

**The Westfield Leader** THE SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD  
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 Boroughs of Mountainside and Garwood  
 And the County of Union, N.J.

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# Election Campaigns Intensify

With 33 days left until the November 4th General Election, political strategists intensify their every means to reach and influence voters. During this "silly season," the public has come to expect the unusual. For voters seeking to be informed, we're trying to help.

The Westfield Leader and The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times offers space each week for candidates to express their views to our readers. Also, this is a standing offer extended all year round to elected officials. We thank all that participate and encourage others to join in. As a reminder, we will not publish personal attacks against opponents in the letters.

Letters from candidates should be written in first person from the candidate to the reader. Keep the length to about 500 words and submit by the weekend prior to publication by e-mail to editor@goleader.com. The public is invited to write as well.

In addition, video interviews with candidates are being produced that are available at www.goleader.com (see video library). Currently two videos exist; Democratic candidate for Congress for the 7th District, Janice Kovach, and Republican candidate for Union County Sheriff Michael Ince. Others scheduled are Scotch Plains Republican and Democratic candidates for Township Council.

This newspaper will also be sponsoring a Scotch Plains candidates' night in October.

In Scotch Plains, three of the five council members will be elected. Republican incumbents running are Bo Vastine, Llewellyn Jones and Mickey Marcus. Running for the Democrats are John Del Sordi, Jr. Rose Checchio, and Luisa Bianco.

Garwood has interesting races, where a new mayor will be elected. GOP mayoral candidate Sal Piarulli faces former councilman Charles Lombardo, a Democrat. Seeking council seats are Republicans Carol Kearney and Tina Simitz versus incumbent Democrats Sara Todisco and Lou Petruzzelli.

Cranford voters will decide between GOP incumbents Andis Kalmins, the current mayor, and Lisa Aduvato, and Democrats, Brian McCarthy and Robert Salvatore. Republican incumbents in Mountainside — Keith Turner and Deanna Andre — and Democrat incumbents in Fanwood — Russell Huegel and Kevin Boris — are unopposed. There is no municipal election in Westfield.

There are school board races in Cranford, Scotch Plains, Fanwood and Westfield. Three incumbent Democratic Freeholders — Chris Hudak, Angel Estrada, and Vernell Wright — are seeking re-election. Republican P. Mark Martini of Westfield is the opposition.

Voters will select a new sheriff for the first time since the 1970s following the death of Ralph Froehlich in July. Democratic Assemblyman Joseph Cryan is opposing Mr. Ince, a Republican.

Statewide, New Jersey voters will decide whether to give Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.) a full, six-year term. He is being opposed by Republican Jeff Bell.

At the Congressional level, Rep. Leonard Lance (R) is opposed by Ms. Kovach (D) in 7th District while state Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-15th, Mercer) and Republican Alieta Eck of Somerset are running for the open seat being vacated by retiring Rep. Rush Holt (D) in the 12th District.

## Scotch Plains Lawn Signs and Presumptuous Letter

To Councilmembers Marcus, Vastine and Jones;

For about three weeks, I have had a campaign sign planted on my front lawn supporting DelSordi, Checchio and Bianco for the Scotch Plains Township Council. Within the last hour that sign was taken away and replaced by a campaign sign for you three. This exchange was made without my or my wife's consent. Not only didn't we consent, we weren't asked. Instead, your presumptuous letter was left in our mailbox.

So here is my question. Who do you think you are that you can walk onto my property, remove my sign and assume I'd want it replaced with your sign? I cannot for the life of me figure out why you feel this is ok. Assuming I want a sign on my lawn, I will decide which one, not you (See First Amendment, U.S. Constitution). This is how a democracy works.

I read with great disgust in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times the accounts of the dysfunctional Scotch Plains council meetings. Honestly, until today, I had no idea who to blame. Well, you guys win. I blame you.

Michael Novack  
Scotch Plains

Here is the text of the letter left in my mailbox:

"We have placed this sign on your lawn because our records indicate that in the past you have allowed local Republican candidates to put a sign on your lawn. We have not been able to contact everybody on our list. We sincerely hope that you are comfortable with us doing so again this year. If you are not, please feel free to

remove the sign from your lawn and we apologize for the inconvenience."

Mr. Novack — Please accept my apologies for this mistake. In fact I saw your address on a list of addresses and not recognizing it, I specifically recall removing it from the list of addresses to get a sign without direct confirmation from the homeowner. It is certainly unacceptable that any existing signs on your property would be taken down. I will find out what volunteer did this and make sure our opponents' signs are returned to you. Again, my apologies for this mistake.

Candidate Llewellyn Jones  
Scotch Plains Council

## All Of You Should Be Ashamed

For a Democracy to survive, each and every citizen must participate by learning who the candidates are as members of our community. Anyone who hits the party line button without taking the time to study each and every candidate acts in the interest of one-party rule, which is inherently bad for our democratic values. Whether Republican, Democrat or other affiliation, take the time to study each button that will have a name next to it and press that button instead of the party button. Maybe you will have watched our local cable access channel, read the newspaper or met with the candidates on the street in making your decision. At least you will have acted in an informed manner that will help to benefit your/our community.

Myself, I have followed the above principle. I look for the candidate who can achieve the most for the

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Mr. Novack — This is disturbing to me and I am sorry this happened to you. I will personally look into what happened. Thank you for bringing this to my attention.

Candidate Mickey Marcus  
Scotch Plains Council

Dear Editor, Following up on the topic above, I wanted to tell you that Llewellyn Jones did knock on my door tonight and apologize for and explain the incident from earlier today. I appreciated his effort to reach out. Also, our original sign has been returned.

Michael Novack  
Scotch Plains

community even if I disagree with some of his/her stances on the issues of the day. We should have term limits to promote diversity instead of nepotism, and there should be some carry over appointed positions without reinventing the wheel by sweeping out of office all persons doing a good job.

When civility and procedural diligence goes out the window, as demonstrated this past year in our public forum, I feel that we, the public, have been used for political gain. Issues should have been discussed and compromises made before the 11th hour vote that impacted our community.

All of you should be ashamed for treating us this way. My answer to all candidates in Scotch Plains is that I will be looking at each and every button.

Bob Fox  
Scotch Plains

## Letters to the Editor

### Dear Westfield Mayor and Councilwomen, Pave All of Coolidge

There are many roads in Westfield that desperately need attention, Coolidge Street among them. This summer my neighbors and I were delighted to see the large construction vehicles arrive, finally, to repave our road. And then, imagine our dismay and disbelief when we realized that only one side of the road would be repaved. Really?

Perhaps the water company, which recently replaced the water main on Coolidge, was responsible for paving half the street. If so, it should have been compelled to pave the entire street, or the town should have figured out another way to take advantage of the situation and fund the paving of the other half. I have attached two photos of the street in front of my house. These two locations are directly across from one another.

Our neighborhood, our properties, and our town are devalued by the striking contrast between the two sides of the street. It's an embarrassment — arguably worse now than if nothing had been done. Please let me know what the town is planning to do to address this situation. My neighbors and I are all paying attention.

Marcie Horowitz  
Westfield

### Why Was Brookside Allowed To Fall Into Its Present Condition?

At the September 23rd Scotch Plains Township business meeting, I shared with the Township Council my observations of Brookside Park, specifically its deteriorating condition stemming from an apparent lack of oversight by the Recreation Director Ray Poerio. I pointed out that I had recently toured the park with Recreation Director Ray Poerio to show him my specific areas of concern, over grown weeds surrounding the pond and throughout the "Brookside Nature Trail," deterioration of the ponds structural wall and litter floating in it, including a rusting wheel barrel, and a lack of plantings that would give the area more appeal.

This weekend I observed that an effort was made to address the weeds. I was delighted that some colorful plantings were installed, but the rusty wheel barrel remains and much more attention and care is required. I am hopeful it will, but what remains greatly troubling to me is why was this park allowed to fall into its present condition.

Where was the oversight by the recreation director, township manager and, for that matter, the Council's liaison to the Recreation Commission. Contrary to what was reported in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times last week, it is still my opinion that Mr. Poerio's comments related to Mayor Glover and Councilwoman Gialanella were inappropriate, unwarranted and politically motivated. My suggestion to him is that he should be more observant of that which he is responsible for, beginning with maintaining our important township assets.

Let me now suggest to him that he direct his attention to the declining condition and activity of the township's miniature golf course at Scotch Hills — deteriorating conditions, which would be apparent to anyone who has visited or even simply just driven by it.

Mike Brien  
Scotch Plains

### Open Letter to the Mayor and Town Council of Mountainside

An ordinance that the Mountainside Town Council is considering adopting October 20 would permit denser development in Mountainside by increasing the floor area ratio in the zoning ordinance. This proposal fails to take into consideration existing lot along new runoff that will eventually drain into the Rahway River and impact communities along the river.

Communities in the watershed suffered over \$100 million of damages from Irene significantly from the overdevelopment upstream and due to poor storm water management practices. The proposed ordinance is an example of the problem.

The Mountainside Town Council has been requested several times to amend its storm water management ordinance to incorporate best practice mitigation strategies, yet there has been no action. The Rahway River Watershed Storm Water Advisory Board sent the model ordinance to town officials several times. [It was also attached to this e-mail.]

The Mayor and Town Council has also been asked since Irene on several occasions to support the Mayors Council Rahway River Watershed Flood Control to fight for flooding mitigation and no representatives have attended any meetings. The problem is that I am sure the Mountainside Council is fair-minded, but it has not recognized that the flooding problems experienced during Irene and sure to be experienced in the future are partly their responsibility to help alleviate.

Rainwater drains down hill into the homes and businesses of Springfield, Kenilworth, Cranford and Rahway. This ordinance does not address this problem and ignores the hardships faced.

I am not a member of a governing board today so I can be direct. I urge you to reconsider the ordinance — That you consider adopting stronger storm water management standards. That would be what is fair.

Dan Aschenbach  
Former Mayor of Cranford

### The Mistake Made In Voting No on Scotch Plains Capital Budget

It seems from letters published here that there remain many who do not understand the issue surrounding the votes taken on the Scotch Plains Town Council concerning this year's budgets. The issue is not that Mayor Glover and Councilwoman Gialanella objected to some of the spending in the operating budget and the capital budget. The town budget is one of the most important things that the Council votes on each year and it is appropriate that all council members think and ask questions and hopefully get satisfied with what the town's professional managers recommend.

It's their responsibility to do that. We all, of whichever party, understand that being on the council and doing things right takes a lot of effort and time, time away from family, work, other civic activities and leisure. And we ought to thank Council members for that more than we do.

The real issue is the way that the Mayor and the Councilwoman exercised their right to vote no. During the public budget workshops, a lot of questions were raised and suggestions made. These ranged from asking whether the security of our parks would be enhanced by 24/7 closed circuit television monitoring to staffing and salary issues to weight rooms in the fire houses to encourage more participation in the volunteer fire

department.

There were also questions about some of the capital items, trucks, plows and the like. All fair questions and appropriate for workshop sessions. But at no time did either of them say that they objected to the operating budget or the capital budget to the degree that they would be voting no on the budgets as a whole. If they had said that then, the town's professionals could have adjusted the budgets, people could talk more and satisfactory results reached before the budgets went up for a vote. But they didn't.

Instead, it was only at the formal council session when the budgets came up for a vote did they express their view that the budgets as a whole were unacceptable to them. It was mildly surprising that they voted against the operating budget. They probably did it due to a political desire to claim that they wanted an even leaner budget than that proposed by the town professionals. Remember that the Mayor and the Councilwoman could vote "no" on the operating budget and it would still pass with three "yes" votes.

But the capital budget needed four yes votes to pass, not three. Please go to the town website and review the video of that meeting. It will be clear to you that the most likely explanation, by far, for their votes is that, again for political reasons, they wanted to distinguish themselves from the three Republicans who were going to vote yes.

The mistake they made was that they did not realize that by voting no, the capital budget would not pass. So that's the real problem. If they had serious issues, they should have said so earlier but they did not. If they had, their issues could have been worked out. But instead they kept silent and they voted no for political reasons, and then they got caught up in the rule that four votes were needed, and so the capital budget did not pass.

Rich Fortunato  
Scotch Plains



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. Soe — A large wooden vessel for holding water
2. Antephalitic — Preventing nightmare
3. Tharos — A small American butterfly having orange wings spotted with black and white
4. Messet — A dog

#### VANGLO

1. A traveler; a wayfarer
2. A ghost in Shakespeare's MacBeth
3. A type of orange
4. The West Indian name for sesame

#### DICASTERY

1. In ancient Athens, a court of justice
2. The process of ornamenting plain glass with transparent pictures
3. A narration; a recital of facts
4. The use of two languages

#### VANSIRE

1. A Dutch father
2. A small, weasel-like animal of Madagascar
3. A common domestic pigeon, with an inflated breast
4. A confidence man; swindler

#### RAPPAREE

1. A French swordsman
2. The victim of a sexual assault
3. A plunderer or robber
4. A large bowl in which fat is burned by means of a wick

See more letters pages 5, 16

## Letters to the Editor

### Name One Family Who Lost Their Business Because of Estate Tax

I read with great interest that U.S. Congressman Leonard Lance is looking out for the interests of minorities. Unfortunately, instead of the truly needy, he's fighting for the tiny minority of families — about 100 in all of New Jersey — who have to pay estate taxes.

In 2014, an estate has to be worth at least \$5.34 million before paying a single cent in tax, up from \$1 million in 2003. Only 9,412 estate tax returns were filed — in the whole country — in 2012! That's 321 families in New Jersey. Of these, only 100 estates paid any tax at all, out of about 69,000 adults who died that year. (www.irs.gov/uac/EOI-Tax-Stats-Estate-Tax-Statistics) Why are these few survivors so deserving of Congressman Lance's special attention?

The Congressman claims that he's doing this to protect family businesses. I challenge him to name one family in our district whose business was lost because of this tax. Instead, his proposal will only increase the steadily rising income inequality plaguing our nation, challenging the very basic notion of fairness on which it is built.

Drew Harris  
Westfield

### Vastine Discusses Property Taxes

I think we pay too much in property taxes in Scotch Plains and throughout all of New Jersey. There are a number of reasons why this is the case, most of which are controlled by the state and the counties.

However, as it relates to the municipal portion of taxes in Scotch Plains, we are doing better than most. Out of 21 towns in Union County, Scotch Plains has the third lowest municipal property taxes in the county. This year alone, Scotch Plains had the lowest municipal tax increase in over a decade, (while fully funding the library) which ranked as the second lowest in Union County.

Please remember, even though we are the collection agency for Union County and the Board of Education, the Township of Scotch Plains only keeps \$0.16 for every \$1 collected, and we believe in using that money effectively and responsibly. That also means not creating budgets based on one-time gimmicks like we saw in 2013.

We are committed to doing even better. By implementing new technology and better methods, we hope to continue to provide improved services at a lower cost. We will continue to look for ways to improve various processes, and we will continue to hold the line on spending through our various service providers and contracted suppliers.

No longer can we hire more expensive professional service providers to satisfy the political bigwigs at the state and county level.

No longer can we ask the taxpayers of Scotch Plains to pay higher prices to a few local contractors when we are able to gain greater economic efficiencies through shared purchasing cooperatives. Those practices had to end if we wanted to keep our municipal taxes low.

Councilman Bo Vastine  
Scotch Plains

