

The Westfield Leader

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The Scotch Plains - Fanwood TIMES

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We Need to Focus on Area Races, As Well as Those For Higher Office

We currently are less than six weeks away from the mid-term elections on November 6 that have the potential to reverse control of Congress and set the stage for the rest of Donald Trump's Presidency.

Within our readership area, Rep. Leonard Lance (R-7th, Westfield) hopes to beat back a challenge from Democrat Tom Malinowski to win a sixth term, while Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-12th, Trenton), presently in her second term, is opposed by Republican Daryl Kipnis.

The most high-profile New Jersey contest this year is the United States Senate race between incumbent Democrat Robert Menendez, now finishing his second full term, and GOP contender Robert Hugin.

Such high stakes on the national level, and the accompanying blitz of political ads expected to continue through Election Day, can easily divert public attention from local, regional and state races. We encourage voters not to let this occur.

We indeed need to remain informed about nominees for federal office — those elected will have a hand in shaping crucial policies on everything from the economy to health care to homeland security — but we also must not lose focus on the candidates and issues specific to our hometowns.

Locally, this campaign season features mayoral and council races in Garwood, plus governing body races in Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Cranford and Mountainside. There are no municipal races in Westfield this year. Additionally, there are contested races for school board in Westfield, Scotch Plains

and Garwood. There are no Fanwood vacancies on the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education and no contests for available school-board seats in Mountainside and Cranford.

Other area races include six candidates vying for three open seats on the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and bids by Democrat Linda Carter and Republican John Quattrocchi to fill the unexpired term of late Assemblyman Jerry Green in New Jersey's 22nd Legislative District. Ms. Carter, a former Union County Freeholder, was named to replace Asm. Green in May.

We encourage residents to learn about these men and women, their experience and their positions, before heading to the polls. In addition to nominees' door-to-door campaigns and appearances at public events, local candidate forums can provide valuable insight into those seeking our vote.

The six individuals running for Scotch Plains Township Council are scheduled to take part in a debate October 18 sponsored by *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*. Meanwhile, residents of The Pointe condominium complex in Garwood will sponsor two forums, for borough council and mayoral candidates, on October 18 and 25, respectively.

Those who are elected to municipal, school board and county offices will participate in vital decisions which, collectively, impact our property taxes, services, the education of our children and the local economy, among myriad other issues. We need to hear from them, and they need to hear from us.

Expansion of Hunt Is Needed to Reduce Overpopulation of Deer

The overpopulation of deer has caused the Union County Freeholders to expand their deer-management program to add a crossbow component. The program began in 1995 in the Watchung Reservation and was expanded in 2002 to include portions of Passaic River Park in Summit, with the Ash Brook Reservation added in 2006, Lenape Park in 2012 and Nomahegan Park and Linden's Hawk Ridge Sanctuary added in 2009. More recently, Oak Ridge Park in Clark was added in 2016. Elizabeth River Park in Hillside was added just this year.

The number of deer hit a high of 260 per square mile in Elizabeth River Park and 182 per square mile around Lenape Park and Nomahegan Park; 90 per square mile in Ash Brook, and 68 per square mile in the Watchung Reservation. Deer have been spotted in people's back yards, in front of the coop apartments at the end of East Broad Street in Westfield, and even in the back of Runnells rehabilitation center in Berkeley Heights, which is in the Watchung Mountains.

Prior to the winter 2018 shotgun hunt, the county reported 150 deer per square mile in and around Lenape and Nomahegan Parks; 58 deer per square mile in the Watchung Reservation, and 84 per square mile in and around Ash Brook Reservation and Oak Ridge Park.

"Forest ecologists recommend a density of 20 per square mile in a healthy hardwood forest and as low as five per square mile in a forest that has been

heavily damaged by browsing," according to a county press release.

Unable to expand the time in the shotgun hunt, which is conducted from early January to March 1, the county has opted to try and reduce the deer population through the use of archery equipment. While we wish a hunt was not necessary, the overbuilding in New Jersey has forced the deer to seek refuge in other wooded areas. Over the years, deer have been involved in serious traffic accidents as well as damaging flowers and other vegetation on residential properties.

The fall bow hunt season runs from October 1 through the end of the year, followed by the winter bow hunt season, January 1 to February 16, 2019, and the shotgun season, January 7 until March 1.

We encourage residents to make sure to keep up on notices announcing the dates of the hunt and to avoid those parks during that time. There have been no reported injuries of anyone in the nearly 25 years of the county's program, but it is always better to err on the side of caution.

We also encourage the county to make the public aware of the success of the hunt as it progresses. The goal is to reduce the deer population by 375. Last year's shotgun hunt removed 160.

Hopefully, the hunt can achieve its goals to the point the county can reduce the number of days the hunt is needed in the future.

Letters to the Editor

To Protect Children From Violence In Homes, School, And Communities

Social isolation is the overwhelming feeling of being left out, lonely or treated like you are invisible. Young people who are isolated are often victims of bullying, violence and depression. As a result, many further pull away from society, struggle with learning and social development or choose to hurt themselves or others. How can we help eliminate social isolation?

Sandy Hook Promise is an apolitical non-profit organization whose "Know The Signs" programs are researched-based programs and practices to help protect children from gun violence in their homes, school, and communities. This program is led by several family members who lost loved ones at the Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012.

The Start With Hello program, one of the Know The Signs programs of the Sandy Hook Promise, teaches children, teens and young adults how to be more socially inclusive and connected to one another. The week of September 24 to 28 is "Start With Hello" Week to promote this program through the country.

The Sandy Hook Promise Start

With Hello program is being introduced in our school district starting this week. The township council recently passed a proclamation promoting Start With Hello Week and lauding the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education for its efforts to keep our students safe in a socially inclusive and connected student body.

Several parents have related to me stories of their children being bullied or not socially accepted. I have great hopes that the Start With Hello program along with other board of education efforts will decrease these types of incidents. You can learn more about the Start With Hello program at <https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/> and I ask that you support this program's implementation in our schools.

It is my expectation that the new special safety officers in each school, the improvements that the BOE is making to monitor entry and exits to our schools, and the building of a socially inclusive student body with programs like "Start With Hello" will allow our children the greatest learning opportunity in a safe and welcoming environment.

Mayor Al Smith
Scotch Plains

Builders And Outside Government Interests Influence Our Local Plans

Court forced development has become a front-page issue for our local community. While the subject of affordable housing is often misunderstood, the associated bulk development that benefits big-time builders at the expense of communities is not. Over the next decade, the housing development complex will make a lot of money at the expense of our local area.

The population will go up, municipalities will have to offer more public services, and the taxpayer will ultimately pick up the tab. It is important for Westfield that town leadership, our schools, and our community work together to pressure Trenton into action and fix a policy that does not benefit the local property taxpayer.

Across the state this past summer, town hall and public meetings have been held to consider the added weight housing-unit mandates put onto suburban towns in our state. Many New Jersey mayors represented their communities at a formal hearing on July 25 hosted by the New Jersey Assembly Housing and Development Committee. Westfield Mayor Shelley Brindle was not able to attend this hearing, however she reassured Westfield that our previous administration "reached a proactive agreement in partnership with the Fair Housing Center," and is "hopeful that a consensus will emerge with more pragmatic solutions for all municipalities before the next round in 2025."

Scotch Plains Mayor Al Smith was able to speak at the hearing. In his testimony, Mayor Smith asked the committee, "Can our aging infrastructure, filled school system, and first responders handle this surge in population?"

Assemblyman Jon Bramnick hosted a meeting earlier in the summer (July 9) advising the community, "developers have a lot of energy and money," and urged on the importance of assembling to encourage our state government to take action. "Community sentiment is very important." Assemblyman Bramnick invited the community to rally and demand state lawmakers take control over the housing issue from the courts.

Over the summer, local news outlets have been most informative with extensive coverage of how these challenges have started to creep into our lives. There were many editorials and op-ed contributions from concerned citizens with advanced and expert knowledge of the particulars.

Residents of Garwood, Cranford, Clark, Scotch Plains are actively dealing with the consequences of court forced development. Many informed contributors to summer's coverage explained how these policies have

the potential to dilute our property rights, add more burden to our government and civil service responsibilities, and bring chunky enrollment patterns to our schools.

Westfield does have a settlement that puts some duct tape over the problem for a few years, however there are units already going up in town with many more to come. Parents of students using public education as well as our civil servants are aware of the strains already building on top of our limited school and security resources.

Publicly-funded parties and pagantry I have to admit are fun, however we must refocus our attention back to dealing with the serious issues being put to our town's future. We cannot afford to rest behind action taken by our previous administration for too much longer. The next round of mandates are due to arrive in 2025. The "home voter" and schools will need to be united and more engaged than the builders, consultants, and outside government interests aiming to influence our local plans for Westfield.

Reducing future housing obligations and limiting the benefits that big-time builders pick up at the expense of Westfield should be a top priority for our Mayor and town council.

Edward Stellingwerf
Westfield

Some Hurricanes Are More Dangerous Because Of The Storm Surge

There can be an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm and battering waves then because of wind. The National Hurricane Center reported Katrina with a storm surge of 25 to 28 feet above normal high tide levels, Opal (1995) and Camille (1969) 24 feet, Hugo (1989) 19.8 feet, and Ike (2008) 15 to 20 feet. Water weighs 1,700 pounds per cubic yard. Now consider the enormous force of battering waves. Who has not been knocked over by even a small wave? No wonder the United States Army Corps of Engineers reported, "Coastal storms have several impacted the north Atlantic coast of the United States, including the New York-New Jersey harbor region."

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, much of the densely populated Atlantic and Gulf coasts lies less than 10 feet above mean sea level. Some 123.3 million people or 39 percent of the total United States population lived in counties directly on the shoreline in 2010! The population of these counties increased 40 percent between 1970 and 2010 and is projected to increase by an additional 10 million people or 8 percent of the total United States population by 2020! Over 50 percent of our country's economic productivity is located there.

Yet little has been done to protect our coastal communities. The proposals of the Army Corps of Engineers and the New York/New Jersey Metropolitan Storm Surge Working Group for a New York Harbor surge barrier in response to Sandy, for example, have not materialized despite significant inundations (storm surge plus astronomical tide) in Lower Manhattan, Staten Island, Brooklyn,



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. Ussuk — The bearded seal
2. Cynanche — An inflammation of the throat or windpipe causing difficulty in breathing and swallowing
3. Libidinous — Lustful, lewd
4. Sheld — Variegated or spotted

YANG

1. To cry like a wild goose
2. Leftovers; odds and ends
3. To annoy, torment or delay
4. Mischievous; devilish

FATIFEROUS

1. Rotund, obese
2. Enlivening; exhilarating
3. Deadly; destructive
4. Shiny; glossy; beaming with light

FANTOCCINI

1. A street vendor; a seller of fruits and vegetables
2. Puppets or marionettes
3. A clown in motley attire
4. A person who lives by his wits, without doing any work

SQUANTUM

1. A picnic
2. A tobacco or money pouch
3. The trimmings of skins and hides, used for making glue
4. Rough or coarse cornmeal

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The Candidate Who Will Fight For NJ

The commercials being aired against Tom Malinowski in order to prop up Leonard Lance are disgraceful, disrespectful, and distorted. Leonard Lance needs this spurious propping up because his whole platform is a sham. There is nothing "bi-partisan" about Lance's past nine years in the House of Representatives. Examine his history and you will discover he voted with the conservative right wing agenda regularly.

A vote for Leonard Lance is a vote for Donald Trump. I'm voting for the candidate who will really fight for New Jersey values: health care, the Gateway Tunnel, common-sense gun laws, and a clean environment. I am voting for Tom Malinowski.

Lisa Quackenbush
Westfield



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LD-21 includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford.	LD-22 includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark, Rahway and Linden.	12th Congressional District Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D) 850 Bear Tavern Road, Suite 201, Ewing, N.J. 08628 (609) 883-0026 [Fanwood, Plainfield and most of Scotch Plains are in the 12th Congressional District]

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