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In memory, dedicated to the over 3,000 people who lost their lives on September 11, 2001 – but especially to our Westfield and Scotch Plains family:

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Courtesy of Ed Zazzali

## Twin Towers Destroyed

By DEBORAH MADISON  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

In what is being equated with the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor in its devastating magnitude of death and destruction, Tuesday, September 11, 2001 will be a date infamously linked with the worst act of terrorism to ever touch American soil.

Countless numbers of lives and the New York City skyline have been horrifically altered by a terrorist attack that totally destroyed the World Trade Center Twin Towers after two hijacked airplane jets crashed into the 110-story buildings. A third hijacked jet was intentionally plunged into the Pentagon 15 minutes before the first of the Twin Towers caved in and collapsed.

Two hijacked commercial airline jets were flown directly into The World Trade Center Twin Towers, located in Battery Park City in Lower Manhattan, on Tuesday morning in what is being described as a terrorist suicide mission. The North Tower was hit at approximately 8:45 a.m. near the 80th floor, and the South Tower was hit near the 70th floor at 9:03 a.m.

As of yesterday morning, much of New York City was paralyzed by the attacks and many schools and businesses were shut down.

Both Trade Center towers had huge, gaping holes from which flames, smoke and debris poured out for hours after the crashes. A third hijacked jet subsequently crashed into the Pentagon at approximately 9:45 a.m. A fourth jet crashed approximately 80 miles outside of Pittsburgh at 10:10 a.m.

Then, one hour after the first crash, the North Tower collapsed on itself at 10 a.m. and the South Tower collapsed approximately one half-hour later at 10:30 a.m. Both towers crumbled into piles of rubble, sending shattered glass and a thick cloud of smoke, debris and soot billowing into the streets of Lower Manhattan for hours, covering cars and people trapped in its blinding wake with silt and dust.

Although numerous of employees were evacuated after the initial plane crashes, eyewitness accounts from the streets below reported, on the major news stations, seeing people plunge out of upper-story windows, to their death, from the fiery floors above.

Thousands of terrified people ran frantically from the impenetrable cloud of smoke that enveloped the entire tip of Lower Manhattan after the buildings collapsed.

Hundreds of passengers aboard the four airplanes were immediately presumed dead, and thousands of New York City and Pentagon employees were injured. More than 50,000 people work in the World Trade Center and over 200,000 people travel through the towers on a daily basis. It is estimated that approximately 24,000 people work at the Pentagon.

As of Tuesday night, there were no official figures on the number of fatalities, although city officials estimated the number of casualties would be high due to the hundreds of emergency personnel in and around the buildings at the time of the collapses.

As of 10:30 p.m. on Tuesday, more than 600 firefighters and New York City police were still missing. New York City hospitals were filled with the injured, including victims with third-degree burns, smoke inhalation and many eye injuries from shattered, falling glass and debris.

New York Governor George Pataki and Acting Governor of New Jersey Donald T. DiFrancesco declared states of emergency, respectively, in order to have the power to summon the National Guard and other emergency personnel.

Thousands of emergency workers, including all police, fire and rescue squad workers were summoned to duty. Emergency workers from New Jersey were allowed to enter New York City to assist in containing the disaster.

Thousands of New Jersey commuters were trapped in New York City when bridges and tunnels were closed and most forms of public transportation were suspended for the remainder of the day. Many of those evacuated were advised by emergency personnel to wait inside nearby buildings until the smoke and falling debris settled. Rescue workers escorted the evacuated workers to Battery City Park, where tugboats, ferries and local cruise boats transported the shaken commuters across the Hudson River to Hoboken and Jersey City to other forms of transportation to various parts of New Jersey.

For most of the day, telephone service in and out of New York City was inoperable as the system was over-burdened with calls from concerned family and friends, who anxiously awaited word on the whereabouts of their loved ones. Cell phone service in and out of the city worked intermittently or not at all at varying times.

The major network news stations, which transmit from the towers, including ABC, NBC and CBS, went off the air for several minutes immediately following the plane crashes and had interruptions in service for several hours. Emergency telephone numbers were announced on the networks for information about family and friends who worked in the Trade Center or who were passengers aboard the affected flights.

As of 11:15 p.m. on Tuesday, there were network reports of cell phone calls coming from inside the towers from survivors trapped under the debris. Many bodies were also pulled from the debris throughout the day, but exact numbers were not given.

The identity of the terrorists responsible for the attacks has not yet been confirmed by Tuesday night, but government sources reported that the Afghanistan Taliban, linked to Muslim terrorist leader Osama bin Laden claimed responsibility for the disasters.

He has also reportedly met with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad regarding their common hatred of the United States. Several months ago, bin Laden was quoted as saying that he would exact “extreme vengeance” and retribution on the United States for political actions in the past.

Congressman James Moran of Virginia was quoted on a news Website as saying that he had learned at a Washington briefing that the fourth jet appeared to be headed for the Presidential retreat Camp David in Maryland, when it crashed 85 miles short of its intended target. Rumors that the government ordered the hijacked plane to be shot down were denied by the State Department.

Although Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stopped short of declaring this an “act of war,” when questioned on television by ABC reporters, President George W. Bush said that these horrible acts would not go unpunished once it was determined who was responsible.

Aircraft carriers were deployed off the East and West Coasts of the United States as a security measure, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Henry H. Shelton said, “The Armed Forces are ready to go.” Most State Department buildings, including the White House, the Capitol, the Pentagon, the Supreme Court and many other government buildings in Wash-

ington, D.C. and in New York City were evacuated.

The collapse of the Twin Towers, which housed many administrative offices for international world banks and other financial institutions, forced the New York City Stock Exchange to close. Other stock exchanges worldwide followed suit as a precautionary measure.

Portions of the Pentagon, one of the largest buildings in the world and the seat of the Defense Department, collapsed after flames burned out of control for several hours. World Trade Tower no. 7 also collapsed, presumed to have been caused by associated fire.

The construction of the Trade Center began in 1966 and was completed in 1972. The towers were 1,368 feet tall — the tallest buildings in city and the third largest in the world.

They housed many administrative offices of the world’s largest, international banks and investment firms, including the offices of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter. The towers were also the home of a 427,000-squarefoot retail space known as The Mall, which was occupied by retailers such as The Gap, J. Crew, Banana Republic and The Limited. The towers also housed numerous museums, restaurants, hotels and a rooftop observatory.

The world-renowned Windows on the World restaurant occupied the North Tower’s 107th floor.

In an unprecedented move by the Federal Aviation Administration, airports throughout the nation were shut down and all commercial airline flights were ordered to land at the nearest airport.

Many municipal buildings in New York and New Jersey also closed to allow employees an opportunity to locate family members who were still trapped in New York. Most local schools remained opened with counselors on hand to support students that were traumatized by the day’s events. Many local students who have parents that work in New York were summoned to their school’s guidance offices to be counseled and to ensure that they were released home to either a parent or emergency contact person at the close of the school day. Several local churches held or will hold special prayer services for those who were affected by the tragedies.

There is no word yet on the number of local families that will be seriously affected by the tragic events.

## Scotch Plains Council

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idea was shelved.

In other business last week, the council rejected two funding resolutions for projects that were originally included in the now-dead capital bond ordinance that failed to pass in May and in July. A resolution authorizing the engineering firm of Hatch Mott MacDonald, which also serves as the township engineer, to begin environment evaluations and clean-up efforts at the former Terry-Lou Zoo property was voted down by a 3-to-2 vote after concerns were raised about the cost and about provisions for state reimbursement of much of the cost.

Mr. Giannis told the council that 75 to 80 percent of the expense would be reimbursed by the state but that it would require the township to approve a deed restriction on the property so that it remains as a recreation facility in perpetuity. That provision raised concerns by some on the council, with Councilwoman Colleen Gialanella questioning the wisdom of such a permanent move.

“Are we ready to commit” to keeping the property as a recreation-oriented property, she asked, wondering if the township would regret such a decision at a later date if it was offered an attractive amount of money to sell to a private entity.

Mayor Glover agreed, saying the council should not be “so hasty” in committing to keeping the property forever. Councilman Vastine pointed out that the debate at the moment was not on keeping the property in township hands forever but only on spending \$91,000 to start the process of cleaning up the property. A decision on whether to seek reimbursement from the state — with the strings attached — is a separate issue, he said.

Mayor Glover also asked why other bids for the project were not solicited. Mr. Giannis said Hatch Mott is very familiar with the property, having done other environmental studies there in recent years.

The other funding resolution rejected last week — also by a 3-to-2 vote — involved a contract of up to \$40,000 to Hatch Mott to begin the process of dredging and cleaning the pond at Brookside Park. Mayor Glover also criticized the lack of competitive bidding for this project, and he was vocally supported by Councilwoman Gialanella.

Earlier in the meeting, the council briefly discussed ways to expand the programming shown on Scotch Plains Television. Councilman Llewellyn Jones said he would like to see the council’s conference workshop sessions taped for broadcast along with increased coverage of high-school activities and sports. Mr. Vastine agreed, saying more coverage of school activities would be a welcome addition as would a news program focusing on local matters.

The council currently is considering the renewal of the township’s contract with Duke Multimedia Productions, which operates the station, and any expansion in its programming could necessitate alterations to the agreement. Last week, station manager Robert Duthaler told the council that he is trying to get high-school students involved in videotaping school events but noted that it was difficult to maintain their interest.

The township will mark the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks with a remembrance service tonight, Thursday, September 11, at 7 p.m., at Alan Augustine Village Green.

## Union County Freeholders

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Andrew Moran, director of public safety, said the course at Texas A&M University is for firefighters with fire departments that have foam-fighting capabilities. He said those towns are Elizabeth, Linden, Berkeley Heights, Kenilworth and Roselle. Mr. Moran said it has not been decided which firefighters will attend.

The board will also vote on increasing legal fees paid on two cases, Kevin Kolbeck versus UC and LaQuan Kearney versus UC. Mr. Kolbeck, a general supervisor of trades with the county, brought suit against the county claiming political retribution by then County Manager George Devaney for his association with ex-county manager Michael Lapolla and his allies. The resolution before the board increases the amount to the firm of LaCorte, Bundy, Varady & Kinsella of Union by \$10,000 to \$14,845.

In his lawsuit, Mr. Kearney alleges he was assaulted by corrections officers. The board resolution would increase the amount to the firm of

Florio, Perrucci, Steinhardt and Fader of Rochelle Park by \$10,000 to \$20,000.

Freeholder Chairman Chris Hudak announced that Michael Flemming has assumed the position of acting administrator at Runnells Specialized Hospital in Berkeley Heights. He replaces Sandra Adour, who was acting administrator since last fall, and who has left the county for another position.

Ms. Adour, in turn, replaced Sue Palma, who took over as acting administrator when Joan Wheeler retired as administrator in 2013.

The long-term care and rehabilitation facility is being sold by the county to Center Management Group, LLC of Flushing, N.Y. for \$26 million. The company operates 15 facilities in New York and New Jersey and recently acquired seven nursing/assisted living facilities from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Center Management is expected to assume ownership of Runnells on Wednesday, October 1.

## Scotch Plains Zoning Board

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Duthie, said an upgraded sign with more lighting could be used as a “benchmark” for other businesses along Route 22 that wish to upgrade their own signage.

Bruce Samuels, the attorney for the applicant, Pylon 22 Corp., told the board that industry standards for sign lighting exist and said he would provide the board — prior to its Thursday, October 2 meeting when the hearing will be continued — with information showing that the proposed sign will be within those parameters.

The other hearing last week was a continuation of a hearing from the board’s July 10 meeting and lasted about five minutes. Two months ago, Brian Farde of 6 Johnson Street appeared before the board to request approval of a proposed addition to his home. Mr. Farde, along with his architect, stated that he was requesting approval of three variances connected to the proposed addition. At that time, it was pointed out that Mr. Farde’s application had requested just one variance — a rear-yard setback of 24.8 feet versus the minimum 30 feet spelled out in municipal regulations. Mr. Farde told the board in July that he was also requesting two other variances — a front-yard setback variance due to a new front porch he proposed to build and a lot-coverage variance. Given these revisions, Board Attorney Vincent Loughlin said the application would need to be revised to include all three variance requests.

Mr. Farde complied, and at last week’s hearing on his application, it was determined that the front-yard variance and the lot-coverage variance were not needed due to some miscalculations of the setback and the lot coverage. Instead, the board voted to approve the sole

variance — the rear-yard setback — by a unanimous vote.

The board also put off until its October 2 meeting a hearing on an application by Par Fuel LLC, which operates the Exxon gas station on Route 22 East, to put up a new digital LED price sign.

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## Scotch Plains Rec.

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with a plan.

“Regardless of what’s done with it,” Mr. Poerio said, “we have to clean it up.” He briefed commission members on several steps that have been taken, including the removal of two old concrete ponds, the clearing of brush and the removal of the old fencing. New fencing and the planting of new trees are next on the agenda, Mr. Poerio said, as is the installation of a walking trail once the environmental remediation is completed.

In other business, the commission was informed that the company that installed the new pavilion at Brookside Park has issued written certification to township Building Inspector Robert LaCosta that the structure and its installation procedures meet all township requirements. The pavilion was purchased

in the spring and was expected to be installed in time for the start of the summer camp program on June 30. But several days earlier, Mr. LaCosta issued a stop-work order, saying that the recreation commission should have first secured approval for the pavilion from the township planning board.

Mr. Poerio has maintained that no such approval was needed, and on Monday, he said, “It still burns me that every pavilion and playground has not required a permit.” He said he will continue to work with Mr. LaCosta so the project can be declared completed. In the meantime, Mr. Poerio said it was “a shame” that day campers this summer were not able to use the pavilion and, instead, were forced to “stand outside in the rain instead of under the pavilion.”

Mr. Poerio also informed the commission that he expects the new roof on the clubhouse at the Shady Rest Country Club to be installed before winter. And he said \$10,000 to \$15,000 has been spent completing a number of minor upgrades and renovations, mostly electrical, inside the building.

## SP Murder

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products including renewable energy. Mr. Eberling held a master’s degree in forestry and business management from the University of Copenhagen in Denmark and had done graduate work at the University of British Columbia, Canada.

NJ Advance Media reported that Ms. Chou was the registered owner of TKJ International, which had a Lenape Lane, Berkeley Heights address and was on the market for sale.



Photo courtesy of Donna Walsh

SETTING SAIL...This August, Connor and Brendan Walsh and Caroline, Patrick and Claire Gallagher of Westfield brought The Westfield Leader aboard the ferry bound for Nantucket, located 30 miles south of the coast of Cape Cod.