litigation.

Union County was set to begin significant roadway rehabilitation along an 1,100-foot section of Centennial Avenue, which would be widened in an effort to reduce traffic congestion. The portion of the roadway to be widened by up to 10 feet is between Wall Street and the Lehigh Valley railroad overpass.

Garwood

Borough council members decided not to pursue litigation against a proposed townhouse development in Westfield along the borough's western border, determining the result - even if successful - did not warrant the cost.

Borough Attorney Bob Renaud said a lawsuit challenging a zoning variance that allowed a more densely populated project on Grandview Avenue between Myrtle and Spruce Avenues in Westfield would likely not be winnable in court.

Mountainside

The borough council discussed possible major upgrade work to its gas line infrastructure as proposed by Elizabethtown Gas. The plan entails replacing existing pipelines in the borough, either by sealing off sections of gas lines and building new ones in a new location or by removing and replacing existing gas lines in the same location.

The planning board reviewed the Mountainside Restoration Committee's plan to relocate the historic Levi Cory House from the corner of New Providence Road and Mountain Avenue to Constitution Plaza. The house, which will sit between the Mountainside Fire Department and Mountainside Public Library, will neighbor the Deacon Andrew Hetfield House, another property that belongs to the committee.

County

Elected officials, business community representatives and commuters attended the Raritan Valley Line Coalition meeting and pushed for an organized plan of action to get NJ Transit officials to put dual-powered locomotives on Raritan Valley Line trains to give commuters a one-seat ride into Manhattan instead of having to stop and transfer at Newark's Penn Station.

The Union County Freeholders went on record opposing an October special election for the United States Senate seat of Frank Lautenberg, who died earlier in June. County election officials estimated the special August Primary and October election would cost Union County \$1.7 million and instead favored the Senate election being held on election day in November.

JULY Westfield

Cross-examination of Stop & Shop's professional planner continued and the objectors put on their first witness at the planning board's hearing on Stop & Shop's application for expansion of its Elm Street location. The company plans to demolish two office buildings at 203 and 195 Elm Street to enlarge the parking area and increase the store's square footage from 35,426 sq. ft. to 53,555 square feet.

Scotch Plains

The township council appointed Jerry Giamis, who had served as business administrator in Vernon Township since 2010, as the next township manager. He succeeded Henry Underhill, who resigned in March. In the ensuing months, Zoning Officer Robert LaCosta had served as acting township manager.

The township council approved an ordinance banning smoking at municipal parks and all fields, except for Scotch Hills Country Club.

The planning board approved the final layout for lighting for the Stage House Tavern's new parking lot. After residents argued that the lighting in the new expanded parking lot would spread light into the surrounding yards, homes and businesses, co-owner Tom Britt agreed to review and improve the plans prior to construction.

Scotch Plains businesses and the township council need to work together if they are to attract grants to improve the township, the Scotch Plains Management Corp. (SPMC) was told at its meeting. Grant-writing expert Adam Zellner said there were grants available, but that many other towns were competing for them. SPMC Chairman Dominick Verdic agreed, saying the SPMC, which manages the downtown special improvement district (SID), was not in a financial position to match grants with its own money, as its ap-

proved budget for 2013 was only \$58,714, as the SPMC did not collect a \$400 annual assessment from SID property owners this year.

Fanwood

Members of the planning board unanimously approved an application to allow Cingular Wireless to continue to occupy the cell tower located at 1 South Avenue and to expand. According to Judith Fairweather, an attorney who represented Cingular, the project consists of upgrading the substation and changing the tower. In her testimony, she noted that the existing tower stands at 120 feet and the new tower upgrade would measure at 138 feet.

Council members unanimously passed an ordinance to reduce the speed limit on Terrill Road on the Fanwood side by five miles per hour, from 40 to 35 mph.

Cranford

Union County College officials said construction of a new \$14-million student services building on the Cranford campus would begin in May of 2014 and take 12 to 18 months to complete.

The township committee decided not to go forward with the formation of a charter study commission to examine new forms of government.

Dreyer Farms was approved by a unanimous vote by the township's zoning board of adjustment to tear down the existing farm stand and single-family residence on its property and to build a single two-story structure to house its retail operations.

A proposed development on Centennial Avenue was approved by the planning board by a 7 to 1 vote on July 17. The multi-use subdivision will consist of a commercial space on the first floor and five one-bedroom apartments on the second floor, all yet to be rented. A two-family home existed on the lot.

Garwood

The borough council announced it would investigate privatizing garbage pickup and conducting a borough-wide property reassessment, sparking an array of responses.

Council members introduced a \$170,000 bond ordinance to purchase a new dump truck, plow and spreader to replace a 28-year-old vehicle.

Mountainside

After Councilman Jeffrey Wass resigned his seat, Rene Dierkes, a resident of Mountainside since 1999, was sworn in as the newest borough council member.

Don Don Realty, the developer of the corner property occupied by the Levi Cory historic house at the intersection of Mountain Avenue and New Providence Road, was denied preliminary and final site-plan approval from the borough planning board. The developer wished to erect a 6,000-square-foot commercial building on the corner of the busy intersection, whose two roads are controlled by the county and serve as major conduits to and from Route 22.

County

The Union County Freeholders approved a memorandum of understanding between the county and the Union County Improvement Authority to review options for the future operation of Runnells Specialized Hospital in Berkeley Heights. A report from Complete Healthcare Resources (CHR), a consulting firm hired by the county, estimated that leasing Runnells to a nursing home operator would result in annual payments to the county of between \$1.4 and \$2.1 million. The report estimated that the sale of Runnells could bring between \$22.4 and \$25.8 million. CHR said Runnells lost \$17

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13-07-18: GUN CONTROL...Pictured from left, Union County Sheriff Ralph Froehlich, Union County Freeholder Chairwoman Linda Carter, Union County Acting Prosecutor Grace H. Park and Union County Public Safety Director Andrew Moran listen as Union County Police Captain Martin Mogensen speaks about one of the nearly 1,600 guns collected during a two-day, state-sponsored gun buyback program in Union and Hudson Counties. More than 1,000 of the guns were turned in at three churches in Union County. The weapons were on display at a joint press conference on July 16 in Jersey City.



13-08-01: PIZZA TIME...Participants in the 12th Annual 5K Run and Pizza Extravaganza enjoy a slice of pie after completing the race, which took participants through Westfield neighborhoods.



13-10-10: APPLEFEST...Judges get ready to sample the apple pie entries at the Fifth Annual AppleFest held at the Reeve History and Cultural Resource Center, hosted by the Westfield Historical Society on Saturday. Pictured, left to right, are: Eric Hambrecht, Jamie Chavez and Marc Corello.

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