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**TIMES** Since 1959  
 Legal Newspaper for the County of Union, New Jersey  
 and for Westfield, Mountainside, Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Cranford and Garwood

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## County Surplus Should Be Used to Reduce Tax Levy

The Union County Freeholder Board has introduced its budget for 2019. The \$490-million spending plan calls for \$367.3 million to be raised in property taxes. The tax amounts to be raised per town will be released on Thursday, April 25 when a public hearing is held followed by the board's vote to adopt the budget.

One area we have expressed concern about is the continued increase in the tax levy at a time when the county has generated a significant surplus which could be tapped to reduce the tax impact on homeowners. This year, the county is using \$25 million of its \$103.3 million in surplus on the revenue side of the budget. But the county is still raising taxes \$6.3 million despite the fact the county will have \$78.3 million of surplus after the reduction of the \$25 million. Taxes account for 75 percent of the county's revenue, a number we believe is too high. Surplus accounts for 5 percent of the budget, with state and federal aid, \$47.3 million, making up 9.6 percent of the revenue stream. County-generated revenues account for \$50.6 million or 10.2 percent of the budget.

Salaries account for \$173.5 million of appropriations, with group health and dental insurance and prescription coverage costing \$73.4 million, of which county employees' contribution is \$6 million. Thus, salaries and benefits cost the county \$241 million.

At the Union County Republican Committee's annual convention, freeholder candidate Peter Kane, who wants to eliminate county government, reasoned that the prosecutor's office, county jail and

courthouse could all be moved under control of state government, with parks and public works transferred to be under control of the municipalities. While county government is not going away, we would love to see the courthouse, prosecutor's office and jail removed from county control to save money. The prosecutor's office and jail would save over \$55 million in salaries and expenses alone. The courthouse has cost the county millions in repairs. The new family courthouse, which opened in 2017, alone cost Union County \$38 million to construct. Superior Court judges and their staffs were moved to the state budget in the mid-1990s under Governor Christine Whitman.

Union County also is the only county in New Jersey to still have both a county police department and sheriff's office. The county police have an operating budget of \$10 million. That includes the county dispatch center, for which the county receives \$500,000 from towns it has agreements with to provide dispatch services.

We are happy to see that the county sold off Runnells Specialized Hospital and has closed its juvenile detention center in Linden, transferring those kids to Essex County, which the county says will save \$24 million over the next three years. Runnells was sold for \$26 million in December of 2014. We hope the county will decide to sell the Linden property as well. That would help grow the surplus even more, which could, in turn, help lower the county taxes and/or be used to reduce the county debt, which is over half a billion dollars.

## Vaccination Exemptions Could Pose Serious Risks to Public Health

The Westfield Board of Health unanimously approved and adopted a resolution April 1 endorsing state legislation that would permit only medical exemptions for mandatory vaccinations, preventing parents from invoking religious exemptions in order not to have their children vaccinated. We believe this decision was a judicious one, and one we hope will likewise gain support among other New Jersey municipalities.

The resolution was introduced at the board's monthly meeting by Megan Avallone, director of the Westfield Regional Health Department, who discussed policies on religious exemptions both in New Jersey and other states. Ms. Avallone told the board that New Jersey presently permits parents to decline vaccinations on religious grounds. She noted that currently, only three states — California, Mississippi and West Virginia — do not allow religious exemptions. She further observed that with the absence of religious exemptions, Mississippi has seen an increase in vaccination rates from approximately 38 to 90 percent.

Ms. Avallone said some parents may use the religious exemption in response to misinformation that has long circulated regarding vaccinations, whether or not it truly reflects their spiritual beliefs or practices.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, all 50 states require that all students be vaccinated against certain diseases. The website [publichealth.org](http://publichealth.org) reports that public health officials and physicians have for more than two decades found themselves up against theories that vaccinations cause autism and other health conditions, despite evidence to the

contrary from multiple studies. Vaccinations can prevent an array of serious illnesses, which can pose particular health risks to children.

According to [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov), the website for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), illnesses that were once commonplace in our country have been virtually vanquished over the past several decades through vaccines. The exclusion of vaccinations can potentially lead to a widespread resurgence of these illnesses, the CDC warns.

Among the conditions that can be prevented by vaccines are chicken pox, diphtheria, measles, mumps, pertussis (whooping cough), polio and rubella. Certain vaccines can provide combined protection against multiple maladies. New Jersey and New York have been wrestling with repeated measles outbreaks, part of a reemergence of the disease around the country, the CDC has confirmed.

Legislation that would prohibit non-medical vaccination exemptions for school children also is before Senate and Assembly committees in New York. Every state permits medical exemptions for vaccinations.

Like most of society today, we believe that all people should be free to practice their faith, including observing dietary customs, mode of dress, manner of worship and other such traditions. However, the issue of vaccinations, and the illnesses they have proved effective at combating, goes way beyond any one individual or group. Vaccines provide a crucial shield against illnesses that could have devastating large-scale effects, and which for some individuals could literally become a matter of life and death.

## Letters to the Editor

### After Perusing The Paper For 'Oops,' I Regained My Confidence In the Staff

I must say I appreciate the local news and editorial section of *The Westfield Leader*. I do think we have a problem. Whomever wrote the editorial article, they are a good wordsmith, but not so good in math. The dates for National Library Week is listed incorrectly. If the date is April 7 to April 13, is a week. The start on Sunday, April 7, through Friday, April 13 (12th) is not a week. Nor the correct date for Friday, which is April 12.

The standard of a week, is seven days, also the date from the 7th to the 13th reflects seven days.

So after perusing the paper for any other "oops," I regained my confidence in the newspaper staff, as there were no subsequent errors!

Thanks for a good read, and a continued effort to keep our town and surrounding community alerted to such enlightening news. Good Day, John Runta, a 40-year resident.

**John Runta**  
Westfield

### Don't Use Plastic, Use Paper Or Nothing Or Less Instead

A lot has been written lately about the difficulty of recycling Styrofoam (polystyrene). And it's true. But there is a way that we can resolve this problem. It's called, 'Don't Take It In The First Place'. (Reduce, reuse, recycle) We seem to have gotten stuck on the need to recycle packaging, when we should be concentrating on reducing (or eliminating) our consumption of it. It does take some work, but I ask everyone to simply stop buying food in Styrofoam packaging.

Almost all of our garbage is packaging, some of it is Styrofoam packaging that we are now being forced to take and then throw away because it cannot be recycled. Chopped meat used to be sold on natural butcher paper; it hasn't always been in plastic wrapped Styrofoam. Next time you are in ShopRite, Kings or Stop & Shop, don't buy the wrapped Styrofoam product; go to your local butcher who will sell it to you in butcher paper. Lettuce (and other produce) doesn't really grow in plastic containers. Buy a head of lettuce, place it in a reusable mesh bag, and leave the plastic at the store. Buying bananas, or other produce with natural skins that we don't eat? Do they really need to be in plastic? Take the bananas, leave the plastic! Buy your produce at Dreyer's or a farmer's market this summer and use your reusable bags. When we buy take-out ice cream, buy a cone instead of a Styrofoam cup. Don't buy Styrofoam cups; ask for and buy paper hot/cold cups! Buy paper plates and not Styrofoam plates. Eggs are sold in plastic, Styrofoam, or cardboard packaging; buy the eggs in cardboard packaging. Don't buy those cheap Styrofoam summer 'coolers'. They don't last long, and we end up throwing them away after one trip!

Please don't take the plastic bags at supermarkets — bring your own reusable bags. Don't take your restaurant 'doggy bags' in Styrofoam containers. Ask for metal tins with cardboard covers, or bring your own. One restaurant I went to only had Styrofoam and plastic; we finally agreed that they would wrap my leftovers in aluminum foil. Bottom line is that we consumers can rule the marketplace once again and resolve this problem — Don't buy the Styrofoam packaging; force the manufacturer to change their packaging. Don't patronize those establishments that refuse to change their packaging to more environmentally sound material. Rule the packaging marketplace; don't let it rule us.

**Bill Nierstedt**  
Garwood

### Real Actions Lead to Real Results In Garwood

We are excited to announce that we are running for re-election to Garwood Council for 2019. When elected to Council back in 2016, we pledged to bring Garwood together. We ran a campaign that promised to look beyond party lines and to answer to all residents. We promised to work to keep taxes down, properly equip our departments, and help beautify our town.

Once in office, we hit the ground running to fulfill those campaign promises by bringing a new, much-needed garbage truck to the DPW. We got it done, but did not stop there. Since then, we have taken the initiative to responsibly cycle out old, worn out equipment, like a plow truck and a street sweeper, to ensure our DPW has what it needs to be able to continue to provide the excellent services Garwood deserves. We took real action, which led to real results.

We promised to launch a Breaking Down the Budget program to get the community better informed about the budget process and give an in-depth look at the particular departments and line items included in the municipal budget and did so just two months into office. We didn't just check the box on this promise and walk away, but instead built on the program in the years following, which included the creation of a resident guide with budget highlights for the public to access online. Real action leading to real results.

Next, we got to work to create a beautification committee. A first-ever Garwood Green Team was self-funded at no taxpayer cost and attracted dozens of volunteers to tackle a variety of projects, from beautifying Georgiana Memorial Park and the recreation complex, to promoting wellness initiatives. Our volunteers' hard work paid off and we proudly achieved Sustainable Jersey certification, giving us access valuable grants, which will allow us to broaden the program's reach. Real action leading to real results.

We also meticulously shaved hundreds of thousands of dollars off of the budget, providing both the lowest and second lowest budgets in the past 18 years! With a zero, flat budget last year and a \$35 increase this year, we're keeping more money in taxpayers' pockets. We're able to do that all while making sure the services you deserve are supported. Through grants, shared services, and efficiencies, we worked hard to get the job done when it came time to revitalize Hartman Park. After almost 30 years, this park was revamped with brand-new, special needs-friendly equipment, new benches, and a new basketball court, making it once again a safe and inviting place for the families of Garwood. In the spirit of our pledge to bring Garwood together, we've increased community events, including Garwood's Martin Luther King, Jr. Service Day and Local Government Week's Touch-A-Truck and Bingo Night. Real action leading to real results.

With the addition of Russ Graham to the Council this year, we've been able to accomplish more. Under his leadership, we will be using grants to undergo a rehabilitation to the infrastructure of our Borough Hall to repair cracks that are in urgent need of repair and will complete the finishing touches to the Hartman Park project by adding shading and a new water fountain.

We went to work for Garwood as soon as we were elected, and we haven't stopped working for you since. And while we've made great progress, there is still a lot more to be done. If there's one thing you can count on, it's that we'll do that work. Real actions lead to real results. With your support, we will keep it going!

**Jennifer Blumenstock, Councilwoman**  
**Marc Lazarow, Council President**  
**Russ Graham, Councilman**


**Deadlines**  
 General News - Friday 4pm  
 Weekend Sports - Monday 12pm  
 Classifieds - Tuesday 12pm  
 Ad Reservation - Friday 4pm  
 Ad Submittal - Monday 12pm

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ABCDIJKLMNOPQRSTUDEFLECTIONUVWXYZ



**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. Cystalgia — Pain in the bladder
2. Rondache — A small circular shield carried by medieval foot soldiers
3. Cynegetics — Hunting with dogs
4. Angekok — An Eskimo medicine man

**THANATOPSIS**

1. To transform completely, especially in the grotesque manner
2. The removing of venom from poisonous snakes
3. The division of the estate of a deceased thane, soldier or servant of a king
4. A view of or meditation on death

**RIDGEL**

1. Harsh in taste, acrid
2. A small ridge
3. The half castrated male of any beast
4. Stern

**PEENGE**

1. A play on words; a pun
2. A sharp, nagging ache
3. The striking part of a hammer
4. To complain in Scottish

**INTRATELLURIC**

1. Located or occurring deep inside the earth
2. Existing or occurring outside the normal knowledge of man
3. The medium or moderator in a seance
4. Occurring within the material world

### Sigma Nursing Guest To Visit College Club

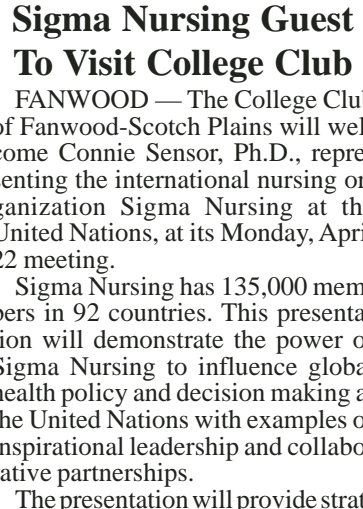
FANWOOD — The College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains will welcome Connie Sensor, Ph.D., representing the international nursing organization Sigma Nursing at the United Nations, at its Monday, April 22 meeting.

Sigma Nursing has 135,000 members in 92 countries. This presentation will demonstrate the power of Sigma Nursing to influence global health policy and decision making at the United Nations with examples of inspirational leadership and collaborative partnerships.

The presentation will provide strategies for citizen engagement with the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Ms. Sensor has held many leadership positions in nursing, including secretary for Region 3 of the New Jersey State Nurses Association, president of the Northeast Chapter of the Transcultural Nursing Society, and secretary on the board of directors for Sigma Theta Tau, the International Honor Society of Nursing. She earned her Ph.D. in Nursing Research and Theory Development from Seton Hall University, a Master of Science in Nursing in Clinical Management with a focus in Transcultural Nursing from Kean University, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Health Education and School Nurse Certification from New Jersey City University.

This program is open to the public, free of charge, and will take place at the Fanwood Presbyterian Church, located at 74 South Martine Avenue, Fanwood. Attendees are asked to use the McDermott Street entrance. The presentation will start at 7:30 p.m. after a brief refreshment period that begins at 7:15 p.m.



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# VACCINATIONS



## A SHOT OF COMMON SENSE

NESEMANO'19  
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<p><b>State LD-21</b>                  Sen. Thomas Kean, Jr. (R)                  425 North Ave. E.                  Westfield, N.J. 07090                  (908) 232-3673                  Asm. Jon Bramnick (R)                  251 North Ave. West                  Westfield, N.J. 07090                  (908) 232-2073                  Asm. Nancy Munoz (R)                  57 Union Place, Suite 310                  Summit, N.J. 07901                  (908) 918-0414</p>	<p><b>State LD-22</b>                  Sen. Nicholas Scutari (D)                  1514 E. Saint Georges Ave.                  Linden, N.J. 07036                  (908) 587-0404                  Asm. Jim Kennedy (D)                  34 E. Cherry St.                  Rahway, N.J. 07065                  (732) 943-2660                  Asw. Linda Carter (D)                  200 West 2nd St., Suite 102                  Plainfield, N.J. 07060                  (908) 561-5757</p>	<p><b>7th Congressional District</b>                  Representative Tom Malinowski (D)                  58 East Main St, Somerville, N.J. 08876                  (908) 547-3307                  [Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford are in the 7th Congressional District]</p> <p><b>12th Congressional District</b>                  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]</p>
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LD-21 includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford.  
 LD-22 includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark, Rahway and Linden.

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